Representations of Pan-Africanism in the Contemporary Post-Apartheid South African High School History Classroom

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Declaration

I, Esma Karadağ, hereby declare that the work on which this thesis is based is my original work (except where acknowledgements indicate otherwise) and that neither the whole work nor any part of it has been, is being, or is to be submitted for another degree in this or any other university. I authorise the University to reproduce for the purpose of research either the whole or any portion of the contents in any manner whatsoever.

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Dedication

To my beloved Taha and Furkan, whose laughter and love have been my constant inspiration, and to my amazing husband Murat, whose unwavering support, encouragement, and patience have made this journey possible. This work is as much yours as it is mine.

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List of Abbreviations

ANC	African National Congress
APO	Azanian People's Organisation
APRM	African Peer Review Mechanism
AU	African Union
BCM	Black Consciousness Movement
BLM	Black Lives Matter
CAPS	Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement
CNE	Christian National Education
C2005	Curriculum 2005
DBE	Department of Basic Education
DHET	Department of Higher Education and Training
DoE	Department of Education
DIRCO	Department of International Relations and Cooperation
EFF	Economic Freedom Fighters
FET	Further Education and Training (Grade 10–12)
FMF	Fees Must Fall
GEI	George Eckert Institute
History MTT	History Ministerial Task Team
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
LTSM	Learning and Teaching Support Material
NEF	New Era Fellowship
NEPAD	New Partnership for Africa's Development

NDP	National Development Plan
NECC	National Education Crisis Committee
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NPC	National Planning Commission
NSC	National Senior Certificate (NSC)
OAU	Organisation of African Unity
OBE	Outcomes-Based Education
PAC	Pan-African Congress of Azania
PAP	Pan-African Parliament
RDP	Reconstruction and Development Programme
RMF	Rhodes Must Fall
RTA	Reflexive Thematic Analysis
SACHED	South African Committee for Higher Education
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SAHP	South African History Project
SANNC	South African Native National Congress
SASO	South African Students' Organisation
TLSA	Teachers' League of South Africa
TRC	Truth and Reconciliation Commission
UCT	University of Cape Town
UN	United Nations
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

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Abstract

This is an interdisciplinary study on the representation of Pan-Africanism in history classrooms in high schools in contemporary post-apartheid South Africa. The subject History is part of the curriculum's stated vision to mould learners' identities in relation to key national and continental post-colonial foundations, such as Pan-Africanism (Department of Basic Education [DBE], 2011). Employing a qualitative empirical method, the study aims to gain insight into the contemporary responses to Pan-Africanism in South African high school history classrooms through *the perspectives of teachers*. How do they represent the concept in history classrooms, engage textbooks and students on the concept, and what do they report on the contemporary views of their history students on Pan-Africanism? Using reflexive thematic analysis, the study highlights significant and bifurcated variations that exist in the representation of Pan-Africanism through *the perspectives of teachers* across classrooms, intricately linked to social class. This key finding confirms Stuart Hall's (1997) cultural theory on representation, which emphasises the role of cultural and historical contexts in which meaning is 'fixed' through the systemisation process of 'encoding' and 'decoding', thereby reinforcing or challenging existing power structures. The study illustrates the teachers' agencies in constructing varied representations of Pan-Africanism in the contemporary history classroom situated in contrasting post-apartheid socio-economic contexts, in which new shared and contested cultural codes and conceptual meanings are created.

Keywords: Pan-Africanism, Representation Theory, Social cohesion, History Education, South African high schools, Social economic class, Teacher perspectives, Teacher agency

Structure of the Thesis

Chapter 1: Introduction and Background to the Study

In the introductory chapter, I discuss how I became interested in researching the representation of Pan-Africanism in South African history classrooms and why this was important to me. I then explain how I contextualise the study by discussing why I focused on history teaching as a subject and by addressing the role of education, particularly history education in South African high schools, in processes of social cohesion and reconciliation as it is generally assumed to transmit ideology and maintains social control. Then I provide a brief overview of the South African history curriculum shifts in the post-1994 era. In doing this, I conduct an appraisal of the official Pan-Africanist discourse of the Department of National Education (DBE)[1], for a better understanding of the Pan-African 'hue' in South African-ness. Since the representation of a subject in the classroom is relevant to the social context, this chapter aims to contextualise the Pan-African discourse in contemporary South African history education. In providing this contextual background to this study, I also explain the critical role of teachers as social and political agencies in schools. This chapter also establishes the rationale for the study by addressing the gaps identified in the existing literature, as discussed in the Literature Review (Chapter 2). It outlines the progression of the research focus, demonstrating how these gaps informed the development of the study's central research question and sub-questions. The chapter further highlights the study's original contribution to the field, offering a clear articulation of its aims and objectives. By doing so, it positions the doctoral research within the broader scholarly discourse and emphasises its potential impact on advancing knowledge in the field.

Chapter 2: Literature Review: Historicisation and Contextualisation of Pan-Africanism and History Education in South Africa

This chapter provides a relevant interdisciplinary literature and scholarship overview of Pan-Africanism as a political, cultural, social, economic, ideological and educational concept/idea/phenomenon (as it tends to variably and interchangeably exist). This overview helps to understand the historical and contemporary factions within Pan-African thought both

[1] 'The Department of Basic Education was formed when the former National Department of Education was split into two: Department of Basic Education and the Department of Higher Education and Training. The DBE deals with all schools from Grade R to Grade 12, including adult literacy programmes' (The Department of Basic Education, n. d.).

outside the site of school education, and within studies in History Education. The meaning of Pan-Africanism in the African continent, as well as its Diaspora, will be gauged within the concept of globalisation, with a narrowed focus on Pan-Africanism in South Africa, from its birth during the liberation struggle to its current understanding. The relevant aspects on South Africa's curriculum as discussed in Chapter 1 are reflected on as relevant to this literature review. To set the stage for presenting the rationale for the study in the next chapter, this chapter will also provide an overview of the research conducted in the field of post-apartheid History Education in South African high schools, including when and where this work has been carried out and the findings of these studies.

Chapter 3: Theoretical Framework for this Study

This chapter explains my theoretical framework on 'representation' using Stuart Hall's (1997) theory of *representation* and its usefulness in understanding and analysing Pan-Africanism as concept in contemporary post-apartheid high school history classrooms. Specifically, I examine within this theoretical framework how the South African government's efforts to integrate Pan-Africanism into high school history curricula are aimed at fostering social cohesion by constructing a unified national identity within the country's diverse cultural landscape, and how I view how teachers in turn mediate those representations through their own experiential agency in the history classroom. Central to this national government constitutional imperative is the philosophy of *ubuntu*, which emphasises interconnectedness and communal values, encapsulated in the phrase 'I am because of you' (see Le Grange, 2011). The research philosophy, epistemological and theoretical frameworks underpinning the study are clearly defined in this chapter, providing a comprehensive foundation for the research approach.

Chapter 4: Rationale, Aims and Objectives, Research Design & Methodology

This chapter provides the rationale for the study and its aims and objectives which inform the appropriate research design and methodology. This includes the rationale behind the data collection method, both of which were guided by theoretical and conceptual choices. Additionally, the chapter addresses ethical considerations, given the involvement of human subjects (practising teachers at schools), and elaborates on the research approach, strategy, methodological choices, and methods employed. A justification for the data collection process and the sampling strategy used for the interviews are provided. The methods for interview-based data analysis are detailed, including a discussion of their rationale. Specifically, the use

of *reflexive thematic analysis* on *representation* is explained, along with its connection to the epistemological stance of *social constructionism*.

Chapter 5: Discussion of Findings in this Study

This chapter examines the diverse representations of Pan-Africanism in South African history classrooms, revealing how these representations are intricately shaped by the socio-economic contexts of schools. The analysis highlights significant variations in how Pan-Africanism is understood and taught across different social environments, with both teachers' and students' perspectives being influenced by their social positions — albeit from the data provided *by the teachers* as students are not directly involved in the study. While teachers in these history classes in South Africa universally recognised the importance of incorporating Pan-Africanism into the curriculum, their motivations and approaches varied notably based on the socio-economic status of their schools. To capture these distinctions, the chapter is divided into two sections: the first focuses on middle-class, fee-paying schools (quintile 4 and 5, or former Model C schools[2]), and the second examines working-class, no-fee township schools (quintile 1, 2, and 3). This structure enables a comparative analysis of how socio-economic disparities impact the teaching and understanding of Pan-Africanism in distinct history teaching educational settings in high schools in contemporary South Africa.

The chapter further explores these findings through three central 'representation' themes that emerged during the research: (1) teachers' perceptions of students' engagement with Pan-Africanism, (2) teachers' perceptions of Pan-Africanism in history textbooks, and (3) teachers' pedagogical approaches. Ultimately, the research unveils how historical inequalities inherited from apartheid, compounded by significant ongoing socio-economic disparities, limit the resources and time available for meaningful engagement with Pan-Africanism. Both class-based settings of these schools reveal respective pedagogical limitations: middle-class schools' lack of access to Africa-centric experiential knowledge and African oral history, testimony; and working-class schools' lack of access to a diversity of resources and historical sources for developing critical thinking skills and scholarly literacies in history education on Pan-Africanism. This chapter not only reflects on these challenges but also considers their broader implications for an inclusive history education in South Africa.

[2] Model C schools were introduced in South Africa in 1990 as a semi-private category of state schools under the apartheid government. They were granted greater financial and administrative autonomy, allowing them to charge school fees and maintain selective admission policies. Initially serving predominantly white students, these schools became desegregated post-apartheid but have largely retained their middle-class character.

Chapter 6: Common Understanding of Pan-Africanism across School Contexts

This chapter of the research findings discusses the common understandings that history teachers in South African high schools hold of the concepts surrounding Pan-Africanism, irrespective of the schools' socio-economic status. It highlights an overt consensus across all schools that being African —whether continental, global, or South African-centred— was primarily associated with being 'black'. Consequently, Pan-Africanism was perceived as a concept/ideology connected to black ethnic, cultural, and racial groupings, which was not consistent with the emerging interpretation of Pan-Africanism found in the contemporary academic literature, as outlined in Chapter 2.

As established in Chapter 1, the study situates this discourse within the broader context of South Africa's educational policies, particularly the government's emphasis on reconciliation and social cohesion. However, the findings reveal a tension between the observed understandings of Pan-Africanism and South Africa's non-racial nation-building ideals. This ideological dissonance raises critical questions about the role of Pan-Africanism in history education and its potential to promote inclusive narratives in post-apartheid South Africa.

Chapter 7: Conclusion

This chapter succinctly synthesises the key findings of the research, addressing the intersectional dynamics of race and class in contemporary South African high schools and their influence on the teaching and perception of Pan-Africanism — as 'representation'. A summary of the main findings in answering the research questions is presented. The limitations and challenges encountered in the research process are acknowledged, providing context for the scope and boundaries of the findings. Finally, this chapter offers recommendations for future research, aiming to further explore the complexities of post-apartheid high school history education which include the vexing question of the relevance of social cohesion, and of class-based experiential narratives in rethinking South Africa's history education imperatives within a diverse and ever shifting African social, political and economic context.

CHAPTER 1

Introduction and Background to the Study

1. 1 What Motivated me to Conduct this Study?

The Republic of South Africa is established as a single, sovereign, democratic state built upon key principles, including non-racialism and non-sexism. These values, enshrined in the Constitution, form the foundation of the new South Africa that emerged following the dismantling of apartheid and the legacy of colonialism. Among these guiding principles, the commitment to non-racialism is explicitly highlighted as a cornerstone of the Republic. But what does this political ideal mean in a lived reality, and in contemporary history classrooms? More specifically to this study, what does this political ideal mean in its relation to the perceptions and understandings of Pan-Africanism? Is it a 'consensus' identity? Does it exist in South Africa, and in history classrooms — and if so, how?

Many South African academics, politicians, and members of the media, for example, regularly assert that a lot of their preoccupations are on developing an African identity, or Pan-African identity because South African institutions have reconceptualised and repositioned themselves in response to the rapidly evolving political climate after the demise of apartheid. These institutional transformations have been frequently cladded in the discourse of 'Africanisation' (Wasserman, 2005, p. 75). Yet very few people know exactly what that identity is. This Africanisation discourse, like the concept of identity itself, is understandably highly contested within a still very fractured South African post-apartheid context. It could be safely assumed that there is a general assumption that the post-1994 identities in South Africa (adults and youth) would naturally, and by default, align with political ideologies like South Africanism (sport patriotism, for example), African Nationalism, or Pan-Africanism, for that matter. However, the lived reality is not that simplistic or deterministic. Whilst this is not a study on 'identity' *per se*, it is useful to reflect on it as related in terms of the concept 'Pan-Africanism' and the complexities embedded within such a term itself.

While the term *post-apartheid* is often used to mark the temporal shift following the official end of apartheid in 1994, this study does not treat it merely as a chronological label. Rather, post-apartheid is engaged here as a critical analytical framework that signals ongoing structural, ideological, and socio-cultural transformations in South African society. It refers to

the contested processes of nation-building, the reconfiguration of race and class identities, and the shifting educational discourses — especially those that aim to reconstruct historical consciousness through curriculum reforms such as the inclusion of Pan-Africanism. Therefore, the term encompasses both temporal and ideological dimensions, recognising that the legacies of apartheid remain embedded in contemporary social, political, and educational practices.

To start off, I was not familiar with Pan-Africanism when I first began my postgraduate studies in South Africa in 2017 as an international student from Türkiye, and least not familiar with the social, cultural and political complexities of post-apartheid. As a social constructionist researcher, I was familiar with the multiple realities and their various 'makings' in society. During my training as a historian during the completion of my Masters' degree in South African Historical Studies, I was superficially aware of the existence of different interpretations of Pan-Africanism as concept and as a political and intellectual movement.

Apartheid has created and imposed complex notions of socially engineered and false demographic racialised 'identities' ('Africans' versus 'non-Africans' — 'white', 'Coloured', 'Indian', for example). This is compounded by the additional layer of complexity created by 'identity' as construct in itself. As illustration, *identity* is a complex concept shaped by various disciplinary perspectives and the interplay between individual and societal elements (see Brunsdon, 2017). Definitions vary. Chryssochoou (2003) views it as the way individuals think about themselves and their world, while Bilgrami (2006) distinguishes between subjective (self-perception) and objective (biological facts) identity. Oyserman et al. (2012) emphasise identity's contextual plurality and its overlap with self-concept, defined as the totality of one's identities. Identity connects individuals to society, mediating their relationship (Chryssochoou, 2003). Early theories like Erikson's (1965) stressed individual development, but recent work highlights societal influences (Beyers & Goossens, 2008), including cultural shifts that shape identity as fluid and consumption-driven (Côté, 1996). Identity extends to collectives, formed internally through shared history and positive group dynamics (Muller, 2008; Poletta & Jasper, 2001) and externally by societal perceptions (Chan, 2013). Collective identity evolves over time, reflecting shared heritage, cohesion, and external construction (Brunsdon, 2017). Constructivist theories, as outlined by Jackson (2009), argue that identities are not fixed or predetermined but are instead contextual, fluid, and continually shaped by external influences such as immigration and globalisation. In this view, identity is not inherent but is constantly constructed and reconstructed through various discursive processes and social practices, even though it might appear fixed or immutable. Jackson (2009) stresses that political and cultural

elites play a crucial role in shaping these identities, often using symbols, history, culture, and ideology to maintain or transform them.

I got more involved in South African society as a long-term resident and post-graduate researcher, engaging in seminars and historical research and experienced the everyday in racially diverse neighbourhoods for a number of years. I gradually developed more of an insider's perspective on things such as post-apartheid identities and related societal aspects. Social interactions formed a significant part of this learning process, particularly through conversations with colleagues, neighbours, and students from different racial and cultural backgrounds. These dialogues often revealed nuanced understandings of race relations, identity struggles, and the enduring legacies of apartheid. I then realised that Pan-Africanism, as a powerful popular and public discursive element in South Africa, has many more different (and clashing) interpretations amongst people as any contested topic on representation in any culture has a vast array of 'meanings', and its interpretations and —representations— are diverse (see Hall, 1997). It was then when I observed in my everyday social interactions with friends, colleagues, fellow students, and others that these multiple and clashing interpretations of what Pan-Africanism means exist in contemporary post-apartheid South African society — on the surface, just as multiple nationalisms may appear to exist in societies.[3] For example, some friends viewed Pan-Africanism as a rallying cry for black solidarity and a rejection of lingering colonial mentalities, while others critiqued it as an abstract ideal that fails to address the lived realities of poverty and inequality. A conversation with a student highlighted this contrast; she expressed disillusionment, stating that Pan-Africanism felt 'too elitist', removed from the struggles of ordinary South Africans. Meanwhile, a colleague passionately described it as a beacon of hope for uniting Africa's Diaspora against global injustices. This sparked my intellectual curiosity as a Turkish citizen with a deep collective historical identity with South Africa[4] and I realised the importance and relevance of this topic to explore further in high school history education. Thus, I became interested in the school as a site of research to see its

[3] Nationalism is a flexible, socially constructed identity that can be shaped by various political contexts. Its principles can be adapted to different sociological movements, such as liberalism, conservatism, fascism, or socialism, depending on the political circumstances (see Anderson, 1983).

[4] I explained this historical connection when I discussed my 'positionality' in the methodology of this thesis. Also, in my Masters' thesis titled 'Late Ottoman Perspective on the South African War 1899–1902: Ismail Kemal Vlora', I examined the pro-British propaganda of Ottoman intellectuals and policymakers. I focused on Ismail Kemal's *Transval Meselesi ('The Transvaal Question')*, a significant propaganda pamphlet advocating British imperialism not only in South Africa but also in other British colonies. My study aimed to understand the pro-British Ottoman intellectuals' understanding of imperialism and civilisation by looking at their attitudes towards the South African War of 1899–1902. I conducted my research under the supervision of A/Prof Shamil Jeppie in Historical Studies at the University of Cape Town between 2017–2019. This research has been published in the *South African Historical Journal*: Karadağ, E. (2024). Positioning in turbulent times: Ottoman intellectuals and the South African War (1899-1902). *South African Historical Journal*. https://doi.org/10.1080/02582473.2024.2380279

relationship to social cohesion (as pertaining to Pan-Africanism) in relation to the goals of the post-apartheid South African government. I therefore oriented my focus to history teaching due to both my disciplinary background as a trained historian, and my acknowledgement of the critical expected political role of history teaching in conveying the nation's official narrative (see Lovorn & Tsyrlina-Spady, 2015).

My historical knowledge informed me of the centrality of Pan-Africanism in South Africa's intellectual and political heritage, from the early nationalist thinkers to figures such as Sobukwe and Biko. More recently, policy initiatives like the inclusion of Kiswahili in the curriculum reflect the state's efforts to project South Africa as part of the broader African continent (DBE, n.d.). The PAC's 1959 manifesto and the ANC Youth League's Pan-Africanist discourse were pivotal in shaping visions of African unity and resistance to colonialism (Abegunrin, 2009; Biko, 1978; Kondlo, 2010; PAC, 1959).

Given this general historical understanding of Pan-Africanism and its relevance to South Africa, and the conflictual understandings of its meaning amongst peers and people I interacted with, I was therefore curious about these passionate debates, its ideological and political complexities and their current importance to the South African government and its Department of Basic Education in promoting social cohesion in history teaching in South Africa. What is the societal reach of these interpretations (both government and public discourse), if any? Why and how do these interpretations of a powerful historical concept in Africa and the Diaspora exist, and *how do they relate to what is happening in the history classroom in high schools in the present South Africa?*

I thought this concern is relevant because to develop a socially cohesive society, we need to understand how key ideas and concepts are embedded in that society. I think one of the key ideas about being African in a place like South Africa requires understanding what the various and diverse notions of Pan-Africanism are. With this in mind, this study is an attempt to answer the question of how South African high school history classrooms —from the perspectives of teachers— align Pan-Africanism with a contemporary non-racial and multicultural official vision[5] in an ethnically and culturally fragmented society.

[5] Government of South Africa, 1996, p. 1.

1. 2 Contextual Framework of the Research Problem

1. 2. 1 Education, Power and Legitimation: The Function of Schools

Education, power, and legitimation have long been interconnected in Africa, particularly since the colonial period, where schools functioned as tools for ideological control. As early as 1758, from a western context, Claude Adrien Helvétius posited in *De l'esprit* that education fundamentally shapes who we are. With the emergence of industrial nation-states, mass education became a means of cultivating citizens aligned with dominant economic and political systems (Katz, 1976). In this context, education became central to promoting national cultures and values defined by the state (Chisholm, 2008).

Formal education is not politically neutral. The knowledge presented in schools is deliberately structured and selected (Anyon, 1978; Apple, 1990), with educators participating —consciously or not— in political acts (Apple, 1990). Schools function as institutions that legitimise both the state and the prevailing social order by transmitting specific ideological values (Apple, 1990; Apple & Franklin, 1990). What is considered legitimate knowledge is shaped by ideological interests and distributed through both the formal and hidden curriculum (Apple, 1990). As Inge (1917) noted, education concerns values more than facts. In this light, Anyon (1978) argues that what counts as 'knowledge' in social studies often serves to justify and preserve institutional structures and societal norms.

As institutions of cultural transmission, schools shape consciousness and contribute to social control (Apple, 1990). They disseminate official ideologies through structured curricula, thereby reinforcing the existing social and economic hierarchies (Apple & Christian-Smith, 1991; Chisholm, 2008; Foster & Crawford, 2006). In this sense, school history functions as a curated narrative aligned with present and future political goals (Foster, 2012). Bernstein (1973, 1975) similarly stresses that the transmission and classification of knowledge in schools reflect the prevailing standards of power and control in society.

African philosophers and theorists have long critiqued colonial education's role in maintaining oppression, imperialist power and economic exploitation. Du Bois (1903), for instance, saw education as a vehicle for social change. In line with this, Anyon (1978) demonstrates how textbooks function within the larger socialisation process, offering legitimising narratives that reinforce societal norms. Textbooks thus become instruments of ideological reproduction, embedding dominant values and political assumptions within the classroom experience.

1. 2. 2 History Education as a Tool for Nation-Building and Pan-African Citizenship

Like in many societies, education in South Africa functions within broader political, economic, and ideological contexts. Schools do not merely transmit knowledge; they also serve to legitimise dominant ideologies and shape citizenship (Anyon, 1978). Through education, especially history teaching, the state articulates its vision of national identity and patriotism (Nugraha et al., 2020; Reichert & Print, 2017; Seventilofa, 2024; Zhang et al., 2023).

Historiography, as the structuring of knowledge and power, is central to constructing the nation-state. In this process, school history becomes a key instrument in shaping collective memory and social cohesion. As Mandela (1990) stated, 'Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world'. History education, in particular, plays a vital role in promoting national unity in transitional societies like South Africa (Chisholm, 2008; Stolten, 2007). As such, textbooks —the main carriers of curricular content— offer official narratives that position citizens in relation to the state (Pingel, 2010; Wasserman, 2005; Bentrovato, 2017).

Given its inherently selective and ideological nature, history writing is not simply about recording the past but constructing narratives that serve present social and political goals (Asmal, 2001; Hofstadter, 1969; Stolten, 2003, 2007). History education, thus, does not merely inform learners about the past; it participates in shaping their identities in relation to concepts like Pan-Africanism (Dryden-Peterson & Siebörger, 2006; Weldon, 2009). In doing so, it reflects broader efforts to promote inclusive, post-apartheid nationhood through curriculum reform (Apple & Christian-Smith, 1991).

Textbooks have long been contested sites for ideological battles. South African history textbooks have often been criticised for promoting nationalism, racial bias, and ethnocentric narratives (Bertram & Wassermann, 2015).[6] The post-apartheid state, aware of these dynamics, has framed history education as a tool for addressing past injustices and fostering reconciliation. The History MTT (2018) highlights history's role as a 'problem-solving discipline' that can confront prejudice and develop empathy, leadership, and critical reflection (p. 43).

[6] This article provides an overview of studies on South African history textbooks since the 1940s. It analyses the content, methodology, and theoretical underpinnings of these studies, highlighting the increase in research since 2000. The goal is to provide a comprehensive overview of history textbook research in South Africa and identify trends and gaps.

Government politicians, such as former Education Minister Kader Asmal, have openly advocated for an African vision in history education and established the South African History Project (SAHP) for this purpose. In 2004, the SAHP distributed UNESCO *General History of Africa* to all schools and libraries in South Africa to support teachers across South Africa. This was accompanied by a text titled *General History of Africa* edited by June Bam and Claire Dyer (2004). The guide was intended to develop critical history literacy skills in all schools, with a focus in the SAHP's national training programme for unsupported black teachers in the townships. One chapter by Nigerian scholar Omano Edigheji is titled 'Africa in the Global Political Economy: from the 1990s to early 2000s', particularly relevant to support teachers in teaching Pan-Africanism. In the preface to the UNESCO *General History of Africa* series (distributed to schools), Asmal noted: '...our future, as Luthuli insisted, must be seen as an African future...' (as cited in Chisholm, 2008, p. 364). A further SAHP publication in 2004, to support South African teachers in locating the country's history in an African context, was the edited book by historian Shamil Jeppie, *Toward New Histories for South Africa: On the Place of the Past in our Present*. The first chapter by Jeppie is titled: 'Africa: Whose History? Whose memory?' Another chapter in this book is on African literature by African philosopher Es'kia Mphahlele.

Post-1994 policy discourses link Pan-Africanism with nation-building, multiculturalism, and non-racialism (Bundy, 2007). These ideas are formalised in policy documents like the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS), which affirms the importance of constitutional values (CAPS, 2011, p. 8).[7]

The South African Constitution (1996) and related education policies, such as the National Policy on History Education (2003), highlight education's role in national reconciliation and social cohesion. Section 29 of the Constitution defines education as a fundamental right that upholds dignity, equality, and freedom. Similarly, the South African Schools Act (1996) aims to provide equitable access to quality education while promoting non-racialism and unity (Sayed et al., 2017).

These policy frameworks position history education as a means of healing historical divisions and creating a democratic citizenry committed to social justice. As such, history becomes more than a subject; it is a nation-building tool used to promote Pan-Africanism and

[7] Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statements (CAPS) is a 'single, comprehensive, and concise policy document, which has replaced the Subject and Learning Area Statements, Learning Programme Guidelines and Subject Assessment Guidelines for all the subjects listed in the National Curriculum Statement Grades R–12' (Department of Basic Education, n.d.).

mitigate social violence, such as Afrophobia (Behr, 2021). Under the leadership of former Minister Angie Motshekga, the DBE consistently prioritised history education as a mechanism for building cohesion in a highly fragmented society (DBE, 2020; Raanhuis, 2022; Sayed et al., 2017). Given the reliance on textbooks in South African schools, they are especially significant in this process (Bakken, 2019).

In sum, post-apartheid history education serves as both a reflection and projection of South Africa's constitutional values. It is tasked with nurturing a reconciled, inclusive national identity rooted in Pan-African ideals and committed to social cohesion.

1. 2. 3. Teacher Agency: Mediating Textbooks and Shaping Representations

While textbooks are often seen as carriers of strong ideological messages, empirical research consistently shows that teachers play a crucial role in mediating and reinterpreting their content. Studies by Hsiang et al. (2023), Ishihara and Kawaguchi (2022), and Olsher and Cooper (2021) demonstrate a frequent disconnect between textbook content, classroom teaching, and actual student learning. Xu (2021) highlight the importance of understanding teachers' perspectives when evaluating textbooks, arguing that their functionality cannot be assessed in isolation from classroom practice. Castillo and Burgos (2023) similarly emphasise the need to analyse how teachers critically engage with these materials.

Apple and Christian-Smith (1991) challenge the assumption that textbooks directly shape teaching content, highlighting instead the negotiated and mediated nature of classroom knowledge. Teachers and students co-construct meaning through interpretation and interaction (Foster, 2011). Textbooks are not merely symbolic representations of state ideology; they are embedded in a dynamic pedagogical context (Chisholm, 2008). For example, despite the production of new, post-apartheid textbooks, research by Bekker et al. (2003) revealed the continued use of apartheid-era materials in some schools in the Western Cape, demonstrating a lag between policy change and classroom practice.

Understanding how teachers use textbooks is thus critical. Chisholm (2008) notes that even well-developed textbooks may not function as intended due to the mediating role of teachers. This is reflected in recent findings by Christian and Stambach (2024), who explore how school principals on the Cape Flats strategically manage challenges such as poverty and violence. Similarly, teachers exercise agency in navigating curricula expectations and adapting materials to the needs of their learners.

Branford (2024) illustrates this dynamic in elite South African schools, where teachers' political orientations, school contexts, and perceptions of students significantly shape their use of the state-mandated curriculum. Employing concepts such as 'risk-taking' (Kitson & McCully, 2005) and distinctions between 'critical thinking' and 'critical pedagogy' (Burbules & Berk, 2013), the study highlights tensions between curriculum mandates and individual teacher agency.

In this study, Pan-Africanism serves as a valuable lens through which to explore these dynamics of teacher agency in post-apartheid South African history classrooms. Teachers are not neutral transmitters of state narratives; they are social and political actors who shape students' evolving identities. Their representations of Pan-Africanism reflect not only curricular aims but also their own positionalities and experiences. Therefore, drawing on Hall's (1997) theory of representation, the study examines how cultural and historical contexts influence meaning-making and how teachers' agency intersects with structures of power and ideology in educational settings.

In South Africa's racially, economically, and culturally complex landscape, these representations are far from uniform. This research therefore investigates how teachers interpret, adapt, and teach Pan-Africanism within differing school contexts and to diverse groups of learners, highlighting their critical role in shaping how this concept is understood and lived in the post-apartheid classroom.

1. 3 South Africa's Vision for History Education

Post-apartheid South Africa's efforts to foster national identity and unity have relied heavily on education, particularly history education, as a tool for promoting social cohesion. The Department of Basic Education (DBE) has positioned history as a mechanism for reconciling South Africa's fragmented past with a vision of inclusive nationhood. This section contextualises the ideological framework underpinning history education policy by examining the South African government's post-1994 nation-building[8] discourse and its integration of Pan-Africanism and *ubuntu* into the curriculum.

[8] The term describes a process which engenders the creation of a country in which the citizens experience an adequate amount of common ground for benefits, objectives, and preferences; thus, they do not aspire to keep apart (Alesina & Reich, 2015, p. 3).

1. 3. 1 South Africa's Official Vision of a 'Nation' for Social Cohesion

In the aftermath of apartheid, South Africa embarked on an ambitious nation-building project grounded in the principles of non-racialism, multiculturalism, and social cohesion — within a society deeply fragmented along ethnic and cultural lines. Under Verwoerdian demographic engineering, black populations had been deliberately ethnicised, while the white minority was constructed as a unified racial group rather than an ethnic one (Moodley & Adam, 2000). Within this framework, the Department of Basic Education (DBE) has positioned history education as a key instrument for addressing historical injustices while simultaneously cultivating a shared national identity among diverse cultural and ethnic groups.

Central to this vision is a shift from racialised exclusivity towards a civic nationalism that promotes constitutional values such as human dignity, equality, and freedom (NPC, 2011). In this regard, post-apartheid South African identity is envisaged not as a product of racial or ethnic lineage, but rather as one grounded in inclusive constitutional citizenship (Johnston, 2014). The narrative of the 'Rainbow Nation', which emerged in the early democratic era, was emblematic of this approach, celebrating unity in diversity and national reconciliation (Moodley & Adam, 2000; Moya, 2021).

The nation-building process has been supported by various political, social, and cultural mechanisms. Symbolic elements such as Nelson Mandela's legacy, the national anthem and flag, and events like the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC, 1995–2002) have played a foundational role. The TRC, for instance, was instrumental in fostering a culture of forgiveness and truth-telling as mechanisms for healing and collective memory. As Archbishop Desmond Tutu (1999) stated, forgiveness, underpinned by the African philosophy of *ubuntu*, was essential for restoring humanity to both victims and perpetrators of apartheid.

Ubuntu, which signifies interconnectedness and communal belonging, has been pivotal in shaping South Africa's social cohesion agenda. Scholars such as Teffo (1998) and Venter (2004) highlight its transcultural potential in guiding reconciliation and nation-building (Horsthemke, 2005, p. 175). In educational policy, *ubuntu* is not only invoked as a moral framework but also as an epistemological foundation for developing inclusive, compassionate citizens (Nkondo, 2007).

Despite these efforts, the Rainbow Nation narrative has come under critique. Scholars such as Bundy (2007) and Stolten (2007) argue that its symbolic promise faded as deep-seated inequalities persisted, and as some segments of society —particularly the white minority—

failed to fully engage with reconciliation efforts (Sitas, 2001). This disillusionment catalysed a shift within the African National Congress (ANC), as Africanist discourses gained prominence. The African Renaissance —promoted as a more assertive articulation of black identity and continental unity— emerged alongside existing nation-building narratives (Bundy, 2007; Johnston, 2014).

Even so, official documents such as the National Development Plan (NDP) —a strategic framework created by the National Planning Commission (NPC) in 2011 to guide South Africa's development until 2030— continue to promote the ideal of the Rainbow Nation. The Plan envisions a society where diversity is viewed as a strength, and all individuals feel a sense of belonging and security (National Planning Commission, 2011, pp. 21–35). This vision is grounded in the core values of the Constitution. Moreover, the Plan cautions against the rise of narrow nationalism and warns of the dangers posed by xenophobia, racism, and chauvinism that may emerge from exclusionary identity politics (Johnston, 2014, p. 7; National Planning Commission, 2011, p. 466).

Instead, 'good nationalism' is defined as inclusive, pluralistic, and grounded in the supremacy of the Constitution. It affirms a non-racial, democratic society that values cultural diversity and human rights (NPC, 2011, pp. 14, 464). As Johnston (2014) argues, this form of nationalism seeks to 'keep the genie of populist ethno-racial nationalism in the bottle' by fostering a minimal, secular, and shared sense of national belonging based on political ideals rather than ethnocultural identity.

This conception of national identity is also reflected in the government's educational discourse. The DBE seeks to reconcile multiculturalism with African identity by promoting an inclusive form of Pan-Africanism that transcends racial boundaries. While affirming South Africa's place within Africa, the DBE aims to avoid equating African identity solely with race, thus upholding the constitutional principles of non-racialism and multiculturalism.

In conclusion, South Africa's official vision of nationhood articulates a complex but deliberate synthesis of civic nationalism, Pan-African unity, and ubuntu-inspired humanism. Through history education, the state aspires to cultivate a citizenry that is both rooted in African belonging and committed to democratic values. This ideological framework attempts to navigate the tensions between diversity and unity, memory and reconciliation, identity and inclusion in a society still grappling with the legacies of its past.

1. 3. 2 Ubuntu: A Philosophical Foundation for Pan-African Unity

Ubuntu, an African philosophy rooted in interconnectedness, communalism, and human dignity, plays a central role in shaping South Africa's post-apartheid identity and governance. Known as *Botho* in Sotho languages, *ubuntu* represents a unifying worldview encompassing values such as generosity, respect, empathy, and social harmony (Lumumba-Kasongo, 2018; Broodryk, 2002; Ewuoso & Hall, 2019). The ideal *ubuntu personality* embodies traits like humility, kindness, and shared humanity (Okoro, 2015).

Though part of an ancient oral tradition, the term's first written appearance dates to at least 1846 (Gade, 2011). It spans a broad linguistic and cultural range across the African continent, not limited to Nguni or South African Bantu languages (Mojolo, 2019). *Ubuntu* is often referred to in the Zulu phrase *umuntu ngumuntu ngabantu* — 'a person is a person through other people' (Tutu, 1999, pp. 34–35) — a concept also expressed in similar forms across various African cultures, such as *ibuanyindanda* (Igbo) and *ujamaa* (East Africa) (Okoro, 2015). Related ideologies like Kaunda's African humanism and Nyerere's African socialism align with *ubuntu*'s emphasis on freedom, cohesion, and self-reliance (Lumumba-Kasongo, 2018).

Ubuntu prioritises collective identity and social cohesion over individualism, yet does not negate individuality entirely (Teffo, 1996). It seeks a balance between self-being and the communal self (Lumumba-Kasongo, 2018; Venter, 2004). Misinterpretations linking *ubuntu* to Eurocentric civilising missions obscure its African epistemological grounding. Rather, *ubuntu* reflects ontological interdependence as essential to African survival and development, contrasting sharply with divisive individualism of Western ideologies. Tutu (1999) illustrates this by noting that apartheid's dehumanisation of others also dehumanised the oppressors themselves.

Etymologically, *ubuntu* derives from *muntu*, meaning 'person' or 'human', indicating universal personhood regardless of race or ethnicity (Mojolo, 2019). It is therefore not confined to Bantu-speaking communities but encompasses a broader concept of shared humanness. For some scholars, *ubuntu* symbolises a unifying force across Africa and the Diaspora, providing a philosophical base for Pan-African solidarity (Makgoba, 1996; Lumumba-Kasongo, 2018).

Ubuntu also serves as a framework for African political and governance models. Suppressed under colonialism and apartheid, its post-apartheid resurgence is tied to reclaiming an authentic African identity and global dignity (Gade, 2011; Maris, 2020). In international

relations, *ubuntu* informs South Africa's multilateral diplomacy and alignment with Pan-African and Global South solidarity. The 2011 report *Building a Better World: The Diplomacy of Ubuntu* articulates this position, identifying Pan-Africanism and *ubuntu* as the foundation of South African foreign policy (Edozie, 2017).

Through *ubuntu* diplomacy, South Africa promotes unity and development both continentally and globally. The ANC views this philosophy as a tool for reshaping postcolonial governance. *Ubuntu*-oriented economics —anchored in social justice, cooperation, and dignity— is emerging as an alternative political-economic vision (Edozie, 2017).

In summary, *ubuntu* is both a philosophical and practical cornerstone of South Africa's post-apartheid identity. It informs national reconciliation, curriculum development, foreign policy, and Pan-African unity. As a deeply rooted African epistemology, *ubuntu* challenges individualistic paradigms and offers an inclusive framework for collective survival, dignity, and transformation.

1. 3. 3 Pan-Africanist Discourse of the Department of Basic Education (DBE)

In post-apartheid South Africa, the Department of Basic Education (DBE) has sought to embed Pan-Africanist ideals and *ubuntu* philosophy into the national curriculum as part of a broader project of social transformation and reconciliation. This agenda, which aligns education with constitutional values, aims to counteract the historical legacies of exclusion, ethnocentrism, and racial division by fostering solidarity, human dignity, and a continental consciousness among learners.

A pivotal moment in the formalisation of this discourse was the publication of the History Ministerial Task Team (MTT) report in 2018. Commissioned by the DBE, the report identified critical shortcomings in the existing Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS), particularly in relation to South Africa's positioning within the broader African and global historical context. Though African history was present in the curriculum and integrated throughout, as also reflected in the SAHP volumes that supported teachers in teaching the history of the continent as illustrated earlier, the MTT (under the new Education Minister Angie Motshekga) argued that the curriculum perpetuated a false sense of South African

exceptionalism, largely inherited from colonial and apartheid-era historiographies that framed the nation in isolation from the continent (MTT, 2018, pp. 41, 49, 80).[9]

The MTT recommended a curriculum realignment that would re-situate South African history within the broader African struggle for liberation and solidarity, thereby dismantling the myth of South African uniqueness and fostering a Pan-African sensibility among students. This shift was deemed essential not only for historical accuracy but also as a strategic response to rising xenophobic violence —commonly referred to as *Afrophobia*— within the country (MTT, 2018, p. 80). These recommendations echo Masooa and Twala's (2013) critique of apartheid education, which promoted Afrikaner exceptionalism and framed African states as threats, as well as Ochonu's (2020) observation that even post-apartheid black South African intellectualism bears traces of apartheid's isolationist legacy.

South Africa's fraught relationship with the rest of the continent is rooted in cultural and psychological ambivalence. Adebajo (2016) characterises this as a 'nervous condition', drawing on Fanon and Sartre to describe the internalised contradictions of colonial domination. This ambivalence is further entrenched by apartheid's demographic engineering, which not only racialised but also fragmented black identity, making Pan-African unity a politically necessary yet culturally complex goal.

Against this backdrop, the DBE has embraced *ubuntu* and Pan-Africanism as key curricular values. These ideals feature prominently in the department's *Action Plan to 2024* (DBE, 2020) and in the *Integrated Strategic Planning Framework for Teacher Education and Development (2011–2025)* (DBE & DHET, 2011), both of which promote inclusive citizenship and unity in diversity. The *Manifesto on Values, Education, and Democracy* (DoE, 2001) frames *ubuntu* as a constitutional value, highlighting its capacity to cultivate compassion, empathy, altruism, and respect in school environments (Letseka, 2011).

In alignment with this vision, the *Values, Education, and Democracy* report (2000) calls for an education system that instils intellectual discipline, cultural tolerance, and moral integrity. Critical thinking and independent judgment are positioned as essential tools for

[9] The South African History Project (SAHP), initiated in 2001 and concluded in 2004 under the leadership of then Education Minister Kader Asmal, aimed to revitalise history education and was guided by a racially diverse Ministerial Committee chaired by Zambian historian Yonah Seleti with June Bam as CEO of the SAHP. The 2015–2018 Ministerial Task Team (MTT), appointed by Minister Angie Motshekga to review the history curriculum, was chaired by historian Professor Sifiso Ndlovu, who had also served on the SAHP committee. While the SAHP focused on inclusivity and reconciliation in the post-apartheid context, the MTT was composed predominantly of black African scholars and educators, with a stronger emphasis on African solidarity.

democratic citizenship, echoing earlier policy imperatives in the *White Paper on Education and Training* (1995), which emphasised the development of reasoning and problem-solving capabilities.

The MTT (2018) further advocates for the inclusion of Pan-African historical figures and ideologies —such as Kwame Nkrumah, Marcus Garvey, W.E.B. Du Bois, Julius Nyerere, and George Padmore— as part of a more comprehensive approach to African solidarity. However, the report critiques existing textbook treatments of these figures as insufficient, arguing that they often fail to convey the full transnational and solidaristic scope of Pan-Africanism (MTT, 2018, pp. 49–50).

A key recommendation of the MTT is the reimagination of African nationalism through the moral and philosophical lens of *ubuntu*. This includes a repositioning of African nationalism not as ethnically exclusive but as a liberatory and inclusive ideology that resists both white oppression and racial retributivism (MTT, 2018, p. 47). The report contrasts this vision with the narrow, ethnonationalist character of Afrikaner nationalism, proposing instead an ethics-based nationalism rooted in civil rights, social equality, compassion, and forgiveness.

This resonates with Eze's (2013) articulation of a 'new ideal of Pan-Africanism' that rejects all forms of domination and instead promotes the global rights of oppressed peoples, irrespective of race, faith, or gender. For Eze, Pan-Africanism encompasses both historical and metaphysical dimensions—an ethos of shared humanity and collective liberation. In this formulation, *ubuntu* serves not only as a philosophical foundation but also as a practical framework for advancing Pan-Africanism in both national education and global justice initiatives.

In sum, the DBE's Pan-Africanist discourse positions history education as a vital tool for cultivating an inclusive, socially cohesive, and decolonised South African identity. Through its strategic incorporation of *ubuntu* and Pan-Africanism, the department seeks to dismantle residual colonial ideologies, counter Afrophobic sentiments, and instil in learners a sense of solidarity, ethical responsibility, and historical belonging — both to the nation and the continent.

The next chapter deals with the Literature Review relevant to this study, and identifies the gap in existing scholarship – which provides the basis for the theoretical framework (chapter 3) and rationale for the study (discussed in chapter 4)

CHAPTER 2

Literature Review

Historicisation and Contextualisation of Pan-Africanism and History Education in South Africa

The literature review of this thesis is structured into three interconnected sub-sections. The first section examines the evolution and conceptualisations of Pan-Africanism within the Diaspora and across the African continent. The second section examines its development and contemporary interpretations in the South African context. Thirdly, the review evaluates the existing scholarship on history education in South Africa, highlighting key themes and debates within this body of literature.

2. 1 Pan-Africanism

2. 1. 1 Pan-Africanism in the Global Context

The main aim of this section is to evaluate the development of the ideas, themes, values, and concepts that define the 'Pan-African vision', situating them within the discourses that shape South Africa's official Pan-African narrative. I also examine how internal and external dynamics, such as globalisation, have influenced the formation of this discourse. The background and context on Pan-Africanism, provides the broader sociopolitical framework of how it is presented by South African high school history teachers in mediating its meaning with their students.

2. 1. 1. 1 Founders of the Pan-African Thought and Movement

The evolution of early Pan-African thought is a complex tapestry woven from various intellectual, cultural, and political threads that emerged in response to colonialism, slavery, and the quest for identity among people of African descent. As understood from the existing literature on Pan-Africanism, the *naissance* of the thought first appeared as an intellectual tradition in a reaction to the subjugation of Africans from the close of the 15th century, then, evolved into an organised movement at the end of the 19th century. In this section, I discuss the prominent Pan-Africanists whose thoughts and activities contributed to the Pan-African

agenda. This section of the literature review examines the renowned Pan-Africanists chronologically and thematically and discusses how they conceptualised the idea.

Although Pan-Africanism as a formal movement is primarily modern, scholars have traced the intellectual roots of Pan-African thought to earlier periods. Nafafé (2022) uncovers the life of Lourenço da Silva Mendonça, a 17th century African abolitionist, to highlight how legal and moral opposition to slavery originated in Africa. Mendonça's experiences in Angola and Brazil informed his 1684 petition to the Pope, where he challenged Portuguese practices of enslaving Africans and exposed the falsity of claims that slavery was an established African norm. By focusing on African resistance, such as quilombos and legal actions, Nafafé dismantles Eurocentric narratives and demonstrates how the fight for emancipation, rooted in African contexts, predated European abolitionist movements. This reorients our understanding of freedom and Enlightenment.

Geiss (1969) argues that significant developments contributing to Pan-Africanism emerged during the late 18th century. Activities of free African Americans and abolitionist movements in America, England, and West Africa played a pivotal role, alongside the establishment of Sierra Leone, which fostered an educated African intelligentsia in British West Africa. Ex-slaves such as Ottobah Cugoano (c.1757–?) and Olaudah Equiano (c.1745–1797), also known by his slave name Gustavus Vassa, were instrumental in shaping this emerging intellectual tradition. Their writings contributed to an ethos of liberation and laid the foundation for Pan-Africanism. In the 1780s, Cugoano and Equiano co-founded the organisation 'Sons of Africa', which campaigned to end Britain's involvement in the trans-Atlantic trafficking of Africans. Adi (2018) identifies the 'Sons of Africa' as one of the earliest Pan-African organisations, marking a significant milestone in the development of Pan-African thought (p. 7).

Geiss (1974) further observes that the representatives of Pan-Africanism in the modern era were predominantly African and African American elites educated in Europe, America, or West Africa. Shaped by their engagement with modernity, they reacted against white supremacy by integrating principles of equality and democracy into their ideologies of liberation. This synthesis of modern ideas and the intellectual traditions established by earlier figures highlights the continuity in the evolution of Pan-African thought.

In light of the existing literature, the 19th century witnessed the political movement of the Pan-African thought. The ideology gained political consciousness with the Haitian Revolution, resulting in the establishment of the first African republic in 1804 and France's

crushing defeat by Ethiopia in 1896. Under the leadership of Toussaint L'Ouverture (1743–1803), a successful slave rebellion was conducted in St Domingue, the French Caribbean Colony. According to Adi (2018), this paved the way for demonstrating the possibility of African sovereignty to the world. Adi (2018) further argues that African victory over the most contemporary powerful forces in Europe (British, French, and Spanish) discredited the racist idea of black inferiority.

It is also contended that Pan-Africanists of the 19th century were outstanding vanguards in the development of this ideology. In this sense, Kuryla (n.d.) notes that these Pan-Africanists put stress on the commonalities between Africans and black people living in America. To illustrate, Martin Robinson Delany (1812–1885), an early Pan-Africanist African American thinker and activist, abolitionist, newspaper writer and editor, novelist, and physician, said: 'Africa for the African race and black men to rule them. By black men I mean, men of African descent who claim an identity with the race' (Kahn, 1984, p. 415). These words of Delany are an important indicator to understand the newly established ethnic consciousness of black men in the Diaspora. His statement also shows the patriarchal nature of the genesis of Pan-Africanism.

Right after Delany, Edward Wilmot Blyden (1832–1912), a West Indian politician, educator, writer, and diplomat, coined the term and theorise 'African Personality' for the first time (Thompson, 1969). Adi (2018) remarks that in advocating 'racial pride', Blyden argued that Africans had a unique contribution to give to the world, as well as a distinct African personality (p. 13). It is believed that Blyden's ideas affected some notable Pan-Africanists such as Garvey and Nkrumah (Adi, 2018, p. 14). He also became the muse of the 'Francophone Négritude movement' represented by Senghor and Césaire (Adi & Sherwood, 2003, viii). In this respect, while many scholars regard DuBois as the 'father of Pan-Africanism', which will be explained later, Esedebe (1971) claims that Blyden was the earliest and greatest champion of Pan-African thought (p. 84). Owing to the long colonial past and centuries of humiliation of Africans, most early Pan-African activists challenge the conception of African inadequacy (Tondi, 2005, p. 311). Adi and Sherwood (2003, viii) assert that they endeavoured to 'vindicate the race'. Blyden's *Vindication of the Negro Race* (1857) and Delany's rebuttal of Social Darwinism, *The Principia of Ethnology: The Origin of Race and Colour* (1879) are good examples of this tradition.

For some scholars, 'the father of modern African political thought' is James Africanus Beale Horton (1835–1883), a physician, scientist, historian, and writer from Sierra Leone (Adi,

2018, p. 14). Adi and Sherwood (2003) indicate that Horton proposed the probabilities and tenets of African self-government and nascent nationalism to others. To Adi (2018), presumably, Horton took the name 'Africanus' for his sensitisation to racism and his African identity. He became the first African to openly campaign for African self-government, demonstrating the African's ability for having a real political government and national freedom.

Early Pan-Africanists mostly supported the idea that Africans should return to their homelands to convert the continental Africans to Christianity. As Kuryla (n. d.) notes, this was considered a way to 'civilise' the inhabitants of the continent. Moreover, Horton, Delany, Alexander Crummel (1818–1898), an African American missionary and abolitionist, writer and former politician, and Bishop Henry McNeal Turner (1834–1915) advocated colonial rule in Africa for the sake of civilising the African continent which was common among Western-educated African intellectuals in the 19th century.

It may be noted that the heritage of slavery spawned the slogan of 'Africa for the Africans', an important motto of Pan-Africanism. 'Africa for the African race and black men to rule them' was first used by Martin Delany in 1861 (Adi & Sherwood, 2003, viii; Shepperson, 1962, p. 350). Afterwards, according to Shepperson (1962), the phrase was popularised by Edward Blyden and the slogan originated in the Back-to-Africa forces which eventually resulted in the foundation of Sierra Leone and Liberia. Both Delany and Blyden regarded a return to Africa to be crucial, principally for the 'regeneration' of Africa (Adi & Sherwood, 2003, viii). With this in mind, Joseph Booth, a British missionary, adopted the slogan and wrote a book in 1897 titled *Africa for the African*. Shepperson (1962) and Adi (2018) assert that the southern African militant movements carried out the slogan which relates to the Bambatha Rebellion or Zulu Rebellion of 1906 in Natal.

It is worth noting that the Pan-African movement as well as its 'Africa for the Africans' slogan gained importance and took its modern shape after the Garvey movement in the 1920s (Shepperson, 1962, p. 350). Adi and Sherwood (2003) also stress that the phrase was later associated with Jamaican Marcus Garvey (1887–1940), who is an important advocate of early Pan-African thought. According to Thompson (1969), Garvey pursued to unify all Africans around the world, to construct a foothold on the African continent from which to combat colonialism and attach the entire continent into a single country. For achieving this objective, he founded the Universal Negro Improvement Association (UNIA) in 1917. Commander (2007) says that the union championed black pride and struggled faithfully for civil rights and

other global causes. Black Star Line, a shipping company of Garvey, was founded, in part, to facilitate the idea of a back-to-Africa movement as well as to enable international black commerce.

The founding 'father' of modern Pan-Africanism as an official movement is considered, by many, to be William Edward Burghardt DuBois (1868–1963), the outstanding African American activist (Eze, 2013). He is often regarded as the most noticeable African intellectual of the 21st century (Adi & Sherwood, 2003, p. 48). In the same vein, Kuryla (n. d.) maintains that DuBois was an influential thinker among his contemporaries and one of the most eminent scholars who studied Africa. DuBois declared the significance of Pan-Africanism with the following words: 'If the Negro were to be a factor in the world's history it would be through a Pan-African movement' (cited in Tondi, 2005, p. 314). DuBois (1903) further noted, 'The problem of the twentieth century is the problem of the colour line — the relation of the darker to the lighter races of men in Asia and Africa, in America and the islands of the sea'. This well-known statement of DuBois demonstrates that the 'colour problem' was not restricted to the United States, but also to the African continent which then was suffering under the burden of European oppression (Kuryla, n. d.).

Another outstanding Pan-Africanist figure was George Padmore (1903–1959) of Trinidad. According to Geiss (1974), Padmore embodied a number of historic factors that were crucial to the establishment of Pan-Africanism. He explains Padmore's remarkable achievements, indicating that his career spanned the entire 'triangle' of Pan-Africanism (the West Indies, the United States, Europe, and Africa which was the triangle of the slave trade) (p. 353). Within this framework, the scope of his work could be argued to be universal. Between 1935 and 1958, he had a significant impact on the young African and Afro-West intellectual elite through his dynamism and emphasis on intellectual precision and political action through the strength of his temperament, as well as articles and several books, lectures, and a broad array of historical contacts. Adi and Sherwood (2003) thus remark that Padmore perhaps would have a much stronger assertion to the title of the 'Father of Pan-Africanism' than DuBois, on whom the title was conferred (p. 152).

Casely Hayford (1866–1930) was a prominent Ghanaian intellectual and political figure, regarded as one of the early leaders of the Pan-African movement. Born in Freetown, Sierra Leone, he was educated in England but spent much of his life advocating for Africa's independence and cultural pride. Hayford is best known for his criticism of colonialism in West Africa, particularly British rule in the Gold Coast (modern-day Ghana). A staunch advocate of

Pan-Africanism, Hayford believed in the unity of African people across the continent and the diaspora to resist colonial oppression and assert their cultural identity. His 1911 publication *Ethiopia Unbound* highlighted his vision for an independent and united Africa. In this work, he articulated the need for Africans to break free from the chains of colonialism and embrace their shared history and heritage. Hayford was also involved in political activism in the Gold Coast, where he pushed for greater self-determination for Africans within the British colonial system. He was a strong voice against imperialism and worked toward empowering Africans to challenge European dominance. Through his writings and political actions, Hayford made significant contributions to the intellectual foundations of African nationalism and the Pan-African movement (Adi & Sherwood, 2003).

Besides, Henry Sylvester-Williams (1869–1911) from Trinidad coined the term 'Pan-Africanism' for the first time (Eze, 2013). Dusé Mohamed Ali (1866–1945), the first-ever, voiced the importance of an economic initiative to achieve total independence (Adi & Sherwood, 2003, p. 1). Malcolm X (1925–1965), Frantz Fanon (1925–1961), C. L. R. James (1901–1989), Patrice Lumumba (1925–1961), Cheikh Anta Diop (1923–1986), Amilcar Cabral (1924–1973) and Jomo Kenyatta (c. 1894–1978) were also significant thinkers, writers, and activists of Pan-Africanism.

The role of women activists who fought for social change at the intersections of race and gender, such as the Trinidadian Claudia Jones (1915–1964), 'one of the greatest women activists of the 20th century' (Jesus, 2023, p. 9), the South African Miriam Makeba (1932–2008), the Jamaican Amy Ashwood Garvey (1897–1969), the Brazilian Lèlia Gonzalez (1935–1994), the 'Afro-German' May Ayim (1960–1996) was crucial. They brought a feminist interpretation to the idea and later evolving concept. This aspect is often left out of the Pan-African discourse, except in some works such as Adi and Sherwood (2003), Adi (2018), and Jesus (2023). Charlotte Maxeke (1871–1939) was also a pioneering South African leader, widely recognised for her contributions to education, social justice, and women's rights. She was one of the first African women to receive higher education, studying at an American Methodist institution. Maxeke is particularly noted for her work in improving education and healthcare for African communities in South Africa. One of her most significant contributions was the founding of one of the first African women's organisations in South Africa. In 1918, she established the *Bantu Women's League*, an organisation focused on advocating for the rights of African women, particularly in the areas of political participation, including the right to vote. The league played a crucial role in advancing gender equality and women's rights. Maxeke was also an important figure in the Pan-African movement, contributing to its

influence in the southern hemisphere. Her views on education, health, and social justice were widely adopted by other black leaders of her time. Her legacy is significant not only for the advancement of social and political rights for black women but also for the broader African women's rights movement, making her an important historical figure in both South African and African history (SAHO, n.d.).

The 1930s and 1940s witnessed a literary movement known as the 'Négritude movement' or 'French Négritude'. It arose as a response against French assimilation policies among French-speaking black intelligentsia in Paris. The movement was framed by Léopold Senghor of Senegal (1906–2001), later President of Senegal, and Aimé Césaire (1913–2008) of Martinique. Geiss (1974) describes the philosophy as the emphasis on 'all African elements', particularly the 'cult of Black womanhood' and 'rejection of modern civilisation' of the 'wild African landscape' (p. 319). Gbadegesin (1991) further explains that as a principle, it identifies the uniqueness of African cultural values. Eze (2013) explains Négritude as an intellectual protest of the constant humiliation of blacks as people with no historical background, subjective existence, or potential historical culture. As one of its founders, Senghor (cited in Gbadegesin, 1991), explains that the assumption of 'tabula rasa' has been used by the colonisers to legitimise the political and economic dependence of Africans. The black man thus should take off his assimilation costume first and claim his being, his négritude (p. 31). Hence, the movement intended to restore the image of truncated subjectivity of black identity and bring about a new apprehension of African personality, or universal African identity, in which blackness turns into a sign of pride, not antipathy (Eze, 2013). Négritude is well explained by Eze (2013) that it was an ongoing effort to dismantle colonial and imperial history's lasting cognitive intrusion. He has coined this psychosocial incursion as the 'colonisation of subjectivity'. Eze (2013) explains the term as follows:

> [Colonisation of subjectivity is] a process in which the referential point of my subjective definition is wholly and totally defined by asymmetries of identity formation imposed by an external other. I am what you have defined me to be. I uncritically accept the given identity and assume it as an authentic source of who I am, who I can become, in fact, my overall life narrative and self-referential judgment (p. 667, f22).

On the other hand, it is worth noting here that there is a great deal of cultural hues in African heritage. In that vein, Gbadegesin (1991) remarks that the idea of Négritude was revised by some intellectual and political circles owing to exaggerating the uniformity of black cultural values. Consequently, it would not accord with the material and moral welfare of the African people. For example, Kwame Nkrumah saw African societies as having three discrete

cultural legacies: 'Western (Christian), Arabic (Islamic), and Traditional Cultures' (p. 43). Yet, Gbadegesin (1991) informs that Senghor was also criticised for being excessively traditionalist in the era of technology (p. 43).

As the literature on Pan-Africanism indicates, indeed, the advocates of Pan-Africanism, outside of the United States, were mainly influenced by the African American culture. According to Kuryla (n. d.), particularly Senghor and Césaire were considerably inspired by DuBois and some Harlem Renaissance (African cultural and intellectual outburst around the 1920s and 1930s in New York) writers such as Countee Cullen, Langston Hughes, and Claude McKay. In addition, for a period, Europe became the nucleus of the Pan-African ideology (Kuryla, n. d.). Adi and Sherwood (2003) indicate that the Négritude movement arose when Césaire and Senghor were students in Paris. Several Pan-Africanists, such as Cheikh Anta Diop, Harold Moody, Nathaniel Fadipe and Ladipo Solanke swung into action while they were in France or Britain. DuBois conferences were mostly convened in Europe.

However, as Kuryla (n. d.) asserts, with the beginning of the Cold War in 1945 and the appearance of the 'Red Scare' in the United States in particular, where the people who had communist links or sympathy were harassed and sued, the intellectual leadership of the African Americans in the Pan-African movement had retreated. The reason for this was the communist or leftist preferences of many Pan-Africanist protagonists. This view was further supported by Adi and Sherwood (2003) that the international communist movement and socialist and anti-imperialist viewpoints had an enormous impact on Pan-African thought during the 1930s. For instance, to them, C. L. R. James was one of the protagonists of the international Trotskyist movement and Claudia Jones, Frantz Fanon, Aimé Césaire, and Walter Rodney were influenced by an internationalist perspective and Marxism. Nevertheless, the late 1960s and 1970s witnessed the reappearance of Pan-Africanist cultural thought among African Americans as one of the indicators of the Black Power movement as Kuryla (n. d.) points out.

On the flipside, Kuryla (n. d.) notes that by the late 1940s, the leadership of the movement was in the hands of the Africans on the continent. According to Shepperson (1962), especially West Africa became the distributing point for the Pan-Africanist ideology and organisations. To Adi and Sherwood (2003) transplantation of the Pan-African movement evolved into a new kind of Pan-Africanism. It conveyed the message all over Africa that, as succinctly put by Thompson (1969, cited in Tondi, 2005), what many deemed unimaginable had happened; a black government had come to be motivated to declare that Africans might rule themselves (p. 323).

Particularly Ghana became a base to propagate and disseminate the Pan-African ideas after its independence in 1957. Upon gaining independence from Britain, Kwame Nkrumah (1909–1972), the first President of Ghana focused on advocating for the economic and political unity of the whole continent. Lumumba-Kasongo (2018) describes him as the 'guru' of Pan-Africanism (p. 45). He was granted the title of '*Osagyefo'*, meaning 'redeemer'. According to Abegunrin (2009), Nkrumah was one of the most revolutionist, reformist, and influential Africanist leaders of the post-Second World War. His renowned slogan was 'Africa must unite'. He believed that the total liberation of Africa will be achieved with political unification, without necessarily forsaking their independence. In 1963, Nkrumah stated that newly independent African sovereignties must construct a political union depending on security, foreign relations, common citizenship, an African currency, and an African Central Bank. To Nkrumah, Africa needs a mutual defence system with an African High Command to maintain peace on the continent (Abegunrin, 2009, pp. 141–143). Nkrumah in his independence speech on March 6, 1957, announced that: 'Our independence is meaningless unless it is linked up with the total liberation of Africa'. He further said: '… we are going to create our own Africa personality and identity'. To this very day, Ghana's mission for Pan-Africanism blazes in the following statement: 'With resilience, we will realize fully the dreams and vision of those who toiled and laid down their lives to win our hard-earned freedom from colonialism' (cited in Commander, 2007, p. 424). These words clearly demonstrate his mission in realising the Pan-African ideal.

2. 1. 1. 2 From Idea to Organised Pan-African Movement: Pan-African Congresses

The literature reveals that the intellectual, cultural, social, and artistic revival of Pan-Africanism motivated a blueprinted campaign at the closing of the 19th century. For this purpose, the intellectuals and activists of Pan-Africanism organised several congresses to establish formal organisations. The very first two congresses were launched in 1893 in Chicago and 1895 in Atlanta, USA. Esedebe (1982) regards the former as the onset of Pan-Africanism as a movement, where the term 'pan-African' was used for the first time.

On the other hand, some scholars such as Adi and Sherwood (2003) and Eze (2013) state that the Pan-African movement was given an organisational structure in 1897 with the launching of the African Association in London leading the very first Pan-African congress convening in the same city held on 23–25 July 1900 which was led by Henry Sylvester-Williams with the attending of 30 delegates from Africa, America, and West-Indies. In the same vein, Ben-Jochannan and Clarke (1991) note that the 1900 London Conference was the

birth of a structural and ideological concept of the movement. It was a quest for African people for the tools to motivate their compatriots to embrace the modern world, rather than insisting on independence. Tondi (2005) therefore marks this conference as the beginning of the first phase of the movement in the broader sense. This idea was further supported by Thompson (1969) that London Conference was a moment of nationalist maturation in Africa when African intellectuals developed ideas. Virtually, according to Gann and Duignan (1967 as cited in Tondi, 2005), the meeting brought the term 'Pan-African' into use and emphasised the requisite of racial equality (p. 313).

Several Pan-Africanism congresses were held between 1919–1927 in Paris, London, Brussels, Lisbon, and New York, known as the DuBoisan Congresses. Eze (2013) asserts that DuBois focused on embracing a global spirit of black identity and shared ambition and cohesion for blacks throughout the world. Tondi (1995) identifies all these congresses from 1893 to 1927 as the first phase of Pan-Africanism.

In light of the literature, 1945 marks the beginning of a new era for the Pan-Africanist movement, as it was a key point in terms of fuelling the decolonisation process all over the world. Contemporary colonial powers, whether they won the war or not, were exhausted and weakened after the Second World War resulting in a great blow to their prestige. This conjuncture gave birth to a wave of decolonisation in which African nations demanded independence. Even though the previous congresses intended to maintain the Pan-African movement, nothing considerable was achieved until 1945 (Tondi, 1995).

However, after an interregnum period of 1927–1945 (where only a few gatherings had occurred and there was no known activity that reflected the persistence of the Pan-African thought), the Fifth Pan-African Conference led by Padmore was held in Manchester in 1945 with the participation of over 200 delegates from Africa and West Indies (Biney, 2007, p. 60; Tondi, 2005, p. 318). This conference is famed as a 'historic' Pan-African Conference in which the differentiation between the African Diaspora's quest for identity and the continental Africans' pursuit of a sustainable way of life crystallised. Assimilation was rejected in favour of total independence in the African continent. According to Tondi (1995), the Fifth Pan-African Congress is a historical landmark on the road to decolonisation and owes its reputation to its success that the African continent split into regions with the purpose of facilitating detailed discussion and framing efficacious redress. Thus, broadly general resolutions for all African people as well as local resolutions for the specific troubles of the different regions could be tackled. For the first time, African representatives returned home with the keystones

of the intellectual and political framework in their battle against European colonialism and its racist practices. Given the importance of the Congress, *AU Echo* (2013, as cited in Adi, 2018), a magazine of the African Union (AU), highlights that the Fifth Pan-African Congress is significant because it framed the basic outline of a functional plan for Africa's political liberation. In this respect, the AU propounds that Congress paved the way for contemporary Pan-Africanism.

After that congress, according to Biney (2007) and Tondi (1995), those belonging to several political and social organisations and trade unions sought to organise large-scale influx for their cause. In this framework, Nkrumah (future leader of Ghana) in his *Declaration to the Colonial Workers, Farmers and Intellectuals* announced that Africans under colonial rule should focus on acquiring political authority by utilising an efficient organisation. He proposed non-violent resistance such as strikes and boycotts. Moreover, he also invited intelligentsia to undertake their roles in mobilising the masses (Geiss, 1974, p. 407).

To conclude, the history of Pan-African thought and practice before the period of 1945 was considered the early strand of the movement in which unity was emphasised, and liberation was sought. In that context, Adi (2018) describes the year 1945 as the turning point in terms of a growing anti-colonial struggle on the continent. Unity, liberation, and development of the African continent were stressed as well as the significance of the African Diaspora was recognised. In this recent form, North Africa was also included. Creating the organisations such as the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) and African Union (AU) demonstrated this new kind of Pan-African thought. According to Abegunrin (2009), Pan-Africanism became one of the two pioneer movements (the other was the Non-Aligned Movement formed in 1961) which placed Africa in a position to sit at the negotiating table, at least in United Nations (UN) conferences (Adi, 2018, p. 143).

Thirteen years after the Fifth Pan-African Conference, another important landmark for African unification emerged. The literature draws attention to the two Accra Conferences held in April and December 1958. The first All-African Peoples' Conference in December 1958 was significant in that it brought together contemporary eight then-independent African governments: Morocco, Tunisia, Egypt, Libya, Liberia, Ethiopia, and Sudan, including Ghana, for the first time in the African continent. Tondi (2005) illustrates that they all released a joint declaration and denounced European colonialism and the apartheid edifice in South Africa. Abegunrin (2009) explains the importance of the conference for African political circles as well as for the public. He says that African people had a chance to experience for the first time

what self-determination implied for Africa and could imagine liberty as an imminent fact. In the following years, Patrice Lumumba in Congo, Jomo Kenyatta and Tom Mboya in Kenya, and Kenneth Kaunda in Zambia became African Leaders in their countries (Abegunrin, 2009).

Abegunrin (2009) asserts that the creation of the United Nations (UN) in 1945, following the Second World War, influenced the idea of the formation of a coherent organisation unifying the continent in the late 1950s and early 1960s. Nevertheless, it was not so easy to reach an agreement on every point. Newly independent African states advocated two different philosophies for their future relations with their former colonies and for a united Africa in the political sphere. In this vein, two main blocs emerged: Casablanca and Monrovia. The Casablanca Group appeared as a radical group with the influence of Kwame Nkrumah, Ahmed Sèkou Tourè of Guinea, and Patrice Lumumba. All these leaders advocated for a 'United States of Africa'. Conversely, the Monrovia Group championed the idea of holding close connections with the Western world. They also endeavoured unity, and activity rested on African social cohesion and political identity, supporting collaboration exclusively in the sociocultural, economic, scientific, and technological spheres while disputing political union, united defence, and international affairs (Abegunrin, 2009). However, Abegunrin (2009) declares that in pursuance of uniting Africa as a collective entity within a constructional scheme, the two groups compromised. Eventually, the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) was launched in May 1963, by its own admission, to promote African integrity in social, political, and economic spheres and to promote solidarity between Africa's peoples in a bigger unity that transcends ethnic and national divergences (African Union, n.d.). In the same vein, Adi and Sherwood (2003) assert that Pan-African aspiration for continental unity became more of an issue redounding the creation of the OAU.

The literature demonstrates that the 21st century witnessed an upsurge in the Pan-Africanism movement. According to Adi and Sherwood (2003), the most remarkable and historic conspicuous example was the reconstitution and renaming of the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) as the African Union (AU) in 2002. Adi and Sherwood (2003) further point out the creation of AU as a leap forward to the 'United States of Africa' visualised by former Pan-African intellectuals and activists. It may be said that the creation of AU was substantial as a response to the adverse outcomes of globalisation and persistent marginalisation of the African continent in global issues. In a similar vein, African Union (n.d.) explains its mission as 'An Integrated, Prosperous and Peaceful Africa, driven by its own citizens and representing a dynamic force in the global arena'. African Union (n.d.) defines its task as seeking to promote political and socio-economic integration; lend countenance to the

common interests of Africans; strengthen the security and stability of Africa; and realise the Pan-African dream of a united, wealthy, and peaceful Africa. The articulation of the African Union is crucial as it represents 55 member states — all the countries on the continent. Moreover, the AU's adoption of the themes of Pan-Africanism and the African Renaissance shows its mission to realise the Pan-African agenda.

However, it should be noted that despite the hope for Pan-African unity and socio-economic development following decolonisation, Africa has faced persistent challenges such as political instability, governance fragmentation, and regional tensions, which undermine the goals of continental integration supported by the OAU, the Lagos Plan of Action, and the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD). While the African Union's Agenda 2063 aims to address these issues through inclusive and sustainable development, questions persist about its ability to overcome the current socio-economic and political crises plaguing the continent (Mlambo et al., 2022).

2. 1. 1. 3 Definitions and Aims of Pan-Africanism(s)

In studying literature on Pan-Africanism, it becomes evident that it is not a fixed concept or idea. Pan-Africanism was never uniform, even during the post-war period when global networks and anti-colonial movements collaborated. Infighting within the Pan-African framework was a constant, often rooted in debates over 'race', which led to the development of different schools of thought within 20th century Pan-Africanism (Sonderegger, 2020). Scholars engaged in Pan-Africanism offer various definitions of how the concept, both as a political and intellectual thought and as a movement, has evolved in different contexts. Here I discuss the foremost scholars on Pan-Africanism to illustrate the point. Adi and Sherwood (2003) and Simala (2003) emphasise that there has neither really been a universally acknowledged and single definition for Pan-Africanism nor its character and periodisation. Ackah (1999) concurs that it does not have a unique originator or specific principles which could be used to define the idea. To Adi and Sherwood (2003), Pan-African thought has taken various shapes in various geographical places throughout history, thus many scholars writing on the issue are reluctant to give fixed definitions. For these political identity reasons, it could be therefore argued that the standpoints of the Pan-African thinkers and activists have varied in the manner of the period, geography, and the nature of the difficulties they confronted (Adi & Sherwood, 2003). Those who recognise that definition is contingent on location and time feel obligated to deliver wordy historical accounts on the various Pan-African theories and movements for the past two hundred years. According to Tondi, (2005), its appearance as an

ambiguous term is since those of African descendants were supposed to extract their identity from being an unfavourable representation of others. He further suggests that Pan-Africanism was used as a response to the dehumanising experiences of Africans (pp. 306, 307).

Pan-Africanism is a sociopolitical and cultural concept that views Africans on the continent and in the Diaspora as part of an integral whole. According to outstanding Pan-Africanist George Padmore (1972), the concept of Pan-Africanism first began as an expression of fraternal solidarity between Africans and peoples of African origin. This view is further supported by Esedebe (1994) that the Pan-African movement aims to revitalise and unify Africa and promote a sense of integrity among those of African descendants. This perspective continues in more recent scholarship, where it is described as a worldwide movement envisioning a united African nation in which all African people with its Diaspora can live (Kuryla, n. d.). Adi (2018) agrees that at its core, all Pan-African movements and thought seek for unity and development of the African continent and its people as well as the African Diaspora.

For many scholars, Pan-Africanism is regarded as a multifaceted framework that intertwines cultural, political, and intellectual dimensions. Araia (2006) argues that Pan-Africanism represents the broader African struggle for liberation, spanning political, economic, and cultural domains, both on the continent and in the Diaspora. Geiss (1974) elaborates on the Pan-African movement, describing it as having three key aspects during its historical evolution: First, it encompassed the intellectual and political activities of Africans and Afro-Americans who believed in the shared identity of Africans and their descendants. This perspective fostered a sense of racial solidarity and self-awareness among Afro-Americans, encouraging them to view Africa as their ancestral homeland, even without necessarily advocating for a physical return. Second, it represented ideologies that emphasised and promoted Africa's cultural unity and self-determination, combined with aspirations to modernise the continent on the basis of equality. Central to this perspective were the notions of the 'redemption of Africa' and 'Africa for Africans'. Third, it included ideas or political initiatives advocating for Africa's political integrity or, at the very least, a strong political partnership across the continent (pp. 3, 4).

Many scholars engaged in Pan-Africanism divide the historical evolution of the idea into narrower and broader interpretations. For example, according to Tondi (2005) and Lumumba-Kasongo (2018), the narrower interpretation of the Pan-African movement focuses on the foundation of a federal African state, while the broader interpretation, encompassing cultural and intellectual Pan-Africanism, seeks shared cultural symbolism, historical ties, and

wider solidarity, such as Afro-Asianism. Lumumba-Kasongo (2018) explains the aims of Pan-Africanism as a pursuit of cultural similarities and commonalities among Africans, as well as intellectual links based on race, ethnicity, geography, and history. All these aims were expected to contribute to a better understanding and appreciation of African culture. In general, Pan-Africanism encapsulates some form of ethnic/racial, cultural, or continental unification.

Maserumule (2016) similarly argues that Pan-African thought encompasses the idea that the people of the African world share common ties and aspirations, fostering solidarity to achieve these goals. As a concept, Pan-Africanism symbolises a dynamic and evolving desire for profound societal change, shaped by the historical, cultural, and political contexts in which it operates. The movement is understood as a means to envision and work towards a more equitable socio-political and economic order by mobilising people around shared ambitions. The African Union —the political headquarter of the universal Pan-Africanist Movement (Amoah, 2019)— explains the term Pan-Africanism as follows:

> Pan-Africanism is an ideology and movement that encouraged the solidarity of Africans worldwide. It is based on the belief that unity is vital to economic, social and political progress and aims to 'unify and uplift' people of African descent. The ideology asserts that the fates of all African peoples and countries are intertwined. At its core, Pan-Africanism is 'a belief that African peoples both on the continent and in the Diaspora, share not merely a common history, but a common destiny.' (AU Echo, 2013, p. 1, as cited in Adi, 2018, p. 1)

The movement intended to uplift those of African origin from generations of suffering. It came to generate the faith of African solidarity among the continental and Diaspora Africans and aims to restore the prestige of Africans in the global world as Maserumule (2016) puts it. For this reason, scholars argue about Pan-Africanism as romanticisation. Pan-Africanism celebrates African history while instilling pride in African values (Esedebe, 1994). This perspective can be traced back to some decades ago in the writings of Thompson (1969), who contends that Pan-Africanism is an idea that was associated not merely with opposition but also with the formulation of a cohesive idea which would enable the African to strengthen his [sic] living standards as well as to uplift him from the hundreds of years humiliation. Hence, Pan-Africanism appeared to reclaim its honour in a world that has previously denied it.

Within this framework, the Pan-African movement can be understood as a concept aimed at rediscovering and celebrating the African personality, as well as reclaiming a history subjugated for centuries under European cultural domination (Ackah, 1999; Tondi, 2005). Drawing on Hall's theoretical perspective, Pan-Africanism is not a static ideology, but an

evolving framework shaped by historical and cultural contexts. Tondi (2005) argues that Western imperialists employed deliberate strategies to establish absolute control and hegemony over Africans, depersonalising them and eroding their cultural and religious heritage. Since culture is integral to self-identification and self-determination, this hegemony disconnected Africans from their own systems of expression and engagement with the world. In this way, European cultural imperialism undermined African value systems and suppressed the African personality. As a response, Pan-Africanism emerged as a dynamic and contextual tool for reawakening and reaffirming the African personality, constantly negotiated within the sociopolitical realities of its time.

2. 1. 1. 4 Development of the Pan-African Idea

This section of the literature review will first explore the issues of the growth of the Pan-African idea from the 15th century with the beginning of slavery. It will examine how slavery tradition and modernisation affected the standing up of Africans against the exploitation, racism, and marginalisation of Africans which contribute to the diverse forms of Pan-Africanism. In this context, the settlement of the Berlin Conference (1884–1885) will be evaluated since it was a crucial moment in world history that shaped the devastating African political and economic colonial experience. Lastly, this section will address the idea of African unity against the fear of 'Balkanisation'[10] and the challenge of the economic, social, cultural, and political subjugation of Africans.

While studying the literature on the evolution of the Pan-African idea, Shepperson (1962) proposes the key aspects of the growth of the Pan-African movement. Firstly, the transatlantic slave trade and the development of slavery in the New World became a driving force for the development of the idea. Then, several Back-to-Africa movements arose emanating from that slavery tradition. Another impact was the white settlement in Africa. Moreover, to him, when we glance at the global context, non-African political impacts such as 'pan-nationalism' movements, particularly in India and Ireland, and the idea of the federal state such as the USA as well as the influences of some late 19th and early 20th century organisations including white organisations and sympathisers such as Joseph Booth, Catherine Impey, and Madame Calmann-Levy were crucial factors to the development of the idea. Other factors which influenced the spread of the popularity of Pan-Africanism were the two World Wars in

[10] Balkanisation refers to the succession of fragmentations of a region into smaller, often hostile units, originally describing the breakup of the Balkans in Europe (Ottoman Empire after World War 1 and so forth). In Africa, the term is used to critique the colonial division of the continent into artificial nation states after the Berlin Conference of 1884, which undermined unity and fostered long-term political and social fragmentation. Pan-Africanism emerged partly in response, advocating for unity against such divisions.

Africa, the emergence of multi-national states, such as the USSR, Indonesia, and China; and the pan-African factors in Egyptian imperialism in the 19th and 20th centuries were also important elements for the growth of the idea.

It is widely acknowledged that though some scholars trace the seeds of the idea back to ancient times such as Nantambu (1998), the challenges against the slavery tradition and concerns on economic, social, cultural, and political salvation of Africans resulted in the *naissance* of the idea of Pan-Africanism in the modern times (Adi, 2018). Rising Pan-Africanist ideas thus should be understood in an immediate context of the triangular trade. Scholars like Lumumba-Kasongo (2018, p. 37) and Adi (2018, pp. 2, 7) emphasise that during the transatlantic enslavement of Africans between the late 15th and 19th centuries, which witnessed the 'largest forced migration in history', and the creation of African Diaspora in North and South America and elsewhere, the idea of African unification emanated. The reason for that idea was to tackle Anti-African racism, dehumanisation, and degradation of Africans as well as global capitalism and European colonial rule. In this respect, it may be concluded that the three points of the triangular trade, Western Europe, Africa (in particular West Africa) and the West Indies and America, thus blossomed into the centres of insurgency and the intellectual evolution of Pan-African philosophy as Tondi (2005) argues.

Walter Rodney (1972) —Guyanese historian, activist, and academic— explains the crucial role of the transatlantic trafficking of Africans, causing the creation of the new nations in the Caribbean, the United States, Brazil, and somewhere else for the birth of Pan-Africanism. To him, the essence of the Pan-African idea occurred in the 15th century in the Caribbean as it is the first region in the globe where Africans were brought to work as slaves. It was in this setting that the need to designate oneself as an African arose if one has roots in the African continent. Before the exploitation and oppression of blacks by the Europeans, Africans would see themselves through the lens of their ethnic groups, clans, villages, or family circles. The greater part of the African section of their histories had been substantially eradicated during the transatlantic crossing to the New World, in which diversified cultures and languages were strewed together (Commander, 2007, p. 424). It can be inferred that this intertwinement gave birth to the notion of strength coming from unity. Within this context, it can be proposed that the matrix of Pan-Africanism was the advent of the concept of Africa. It was vital to dismantle the internal divisions that existed between Africans in the opinion of Rodney (1972). Pan-Africanism thus arose in a situation where a big number of Africans from various socio-economic backgrounds were pushed into a situation where this need would exist. Thus, to Rodney (1972), Pan-Africanism should be understood within the struggle. This idea is also

specified in Frederic Douglass's (1857) highly quoted words: 'If there is no struggle, there is no progress'.

Studies demonstrate that no less than 12 million African people were carried to the Americas and millions died during the transportation. It is a clear fact that their rights were dismissed and often they were even considered nonhuman upon arrival at their final destination. Even after the abolition of slavery, discrimination was retained with special laws (Adi, 2008). On the flip side, Africa's current and historical impoverishment, as well as the marginalisation of black people was a vast system of brutal economic exploitation that employs only race as a tool (IGD, 2013). Racist ideas of the white man were mostly promulgated by those who benefited from slavery, colonialism and capital-centred societies and arose in different ways (Adi, 2018). According to W.E.B. Du Bois, racism was instrumental in securing the support of the white working class for imperial expansion, by offering them social and psychological benefits that reinforced white supremacy despite their economic exploitation. To him, this gospel was preached across the world. It has its literature, priests, covert propaganda, and most importantly, it was paying (Apple, 2013; Myers, 2019). Against this backdrop, Adi and Sherwood (2003) articulate that the crimes committed against Africans (subjugation and enslavement of Africans, European so-called 'scramble for Africa', and economic and sociocultural underdevelopment of the continent) were legitimised by pseudo-scientific racist ideologies.

Racist treatments underpinning the laws and experiences in social life, such as the terrorist attacks of the Ku Klux Klan, were due to the belief that Africans are born with an inherent disadvantage over other humans, particularly those of European descent (Adi, 2008). Prah's (1997b) words explicitly demonstrate the stereotype of Africans by white colonialists at that time: The European was characterised as 'light, lively, and inventive' while Africans were regarded to be 'cunning, slow, and negligent' (p. 77). In the same context, Eze (2013) asserts that the movement is a modern output since a 'racialised different other' was revealed in the 15th century with the dawn of modernisation. He elucidates the apprehension of Europe for 'a new ideal of humanity', which is 'rational' or 'civilised' man, originated with the European Enlightenment and comprehending that every rational individual is dignified. With the colonisation of Africa, Europeans saw Africans as 'modern barbarians' insufficient to bear these features considering their disparity to Western culture (p. 664). For example, Eze (2013) claims that Native Americans would be enslaved by Europe at the outset of the triangular trade, yet they soon were considered to have souls like Europeans with the convincing of colonists by the Jesuits. Then, they enslaved 'soul-less' Africans. The governmental and religious

authorities of the time institutionalised this practice of brutal dominance. Indeed, *Romanus Pontifex* (1455), the papal bull instructed the European nations to subdue all 'enemies of Christ wheresoever placed', and 'all movable and immovable goods whatsoever held and possessed by them and to reduce their persons to perpetual slavery' (p. 664).

Kodjo (1987) similarly highlights how Africans remain marginalized following the Middle Passage, describing them as distorted reflections of others—severed from their history, forced into a world that rejects their values, and confused by a cultural onslaught that devalues them. Mohammed Ali, famed Afro-American boxer, captures the Eurocentric views of white superiority in everyday life when he humorously notes in 1963 that:

> Everything good and of authority was made white. We look at Jesus, we see a white with blond hair and blue eyes. We look at all the angels, we see white with blond hair and blue eyes … We look at Miss America, we see white. We look at Miss World, we see white. We look at Miss Universe, we see white. Even Tarzan, the king of the jungle in black Africa, he's white! (as cited in Adi, 2018, p. 3).

It is not surprising that Africans in the Diaspora challenged the racist ideology of the time: Europeans were superior to blacks, and Africans were even inhuman and thus they were only appropriate for enslavement (Adi, 2018). On the contrary, in spite of the fact that anti-African racism was present, Africa was mostly reflected in a favourable image by the forerunners of the Pan-African ideal. Pan-African intellectuals and activists proposed a 'new common Pan-African identity — African' (Adi, 2018, p. 8). In this framework, Karioki (1974) claims that the Pan-African idea is a 'racial expression' and at its inception, it was a 'racially inspired' movement (pp. 2, 3). This perspective is also supported by Henry Sylvester Williams, a founding father of Pan-Africanism as regarded by many scholars, who studied law in England that the 'problems of the Black folk in England were largely based on racism' (as cited in Nantambu, 1998, pp. 564, 365). Another prominent Pan-Africanist Julius Nyerere (1974), the first President of Tanzania, in his speech to the 6th Pan-African Congress held in Tanzania asserts that racialism prompted the birth of the Pan-African movement (p. 19).

On the other hand, many African people were aware that their ethnic boundaries were conjectural and made by the white man. On reflection, Africa had no borders till the Europeans partitioned the continent into their plots. According to Tondi (2005), essentially, the Berlin Conference of 1885, where at Africa was partitioned between the great powers, became one of the crucial parameters which were conducive to the conceptualisation of Pan-African thought (p. 303). After this partition, the continent has become not only artificial, but also a collection of dependent, destitute, divided, and conflict-ridden micro-states (Oloruntoba & Gumede,

2015). Intellectuals and activists of the Pan-African movement were cognisant that families and tribes have been separated by colonial boundaries during the carving up of Africa. According to Maserumule (2016), this appropriation dissolved the indigenous African population's cultural and linguistic borders. Africans got distant from one another, dividing into many national groups. And today, the evolution of Africans still mirrors the Berlin-determined segmentation model, even if they have gained their independence from the colonial powers. As a result, to Maserumule (2016), Africans identify with one another as foreigners within their colonially defined borders. This can take the shape of hate and intolerance, such as xenophobia, ethnic conflicts, and civil wars. Besides, African leaders are fiercely protective of their countries' sovereignty. These are the paradoxes that have moulded Africa's history. This partition is today described as the 'Balkanisation' of Africa into petite and delicate nation-states by making the analogy with the splitting of the Ottoman and Habsburg Empires throughout the 19th and 20th centuries. Pan-Africanists thus advocate unity against the artificial boundaries that were created during the period of colonisation as well as admonish to be alerted the danger of divide and rule policy.

As a result, Africa has remained static on the prescribed course of foreign powers during the colonisation period (Pardos, 2016). Consequently, Pan-African thought challenged the economic, social, cultural, and political subjugation of Africans by Europe. African intellectuals' concern for an African unity movement was due to the fact that Africa was not making progress (Tondi, 2005, p. 301). European imperialist domination, which was at its culmination in the late 19th century and resulted in the exploitation and underdevelopment of the continent which still lingers today, was challenged politically, culturally, religiously, and economically. For instance, Ethiopianism, an African-initiated church movement that emerged in the late 19th century in Southern Africa, arose as a form of religious resistance and is linked to Pan-Africanism within the religious sphere (Duncan, 2015, p. 198; Tondi, 2005, pp. 303–305). The movement was motivated by various biblical texts about Africa (Adi, 2018, p. 16). 'Princes shall come out of Egypt, Ethiopia shall soon stretch forth her hand unto God' (Psalm 68:32) was, particularly, warranted as the biblical prophecy for the eventual salvation of Africa (Geiss, 1974, p. 134). According to Esedebe (1994), Ethiopianism was committed to a dual purpose: first, to protect revered indigenous values from the damaging consequences of the alien actions; second, to fight for the idea of 'Africa for the Africans' against the foreign intervention. Actively engaging in the slogan 'Africa for the Africans', 'Ethiopia' as a term was used as an equivalent for Africa (p. 19). In this sense, for example, Prince Hall (as cited in Adi, 2018) expressed in his popular speech that: 'Thus Doth Ethiopia Stretch Forth Her Hand

from Slavery, to Freedom and Equality' (p. 16). It may be concluded that the defeat of Italy by Abyssinia in 1896 also strengthened the movement.

As clearly demonstrated by the current literature, the opposition to slavery, racism, colonialism, and imperialism, as well as the threat against neo-colonialism and savage capitalism has contributed to many kinds of Pan-Africanism and has been represented in Africa and the Diaspora in various ways. Pan-African thought and practice thus involves diversified ideas, movements, and activities that glorify 'Africanness', protest the exploitation and suppression of Africans, and challenged anti-racist ideas (Adi & Sherwood, 2003, vii).

2. 1. 1. 5 Discussion on the Relevance of Pan-Africanism

Pan-Africanism is widely recognised in scholarly literature as a pressing and significant concern. Its relevance continues to attract the attention of scholars and students in African politics, education, and history. Academics engaged with Africa are actively contributing to the discourse, raising awareness of its importance (Lumumba-Kasongo, 2018). As Lumumba-Kasongo (2018) notes, there is a growing need to reconsider Pan-Africanism, despite the movement's limited success in seizing state power or fully realising its principles in state policies (p. 45).

The contemporary literature on Pan-Africanism frequently emphasises the re-emergence of Pan-Africanist discourse as an important discursive force in an increasingly globalised world. The reason for revisiting Pan-Africanism by the African governments, as well as African intellectuals, students, and politicians thus should be understood within a global context. The Pan-African philosophy is shifting with 'structural transformation' in the direction of globalisation (Bam, 2000; Oginni & Moitui, 2016, p. 39). This is a new perspective for the Pan-African project inherent in the globalisation process. In the same vein, Neville Alexander (2003) notes that a new world order initiated the circumstances for a new wave of Pan-African unity. Hence, the globalisation process and emerging international system have resulted in a regional economic and political bloc formation in which Africa is one of these blocs (Alexander, 2003). From this perspective, Adi and Sherwood (2003) link the renewed interest in Diaspora and transnational studies to the increasing apprehensions about globalisation. Moreover, they argue that the establishment of the African Union in 2002 was, to a large extent, a response to the adverse effects of the globalisation process.

Similarly, Ali Mazrui (2005) explores the evolution of Pan-Africanism, focusing on its relationship with intellectuals. He argues that Pan-Africanism experienced a rise in the early

20th century, particularly driven by key intellectuals who shaped the movement's ideals and goals. However, Mazrui notes a decline in the mid-20th century, influenced by changing political dynamics, the failure of Pan-Africanism to fully address post-colonial realities, and the rise of nationalist ideologies that overshadowed the Pan-African vision. Despite this decline, he suggests a potential revival of Pan-Africanism, pointing to the new challenges faced by Africa and the importance of re-engaging with its intellectual roots to address contemporary issues such as globalisation, poverty, and conflict. He emphasises the need for a revitalised Pan-African discourse that integrates the voices of African intellectuals across the Diaspora and addresses both historical and modern concerns.

This perspective is reinforced by Amoah (2019), who argues that the emergence of a 'new' concept of Pan-Africanism stems from the need for a new world order and global governance. Since the imperial era and the decolonisation of Africa after World War II, global governance and international politics have undergone significant transformations. For instance, institutions such as the United Nations Security Council have influenced global governance, while nationalism and the relevance of the nation-state in a globalised world have faced increasing challenges (Amoah, 2019). Nevertheless, Pan-Africanism remains highly relevant, as the unity of African people and the aspiration for collective self-reliance are as compelling today as they were in the past (Amoah, 2019). In *The New Pan-Africanism: Globalism and the Nation State in Africa*, Amoah (2019) defines the new Pan-Africanism as Africa's pragmatic response to the structures and mechanisms of global governance. It seeks to address African crises by finding practical solutions informed by the current geopolitical landscape, the broader global political environment, and historical experiences.

In a similar context, Eze (2013) points out that approaching Pan-Africanism as a performative-operative discourse enables a new stance of denial based on present sociocultural layers of historical experiences while ceasing to be a narrow-minded dogmatic worldview driven by racial consciousness. Eze (2013) suggests that in order to overcome ethnocentrism in historical thinking, a new historical interpretation of Pan-Africanism which is 'not fixated in the past' needs to be embraced. The relevance of history to the changing sociopolitical and cultural experiences gives it authority in this context. The concept of Pan Africanism that he refers to encompasses people of all races whose studies, writings, and personal goals have anything to do with the geopolitical region known as Africa. According to him, in order to accomplish this goal, the regulative ideal is to support an 'empirical and normative understanding of Africanity', that acknowledges sociocultural differences, accommodates individuals of all racial backgrounds, and its general historicisation (p. 670).

This conceptualisation of Pan-Africanism aligns with Mbembe's (2007) term *Afropolitanism*, which suggests that invoking 'Africa' does not necessarily equate to invoking 'blackness', as there are Africans who are not black, and not all black people are African. Consequently, Afropolitanism moves 'beyond Pan-Africanism', which Mbembe and Balakrishnan (2016, pp. 29, 30) describe as a 'racial ideology'. For Mbembe, Afropolitanism represents a critical perspective that acknowledges, 'there is no world without Africa, and there is no Africa that is not part of the world' (Mbembe & Balakrishnan, 2016, p. 29). The concept captures the diverse ways Africans and people of African descent perceive themselves as integral to the global community rather than existing on its periphery. Mbembe further asserts that this concept is rooted in South Africa, which serves as a fertile theoretical space for exploring ideas that transcend racial boundaries: 'South Africa is, in that sense, from a theoretical point of view, a very rich laboratory for anyone who would like to think beyond the racial' (Mbembe & Balakrishnan, 2016, p. 29).

Walter Rodney's (1972) *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa* examines the historical processes through which European colonial interventions systematically hindered Africa's economic, social, and political development. Rodney argues that the state of 'underdevelopment' in Africa was not a natural occurrence but a deliberate outcome of Europe's exploitation of African resources and labour. During the colonial era, Africa was reduced to a supplier of raw materials and cheap labour, limiting its capacity for autonomous growth. From a Pan-Africanist perspective, Rodney highlights how this structural exploitation persists in the form of neo-colonial economic relations and Western-dominated trade policies. He contends that Africa's liberation and development require not only an awareness of the colonial legacy but also collective action through Pan-African solidarity and socialist strategies. By framing Pan-Africanism as both a resistance to historical exploitation and a pathway to building a just global order, Rodney's work emphasises its significance as a unifying and transformative movement.

The findings of Oginni and Moitui (2016) indicate a significant increase in the presence of numerous Pan-African networks on social media, highlighting the growing prominence of these networks in contemporary society. Their findings demonstrate that African people believe that Pan-Africanism fosters the common values and identity of Africa. Therefore, African governments must exploit the increasing access to internet facilities in its potential to strengthen Pan-Africanism from grassroots to society. To them (2016), in this way, a process of 'Africanisation', asserting African common values, cultures, tradition, and identity within global Westernisation, will be promoted. They argue that Pan-African ideology must be

remodelled and revitalised to counter the neo-colonialism embedded in the exploitative, capitalist-driven globalisation of the 21st century. Similarly, Rasool (2019) examines the role of Twitter (X) in shaping the engagement of Black Millennials of African ancestry with Pan-African knowledge and activism in the digital age. Focusing on the period between 2012 and 2018, she explores the intersection of social media and Pan-Africanism, highlighting how Twitter has emerged as a pivotal platform for the sharing, discussion, and creation of Pan-African knowledge. Rasool contends that the platform facilitates real-time communication across global African communities, fostering new forms of solidarity, knowledge production, and activism. Through her analysis, she offers valuable insights into the evolving dynamics of identity, power, and resistance within the African Diaspora in the 21st century.

Lumumba-Kasongo (2018) highlights Pan-Africanism as a vital intellectual ideology for driving social change in Africa. He argues that Pan-Africanism provides a framework for determining Africa's developmental paths and the types of initiatives required to establish institutions capable of fostering social transformation. Studying Pan-Africanism is particularly relevant, as African societies and their organisations continue to explore development potential. According to Lumumba-Kasongo, sustainable African development hinges on a deeply integrated regionalist cultural and intellectual initiative. He asserts that African politics must pragmatically and realistically reshape Africans' self-perceptions, local political and socio-economic contexts, and broader self-understanding. This transformation is essential for restructuring the institutions of African nation-states, enabling Pan-African transnational collaboration and humanism to inform policies and joint efforts. Moreover, the significance of Pan-Africanism stems from its response to the dynamics of global capitalism and liberal democracy, as experienced and practised by African nation-states, their civil societies, and various social and ethnic groups. It may be asserted that this transformative progression will firstly be realised through both political and formal education. The challenges of democracy and economic freedom must be resolved through education while promoting Pan-Africanism. Freedom and democracy are preconditions for Pan-Africanism to be evolved (Lumumba-Kasongo, 2018, p. 49). To Lumumba-Kasongo (2018), decolonisation will be achieved through education. In the pursuit to reach an agreement about humanist progress, democratic education and education for progress need to be part of the discourse. The Pan-African curriculum must give weight to multiculturalism, inclusiveness, and appreciation of unity in diversity (pp. 49–51).

In conclusion, Pan-Africanism remains a vital framework for understanding and addressing Africa's historical and contemporary challenges. As globalisation reshapes

sociopolitical dynamics, the movement continues to evolve, integrating new perspectives such as Afropolitanism and digital activism. Scholars emphasise the importance of education, regional integration, and collective action in fostering unity and addressing systemic inequalities. Despite its complexities and historical limitations, Pan-Africanism persists as a transformative ideology, offering pathways for African solidarity, development, and resilience in an interconnected world.

2. 1. 2 Pan-Africanism in the South African Context

In order to understand the representation of Pan-Africanism in high school history classrooms in South Africa, it is crucial to grasp the essence of the concept and political activity in South Africa within global activism as discussed above. By situating the global representation of Pan-Africanism in a broader social, cultural, and political context, my aim is to understand the ideological, social, cultural, and political implications finding their way into South African classrooms. Hence, the question is, *given this historical evolution of the concept (as it has evolved), how does democratic South Africa encompass the ideas of Pan-Africanism while aiming to construct its non-racial nation-building ideology?*

The evolution of the Pan-African agenda in South Africa is examined in two parts. The first part focuses on the period prior to the 1990s, exploring how the Pan-African agenda emerged as an anti-apartheid movement. This includes an analysis of the envisagement of non-racialism and the Pan-African discourse advanced by prominent South African Pan-Africanist Robert Sobukwe and the Pan African Congress of Azania. Additionally, the political and educational anti-apartheid activism of Steve Biko (1946–1977) and the Black Consciousness Movement he led are discussed.

The second part addresses the post-1994 era, examining its relationship with Pan-Africanism under the political leadership of the ruling African National Congress, led by Nelson Mandela (presidency 1994–1999) and Thabo Mbeki (presidency 1999–2008). Particular attention is given to how Mbeki employed Pan-African and *ubuntu* discourses to counter xenophobia and racism, fostering a vision of a peaceful society. The Mbeki era of political leadership is reviewed in detail, particularly in terms of its alignment with Pan-Africanism within the broader framework of his African Renaissance vision.

Existing literature on Pan-Africanism in South Africa demonstrates that Pan-Africanism holds a prominent place in contemporary South Africa. For example, the *National Development Plan 2030* (NPC, 2011) demonstrates the official Pan-African outlook by

describing that South Africans are Africans, South Africa is an African country, South Africans are part of their multinational region, and South Africa is an essential part of the African continent. Additionally, South Africa's commitment to Pan-Africanism is central to its foreign policy, emphasising African unity, peace, and global representation (DIRCO, 2023). In the *South Africa's National Interest* (DIRCO, 2023) document, Pan-Africanism is identified as a key element in shaping the country's foreign policy, particularly in its efforts to strengthen African unity and promote the continent's development. The document emphasises that South Africa views Pan-Africanism as a guiding principle for addressing socio-economic disparities across Africa and fostering collaboration among African nations. The country actively supports the African Union (AU) and other regional organisations, aiming to enhance peace, security, and stability on the continent through the Pan-African ideal of continental solidarity. Moreover, the document highlights South Africa's commitment to ensuring Africa's stronger representation in global governance. Pan-Africanism is seen as central to advocating for greater justice and equity in international platforms, giving African nations a more prominent voice in global decision-making processes. Finally, the document highlights the importance of Pan-Africanism in addressing conflict resolution and promoting sustainable peace within Africa. Through Pan-African ideals, South Africa seeks to foster long-term cooperation and solidarity among African countries, ensuring a more secure and unified continent. This alignment with Pan-Africanism reflects South Africa's strategic focus on creating a just, cohesive, and globally engaged Africa.

In alignment with this Pan-African framework, the South African government has introduced Kiswahili as a Second Additional Language (SAL) in Grades 4–12 in 90 schools across the country, with 10 schools per province, as part of a broader effort to prioritise the teaching and learning of formerly marginalised African languages (Department of Basic Education, n.d.). This move reflects the government's response to the decolonisation of the curriculum and the gradual inclusion of African languages in education. Then Minister of Basic Education, Angie Motshekga, explained that Kiswahili, historically used as a trading language and a means of inter-ethnic communication, holds significant potential to unite Africans across the continent. As one of the official languages of the African Union (AU), Kiswahili serves as a symbol of African unity. The Department of Basic Education (2021) emphasised that the introduction of Kiswahili aims to promote social cohesion with fellow Africans, reinforcing the Pan-African vision. Additionally, *National Development Plan 2030* (NPC, 2011) identifies the learning of indigenous languages as a key target for nation-building and social cohesion, urging every South African to learn at least one indigenous language, with employers

incentivising this effort. This initiative not only aligns with the South African government's Pan-African stance but also supports broader efforts to foster African unity and identity through education.

From the early 20th century, black South African nationalist intellectuals made significant contributions to Pan-African thought and movements across Africa and the Diaspora. Ouma (2021) notes that South Africa was closely connected to the '20th century Pan-African imagination'. Many black South Africans were also actively involved in anti-colonial nationalist ideologies and movements (Ochonu, 2020). As the apartheid regime outlawed political organisations and severely restricted the civic and political freedoms of black South Africans, many fled the country. These exiles played an important role in the 1960s 'decade of decolonization', settling in newly independent African countries. They emphasised the connection between the anti-apartheid struggle and the broader Pan-African mission, contributing significantly to political and cultural life (Ouma, 2021).

In 1944, the Manifesto of the ANC Youth League was revealed with the formation of the Youth League. That document created a backbone for South Africa's Pan-Africanism and granted a conceptual basis for it that Sobukwe afterwards elaborated further. The manifesto declared that all African people shall speak with one voice, from the Mediterranean Sea in the north to the Indian and Atlantic Oceans in the south (as cited in Kondlo, 2010, p. 54). According to the Pan Africanist Manifesto, in South Africa, African nationalism became a social force to maintain the 'material, intellectual and spiritual' benefits of the subjugated people, while Herrenvolkism (the Nazi ideology of a superior race) has been a social force upholding these benefits of the oppressor. In this manner, providing a rational and practical answer, Africanism was regarded as the *sine qua non* for the social question in Africa (PAC, 1959, p. 25). According to Johnston (2014), the appeal to concentrate on 'Africanism' was one of the most significant contributions of the Congress Youth League to the ANC (p. 75).

Focusing on the period before the 1990s, Abegunrin (2009) asserts that the liberation struggle against white minority rule in South Africa was strongly Pan-African in nature (p. 60). One of the founders of the ANC, Pixley ka Izaka Seme (1991), as cited in Johnston (2014), stated, 'The demon of racialism, the aberrations of the Xhosa-Fingo feud, the animosity that exists between Zulus and Tsongas, between the Basuto and every other Native must be buried and forgotten'. He argued that these divisions and jealousies were the root cause of the troubles, backwardness, and ignorance facing the people (p. 73).

Robert Mangaliso Sobukwe, founding President of the Pan Africanist Congress of Azania (PAC), appeared as a dissident and one of the most influential Pan-Africanists of South Africa in the second half of the 20th century. Moreover, Sobukwe was one of the leading minds behind the construction and maturation of the ideology of the PAC. Streek (1990), as cited in Kondlo (2010), aptly notes that Africanism made sense when Sobukwe began speaking (p. 8). According to Maserumule (2016), Sobukwe regarded African nationalism as a foundation for the entire unification of Africans. To him, African nationalism would be also a ground for gaining the national sovereignty of Africans in South Africa and a path to a complete democratic system in the country. The PAC was a significant actor during the struggle against the apartheid regime. Along with the African National Congress (ANC), the PAC were the only two organisations recognised by international institutions such as the United Nations (UN) and OAU during the period of its banishment. Kondlo (2010) thus notes that it is difficult to complete a convincing account of self-determination in South Africa without understanding the entire history of the PAC.

One aim adopted by the Pan Africanist Congress was to spread and reinforce Pan-Africanism and the concept of the 'Federation of Southern Africa'. The other aim was to use African nationalism to unify and mobilise the African people into a single national front (PAC, 1959). In the founding congress of the PAC on April 4, 1959, Sobukwe addressed the historic missions of the struggle to achieve total freedom in Africa. These missions were, firstly, to build, develop, and cement the linkages of African nationhood on a Pan-African ground. Secondly, the basic premise that indigenous peoples have complete and permanent authority and ownership over all the lands of the continent will be efficiently enforced. Thirdly, a United States of Africa which will serve and supply a definite institutional structure for African people would be established and sustained. Lastly, an Africanistic Socialist democratic social system that prioritises the individual's fundamental material, intellectual, and emotional interests would be created (PAC, 1959, p. 26).

Under the title *Monolithic Giant – Union of African States*, the Pan-Africanist Congress (PAC) Manifesto of 1959 elaborated its Pan-Africanist vision. According to the manifesto, Africans in South Africa regarded themselves as part of a single African nation. Consequently, they committed to tirelessly striving and working towards achieving institutional representation for this nation through the unification of independent African states. The envisioned United States of Africa was proposed as a bulwark against imperialism, colonialism, Herrenvolkism, and tribalism, serving as a solid and lasting foundation for an Africanist socialist democracy. The PAC believed that the emergence of such a unified nation was essential for preserving

African freedom, securing material and moral interests, and establishing conditions that would enable contributions to human progress within a sovereign Africa.

Johnston (2014) argues that the emergence of a more assertive and unequivocal articulation of African nationalism was a logical response to the evolving economic, political, and social realities of the time. Similarly, the African National Congress Youth League (ANCYL) recognised the need for African political assertiveness. However, some members of the Youth League were mindful of the risks associated with 'an extreme and inward-looking black racialism' (Walshe, 1987, as cited in Johnston, 2014, p. 76). Over time, the term 'Africanism', initially evoking African pride and self-determination, began to carry negative connotations. It became associated with a narrow form of racialism. In response, the Congress Youth League expanded its interpretation of Africanism to encompass non-racialism. Johnston (2014) highlights that this redefinition signified a shift, as African nationalism was reframed within the broader context of non-racialism.

The ideas of Robert Sobukwe on Pan-Africanism have sparked significant scholarly debate, particularly concerning his emphasis on Africanism as inseparable from universal human solidarity. For instance, Thompson (2001) observes that Sobukwe distanced himself from the extremist views held by some of his supporters (p. 210). Sobukwe asserted that he was not anti-anybody, but rather pro-Africa, declaring that 'we breathe, we dream, we live Africa' because Africa and humanity are fundamentally intertwined (as cited in Pogrund, 2015, p. 37). Similarly, the Pan Africanist Congress (PAC) articulated a non-racialist stance, explicitly rejecting all forms of racialism, including multiracialism. According to the PAC, Sobukwe and the organisation advocated for non-racialism on the premise that there is only one race—the human race (PAC, 1959, p. 9).

In the *Pan Africanist Manifesto* of the PAC (1959), it is stated that Africans take pride in their identity as part of the human race (pp. 24, 25). The PAC maintained that there are no fundamental differences among the three major lineages of humanity —Caucasoids, Mongoloids, and Afrinoids— a perspective that was critiqued by non-racial activists such as Neville Alexander and the Non-European Unity Movement for perpetuating the so-called 'three-race theory'. These critics contended that the classification itself reinforced essentialist notions of human difference. The PAC, however, upheld that there are no intrinsic cognitive, moral, or behavioural disparities between these lineages and argued that assigning rights based on ethnological origin entrenches regional chauvinism, perpetuates disrespect for human worth, and undermines human dignity.

The Pan-Africanist conceptualisation by the Pan Africanist Congress (PAC) rejected the inclusion of other national groups within the borders of one nation. For the PAC, the term 'multi-racialism' signified that the various national groups in South Africa possessed fundamental and insurmountable differences. Consequently, multi-racialism would serve to maintain these groups as permanently distinct under a system akin to democratic apartheid. This approach effectively amplified racial divisions. The PAC advocated for an African government led by Africans and serving Africans, where allegiance to Africa was paramount. It proposed that anyone willing to embrace democratic rule under an African majority could be considered African (Drew, 1996). According to the PAC document, it was deemed essential for the African nation's proper progress that individuals demonstrate exclusive loyalty to the African nation rather than to their racial or ethnic groups (PAC, 1959, p. 2). The document emphasised the impact of material conditions on a nation's growth over mere ethnic origin, leaving no space for those who did not align economically and intellectually with the African nation. The PAC maintained that while white South Africans could eventually become 'real Africans', they could not empathise with the African struggle, given their vested interests in the existing social structure (Drew, 1996).

Another influential and prominent figure in Pan-Africanism in South Africa was Stephen (Steve) Bantu Biko, a founding partner, and the first President of the all-Black South African Students' Organisation (SASO), established in 1968. His murder by the security police in 1977 fashioned him as an 'international martyr' for South African black nationalism. He remains a political icon in the university student movements (often cited by the #RMF activists).

The idea of the Négritude Movement took shape in South Africa as the Black Consciousness Movement which was led by Biko (Ackah, 1999, p. 14). Adi (2018) notes that the contributions of Biko are widely credited with igniting a new Black politics in South Africa. Black Consciousness refers to the awareness among black people of the need to unite in resistance to oppression. The Black Consciousness Movement emphasised how psychological and cultural acceptance of inferiority contributed to black subjugation and played a key role in confronting white dominance (Biko, 1978). It aspires to disprove the myth that 'black is a deviation from the standard of white'. It is an emergence of a new understanding that by trying to run away from themselves and imitate the white man, blacks are disrespecting the wisdom of whoever created them black in the first place. Black Consciousness is thus to recognise the intentionality of God's design in making black people black. It aims to imbue newly acquired

pride in black people, their achievements, cultural values, worldview, religion, and attitudes on life (Biko, 1978, p. 49).

Reunification of South Africa with the rest of the continent became one of the major sub-narratives leading to the negotiation over the demise of the apartheid regime (Vale & Maseko, 1998, p. 271). According to Vale and Maseko (1998), during the interregnum period, significant relations, such as economic, industrial, and business sectors were established with Africa. Soon after the dismantling of apartheid, the incipient new government in South Africa along with Mandela's charismatic leadership occupied a central role both in Africa as well as all over the world (Berger, 2009). The ANC has openly declared its desire to establish the hegemony of Africanism (Eaton, 2002). Mandela grew into an embodiment of African liberation across the continent and the Diaspora. He was one of the rare Africans grasping and holding international attention (Vale & Maseko, 1998). According to Adi and Sherwood (2003), he was the most celebrated political prisoner of the 20th century. This has thus contributed to the allure of South Africa's reinforced role in the continent (Vale & Maseko, 1998). Furthermore, *Nkosi Sikelel' i Afrika*, which has a strong Pan-African connotation and is therefore also the national anthem of Tanzania and Zambia, was adopted as the national anthem of the new South Africa (Bornman, 2014, p. 185). The anthem conveys a concept of 'African unity and political action' (Jules-Rosette & Coplan, 2004, p. 361). It was also the anthem of the resistance movement during apartheid (Eaton, 2002).

The new government of South Africa endeavoured to isolate the country from an apartheid-inclined international politics entrenched in the Global North. The emergent South African foreign policy was mainly expressed in 'morality, Africa, and the Global South' with two hallmarks (Monyae, 2014, ii). Adebajo (2017) notes that the focal point of Mandela's era (1994–1999) was the strengthening of human rights in Africa as South Africa's principal national role, while Thabo Mbeki (1999–2008) centred his government on the mission of Africa's rebirth and renewal with the concept of the African Renaissance which will be discussed later. South Africa has performed a leading role in building alliances with the states in Africa and the industrial countries, in resolving confrontation and assisting economic growth (Monyae, 2014). In order to overcome its isolation from the African continent, the post-apartheid government played a key role in creating the new African Union and designing its socio-economic agenda: the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) in 2001. The new government also endeavoured to strengthen the Southern African Development Community (SADC). By 2015, the South African economy was responsible for a third of the economic activity in Sub-Saharan Africa as well as eighty percent of the economic activity in

the SADC region (Onyekwena et al., 2015). South Arica's second democratically elected President, Thabo Mbeki, became the first chair of the AU between 2002–2007. According to Adebajo (2017), building the institutions with the AU, NEPAD, the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM), and the Pan-African Parliament (PAP) during the era of Mbeki strikes the attention as the most tactical bilateral relationship. In addition, South Africa organised important international conferences on long-term development, racism, and HIV (Berger, 2009, p. 159).

As deputy president from 1994 to 1999 and then president between 1999–2008, he possessed the diplomacy of post-apartheid South Africa for 14 years. In his book, Adekeye Adebajo (2017, p. 7; cf. Taylor, 2017, p. 591) states that Thabo Mbeki was the most prominent African political leader of his era. Mbeki's international image was shaped by African identity and unity (Adebajo, 2017). According to Alexander (2003), Thabo Mbeki portrayed himself as a Pan-Africanist quite consciously since 1996, and perhaps even before. Mbeki (1996) expressed that he is a South African and a foot soldier of a titanic African army. In this regard, it can be argued that Mbeki's policy direction needs to be interpreted within a historical Pan-Africanist framework. Adebajo (2016) defines him as a visionary and cosmopolitan intellectual devoted to Pan-Africanism and rebuilding the honour of the Africans in both the continent and the Diaspora. According to Glaser (2010), he was a radical anti-imperial nationalist advocating African unity in the South. He proposed a more gradual integration of Africa. Mbeki had faith in the 'ancient glory' of Africa and endeavoured to establish modern countries which recovered the continent's past (Adebajo, 2016).

From his speeches, it can be deduced that Mbeki was an ardent advocate of the all ideas of Pan-Africanism, African Renaissance, *ubuntu,* and African and human solidarity. That is, Mbeki's Pan-Africanist ideology includes non-racialism. Mbeki endeavoured to restate African nationalism more assertively without renouncing non-racialism. In this sense, a new approach to nation-building was carried out by him (Johnston, 2014, p. 173). Hence, the ANC government's nation-building design gained an Africanist character, especially after the era of Mbeki. The beginning of the Mbeki era indicated an African shift in the discourse surrounding nation-building (Bornman, 2014; Blaser, 2004; Eaton, 2002; Herwitz, 2011). Former President Thabo Mbeki's words adequately express this change:

> But it is critical that the overarching identity of being South African is promoted among all those who are indeed South African, as part of a process of building an African nation on the southern tip of the continent. The affirmation of our Africanness as a nation … is recognition of a geographic reality and the awakening of a consciousness which colonialism suppressed (Bornman, 2014, pp. 182–3).

This is further clearly manifested in his 'I am an African' speech on the event of the adoption of South Africa's new Constitution on May 8, 1996. His speech is especially crucial with a particular Pan-Africanism understanding of diversity away from narrow nationalism and in which Mbeki clearly defines his understanding of Africanness in multicultural South Africa:

> …I owe my being to the Khoi and the San … who were the first to lose their lives in the struggle to defend our freedom and independence…
>
> I am formed of the migrants who left Europe to find a new home on our native land. Whatever their own actions, they remain still, part of me.
>
> In my veins courses the blood of the Malay slaves who came from the East. Their proud dignity informs my bearing, their culture a part of my essence…
>
> I am the grandchild who lays fresh flowers on the Boer graves … who sees in the mind's eye and suffers the suffering of a simple peasant folk, death, concentration camps, destroyed homesteads, a dream in ruins…
>
> Being part of all these people, and in the knowledge that none dare contest that assertion, I shall claim that — I am an African…
>
> The constitution whose adoption we celebrate constitutes and unequivocal statement that we refuse to accept that our Africanness shall be defined by our race, colour, gender of historical origins.
>
> It is a firm assertion made by ourselves that South Africa belongs to all who live in it, black and white…

Johnston (2014, p.173) argues that Mbeki's vision of African nationalism did not involve the solidarity elements that typically separated black South Africans from the broader society through ethno-nationalist symbols (such as ethnicity, culture, or religion). Mbeki's 1996 vision of Pan-African encompassed all Africans — both black and white within South Africa, across the continent, and in the Diaspora— highlighting indicators of degraded status including impoverishment, marginalisation, cultural humiliation, and psychological harm. To illustrate this, Johnston references Mbeki's famous 'I am an African' speech.

> The pain of the violent conflict that the peoples of Liberia, Somalia, the Sudan, Burundi and Algeria is a pain I also bear.
>
> The dismal shame of poverty, suffering and human degradation of my continent is a blight that we share...

2. 1. 2. 1 Thabo Mbeki's Understanding of Pan-Africanism and Ubuntu against Xenophobia

It seems that Pan-Africanist inspiration in South African society has gone down in flames with the xenophobic (or Afrophobic) violence that came about in May 2008 all over the country. However, as a discourse, Pan-Africanism is a crucial standpoint and consciousness claiming that it is against any kind of nationalism — which generally means racism for the African concept (Maserumule, 2016). Yet today, xenophobia is a widespread phenomenon in South Africa and unexpectedly emerged just over a decade after the watershed 'I am an African' speech in 1996.

Regarding the xenophobic violence of 2008, Mbeki expressed pride in South Africans' leadership in the liberation and dignity of Africans. He affirmed his commitment to serving Africans and opposing any self-interest that undermines African unity. Addressing the issue, Mbeki invoked the concept of *ubuntu*, urging South Africans to extend compassion and hospitality to all, regardless of the divisions imposed by colonialism and apartheid. He reminded them of their heritage, shaped by intellectuals like Tiyo Soga, J. G. Xaba, and Pixley Seme, who championed African unity. However, he lamented that these thinkers would bow their heads in shame at the betrayal of *ubuntu* through violence against innocent refugees. Citing a Malagasy proverb, Mbeki (2008) emphasised that true warmth comes from harmonious relationships, not material comforts.

He continued his speech by affirming that, as Africans, they would never renounce the principles of *ubuntu* or become adversaries to other Africans. He emphasised their identity as Africans, part of a global family of billions residing both on the continent and in the Diaspora, united by a shared destiny. He expressed pride in their African identity, rooted in their undeniable contributions to human civilisation, and conveyed hope that Africa's regeneration would bring new values to humanity. He cited the example of many South Africans who came together to assist and reintegrate thousands of displaced Africans as evidence of this commitment. Mbeki emphasised that South Africans have fought for the dignity of all Africans and all people, regardless of race, colour, or gender, for more than three centuries. Consequently, he declared their refusal to tolerate the 'felonious deviancy' of xenophobia, which he linked to historical atrocities such as the genocidal destruction of Indigenous peoples in the Americas, South Africa, and Australia, as well as the Jewish Holocaust and the Rwandan genocide. He concluded by proclaiming that, as South Africans who value global cohesion and

Pan-Africanism, they remain committed to supporting other Africans wherever they may be (Mbeki, 2008).

2. 1. 2. 2 The African Renaissance

The literature on the African Renaissance largely concludes that while Pan-Africanism is a political, economic, social, and cultural initiative that pursued to bridge the continent's political split; the African Renaissance is a modern, late 20th century derivative of that concept (Landsberg & Kornegay, 1998). To Landsberg and Hlophe (1999), it is a project which appears to be both a modernist project and the revitalisation of pre-colonial continental history. The term was first conceptualised by Cheikh Anta Diop in his essays between 1946 and 1960 and popularised by Thabo Mbeki in the 1990s (Marumo & Chakale, 2018).

Bundy (2007) notes that the African Renaissance is difficult to define precisely. It is a combination of Pan-Africanism with traditional development discourses at its most rhetorical by Mbeki. In a similar vein, Mamdani (1999), as cited in Bam (2001) notes that the African Renaissance discourse developed through continuing discussion from Pan-Africanism. Mbeki clarified his Pan-African agenda within the concept of an Africa-wide Renaissance (Maserumule, 2016). In other words, Mbeki-style Pan-Africanism is embedded in his understanding of that concept. Therefore, the African Renaissance is correlated with the political ideas of Mbeki (Ajulu, 2001, p. 27) who obtained himself the title 'The Renaissance Man'. In this sense, Landsberg and Hlophe (1999) note that the African Renaissance is a South African-inspired concept and project.

The broad use of the African Renaissance in South Africa was introduced in the public discourse following Mbeki's popular 'I am an African' speech in 1996. Mbeki did not declare the African Renaissance explicitly in that speech, yet he addressed moral, intellectual, and political links mandatory for his proposals with regard to a Renaissance (Bongmba, 2004). Mbeki expressed:

> …in this small corner of a great continent that has contributed so decisively to the evolution of humanity says that Africa reaffirms that she is continuing her rise from the ashes.
>
> Whatever the setbacks of the moment, nothing can stop us now!
>
> Whatever the difficulties, Africa shall be at peace!
>
> However improbable it may sound to the sceptics, Africa will prosper!

Soon after, the African Renaissance vision was adopted as a primary element of the ideological orientation of the ANC in the national conference of the party in 1997 and became the official discourse of the ANC-led government, particularly relating to foreign affairs (Maloka, 2001). According to Ochonu (2021), it was when Mbeki sought to imbue the party with his personality, imprimatur, and political philosophy in the run-up to his presidency.

Moeletsi Mbeki (2000), a political economist and brother of Thabo Mbeki, expresses that the African Renaissance appeared to be portrayed as the foreign policy of South Africa. Along similar lines, Vale and Maseko (1998) assert that the South African idea of the African Renaissance has a social contractual interpretation which is a bipartite deal: promising the state to a democratic harmony with its own citizens as well as linking South Africa to Africa's mission of self-determination and peace in the continent (p. 277). In addition, Landsberg and Hlophe (1999) note that the African Renaissance reflects an initiative by a democratic South Africa to indicate a shift away from the apartheid regime's antagonistic foreign policy and a renewed neighbourly policy stance toward the African continent. This is also a reflection of the realisation that South Africa cannot achieve its goal of becoming a global player on its own if it remains surrounded by underdeveloped countries. As a result, the idea has emerged as one of the most plausible vehicles for determining continental growth. Maloka (2001) contends concurrently that the concept of the African Renaissance and the total reconstruction of the continent stimulated hope and excitement in the public at the time.

Colonial rule has profoundly influenced Africa's history, including South Africa's, by establishing the foundations for the systematic subjugation of African cultural, scientific, and economic practices. This dominance led to the neglect of indigenous knowledge systems and shaped how Africans perceive themselves and engage with the world. Consequently, African identity has often been distorted to mirror Eurocentric ideals. Throughout this period of domination, African cultural heritage has been sidelined and marginalized. In response to these circumstances, various movements have emerged aiming to reclaim and promote uniquely African perspectives and worldviews. One such initiative, the pursuit of an African Renaissance, embodies this effort (Higgs, 2003).

The African Renaissance can be viewed as a response to the Eurocentric approach of the colonial era, during which African contributions to global development were misrepresented or ignored. Afrocentrism emerged as a challenge to the Eurocentric belief that the Greeks were the sole originators of rationalism, a view that marginalised non-Europeans and perpetuated scepticism about African achievements (Chawane, 2016). As such, the African

Renaissance seeks to champion black culture and assert the distinct contributions of Africans to civilisation (Ackah, 1999). Thabo Mbeki (1998) argues that by reclaiming African people from the legacy of colonialism, the African-wide renaissance aims to position independent Africans on the global stage as equal and esteemed contributors to world civilisation, acknowledging that Africa was once the cradle of humanity. Mbeki further asserts that an African is as human as anyone else, and more cultured and intelligent than many of his contemporaries. Additionally, the *National Development Plan 2030* (NPC, 2011) envisions a future where Africans are deeply aware of the wider world, a world intricately connected to their past and present and carrying some of their legacies (p. 12).

At the first African Renaissance Conference in Johannesburg, it was debated how Africans were alienated from reality and consciousness (Bam, 2000). In this context, Mamdani (1999) relates the intellectual detachment of South African intellectuals from Africa with the Dark Ages, enslavement, and colonialism. As a result, he claims, the African Renaissance is this new feeling of self, formed of a different understanding of history and one's role within it (Bam, 2000). The insight arising from the conference, according to Bam (2000), illustrates an evolvement from narrow racial consciousness to an inclusive Africanism that Afrikaner Africans, European Africans, Arab Africans, Indian Africans, etc., are all considered Africans. It harmonises Pan-Africanism with globalisation and creates a proper balance between an 'inward-looking' and 'outward-looking' Africa-focused intelligentsia. African Renaissance proponents urge for a creative global vision that originates in Africa. Africans, Makgoba (1999) asserts, must define themselves and their agenda in accordance with their own reality, be agents of their own destiny, and have their country's historical fallacies restored. The three components of history, culture, and consciousness of being African in the world in an increasingly non-racialising and creolising global environment are used to define who is African today. Thus, historical consciousness is essential for identifying Africans as Africans and demanding their role in the new world order with confidence (Bam, 2000).

Moreover, the African Renaissance aims to settle democracy in Africa and break neo-colonial ties with the great international powers (Mbeki, 2000, p. 78). Concordantly, Mbeki's concept of the African Renaissance suggests that the action will take place more through the activities of the nascent social powers in Africa, such as indigenous private co-operations, NGOs, trade unions, professional organisations, and universities than through governmental agencies. This can be ascribed to the fact that African policymakers are still bounded by a durable umbilical cord to the West and the new actors in Africa do not have suchlike

commitments (Mbeki, 2000). Within this concept, the African Renaissance is part of a wider anti-colonial campaign (Maloka, 2001).

In other respects, and maybe more crucially, the term 'Renaissance' is the resonance of the eruption of mental energy to stimulate the enthusiasm of awakening in Africa in the 20th century by a craving for progress, ceasing the former ways, and emancipating of creativity (Vale & Maseko, 1998, p. 278). Mbeki referred to 'rebirth', 'revival', 'reawakening', 'restoration', and 'reappearance' in Africa (Landsberg & Hlophe, 1999, p. 3). The African Renaissance was seen as the *sine qua non* for the reconstruction of Africa (Bongmba, 2004, p. 292) and identified as the 'third moment' in Africa's post-colonial history following the liberation struggle in the 1950s and political liberation of South Africa in 1994. According to Thabo Mbeki, as cited in Mbeki (2000), the first two phases functioned as 'dress rehearsals' for the African Renaissance which has a far profound task beyond political freedom and democratic rule (p. 77).

In this respect, the core aspects of Mbeki's African Renaissance concept are social, political, and economic revitalisation, and the advancement of Africa's geopolitical standing in world affairs (Maloka, 2001). This skeleton involves all spheres of human activity including political, economic, cultural, societal, scientific, and environmental (Jana, 2001). According to Adebajo (2017), Mbeki's idealisation of the concept of the African Renaissance was moulded by the ideas and writings of Nnamdi Azikiwe (1904–1996), lawyer, political activist, and the first President of Nigeria, Cheikh Anta Diop, and Pixley ka Isaka Seme (1881–1951), lawyer and one of the founding members of the South African Native National Congress (SANNC). Mbeki's romanticisation of Seme may be derived from Mbeki's (2008) speech when he stated: he has always assumed that, as Pixley ka Isaka Seme had predicted, Africa's reconstruction would occur. This regeneration would accompany a novel and unique civilisation whose fundamental departure is deeply spiritual and humanistic — undoubtedly, a moral and immortal regeneration (Mbeki, 2008).

The aspiration of the renaissance, however, will linger as a romantic idealistic notion without an organised action agenda to practise this phenomenon, as stated by Mbeki (2000). Mbeki determines a couple of crucial pre-requisites to realise the renaissance: a proletariat class integrated into ownership and enterprise management, as well as the development of a broad urban professional and entrepreneurial middle class actively engaged in the development of small and medium businesses (p. 77). In addition, the liberation of women, the development of a more qualified political class, educational innovation, more effective and efficiently operated

medical services, and greater African unity might be adopted to promote the African Renaissance (Mbeki, 2000, p. 78). Besides, Mbeki highlighted the importance of innovative technologies for African development, such as computers and the internet as the case of printing had facilitated the transition from the middle ages to modern times (Vale & Maseko, p. 278).

On the other hand, the African Renaissance has been criticised for becoming a 'totalising idea' and for the ANC's move to narrow Africanism (Maloka, 2011, p. 2). To Bundy (2007), several academics discussed that ANC's racialised view of the society endangered its official engagement with non-racism. Moreover, Ochonu (2020) asserts that the African Renaissance was created deliberately as a vehicle to channel African sympathy towards South Africa's continental and global goals, rather than as a real attempt to foster Africa's collective resurrection. According to him, South African political circles view South Africa's relations with the continent in purely utilitarian terms. What South Africa can do for Africa is rarely articulated in a reciprocal manner. There is also no recognition of what Africa has already accomplished for South Africa. Vale and Maseko (1998) similarly note that for South Africa, the African Renaissance aims to optimise the foreign policy alternatives, particularly with respect to the continental assistance for seeking a seat on the United Nations Security Council. Furthermore, according to Adebajo (2016), despite the discourse of the African Renaissance, many Black South African politicians refer to the rest of the African continent as if they are not Africans by referring only 'Africans' are its black citizens. Adebajo (2016) defines this as the 'cultural schizophrenia' of South Africa. However, according to Maloka (2011), the debates on the concept contribute to intellectual discussions on the continent's situation and its development. The South African debate is obviously an important tool for advancing a nationwide Afrocentric agenda in the post-apartheid era.

In a nutshell, within a South African context, the African Renaissance is a philosophy of both domestic and foreign policy aims embedded in political, economic, social, cultural, and educational grounds. This relatively new concept is accounted as a late 20th century form of Pan-Africanism yet emphasises progress and creativity on the African continent more than self-determination and breaking colonial linkages with the colonial powers. The discussion of the African Renaissance boldly demonstrates that Pan-Africanism, which had historically championed the notion of 'Africa for the African', evolved into an inclusive and global Africanism.

2. 2 Pan-Africanism in History Education in South Africa

The landscape of history education in South Africa is deeply influenced by the country's complex sociopolitical history, particularly the legacy of apartheid and ongoing efforts toward decolonisation. This literature review synthesises key themes and findings from various studies to provide an overview of the current state of history education in South African high schools, and the key issues at stake. It also examines global scholarly contributions to Pan-Africanism and education, exploring the broader implications of Pan-Africanist thought for educational practices.

Kallaway's (2021) *The Changing Face of Colonial Education in Africa: Education, Science and Development* critically examines how colonialism reshaped education in South Africa during the 19th century. He argues that education in South Africa has always been a dynamic process, with informal education predominating before Western influence. Kallaway advocates for integrating local community-based educational practices into contemporary frameworks, promoting a more holistic approach to education in Africa.

Under the apartheid regime's Calvinist nationalist doctrine of Christian National Education (CNE), South African history textbooks and curricula tended to serve as a source of legitimacy for contemporary ideology and identity formation for Afrikaans-speaking whites (Chernis, 1990). Christian National Education was the apartheid-era education system introduced in 1948, based on a specific Afrikaner interpretation of Calvinist doctrines (Davids, 2021). CNE aimed at teaching the history of the 'Church history, especially that of the Reformation', 'love for their own Fatherland', and the 'National (*Vaderlandsche*) history of the Afrikaner nation' (Chernis, 1990, p. 153). The apartheid era witnessed the teaching of South African history being exposed to political manipulation and becoming a platform for politicians to authenticate the racial division in the country (Masoo & Twala, 2014). That grand narrative praised narrow ethnic identities that were based on race, culture, and language (Chisholm, 2008). Auerbach (1965), in his study of the messages conveyed in history textbooks and curricula in the Transvaal province, concluded that South Africa was at a stage where black people were not regarded as citizens but rather as a physical threat. He also warned of the pervasive and rigid Afrikaans ethnocentrism embedded in South African curricula at the time.

Nevertheless, according to Chernis (1990) and Polakow-Suransky (2002), forceful Anglicisation practices and the imposition of British educational norms, after the South African War of 1899–1902, may be understood as a backlash to the Afrikaner nationalist narrative in many respects. Du Preez (1983), for example, found that the 53 textbooks he analysed served

to assist the Afrikaner heritage suppressed by the previous British administration as well as viewed the black South African population as a threat. Dean et. al (1983) similarly found that the contemporary textbooks demonstrated a deeply embedded ethnocentrism, discrimination, stereotyping, and incapability of blacks clearly meant to perpetuate and legitimate the apartheid system.

The Bantu Education system in South Africa, established in the 1950s under the apartheid regime, represents a critical area of research for understanding how education was used to institutionalise racial inequality and limit the economic opportunities of black South Africans. Scholars have investigated the socio-economic and cognitive repercussions of this system, as well as its persistent legacy in shaping the inequalities evident in contemporary 'post-apartheid' South African education. The Bantu Education Act of 1953 was specifically designed to deliver a substandard curriculum to black South Africans, ensuring the perpetuation of apartheid ideology by reinforcing white dominance. Beyond its role as an educational policy, the act was a deliberate tool of social engineering, intended to produce a compliant, low-skilled labour force that would sustain the economic and political interests of the apartheid state (Christian, 2024). Peter Kallaway's (1984) work has been pivotal in examining the ideological underpinnings of Bantu Education, particularly how it functioned not only as a policy of racial segregation but also as a means of entrenching a dominant white-centric educational system, sidelining African cultural and intellectual contributions. His research highlights how the Bantu Education Act under apartheid was designed to restrict the development of black learners by distorting their knowledge and perpetuating the notion of racial inferiority. This segregated education system, which separated white and black students, was a means of legitimising and extending the objectives of colonised education. That is, in the pre-1994 era, South African history textbooks were a playground predominantly for the ruling Afrikaner nationalist intelligentsia imposed racial prejudices.

However, it should be noted that the populist and oppositional black historiographies central to the Pan-African discourse in South African schools have deep historical roots, predating their formal inclusion in contemporary educational curricula. These historiographies were integral to the People's History Movement, which emerged in the 1980s as a counterpoint to the dominant colonial and Eurocentric narratives embedded in South African historical education. The movement emphasised African agency, resistance, and the construction of a historical narrative that reflected the experiences and struggles of the oppressed black majority. It rejected the glorified portrayal of colonialism and called for the histories of marginalised peoples to be highlighted. This intellectual shift found expression not only in political activism

but also in the academic sphere. During the apartheid era, radical academic history developed as a form of resistance to the state's official historical narratives. Critical scholars began to interrogate how colonialism and apartheid had shaped historiography, advocating for a more inclusive, decolonised approach to the discipline of history. In South African universities, particularly those dominated by white liberal institutions, history was contested by black students both as an academic discipline and used as a tool for political resistance (Martinerie, 2022).

South Africa's history education has undergone significant transformations since the end of apartheid (see Soudien, 2010). The post-apartheid era has seen a shift from the racially segregated and Eurocentric curricula of the past to a more inclusive and representative approach to teaching South African history (Bertram, 2020). Kallaway et al. (1997) examine curriculum reforms, school integration, teacher training, and the challenges in balancing traditional knowledge with global educational trends. It offers a critical view of the progress and ongoing issues in transforming South African education. This aligns with broader calls for the decolonisation of education and the integration of indigenous knowledge systems and philosophies, such as *ubuntu*, into the educational framework (see Adewale, 2023; Nussey, 2018).

Nevertheless, democratic South Africa, which inherited the apartheid legacy, is still experiencing a war between the old and the new systems in education. After the interim curriculum, a significant reform in the education system was the introduction of Outcomes-Based Education (OBE) through Curriculum 2005 (C2005) in 1998 (see Schmidt, 2017). This approach sought to shift from the traditional content-based curriculum to a more learner-centred and skills-focused model (Botha, 2002). The initiative aimed to create a revised educational framework tailored to the needs of the majority of South Africans, particularly those disadvantaged under the previous system.

The implementation of OBE, nonetheless, faced numerous challenges, including a lack of teacher training and resources, as well as concerns about the quality of education (Botha, 2002; Schmidt, 2017; Todd & Mason, 2005). History education was reduced to a broader social sciences category (Siebörger, 2000) and asserts that history was ignored not due to what it was, but because it was part of the pre-apartheid educational philosophy that had to be pushed aside under the new democratic and non-racial order. Within this context, Stolten (2007) argues that the majority of South Africans might have a history with which they can at least somewhat identify, namely resistance to colonisation and the fight for independence. However, this kind

of history would not be welcomed by those white South Africans who supported and benefitted from apartheid. Based on the idea that it is preferable to have no history than to have a conflictual history, some researchers have argued that not writing and distributing new textbooks is a conscious effort by the government (founded on political negotiation and reconciliation) to ease tension and shrink dispute (Engelbrecht, 2008; Polakow-Suransky, 2002). Siebörger (2006) states: 'In an attempt to be rid of as much of the past baggage as possible, "subjects" were not permitted to be mentioned at all' (p. 232). Consequently, history education is often regarded as peripheral (Stolten, 2007). In this vein, this approach was interpreted as the suppression of critical consciousness, particularly historical consciousness, as noted by Bam (2000). Campbell (2002), as cited in Polakow-Suransky (2002) explains this situation, which was reshaped in the immediate aftermath of apartheid, by saying that South Africa 'had a paradoxical situation, where a society that was going through a very public ritual about confronting the past was simultaneously abolishing history instruction in its classrooms' (p. 4).

However, the then Minister of Basic Education, Kader Asmal, prioritised history education by establishing a History and Archaeology Commission in 2000 to investigate history education in schools, as well as a South African History Project (SAHP) in 2001, as discussed earlier, composed of the country's prominent historians. In 2000, the *Report of the History/Archeology Panel* was presented to the minister, stating that study of the disciplines of history and of archaeology, which fosters a spirit of critical inquiry and helps to develop a historical consciousness, will ensure that present and future generations have the knowledge and skills necessary to contribute to the maintenance of an 'open, equitable and tolerant common society'. As Chisholm (2008) indicated, the report's stance on curriculum reform was not celebratory and nationalist in overall tone but rather emphasised the temporary character of knowledge. Students were supposed to learn how knowledge of the past is socially constructed, how to interpret sources and understand the implications of historical interpretation and representation. According to Chisholm (2008), this indicates that the history curriculum is constructed in such a way that it fosters to mediate cultural differences and forms new political communities and citizens. From this perspective, the official curriculum of 2003 (National Curriculum Statement / NCS) for Further Education and Training (FET) encouraged cosmopolitan citizenship. Subsequently, the CAPS history curriculum, a limited revision of the NCS, was introduced in 2011 (see Siebörger, 2012). The CAPS curriculum has been praised for its efforts to Africanise the history curriculum and incorporate diverse perspectives,

including those of indigenous communities (Maluleka & Mathebula, 2022; Masooa & Twala, 2014).

Alongside these curriculum reforms, a key challenge in South African history education has been the contested nature of history as a school subject and the need to address the exclusion of the majority African people's achievements and perspectives (Davids, 2016; Nussey, 2018; Radebe, 2022). There have been ongoing debates and initiatives around the decolonisation and Africanisation of the education system (Le Grange, 2018). This has involved efforts to incorporate African philosophies, pedagogies, and knowledge systems into the curriculum, as well as addressing the historical marginalisation of African voices and experiences (Maluleka & Mathebula, 2022; Radebe, 2022). The Afrikaner tendency in the writing of South African history has often portrayed Africans in a contemptuous manner, disputing their claim to the country (Radebe, 2022). The post-apartheid reforms have sought to decolonise the curriculum and include more diverse narratives (Angu et al., 2020; Offenburger, 2009). However, as Wasserman and Bentrovato (2018) point out, the introduction of the CAPS was intended to standardise the curriculum nationwide. Yet, critiques suggest that it often fails to fully address the historical narratives of marginalised groups, perpetuating the very exclusions that the reform sought to remedy.

Maposa's (2014) PhD analysis of four Grade 12 South African history textbooks on postcolonial Africa highlights the predominant association of Africanness with blackness, thereby marginalising whites (often identified as Europeans) and Arabs. Bertram's (2021) study examines the recontextualising logics in history curricula from Kenya, Rwanda, South Africa, and Zimbabwe. The focus is on how post-colonial African nations represent their histories within school curricula. By analysing these four cases, the study highlights how historical narratives are shaped to reflect national identities, address colonial legacies, and instil civic values. Differences in approach are linked to each country's unique historical and political context, showcasing diverse strategies in teaching African history.

Furthermore, Shabangu (2024) critiques the South African school history curriculum for its reliance on colonial and Enlightenment-influenced historical narratives, which marginalise indigenous epistemologies. The dominance of Western archives has rendered the curriculum incompatible with the lived realities of indigenous communities, failing to incorporate alternative historical perspectives. Shabangu argues that post-apartheid reforms have not sufficiently addressed colonial legacies in history education and calls for the inclusion

of indigenous archives, such as Umlando (oral histories), Izithakazelo (clan praises), and intwaso (ancestral knowledge), to create a more inclusive and relevant historical framework.

Maluleka and Ndumeya (2024) highlight the neglect of assessment in decolonising history education in post-apartheid South Africa. While the #MustFall protests spurred debates on content and pedagogy, assessment remains largely unchanged. Using theories of decolonisation and Maton's (2014) Epistemic-Pedagogic Device, they argue for rethinking assessment at the levels of conceptualisation, recontextualisation, and implementation. They call for alternative assessment methods that break from colonial and capitalist structures, aligning history education with liberatory practices. Moreover, Bam, Ntsebeza, and Zinn (2018) critically engage with the ways in which African pre-colonial history has been constructed within the framework of Eurocentric historiography. It explores the necessity of decolonising the historical narrative by prioritising African perspectives, oral histories, and indigenous knowledge systems. Their edited volume in the *Rethinking Africa* series, *Whose History Counts: Decolonialising Precolonial Historiography,* highlights how colonial and apartheid ideologies shaped historical accounts, marginalising African experiences and voices. The contributors call for a shift in historiography that acknowledges African agency and restores the richness of African history, offering a valuable resource for scholars interested in the intersection of decolonisation, history, and African Studies.

Researchers have also highlighted the need to better incorporate marginalised perspectives and experiences, such as those of women and other historically oppressed groups, into the history curriculum (Wills, 2016). The current curriculum framework has been criticised for its inability to adequately address the gendered and intersectional nature of historical experiences (Wills, 2016). Additionally, the integration of religious education and the teaching of the 'changing and contested nature of knowledge in the natural sciences' have been identified as important aspects of the post-apartheid curriculum (Chidester, 2008; Dekkers & Mnisi, 2003).

The literature focuses on the profound connection between historical consciousness and identity formation, particularly within the context of Black Consciousness movements. As Macqueen (2018) illustrates, these movements have significantly shaped historical narratives, fostering a collective identity among marginalised communities in South Africa. This connection highlights the transformative potential of historical consciousness as both a personal and societal tool. However, Bam (2000) critiques the post-apartheid politically negotiated South African education system for suppressing historical consciousness, which

undermines efforts toward truth, reconciliation, and global engagement. Angier (2017) further emphasises that the lack of a comprehensive understanding of this critical aspect of South African history creates significant challenges for young learners, as students' understanding of South African history is often shaped by their racial and socio-economic backgrounds, leading to differing interpretations of key historical events. Without this understanding, the development of a well-rounded sense of identity and the ability to critically engage with history remains limited.

To address these challenges, researchers have proposed various pedagogical strategies aimed at fostering a deeper connection to historical events and their implications. For instance, Davids (2019) explores the use of protest songs, literature, and other creative forms of engagement to enhance learners' understanding of historical events. These approaches not only enrich the curriculum but also provide students with alternative means of connecting to history in a way that resonates with their lived experiences. Furthermore, incorporating decolonial and Africanist perspectives into the curriculum has been identified as a pivotal step towards achieving a more inclusive and representative history education (Cleophas, 2018; Maluleka & Mathebula, 2022). Such frameworks challenge Eurocentric narratives, offering learners a broader and more nuanced view of South African and African history.

Research also suggests that the implementation of the curriculum changes has faced several challenges. Many history classrooms continue to struggle with language barriers, as many students learn history in their second or third language (Msila, 2013). The use of English as the primary language of instruction, despite South Africa's multilingual context, has created difficulties for many students and teachers (Modise et al., 2020; Mpofu, 2023; Wildsmith, 2013). Additionally, the substantive knowledge presented in history textbooks may be too complex for some learners, particularly those with reading and comprehension difficulties (Bharath, 2023).

Social cohesion and teacher education in South Africa have been the focus of several studies in recent years. Salmon and Sayed (2016) examined the role of initial teacher education in promoting social cohesion in South Africa. They found that while teacher education programs aim to foster social cohesion, there are significant challenges in translating these intentions into reality. The authors argue that teacher governance policies in South Africa are underpinned by a technocratic conception of policy, which fails to address the wide disparities across the education system. Sayed, Yusuf, Badroodien, Hanaya and Rodriguez-Gómez (2017) emphasise the critical role of education and teachers in fostering social cohesion in South

Africa. In line with this, the literature highlights how education policies can contribute to promoting peace and unity. Sayed et al. (2017) argue that equitable access to quality education is essential in this regard, and they propose four key principles to guide this process: redistribution (equity), recognition (of diversity), representation (engagement), and reconciliation (addressing past injustices). These principles, they contend, can support social cohesion by ensuring inclusive educational opportunities that bridge divides and help heal past wounds.

The teaching of South African history has also been influenced by broader trends in the country's education system, such as the focus on improving the quality of education, addressing inequalities, and integrating new technologies into the classroom (Dube & Setlalentoa, 2024a; Mouton et al., 2012; Msila, 2015; Ohei et al., 2023). Researchers have highlighted the importance of using high-quality literature, critical pedagogy, and narrative structures to strengthen students' understanding of history in South African classrooms (Davids, 2019). According to Robinson (2023), the teaching of topics such as colonialism, slavery, the Holocaust, and apartheid requires an understanding of the concept of race and how it has been used to justify discriminatory and unjust behaviour.

The lack of resources, particularly in rural areas, and the uneven quality of teaching and learning have also hindered the effectiveness of history education (Coetzee et al., 2017; Mncube et al., 2023). Researchers have highlighted the importance of addressing the unique challenges faced by historically disadvantaged schools, particularly in terms of learner motivation and achievement (Mupira & Ramnarain, 2018). Chisholm et al. (2005) investigate the challenges of educator workload in South Africa, focusing on how administrative duties, large class sizes, and curriculum demands strain teaching practices. The report emphasises the disparities between well-resourced and under-resourced schools, highlighting the additional pressures faced by teachers in disadvantaged contexts. Strategies such as inquiry-based learning and the incorporation of place-based education have been proposed as ways to enhance learning and engagement in South African schools (Ontong & Le Grange, 2016; Todd & Mason, 2005).

In a related study, Onaolapo et al. (2023) explored the experiences of pre-service teachers teaching in rural schools, revealing a range of challenges, including lack of resources, poor infrastructure, and limited support. This disconnect can hinder the development of a sense of belonging and social cohesion among students. Hoffman et al. (2016) examined teachers' views on professionalism and accountability in a bifurcated education system in South Africa.

The study revealed that teachers in different school contexts (fee-paying and no-fee schools) have divergent understandings of their professional roles and responsibilities, which can further exacerbate social inequalities in the education system. It appears that, much like the bifurcated understandings of professionalism in the South African education system, this study also uncovers divided interpretations of 'Pan-Africanism' — united only by a common reference to 'blackness'. The literature also suggests that teacher education programs in South Africa do not always engage student teachers in ways that challenge existing social inequalities. McDonald et al. (2021) found that the process of learning to teach does not necessarily involve behaviours that might challenge these inequalities, as teachers are often seen as agents of pedagogic authority who legitimate inequality.

The link between xenophobia in schools and broader societal dynamics has been widely examined, with several studies highlighting the role of educational environments in either perpetuating or addressing discriminatory attitudes toward African migrants. Research has shown that xenophobia in South African schools reflects larger societal tensions, with students often displaying prejudice against their peers from other African countries. Krüger and Osman (2010) focused on Johannesburg's inner-city schools, revealing how immigrant learners frequently face hostility and alienation. Vandeyar and Vandeyar (2014) similarly identified discriminatory attitudes among students, linking these behaviours to the broader societal context. Chimbga and Meier (2014) argued that schools have a pivotal role in either challenging or reinforcing such xenophobic attitudes through their curriculum and cultural practices. More recently, Dube and Setlalentoa (2024b) examine the impact of xenophobia on migrant learners in South African classrooms, highlighting how it disrupts their educational experiences and contributes to a cycle of school violence, while advocating for the inclusion of cultural responsiveness in teacher education programs to promote social cohesion. Nnadozie and Morojele (2024) expanded on this by documenting the dual challenges faced by migrant learners, who encounter both overt xenophobic violence and more subtle forms of identity erasure within the educational environment.

Another area of research has examined the role of narrative structures and ethnographic approaches in history classrooms, with Hues (2011) emphasising how these narrative structures often have a greater influence on history teaching than the curriculum itself, suggesting that the complex social and cultural dynamics within classrooms are pivotal in shaping history education. Research supports this idea that teachers' personal experiences play a crucial role in shaping their teaching methods (Dryden-Peterson & Siebörger, 2006; Dryden-Peterson & Robinson, 2023). According to Dryden and Siebörger (2006), history instruction in South

Africa frequently mirrors wider societal changes, with teachers assuming the role of 'memory makers', intertwining personal narratives with formal content to create a more complex portrayal of history.

The use of oral histories in education has been a growing area of research, particularly in the context of post-apartheid South Africa. From promoting democratic citizenship and critical engagement to addressing gaps in official narratives and fostering teacher agency, oral histories emerge as a powerful pedagogical tool. Wieder's (2003) study provides a valuable contribution to this growing body of research. Wieder examines the critical role that teachers played in the struggle against apartheid through the lens of their personal narratives. Importantly, the process of collecting and sharing oral histories can itself be a form of critical agency and resistance. Carrim (2015) discusses how under apartheid, critical thinking and agency were linked to the 'critical struggle' against domination, but in the post-apartheid era, compliance with the new government has become emphasised. In this context, Wieder's (2003) work highlights how teachers who fought apartheid used their pedagogy and politics to challenge the status quo.

Overall, the transformation of South African history education has been a complex and ongoing process, marked by both progress and challenges. The continued efforts to decolonise, Africanise, and improve the quality of education in the country reflect the broader societal and political changes taking place in the post-apartheid era.

In alignment with the study's commitment to contextualising Pan-Africanism in South African classrooms, it is essential to draw from African voices and epistemologies in education.

The study employs Stuart Hall's (1997) theory of representation as its central theoretical lens, as a black intellectual within the African Diaspora. Critical theorists like Hall provide a necessary epistemic grounding that challenges the dominance of Eurocentric paradigms and enriches the interpretive scope of this research.

A foundational contribution in this regard is the work of Higgs, Vakalisa, Mda, and Assié-Lumumba (2000), who call for an Africanisation of education that is rooted in local cultural, philosophical, and historical experiences. Their edited volume *African Voices in Education* presents a collective critique of the marginalisation of African knowledge systems and argues for an education system that affirms indigenous epistemologies and the lived realities of African learners and educators. Similarly, scholars such as Yusef Waghid have advanced the role of *ubuntu* in educational philosophy, proposing it not merely as an ethical

concept but as a framework for deliberative democratic education — an approach that fosters collective engagement, care, and mutual recognition in the classroom. Waghid (2014) argues that education in Africa must promote dialogical, inclusive practices that reflect communal values and challenge the alienating effects of neoliberal schooling models. This resonates with the DBE's emphasis on *ubuntu* in history education policy, as discussed in Chapter 1, and provides further theoretical justification for foregrounding relationality and solidarity in pedagogical analysis.

In the broader discourse of decolonial education, Sabelo Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2013) stresses the importance of confronting the 'coloniality of knowledge' that persists in African curricula. He critiques the failure of post-apartheid reforms to sufficiently disrupt Eurocentric knowledge hierarchies and calls for the integration of epistemologies that centre African experiences and resist global epistemic domination. His work complements this study's engagement with Pan-Africanism as both a historical and ideological framework and highlights the importance of rethinking curriculum through decolonial lenses.

These African theorists highlight the necessity of approaching education in South Africa not only as a site of representation, as Hall (1997) suggests, but also as a contested space of epistemic struggle. By incorporating their perspectives, this study responds to calls for methodological and theoretical decolonisation and expands its conceptual apparatus to more fully account for the political and cultural dimensions of schooling in post-apartheid South Africa.

In the ongoing discourse surrounding education and liberation, the work of key figures such as Paulo Freire (who lived and worked closely with intellectuals in Africa) and the broader Pan-African intellectual tradition provide invaluable insights into how education can serve as a tool for social change and the dismantling of colonial legacies. Freire's critical pedagogy (1970), which emphasises the importance of education as a means of achieving social justice, has been significantly shaped by Pan-Africanist thought. Strong and Nafziger (2021) explore Freire's engagement with African revolutionary movements, illustrating how his ideas on popular education resonate with the Pan-African goals of fostering critical consciousness and empowerment among marginalised communities. This concept of education as a transformative force is further reinforced by King (2018), who asserts that the Pan-African and black intellectual traditions provide a crucial framework for understanding the educational processes necessary for liberation. By centring the experiences and knowledge of African peoples, these educational approaches aim to dismantle colonial legacies and empower

individuals to reclaim their identities, challenging the epistemic and cultural dominance of the West.

In examining the integration of Pan-African ideals within educational settings, Caesar's (2016) study of African-centred schools in Cameroon and South Africa offers a significant contribution. His research highlights how these schools incorporate African cultural values, history, and identity into their curricula to foster a sense of pride and unity among students. Specifically, the study identifies African-centred schools in South Africa as institutions that adopt an educational approach focused on African knowledge, history, and Pan-African philosophies. This approach not only aims to cultivate African identity but also challenges the Eurocentric biases that dominate mainstream educational systems. Through the lens of these educational institutions, Caesar highlights how Pan-Africanism is operationalised in both teaching and curriculum design, contributing to broader goals of Pan-African unity and social cohesion.

Furthering this discourse, Mjiba Frehiwot's doctoral thesis, *Education and Pan-Africanism: A Case Study of Ghana, 1957–1966* (2011), provides a critical examination of how educational reforms in post-independence Ghana were intertwined with the promotion of Pan-Africanist ideologies. Under the leadership of Kwame Nkrumah, these reforms sought to integrate African history, culture, and the ideals of unity and freedom into the educational system. The reforms aimed to foster a sense of African identity and consciousness among students, positioning education as a key tool for both national and continental unification. However, Frehiwot's study also highlights the challenges encountered in implementing these reforms, particularly the impact of class disparities and limited resources. Despite the widespread dissemination of Pan-Africanist ideals, the full realisation of these educational goals was impeded by external political pressures and internal conflicts.

Ndille (2018, 2020) has extensively examined the Africanisation of education in post-independence Africa, focusing on both the historical context and contemporary challenges of these efforts. His research highlights how African states sought to restructure their education systems to reflect indigenous knowledge and cultural identities, yet often struggled due to the lingering influence of colonial frameworks, the dominance of Western epistemologies, and the globalised nature of modern education (Ndille, 2018). In a later study, he revisited these themes, arguing that despite early enthusiasm, Africanisation policies have faced persistent obstacles, including economic dependencies and the reluctance of some African intellectuals to fully embrace alternative knowledge systems (Ndille, 2020). He further contends that while

globalisation has complicated these efforts, Africanisation remains crucial for decolonising education and fostering epistemic independence on the continent (Ndille, 2020).

John Karefah Marah (2023) critiques Africa's fragmented and externally imposed educational systems, arguing that they have alienated Africans from their identity by promoting European, American, Islamic, or Arab ideals. He advocates for a Pan-African education model that promotes a unified continental identity and citizenship. This approach, rooted in both Diasporic and continental Pan-Africanist thought, aims to replace divisive traditions with an inclusive, forward-looking system suitable for the 21st century.

In conclusion, this Literature Review chapter reviewed Pan-Africanism within both global and South African contexts, tracing its evolution from intellectual and activist foundations to its institutionalisation in movements and educational policies. Key themes included the diverse definitions and goals of Pan-Africanism, its contemporary relevance, and its connections to South Africa, particularly through *ubuntu* philosophy and the African Renaissance. Secondly, the literature review provided an overview of history education research in South Africa and on the continent. While the South African education system has transformed since apartheid, it still faces challenges stemming from resource shortages, inequalities in teaching quality, and ongoing racial discrimination. These issues reflect broader societal dynamics and hinder efforts towards social cohesion. Lastly, the chapter examined the integration of Pan-African ideals in history education, highlighting how African-centred curricula, influenced by African intellectuals and anti-colonial thinkers such as Freire, have sought to dismantle colonial legacies and empower marginalised communities. Despite challenges, ongoing efforts to embed Pan-African principles in education continue to inspire movements for social justice and unity across the continent.

Despite the substantial body of scholarship on Pan-Africanism as a political, ideological, and intellectual movement, and growing research on post-apartheid history education, there remains a notable gap in studies that bridge these two fields within the South African high school context. Much of the existing literature on Pan-Africanism is situated in political science, philosophy, and African Studies, focusing on its historical evolution, ideological diversity, and continental significance. Conversely, literature on South African history education primarily engages with themes of curriculum transformation, decolonisation, nation-building, and reconciliation. Yet, few studies have examined how Pan-Africanism — particularly as a concept embedded within post-apartheid education policy— is represented, interpreted, and taught in high school history classrooms. Furthermore, there is limited

empirical research exploring how teachers, as mediators of curriculum and key agents of representation, make sense of and enact Pan-Africanist ideals in diverse socio-economic school contexts. The interplay between class, teacher agency, and the representation of Pan-Africanism in the classroom remains largely underexplored. This thesis addresses this gap by offering a focused investigation into the lived meanings, pedagogical practices, and curricular interpretations of Pan-Africanism from the perspective of high school history teachers, thus contributing to both Pan-African and education scholarship in contemporary South Africa.

This Literature Review has provided an overview of existent work in the field, and the present gap that exists in scholarship in the field, which informs my choice of theoretical framework for this study (chapter 3), followed by the rationale for the study, its aims and objectives, and research design (chapter 4).

CHAPTER 3

Theoretical Framework for this Study

This chapter delves into the theoretical framework underpinning this study, focusing on the representation of Pan-Africanism as the central lens through which the research is approached, with particular emphasis on Stuart Hall's (1997) work on cultural representation, which provides the foundational theoretical perspective for understanding how Pan-Africanism is interpreted and mediated in South African high school history classrooms. This will be followed by an examination of the research philosophy, which adopts a social constructionist epistemology, exploring how the realities of Pan-Africanism are constructed and interpreted within South African history classrooms. The interpretive nature of the study, drawing on Hall's theoretical insights, facilitates a deeper understanding of the complexities surrounding Pan-Africanist representations in contemporary South African high school history classrooms.

In order to make sense of how Pan-Africanism is presented, taught, and interpreted in South African high school history classrooms, this chapter adopts the concept of representation as its central theoretical lens. Representation, as developed most notably by Stuart Hall (1997), enables an analysis of how meanings are not fixed but constructed, contested, and circulated within particular cultural and institutional contexts. For a concept as ideologically and historically charged as Pan-Africanism, examining its representations provides a critical entry point into understanding how it is translated into the school curriculum and how teachers, in turn, engage with and reshape those meanings in practice. This chapter outlines the theoretical and philosophical assumptions that guide the study, beginning with Hall's theory of representation and moving toward a discussion of how race, class, and context shape representations of Pan-Africanism in education.

Stuart Hall (1932–2014) occupies a pivotal position in the development of British Cultural Studies and is widely acknowledged as a foundational figure in black cultural theory. His intellectual legacy is deeply rooted in the traditions of the African Diaspora, and his work critically engages with the complexities of identity, race, and culture within both postcolonial and diasporic contexts. Hall's analyses foreground the ways in which diasporic experiences influence cultural expression and social relations, emphasising that identity is neither fixed nor essential, but historically constructed and discursively produced.

Hall's intellectual formation was shaped by a broad engagement with Marxist theory, poststructuralism, and notably, Pan-African and anti-colonial thought. His connections to Pan-African philosophers and thinkers profoundly informed his understanding of the global Black experience, particularly in relation to the enduring legacies of colonialism, racial capitalism, and cultural domination. Through this lens, he explored how cultural practices operate as sites of ideological struggle and how representation serves as a key mechanism through which hegemonic meanings are maintained or contested.

A defining feature of Hall's theoretical framework is his emphasis on the fluidity of cultural identity. Rejecting essentialist conceptions of race and ethnicity, Hall proposed that identity is always in process — shaped by historical conditions, cultural narratives, and power relations. This view is encapsulated in his influential articulation of 'new ethnicities', which foregrounds hybridity, difference, and positionality as central to understanding contemporary subjectivities, particularly within diasporic black communities.

His 'encoding/decoding' model of communication, developed in the early 1970s, remains a cornerstone of media theory. In this model, media texts are encoded with intended meanings by producers but are decoded by audiences in multiple ways, depending on their social contexts and interpretive frameworks. This shifted the focus from media content to audience reception, allowing for a more dynamic understanding of how ideology is negotiated in everyday life.

Furthermore, Hall's concept of representation —particularly as elaborated in his work *Representation: Cultural Representations and Signifying Practices* (1997)— centres the role of language and imagery in constructing meaning. He argued that representation is not a mirror of reality but a constitutive force that shapes how individuals and groups are understood within the cultural imaginary. This insight was critical in illuminating how Black bodies and identities have historically been misrepresented, stereotyped, and marginalised in dominant Western discourses.

By bridging Caribbean, African, and Western intellectual traditions, Hall provided a unique analytical perspective that challenged Eurocentric paradigms and expanded the theoretical boundaries of cultural studies. His work on race, diaspora, and cultural politics positioned him as a leading theorist in understanding the dynamics of cultural identity, power, and resistance. His writings —ranging from *Policing the Crisis* (1978) to *The Hard Road to*

Renewal (1988)— remain vital to contemporary debates in sociology, media studies, postcolonial theory, and critical race studies.

Hall's theory of representation is rooted in the understanding that language is not merely a reflection of the world but a medium through which meaning is produced and shared. Representation involves connecting things, concepts, and signs to generate meaning. Meaning is not inherent in things themselves, nor is it simply assigned by individuals. Instead, meaning is constructed through a shared system of conceptual maps and linguistic signs within a cultural context (Hall, 1997).

Hall (1997) outlines several approaches to understanding how language produces meaning in representation. The reflective approach assumes that language mirrors reality; meaning is thought to exist in the world, and language simply reflects it. In contrast, the intentional approach emphasises the author or speaker's individual intention, suggesting that meaning is determined by what they wish to convey. However, Hall advocates for a third view —the constructionist approach— which argues that meaning is not passively reflected or individually imposed, but actively constructed through language and shared cultural codes. This study adopts the constructionist position, recognising that meaning is socially produced and always mediated through discourse, institutions, and power relations.

A shared conceptual map is necessary for constructing shared meaning, and representation is only possible through shared language. These conceptual maps are translated into signs —written words, spoken sounds, images— that carry meaning through cultural systems. While individuals interpret the world in unique ways, communication is made possible through overlapping conceptual systems and common cultural frameworks.

3. 1 Pan-Africanism through the lens of Hall's Theory of 'Representation'

Pan-Africanism contains many and diverse definitions and understandings. The interpretations and intentions of what we call 'Pan-Africanism' are in constant flux according to the political needs and desires of the time. It is thus quite different from the one understood during the anti-colonial struggles on the continent, as it emerged during the Nkrumah era in the 1950s. Pan-Africanism can be said to have undergone a structural transformation by many intellectuals and policymakers in South Africa towards a more inclusive understanding that enfolds African and human solidarity, unity in diversity, and global citizenship — which may differ significantly in how it is understood and mediated in other countries on the continent.

While Pan-Africanism has undergone various transformations over time, especially in response to political, social, and cultural shifts, its adaptability and fluidity have remained central. The ongoing reconfiguration of Pan-Africanism within academic and political discourse, with its diverse interpretations, reflects its dynamic and context-specific nature. Thus, in the academic literature, Pan-Africanism has been defined with many different terms such as an *ideology and movement* (e.g. Adi, 2017; Amoah, 2019; Esedebe, 1982); *idea and ideology* (e.g. Mbembe & Balakrishnan, 2016; Muchie, 2000); *idea and concept* (e.g. Kumah-Abiwu & Ochwa-Echel, 2013); *idea* (e.g. Clarke, 1990; Muchie, 2000); and *concept* (Ta'a, 2014). These varying definitions indicate multiple conceptualisations across different fields and contexts.

Hall emphasises the dynamic and continuously evolving nature of cultural identities and social movements, arguing that cultural representations cannot be reduced to a fixed, singular form. In this context, Pan-Africanism should be understood not as a static ideology or movement, but as a concept that is constantly reshaped within historical, cultural, and social contexts. I define Pan-Africanism as a culturally evolving and politically and economically mediated concept in accordance with Hall's representation theory.

Pan-Africanism is a concept that can be represented in various ways across different historical and geographical contexts and interpreted in diverse ways by different groups. When approached as a concept, Pan-Africanism is understood as a multifaceted and multidimensional phenomenon, with its content and meaning changing over time. In this sense, Pan-Africanism is not merely a theoretical or political movement but also a concept involved in the processes of meaning-making and identity construction among individuals and groups. Thus, defining Pan-Africanism as a 'concept' provides an approach that reflects its flexibility, diversity in historical contexts, and alignment with social transformations. This definition allows Pan-Africanism to be understood not as a fixed entity or movement, but as an intellectual framework that is continuously redefined and imbued with different meanings across varying societal contexts.

I therefore consider Pan-Africanism to be an evolving word and language with different meanings. Since 'things' such as Pan-Africanism do not in themselves carry meaning, we construct meaning using representational systems — concepts and signs (Hall, 1997, p. 25). The representation of Pan-Africanism is frequently a play with words —idea, concept, movement, ideology— which this study interprets through the lens of Hall's theorisation of representation.

Furthermore, Stuart Hall's assertion that 'race is the modality in which class is lived' (Hall, 1980, p. 314) highlights the intersections of race, class, and representation. In the context of South Africa, this perspective is particularly useful for understanding the inequalities in the education system after apartheid. Education, as a space where economic and social class is shaped, intersects with racial discrimination, reinforcing existing disparities (Seekings & Nattrass, 2005). For example, while white students often have access to better-resourced schools, black students have historically been confined to underfunded institutions in disadvantaged areas (Fiske & Ladd, 2004). This demonstrates how class inequalities are experienced along racial lines. Hall's theory thus provides a framework for examining historical inequities in South Africa's education system, revealing the interplay between race and class.

The South African government and DBE have leveraged Pan-Africanism to promote a unified national identity while accommodating the country's diverse cultural landscape. This representation aligns with Hall's constructionist approach, where meanings of concepts are shaped and reshaped in specific political and social contexts. By framing Pan-Africanism as a constructed and contingent concept, this study is able to interrogate how official discourses are reinterpreted —or at times resisted— by teachers.

In addition to his theory of representation, Stuart Hall's (1980) encoding/decoding model of communication further deepens the theoretical lens of this study. Hall challenges the linear sender-message-receiver model by arguing that media and cultural texts are encoded with intended meanings by producers but are decoded by audiences in diverse ways depending on their social contexts, cultural frameworks, and ideological positions. Applied to the educational context, this model enables a critical understanding of how teachers, as receivers and reproducers of curricular messages, do not merely adopt state-sanctioned meanings of Pan-Africanism but reinterpret them based on their own experiences, values, and classroom realities. The preferred reading encoded by curriculum designers may be negotiated, opposed, or selectively embraced by teachers, reflecting the uneven terrain of ideological reception in post-apartheid schools. This reinforces the notion that Pan-Africanism, even when centrally defined, is always subject to multiple meanings at the point of pedagogical implementation.

3. 2 Stuart Hall's Reception Theory (1973) and Teacher's Agency

Hall's reception theory offers a valuable framework for understanding how meanings are created, transmitted, and interpreted in educational settings, especially in history

classrooms addressing complex topics like Pan-Africanism. According to Hall, meaning is not simply 'transmitted' from sender to receiver but actively constructed during both encoding (message creation) and decoding (message interpretation).

In this context, curriculum-based textbooks represent 'encoded' messages, providing structured portrayals of historical events, ideologies, and movements aligned with national curricula and educational goals. However, these messages are not delivered to students unchanged. Teachers play a crucial role in 'decoding' these messages, interpreting and reframing the content for their learners.

This decoding process is far from neutral. Teachers exercise significant agency influenced by their own values, pedagogical beliefs, and sociocultural perspectives. For example, a teacher may emphasise Pan-Africanism's solidarity aspect, linking it to contemporary global struggles, or highlight its revolutionary nature, focusing on how it challenges colonial legacies and local sociopolitical issues. Thus, teacher agency is central to how Pan-Africanism is presented and understood.

Teacher agency also shapes how students interpret Pan-Africanism. Teachers decide which elements to highlight, how to connect them to students' lived experiences, and how to frame historical events or figures. For instance, the message of Pan-African unity might resonate differently with students depending on their socio-economic backgrounds: students from more privileged settings may interpret it with a global outlook, while those from marginalised backgrounds might adopt a more critical, local perspective.

Hall's reception (encoding/decoding) theory is particularly relevant because it highlights the active role of teachers in constructing meaning. Meaning is not passively received from textbooks but is actively mediated by teachers, who influence how Pan-Africanism is understood and how it relates to students' identities and contexts. This theory underscores the dynamic and often contested nature of meaning-making in classrooms, where teacher agency is key to how historical concepts like Pan-Africanism are communicated and received by new generations.

In conclusion, adopting Hall's theory in the study of Pan-Africanism in South African classrooms helps to examine how teachers, with their agency, mediate and shape the meaning of Pan-Africanism. It also emphasises the importance of context and teacher interpretation in the way historical movements and ideologies are taught, providing a deeper understanding of how students engage with these ideas and how their understanding of Pan-Africanism evolves

through the decoding process. By positioning Pan-Africanism within the framework of mediated representation, the study emphasises how teachers' agency, shaped by power, identity, and cultural context, influences the construction and reception of meanings. This approach provides insights into the broader sociopolitical implications of teaching Pan-Africanism in post-apartheid South Africa, illustrating how teachers' practical choices and interpretations affect the transmission of these ideas.

3. 3 Research Philosophy: A Social Constructionist Approach

Introduced firstly by Thomas Kuhn (1962), the term *paradigm* (or worldview) refers to a basic set of beliefs which a researcher apprehends when examining a social phenomenon (Creswell, 2014; Pessu, 2019). The term is defined as a 'basic system or worldview that guides the investigator, not only in choices of method but in ontologically and epistemologically fundamental ways' (Guba & Lincoln, 1994, p. 105). Paradigms thus are rested on the researcher's ontological, epistemological, and methodological assumptions (Pessu, 2019). Researchers make philosophical assumptions on what knowledge is (ontology) and how we know it (epistemology) (Creswell, 2014); in other words, the researcher's view on the 'nature of reality' (ontology) and the 'nature of knowledge' (epistemology) (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016, p. 8).

Easterby-Smith et al. (2008) argue that the ontological assumption is the initial step for most disputes between researchers. It is premised on the idea that the essence of reality, and whether an objective reality exists or is just a subjective reality constructed in our minds, will determine our views (Pessu, 2019). Furthermore, obtaining an epistemological perspective is relevant for many reasons as Easterby-Smith et al. (2008) point out. Firstly, it may assist in the clarification of research design challenges. It refers to the research's overall framework, which includes the types of evidence being collected, from where it is gathered, and how it will be interpreted. Secondly, identifying the research methodology will be helpful in determining which designs will fit (for a given set of goals) and which will not (Gray, 2004). The researcher's ontological and epistemological assumptions inform the methodological approach (Pessu, 2019).

Merriam and Tisdell (2016) categorise the epistemological perspective of a researcher as: 'positivist / postpositivist, interpretive / constructivist, critical, and postmodern / poststructural' (p. 12). Unlike positivist epistemology, constructivist or interpretivist epistemology maintain that social phenomena emerge from the apprehension and consequent

actions of social activities. Within this paradigm, my research is situated within (social) *constructionist* epistemology focusing on exploring the realities produced within the data (Clarke & Braun, 2013).

In this study, I adopt a social constructionist research philosophy, which aligns with the theoretical position that meanings are constructed through social interactions, discourse, and shared cultural codes (Hall, 1997). This differs from constructivism, which typically emphasises the individual's internal cognitive processes in meaning-making, as seen in the work of Piaget (1954). While both perspectives reject objective truths and accept that knowledge is actively created, social constructionism focuses on how knowledge and reality are co-produced in cultural and historical contexts.

Given that my study examines how Pan-Africanism is represented and interpreted in classrooms —not merely by individuals but within broader sociopolitical and cultural systems— social constructionism provides the more appropriate epistemological foundation. Through a constructionist lens, I acknowledge the importance of recurrence in data, but foreground 'meaning and meaningfulness' as the central criteria in the coding process (Byrne, 2021, p. 1396).

Although this research is underpinned by a constructionist epistemology, it is carried out from an interpretive theoretical perspective, given the strong association between interpretivism and constructionism at the epistemological level (Gray, 2004). I therefore recognise that my interpretation of Pan-Africanist 'facts' within schools is shaped by my own interpretive standpoint, which is inevitably influenced by my identity and positionality as a historian (see Carr, 1967).

Knowledge is not absolute in interpretivism but rather *socially constructed* by the subjective individual who experiences it (Thorne, 2008). The interpretive research paradigm examines how people experience and engage with and view their social environment (Merriam, 2002). Crotty (1998) affirms that interpretivism inquiries 'culturally derived and historically situated interpretations of the social life-world' (p. 37). Interpretive research aims to 'explore and unpick people's multiple perspectives in natural, field settings' (Gray, 2004, p. 25). Social constructionist epistemology, emphasising subjectivism and relativism, assumes that although the reality may exist independently of experience, it can only be grasped through experience (Doolittle, 1999). Meaning, therefore, is formed by the individual's interactions with the world.

As believed by social constructionist, individuals aspire to comprehend the world in which they live. Thus, there is no objective truth, only various 'viewpoints and perspectives'. Anything we embrace as 'fact', and even how we imagine 'truth', is influenced by the community in which we live as well as our social position and experience (Chapman & Ball, 2001, pp. 4, 5). That means people create subjective meanings for their experiences. These meanings are diverse and multifaceted; hence the researcher focuses on the complexity of perspectives instead of reducing them to a few categories and ideas (Creswell, 2014). People construct their own meaning in various ways even regarding the same phenomenon, whereas meaning is not discovered, but instead constructed (Gray, 2004). The researcher aims to make sense of (or interpret) other people's perceptions of the world. Therefore, the purpose of interpretive/constructivist research is to 'describe, understand, and interpret' and it views reality as 'multiple realities and context-bound' (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016, p. 12).

In social constructionist assumption, the objective of the study is to depend insofar as possible on the participants' perspectives on the situation under investigation. It is therefore understood that individuals may interpret the same fact (e.g., Pan-Africanism) in different ways, in so far as a wide range of interpretations of human experience exists (Neuman, 1997). A single event or phenomenon has several realities and interpretations (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016).

By employing the theoretical framework of Stuart Hall on representation in this study, I am therefore not looking for definitive knowledge of what Pan-Africanism is or what it is not, but rather what my participants (the history teachers), who are subjective individuals *socially constructing* it in pedagogical settings in contemporary South Africa, *understand and mediate* it to be; i.e. their representations of it in these contexts. I comprehend that what my participants accept as 'fact' about Pan-Africanism, and even how they present its 'truths', is influenced by the society in which they live, their social position and their lived experiences in South Africa. Because of the diversity and variety of meanings about Pan-Africanism, as a researcher, I concentrate on the complexity of viewpoints rather than condensing them into a small number of limited categories and concepts. Pan-Africanism's diverse and multifaceted meanings, often framed as a concept, ideology, movement, or idea, require focusing on its complexities rather than reducing it to limited categories, a perspective informed by Stuart Hall's theorisation of 'representation'. I try to interpret their perceptions and mediations on Pan-Africanism as 'representation'. By theoretically applying an interpretive approach, I focused on the diverse facets of Pan-Africanism, how teachers interpret their classroom experiences, how these

individuals construct their worlds, and what meaning they ascribe to their experiences with this idea (in terms of the latter, see Merriam & Tisdell, 2016; Kahlke, 2014).

In conclusion, this chapter explored Stuart Hall's representation theory as a framework to understand how Pan-Africanism is depicted in contemporary South African high school history classrooms. By emphasising the evolving meanings of Pan-Africanism through cultural, historical, and political lenses, it highlighted its adaptability in addressing social cohesion. Hall's insights on the interplay between race, class, and meaning provide a foundation for analysing how Pan-Africanism is taught in classrooms, shaping collective identity and fostering national unity.

Building on the theoretical insights discussed, the next chapter 4 provides a discussion of the rationale, aims and objectives research design and methodology for this study.

Chapter 4

Rationale, Aims and Objectives, Research Design & Methodology

This chapter outlines the rationale, aims and objectives and how the research design and methodological approach adopted in this study, intends to achieve them. It provides the research questions, a detailed account of the research type, ethical considerations, and sampling strategies.

The methodological section discusses the data collection methods, including reflections on researcher positionality, followed by an overview of the data analysis techniques employed. Additionally, the chapter acknowledges the challenges encountered during fieldwork and the limitations that may have influenced the research process.

4. 1 Rationale for the Study

While substantial attention has been devoted to the role of history education in shaping national identity and fostering social cohesion in post-apartheid South Africa, limited research has specifically explored how the concepts constituting the Pan-African vision, such as *ubuntu* —a key element of the post-apartheid government's narrative— are represented in contemporary high school history classrooms. Existing studies often prioritise broader educational reforms or the challenges of decolonising the curriculum, yet they insufficiently address the nuanced ways in which Pan-Africanism is interpreted, taught, and received in diverse educational contexts in post-apartheid South African classrooms.

This study responds to these gaps by applying a theoretical framework grounded in Stuart Hall's (1997) cultural theory of representation. Hall posits that representations are not mere reflections of reality but are constructed through cultural codes and social practices, shaping and contesting power structures. This perspective provides a valuable lens for analysing how Pan-Africanism is constructed and mediated within educational settings. However, empirical research investigating the practical application of such theoretical insights in classrooms remains sparse. Particularly absent is an analysis of how cultural codes intersect with factors such as socio-economic class, teacher agency, and historical legacies to produce diverse representations of Pan-Africanism.

The research also addresses contemporary dynamics within South African schools, such as the political disengagement among students in traditionally activist township schools

and the emergence of *ubuntu*-centric 'Rainbowism' Pan-Africanism, which appears to resonate more with white and more privileged black students at former Model C schools. Additionally, the dual identity formation of black students who navigate both African and South African identities in middle-class schools presents an underexplored area of inquiry. These dynamics hold significant implications for understanding social cohesion and identity formation in history classes in high schools in the post-apartheid era.

This class-based divergence in how Pan-Africanism is represented and received in schools also echoes a deeper historical disjuncture. As noted in Chapter 2, black South African nationalist intellectuals played a foundational role in shaping Pan-Africanist thought in the early 20th century and became key actors in broader anti-colonial struggles during the 1960s 'decade of decolonisation' (Ouma, 2021; Ochonu, 2020). Many of these figures, exiled during apartheid, later returned to assume positions in the post-apartheid political elite. Their experiences had been shaped by Pan-African solidarities in newly independent African states and by the ideological promise of continental unity. Yet, the findings of this study suggest that the Pan-Africanist ideals upheld by this exile generation often fail to resonate meaningfully with learners in working-class township schools today. These ideas, once embedded in lived struggle, now appear distant, abstract, or elite-disconnected from the material conditions and everyday concerns of many students. This gap points to a broader challenge of ideological transmission: how historically rooted, anti-colonial visions of unity and solidarity are (or are not) adapted to the shifting realities of contemporary youth in post-apartheid South Africa.

In attempting to address the gap in research on representations of Pan-Africanism, this study employs a qualitative, empirical approach, incorporating reflexive thematic analysis to examine how Pan-Africanism is represented, engaged, and perceived in South African high school history classrooms. By integrating Hall's theoretical framework, the research interrogates how representations of Pan-Africanism are shaped by cultural and historical contexts, offering insights into the intersections of education, identity, and class.

Given the complexity of classrooms and schools as research sites,[11] I have specifically chosen to focus on teachers' agency in terms of representation of Pan-Africanism within these settings, which include their reports on the students' engagement with Pan-Africanism. The case study in this research is thus 'bounded' by my focus on the values, ideas, themes, and concepts that constitute the Pan-African vision as represented in history classrooms in public

[11] There are other studies that illustrate the challenges and risks faced by researchers conducting similar research in classrooms in South Africa (e.g., Bam, 2001).

(state) schools in contemporary South Africa, as emphasised by Stake (1994), who highlights the importance of defining the boundaries of a case study for in-depth analysis. This approach allows for an examination of how teachers, within their professional autonomy and personal beliefs, navigate, shape, and at times contest the representation of Pan-Africanism in the diverse contexts of South African high school classrooms.

To achieve this, the study begins by analysing how Further Education and Training (FET) history teachers in middle-class schools (quintile 4 and 5, or former model C schools) and working-class schools (quintile 1, 2, and 3, or township schools) conceptualise Pan-Africanism. This analysis examines their interpretations as informed by prescribed textbooks and their lived experiences, exploring how these factors shape their understanding of the African continent and its position in the global context. It also analyses the perspectives of these teachers' insights into the reasons behind the presence (or absence) of Pan-Africanism in the curriculum and history textbooks they use. The study further examines whether consistent interpretations of Pan-Africanism exist among teachers across different schools or if divergent understandings arise, influenced by contextual factors such as the school's socio-economic status, available resources, or the teachers' individual pedagogical approaches.

I therefore analysed the representation of Pan-Africanism in contemporary South African high school history classrooms in terms of the role of teachers as an agency that allows us to see where Pan-Africanist realities are located and whether these realities in classrooms are compatible with the ideas of Pan-Africanism targeted by the DBE, and the government, for social cohesion. I sought to juxtapose the *rhetoric* of the government and the DBE on Pan-Africanism versus the *reality* in schools. Thus, I began my research by examining the discourse of the government and how that reflects in the Department of Basic Education (DBE)'s understanding of Pan-Africanism to see the formal discussion of it in South Africa. The next question, therefore, is if that is the official approach to Pan-Africanism, is it present (or evident) in teachers' narratives of their practices in the classroom? And if it presents in the classroom (as reported in their narratives), in which form? Then, why in this form? Therefore, I tried to unpack the concept and representations of Pan-Africanism in South African schooling contexts and to provide a deeper-layered redefinition from the contemporary perspectives of history teachers. There is a range of definitions coming from Pan-Africanist intellectuals and policymakers about its notions, and they offer a much more dynamic view of what it is. Consequently, the problem is *how to find out what it is. How do we look for it in their narratives and representation of what happens in the history classroom?*

4. 2 Aims and Objectives of the Study

This study aims to contribute to the interdisciplinary scholarly discourse surrounding Pan-Africanism within the field of *African Studies* and its intersection with Education Studies, specifically focusing on its representation in South African high school history education — an unexplored field of study. This research examines how Pan-Africanism is conceptualised and taught in South African classrooms, focusing on teachers' interpretations and their influence on their pedagogical approaches to the concept. It aims to uncover what teachers understand Pan-Africanism to represent, the implications of these representations and practices, and how, from their perspective, students comprehend and engage with the concept. Essentially, through a dialogical research process with in-service teachers, the study seeks to define the nature of Pan-Africanist education (albeit from the perspectives of the teachers) in contemporary South African history classrooms.

The research focuses on teacher' agency in interpreting and presenting Pan-Africanism, examining the complex relationship between curriculum materials, pedagogical practices, and the diverse social contexts of schools. By comparing how Pan-Africanism is conceptualised across schools with different socio-economic backgrounds, the study aims to uncover the dynamics of its integration into education and its implications for fostering social cohesion. The research further probes the influence of teachers' personal beliefs and experiences on their teaching practices, as well as how these elements shape students' understanding of Pan-Africanism.

The study explores the presumptions made regarding social cohesion when discussing Pan-Africanism. It questions whether the subject informs a more inclusive understanding of Pan-Africanism, moving away from racial consciousness. As the post-1994 South African government aims to foster a stronger continent-wide Pan-Africanist identity (DIRCO, 2023), this idea or concept is often underestimated and (mis)represented in textbooks. This raises important questions about teachers' expertise and experience in bringing Pan-Africanism into the classroom through textbooks or their own teaching practices.

This thesis hopes to contribute to an understanding of evolved meaning of Pan-Africanism in terms of how it is currently represented as both political and cultural meaning in South African high school history classrooms. In exploring the 'representation of Pan-Africanism', my aim is to see the link between the *concepts* people use to 'describe or depict' Pan-Africanism and the common *language* that enables them to refer to these concepts (see Hall, 1997). This also helped me to critically engage the language used to describe 'Pan-

Africanism' in the various ways used by philosophers, theorists, politicians, and my interviewees. Specifically, the research seeks to understand the explicit and implicit conceptual forms of Pan-Africanism representation in schools. It explores what teachers say and do not say, acknowledging the specific language used to describe this topic, i.e. — 'a form of representation'. *What is their role in mediating this representation in schools?*

By comparing and contrasting these interpretations, the research aims to highlight both the commonalities and divergences in how Pan-Africanism is integrated into history education, thereby offering insights into the evolving nature of this concept in South Africa's educational landscape.

4. 2. 1 Engaging the Present History Curriculum and Pan-Africanism

In the CAPS (Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement) policy document Pan-Africanist themes are represented across the Further Education and Training (FET) phase (Grades 10–12). Despite its discursive prominence in state rhetoric and policy frameworks (DBE, 2020; MTT, 2018), Pan-Africanism is neither defined as a distinct concept in the CAPS documents nor consistently addressed as an overarching curricular objective. Instead, it appears implicitly, scattered across topics related to African nationalism, decolonisation, and anti-colonial resistance.

In Grade 10, African history is introduced through a focus on precolonial societies such as Great Zimbabwe and Mapungubwe. While Pan-Africanism is not explicitly referenced, many teachers interpret this as a foundation for introducing students to a positive view of African heritage. In Grade 11, the topic 'Nationalism in South Africa and Africa' includes Ghana's independence struggle and the role of Kwame Nkrumah. Here, Pan-Africanist ideals are more visible through comparative analyses with Afrikaner nationalism, though often limited to a narrow definition of African nationalism (DBE, 2011). Grade 12 contains the most sustained —though still fragmented— references to Pan-Africanism under 'Independent Africa' and 'Civil Society Protests 1950s–1970s', where students encounter figures like Steve Biko, W.E.B. Du Bois, and Marcus Garvey.

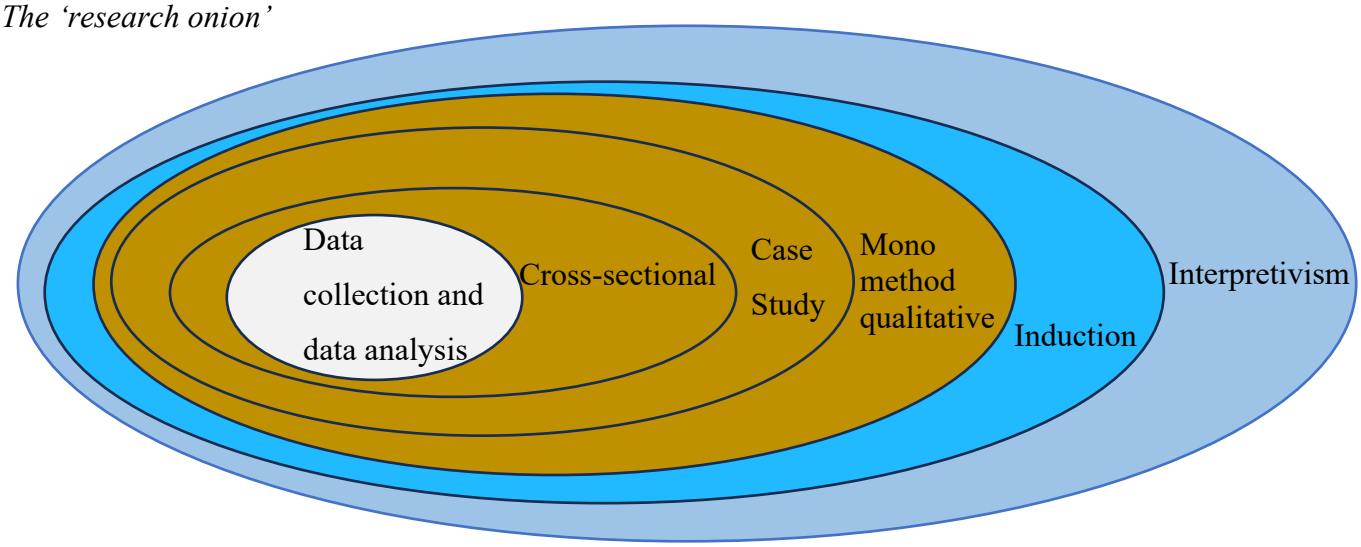
Despite these inclusions, the History Ministerial Task Team (MTT) report (2018) critiques CAPS for perpetuating South African exceptionalism and recommends a more deliberate repositioning of the country within the broader African liberation narrative. The report argues that current textbook content does not adequately capture the philosophical and transnational dimensions of Pan-Africanism, thereby undermining the Department of Basic

Education's vision of fostering continental solidarity and mitigating Afrophobic sentiments (MTT, 2018, pp. 49–50, 80).

The representation of Pan-Africanism in the South African curriculum is not only fragmented but also highly dependent on teacher agency. In practice, Pan-Africanism functions less as a mandated curriculum theme than as an optional pedagogical interpretation — a gap that raises important questions about equity, ideological clarity, and the feasibility of using history education as a tool for continental identity formation.

Figure 4. 1

The 'research onion'



Source: ©2018 Mark Saunders, Philip Lewis and Adrian Thornhill.

In this study, the *research onion* model developed by Saunders et al. (2007) was used to structure the research design in a systematic and coherent manner. This layered model guides the researcher through successive stages of methodological decision-making—from the outer layers of research philosophy to the core of data collection techniques. Starting with a *social constructionist research philosophy*, the study adopted an *inductive approach*, a *qualitative methodological choice*, and employed a *case study strategy* focused on high school history teachers. The research was conducted over a *cross-sectional time horizon*, and *data were collected through in-depth interviews*. This layered approach ensured internal consistency between the study's philosophical stance and its methodological execution. In particular, the use of *reflexive thematic analysis*, grounded in Stuart Hall's theory of representation, aligned with the study's focus on meaning-making processes and the ways in which Pan-Africanism is

represented, interpreted, and mediated by teachers in the post-apartheid South African classroom context.

4. 2. 2 The Key Research Questions

The main inquiry of this study is:

- What are the existent and various representations of Pan-Africanism in contemporary post-apartheid South African high school history classrooms through the lens of practising teachers and how they present students' understanding and engagement within these representations?

Sub-questions:

- How do teachers perceive the representation of Pan-Africanism in the curriculum and history textbooks, and what are their perspectives on its inclusion or omission in these educational resources?
- What are the prevailing interpretations of Pan-Africanism among teachers in various schools, and what are the implications of these interpretations?
- What are the diverse interpretations of Pan-Africanism among teachers in different schools, and which societal contexts contribute to these varying perspectives?
- How do teachers perceive and mediate the understandings of Pan-Africanism that their students express in their classrooms?

4. 3 Research Design

4. 3. 1 Type of Research

Kumar (2011) advises looking at the types of research from three different standpoints: in terms of its application of the findings, objectives, and enquiry mode used in conducting the research. Based on this classification, the type of this study from the application perspective is *applied* research — instead of *basic* or *pure* research which is a knowledge base (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). The type of research from the perspective of its objectives is purely *descriptive*. A descriptive study intends to render a representation of a phenomenon as it naturally occurs (Hedrick et al., 1993). A descriptive study aims to describe a situation, problem, phenomenon, service, or program in a systematic manner or describes opinions about a subject (Kumar,

2011). The objective of this study is to describe the understanding of Pan-Africanism in South African high schools.

The mode of enquiry of the research is *qualitative* (also called *unstructured*) as the type of research considering the aim of the study is to 'establish the variation' in the understanding of Pan-Africanism 'without quantifying it' (Kumar, 2011, pp. 11–13). A qualitative approach is mainly used to describe multifariousness *per se* in a situation, phenomenon, problem, or attitude towards an issue, namely, it explores the nature of the problem, issue, or phenomenon (Kumar, 2011). This research, therefore, is conducted using a *qualitative research design* (or *qualitative inquiry*). When using qualitative analysis approaches, depth takes precedence over breadth. Inherently, the results are usually richer in terms of comprehending how information is conveyed (Nicholls, 2003).

This project is focused on the idea that individuals construct knowledge on a continuing process as they participate in and make meaning of a phenomenon; unlike quantitative research paradigms which typically tends to be grounded on the assumption that knowledge is pre-existing and is only waiting to be discovered (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). The characteristics of qualitative research design are evolving, flexible, and emergent and findings are richly descriptive, comprehensive, expansive, and holistic and demonstrated as themes/categories. In qualitative research study, the focus of interest is 'understanding the meaning a phenomenon has for those involved' and the main goal of the researcher is to understand how individuals make sense of their experiences (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). The conceptual approach of this paradigm is an 'open-ended inquiry into sensitizing concepts' to explore 'what people mean' by these concepts and 'how they use' them (Patton, 2014, p. 156) when referring to Pan-Africanism.

Given that my main concern was to understand the experience of the Pan-African concept from the perspective of teachers and their perspective of their students' understanding and engagement with the concept, the specific type of qualitative research is a *qualitative case study* (see Merriam & Tisdell, 2016).

While this chapter outlines the logic of the design, it is important to foreground that the research process did not follow a linear technical model. Rather, it unfolded dialogically, shaped by a series of iterative decisions and ethical-political reflections that emerged during fieldwork. I approached research design not merely as a technical exercise but as a meaning-making practice, informed by critical theory and my own evolving positionality.

4. 3. 2 Research Ethics

As the research involves human subjects as a source of data, I submitted my proposal for ethical approval to the Faculty on 31 August 2021. I explained to my interviewees what the purpose of my research was in conducting these interviews. I provided participants with information about myself, my academic background, the purpose and proposed use of the research.

I asked my interviewees to verbally consent to the interview (which was recorded) and that I would record our interview by mobile phone online (those outside Cape Town) and in-person. I informed the participants that they should not feel under any obligation to participate and that they could withdraw from the interview session at any time. I ended the interview with those participants whom I felt were distressed by being questioned on the topic, without asking them too in-depth questions about the research (e.g., just explaining how Pan-Africanism was described in the textbook they were using). I did not question them on the reasons for feeling distressed as I was aware of my own status as outsider–insider (with a foreign accent) and the evident sensitivities around my positionality.

To protect confidentiality, I did not ask participants for their names. Instead, I used fictional names to safeguard their identities. For example, in the Gauteng Department of Basic Education Research Request Form, it is indicated: 'The names and personal details of the GDE officials, schools, ECD Centres, principals, parents, teachers, ECD Practitioners and learners that participate in the study may neither be asked nor appear in the research title, report/thesis/ dissertation…'[12] Therefore, participants remained anonymous, and no questions were asked to identify the interviewees. No payment was made to the interviewees. Additionally, I did not interview students directly as this was not the focus of my research but rather asked their teachers about their comprehension and interest in the topic in the classroom.

4. 3. 3 Sampling

I limited my sample of teachers from three selected provinces (Gauteng, KwaZulu-Natal, and Western Cape) by looking at the spread of education provision. These three provinces have different kinds of educational spread. Gauteng, KwaZulu-Natal, and Western Cape constitute the biggest provinces by population in the country (Statista, 2019) as well as the leading colonial centres which are socio-economically fairly affluent. Kwa-Zulu Natal was

[12] https://www.wits.ac.za/media/wits-university/research/documents/GDE%202023.%20Research%20Request%20form.pdf

chosen for the study because of the impression in general from media reports that Pan-Africanist understanding of this province is generally very ethnicised, equated with Zulu nationalism — which became quite transparent during the Jacob-Zuma era (see Ndletyana & Maaba, 2010). Apart from this, the majority of interviews came from the Western Cape, as I live in Cape Town, where I have much easier access to teachers (a practical consideration). I could be able to go to schools (township schools) as they do not have access to emails in which to correspond with me. An additional barrier was that my research coincided with the immediate post-Covid lockdown period when people were still cautious of contact, and which also made inter-provincial travel difficult.

The perspectives of teachers on Pan-Africanism from these three provinces were sought. The national quintile (NQ) classification of public schools in South Africa is determined by the poverty level of the community surrounding the school and some infrastructure factors (Western Cape Department of Education, 2013).

All public ordinary schools in South Africa are divided into five categories (quintiles) with the intention of allocating financial resources. The 'poorest' quintile is quintile one, while the 'least poor' quintile is quintile five. Quintiles 1, 2, and 3 are designated as no-fee schools, whereas quintiles 4 and 5 are fee-paying schools.

The use of 'poverty' in the thesis to describe the material constraints of quintile 1–3 schools reflects the tangible challenges these institutions face, yet it requires careful consideration to avoid oversimplifying the complex structural and historical inequities rooted in apartheid and global capitalist systems. Bourdieu's cultural capital theory provides a lens to understand how schools, as sites of knowledge production, often privilege forms of knowledge, language, and cultural practices associated with middle-class, historically white institutions, marginalising African oral histories and ubuntu-centric pedagogies. Framing township schools as 'impoverished' risks overshadowing the rich cultural capital within these communities — such as resilience, communal values, and indigenous knowledge systems— which hold significant value despite being undervalued in formal education. Retaining 'poverty' as a descriptor can be effective if explicitly tied to the global capitalist forces and historical disinvestment that have shaped these conditions, while simultaneously recognising the cultural capital of township schools as a vital source of resistance and agency in shaping Pan-Africanism. This approach aligns with Stuart Hall's representation theory, emphasising teachers' roles in mediating narratives of African identity and social justice within these educational spaces.

The quintile classification of a school is significant as it influences the sum of funds it receives each year and whether it may charge fees (Western Cape Education Department, 2013). NQ classification is therefore regarded as a better denominator of socio-economic status. My sampling technique is informed by the diversity in the representations of Pan-Africanism presented by teachers from different social strata as a central focus of my research. Understanding how this diversity is shaped by teachers' social positions and experiences is a key aspect of the study. Additionally, exploring the role of representation in these differences requires a deeper analysis through the lens of Stuart Hall's (1997) concept of representation.

To demonstrate the role of teachers in the understanding of Pan-Africanism in South Africa, FET phase (Grade 10–12) history teachers in urban schools were interviewed. As the first layer of fieldwork, I conducted interviews in February and September 2022 with a total of 37 in-service teachers demographically and gender representative of South Africa's population as Pan-Africanism is historically a 'black' ideology. I sought to get a good range of different perspectives on history teaching.

To gain access to participants, I employed the snowball sampling technique. Snowball sampling, as discussed by Naderifar et al. (2017), is a purposeful and often effective qualitative data sampling method, particularly in research contexts where the population is hard to reach, hidden, or difficult to access through traditional methods. In snowball sampling, an initial participant, typically someone who fits the criteria of the research, is identified and asked to refer additional participants who also meet the study's criteria. These referrals continue to cascade, leading the researcher to more participants, each linked to the others. Initially, I was able to connect with a history teacher through the son of a family friend in Cape Town, who then referred me to other teachers. Additionally, I reached out directly to schools via email, expressing my interest in interviewing teachers about their teaching practices and perspectives on Pan-Africanism. Both email outreach and snowball sampling were utilised to collect data, particularly for middle-class schools.

Throughout 2022, I sent emails to schools inviting research participants with a consent form. In this period there were no Covid-19 restrictions and schools were now fully open to face-to-face teaching. At the end of each interview, I asked the teachers if they could put me in touch with history teachers in other schools. I also sent emails to academics working on history education in South Africa asking them to put me in touch with teachers they knew. I also met some of them face to face and interviewed them. I believe that this technique was effective in getting teachers to trust me for the interview. For example, a history subject advisor in the

Western Cape asked the history teachers he coordinates about my research and whether they would like to participate. I also obtained ethical clearance from Wits University to interview students training to be history teachers in order to increase participation for my sample in Gauteng. Subsequently, the invitation to my research reached around 1500 people, almost all senior history teachers in Cape Town and 1045 student teachers in Gauteng,[13] and only 37 teachers were eager to talk on this topic. None of the student teachers at Wits University responded to my invitation. I assume that mostly teachers who were already teaching the subject in an engaging way in the classroom wanted to participate to my study. The teachers I did not interview either said they did not teach the subject, or they did not respond at all. In this regard, unlike survey studies, where the number and representativeness of the sample are key attributes, the most important factor in a qualitative study is each individual's ability to contribute to the 'development of insight and understanding of the phenomenon' (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016, p. 127). The teachers participated who participated in the research had at least five years of experience in the field. The predominance of female respondents in this study is an interesting finding, as it reflects broader gender dynamics within the South African teaching profession, where women comprise the majority of educators, particularly in the humanities and social sciences. This gendered composition may influence how concepts such as Pan-Africanism are interpreted and taught in the classroom, shaped by female teachers' lived experiences, professional identities, and sociocultural perspectives. Moreover, their engagement with history education may offer distinct insights into how gender intersects with pedagogical agency and representations of identity and solidarity in post-apartheid South Africa.

[13] I received the following email from Wits University on 31 March 2022: 'Dear Esma Karadag, Please find the attached permission letter as requested and note that your survey has been successfully re-circulated to 1 045 students as per the submitted form. The dissemination of the questionnaire/survey will be done only once. Kindly also note that participation is voluntary and you may not receive an immediate response.' However, none of the student teachers contacted me to participate in the study.

Figure 4. 2

Pie chart of interviewed teachers by province and school type

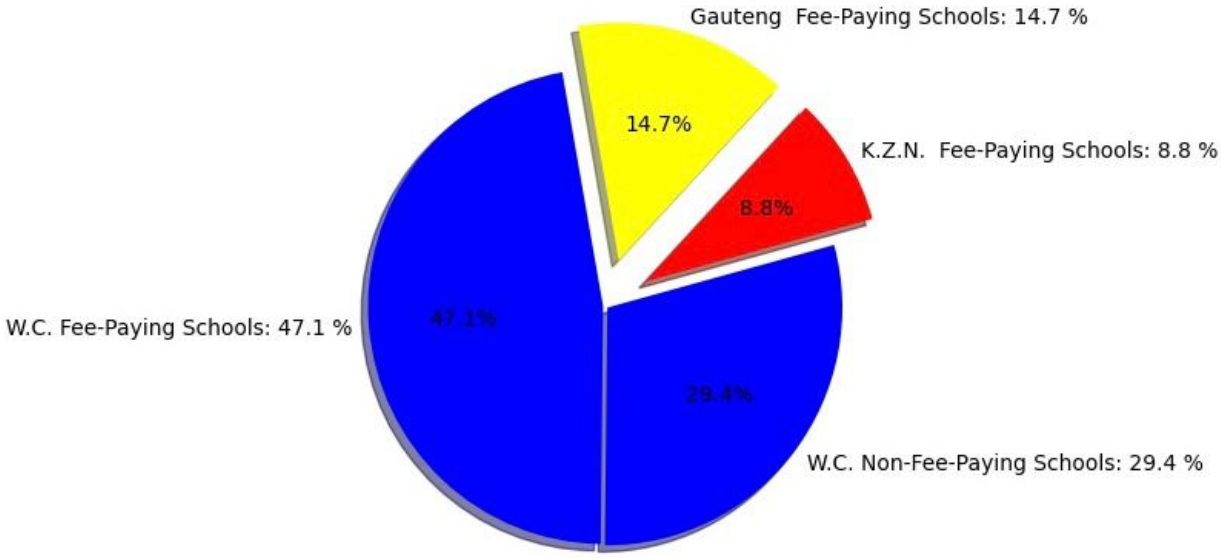
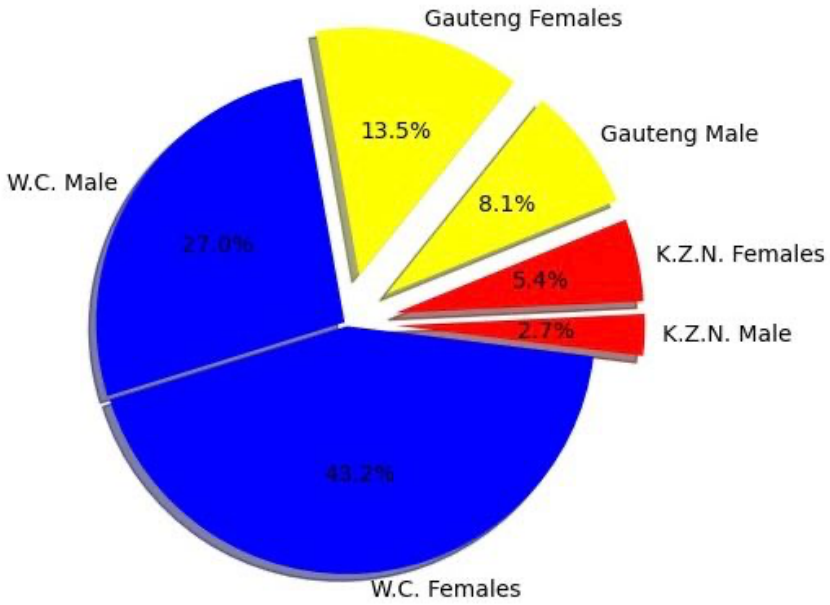


Figure 4. 3

Pie chart of interviewed teachers by province and gender



The predominance of Western Cape-based data in this study is both a limitation and a reflection of the region's unique intellectual landscape, which has historically nurtured a deep engagement with Pan-Africanism. As noted in the works of Soudien (2019) and Wieder and Soudien (2009), the Western Cape has long been a site of intellectual and political thought, particularly through the New Era Fellowship (established already in the 1940s) and its influence on education activism in South Africa. This province, being the oldest colonial one (predating colonisation in the rest of the country by at least 150 years), is one of the most politically charged. It has witnessed significant contributions to political and educational discourses, particularly with respect to Pan-Africanism. Therefore, the concentration of responses from the Western Cape may not only reflect a sampling limitation but could also indicate a heightened interest in Pan-Africanism within the province. The region's long-standing intellectual history in shaping national conversations around race, identity, and liberation could explain its central role in the discourse on Pan-Africanism. Nevertheless, while this focus presents a limitation in terms of generalisability, it also demonstrates the Western Cape's critical role in South Africa's educational and political landscape, making it a meaningful site for studying these dynamics.

Considering the necessity and do-ability of the research design, a relatively small number of individuals could participate in the research. Thus, the *non-probability* sampling method (non-random selection), which is often a feature of qualitative research, was embraced (see Cohen et al., 2007). For working-class (township, no-fee / quintile 1, 2 and 3) schools in Cape Town, a type of non-probability sample: *purposive* (judgement, selective, or subjective) sampling method was adopted since the research aims to gain an in-depth understanding of Pan-Africanism (see Palinkas et al., 2015, p. 533) and how the participants have experienced it (see Creswell, 2014). I handpicked interviewees to participate in the research under my own prediction of their exemplification (see Cohen et al., 2007).

The schools where teacher interviews were to be conducted were identified, and their names were included in the letters of application. These letters detailed the research objectives, the measures to ensure participant anonymity, the semi-structured interview questions to be posed to participants, and the ethical clearance obtained from the University of Cape Town (UCT). Applications for permission to conduct the research were submitted to the respective provincial Departments of Education. Approval was granted by the Western Cape, Gauteng, and KwaZulu-Natal Departments of Education. These approvals, alongside the ethical clearance letter from UCT, are included in the appendices. See Appendix A for the ethical clearance letter from the Western Cape Department of Education, Appendix B for Gauteng,

Appendix C for KwaZulu-Natal, and Appendix E for the UCT. Dates of approval are also specified in each document.

Figure 4. 4

Chart showing provincial representation of teachers interviewed for the study from February 2022 to November 2024. The most responsive sample came from the Western Cape, and the smallest from KwaZulu Natal.

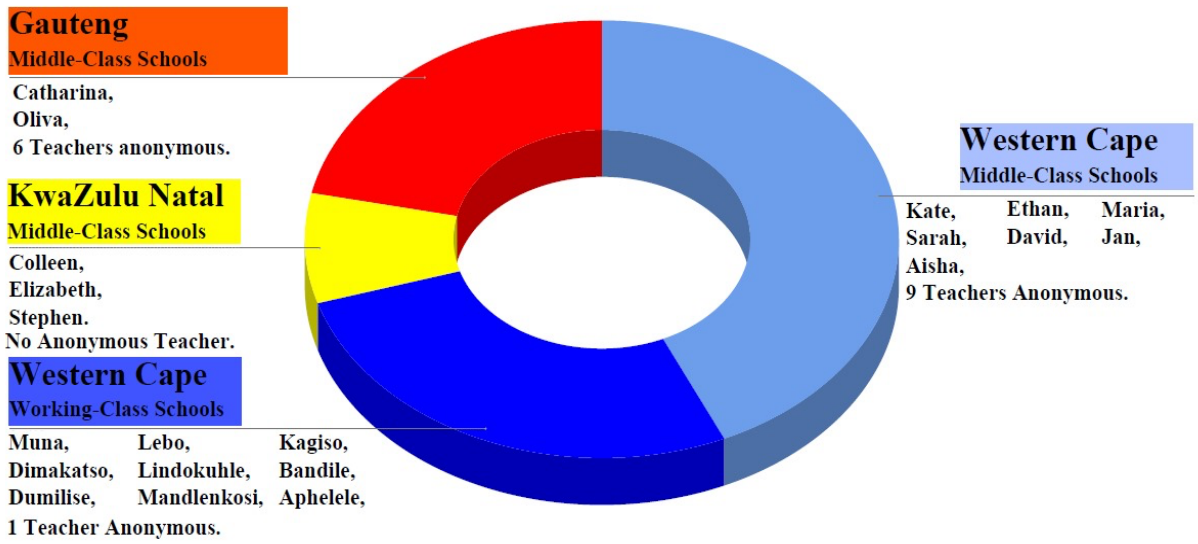


Table 4. 1

National Poverty Distribution Table

My sample constitutes high school history teachers from the three highlighted provinces in this table below.

	NQ1	NQ2	NQ3	NQ4	NQ5
EC	27.3%	24.7%	19.6%	17.0%	11.4%
FS	20.5%	20.9%	22.4%	20.8%	15.4%
GP*	**14.1%**	**14.7%**	**17.9%**	**21.9%**	**31.4%**
KZN*	**22.1%**	**23.2%**	**20.2%**	**18.7%**	**15.8%**
LP	28.2%	24.6%	24.2%	14.9%	8.0%
MP	23.1%	24.1%	21.5%	17.7%	13.5%
NC	21.5%	19.3%	20.7%	21.4%	17.1%
NW	25.6%	22.3%	20.8%	17.6%	13.7%
WC*	**8.6%**	**13.3%**	**18.4%**	**28.0%**	**31.7%**
SA	20.0%	20.0%	20.0%	20.0%	20.0%

Source: Parliamentary Monitoring Group (2020) https://pmg.org.za/committee-meeting/30934/

Note: EC = Eastern Cape, FS = Free State, GP = Gauteng Province, KZN = KwaZulu-Natal, LP= Limpopo Province, MP = Mpumalanga Province, NC = Northern Cape, NW = North West, WC = Western Cape, SA = South Africa.

4. 4 Methodology

4. 4. 1 From Data Collection to Meaning-Making: Constructing Data in Situated Dialogue

Research would never be built on a 'blank slate'; it rather builds on the existing practices and ideas (Kahlke, 2014, p. 39). The methodology is described as the 'study — the description, the explanation, and the justification for the methods, and not methods themselves' (Kaplan, 1964, as cited in Carter & Little, 2007, p. 1317). I, as a researcher, was the main instrument for data collection since that is characteristic of qualitative research (see Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). In my attempt to establish 'patterns, consistencies, and meaning' through the data collection process, I worked *inductively*, developing from specific to general themes (see Creswell, 2014, p. 4; Gray, 2004, p. 6). This strategy allowed me to establish a pattern of meaning rather than commencing with one (see Creswell, 2014). In this approach, the interpretation of the phenomena reveals concepts and theories. Generalisations, relationships, and even theories might be created using this method (see Gray, 2004).

As suggested by Patton (2015), I collected data from 'direct quotations from people about their experiences, opinions, feelings, and knowledge obtained through interviews' (see Merriam & Tisdell, 2016, p. 105). The research was employed by *concurrent* data collection which means the data was collected and analysed simultaneously. It is also a cross-sectional data collection as I collected the data from the participants at a single period of time.

The method of the research is to conduct interviews with history teachers. I did not analyse the texts in the history textbooks used by the teachers in the classroom, rather I investigated how the teachers understood the texts on Pan-Africanism and how they taught them from the textbooks.

I frame this phase not as mere 'data collection', but rather as a co-construction of situated meanings in historically and socially loaded educational spaces. Drawing on Hall's (1997) theory of representation, I view each interview encounter as a space where meanings about Pan-Africanism were not simply transferred or discovered, yet actively negotiated. The research settings —particularly schools divided along lines of historical privilege— were part

of the representational system through which teachers articulated their identities, pedagogies, and perceptions.

From an educational perspective, understanding how students are introduced to a topic —and how these teachings shape their understanding— requires examining both the pedagogical approaches and the resources used. One effective way to achieve this is by analysing textbooks, observing classroom practices, and interviewing teachers. Whilst I chose not to analyse the textbooks and do classroom observations, I opted to interview the teachers. With this in mind, I explored contemporary South African *public schools* to investigate how a theme as significant in public discourse as Pan-Africanism is integrated into classroom pedagogies. I have bounded my case to public schools in South Africa because according to the 2016 *Education Statistics in South Africa* published by the Department of Basic Education, 'of the 13 307 830 learners and students enrolled in all sectors of the basic education system in 2016, 12 342 283 **(92.7%) were in ordinary public schools** (*emphasis added*) and 590 282 (4.4%) were in ordinary independent schools. Of the learners in other institutions, 255 862 (1.9%) were in ECD centres and 119 403 (0.9%) were in special schools' Department of Basic Education, 2018, p. 3).

South African schools rely heavily on Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS)-compliant history textbooks as the primary teaching resource, given their centrality to exam preparation. In this context, I asked history teachers for their views on how Pan-Africanism is represented in the textbooks they used. Specifically, I explored *their perspectives* on the inclusion —or absence— of Pan-Africanism in these educational materials. Understanding their thoughts was essential to gaining insight into how they perceived and engaged with the content, as well as how they navigated any gaps or inaccuracies within the confines of the CAPS curriculum.

After asking the teachers how they used the textbooks in line with the official curriculum that had gone through long phases during the post-1994 period — as explained in *Literature Review* of this study, I asked them how they taught Pan-Africanism in the classroom.

Within this approach, I sought to analyse teachers' views on Pan-Africanism and how they think about teaching it. Hence, what they say about the textbooks is their interpretation of what is in the textbooks, i.e. —'a form of representation'. My analysis is therefore to grasp the nuances of how different people can see the same text and say different things and both to gauge what they think it is and what they are told it is — and how they themselves mediate meaning (representation) in the classroom or in their dialogues. I therefore interpret the views

of the Further Education and Training (FET) phase history teachers in their meaning-making process as representation on Pan-Africanism which allows me to give a particular understanding of how they respond as history teachers in relation to my research questions.

To evaluate the appropriateness of the questionnaires and make necessary adjustments, a pilot test of the interviews was conducted in Cape Town in four middle-class schools during the first month of data collection, February 2022. Pilot testing is also necessary, according to Tuckman (1994), to evaluate whether interview questions have the intended measurement standards. Nunan (1993) claims that pilot testing must be conducted for all research. It allows the researcher some interviewing practice, to understand which questions are ambiguous and should be reworded, and which questions generate worthless data. In addition, respondents may suggest new questions to be asked in the interview (see Merriam & Tisdell, 2016).

One key observation from the pilot interviews was that the question exploring the relationship between nation-building and the teaching of Pan-Africanism in schools was not well understood by respondents. The lack of clarity around this question suggested that it did not align well with the overall objectives of the study and was unlikely to produce meaningful data. Consequently, this question was removed for the actual fieldwork. However, the responses gathered during the pilot interviews were still incorporated into the study's analysis, as they provided valuable insights into the broader themes being examined. Other adjustments included minor rephrasing of questions to enhance clarity and ensure that they resonated with the participants' experiences. The pilot testing ultimately ensured the refinement of the interview guide, improving its effectiveness for subsequent data collection. After refining the pilot study, open-ended, semi-structured questions were used during the interview sessions. These included questions such as:

- Which textbook do you use?
- How is Pan-Africanism defined in the textbook?
- How much of Pan-Africanism is covered in your textbook? Which aspects?
- How does this textbook relate to your own understanding of Pan-Africanism?
- Do you consider yourself a Pan-Africanist? If so, in which way? And do you bring these ideas into your teaching and why, and how?
- How do you think the text influences the students' perception of Pan-Africanism?
- What are the reactions of the students to Pan-Africanism?

I conducted face-to-face and, when the interviewees preferred, online interviews synchronously (in real-time) via Computer-Mediated Communication (CMC) tools (Zoom and MS Teams). As suggested by Patton (2015), the type of questions were *opinion and values questions* which I was curious about, regarding participants' views or thoughts (see Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). My aim was thus to ask broad and general questions allowing the participants to construct their own meaning on the issue (see Creswell, 2014). In order for participants to be able to share their opinions, *one-on-one* (one interviewee at a time), *semi-structured*, and *probing* (or in-depth) interviews that lasted between 35 minutes to 1.30 hours were carried out. Merriam and Tisdell (2016) suggest that fewer and more open-ended questions are better for qualitative research and are typically used in that kind of research. Interviews did not exclusively adhere to a pre-determined set of questions. Having fewer broad questions and a conversational communication method detached me from the interview guide and allowed me to better listen to what my respondent had to say; to ask follow-up questions or to appropriately probe, get more details, explanations, clarifications, and examples, based on the interviewee's responses, enabling me to pursue lines of inquiry that could lead to conceivably valuable inputs (see Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). The answers of the person questioned determined which questions were asked. Firstly, interesting and easy questions (e.g., *Which textbooks do you use?*) were asked to interviewees to encourage them to stick around. Detailed questions (e.g., *What are the reactions of the students?*) were saved at the end of the interview. Probing interviews enabled me to obtain more in-depth insight and draw more definite indications about the forms of understandings of Pan-Africanism. This style of interviewing assisted me 'to respond to the situation at hand, to the emerging worldview of the respondent, and to new ideas on the topic' as suggested by Merriam and Tisdell (2016, p. 111).

I then continued interviewing until I believed that I had achieved *diversity* within the study population and *richness* of data, instead of using the 'saturation' concept (for further discussion, see Braun et al., 2019). Because of the participants' obvious eagerness to talk about Pan-Africanism, the data obtained was remarkably experiential and rich.

4. 4. 1. 1 My Positionality as a Researcher

I need to admit that instead of adopting an absolute binary perspective where I am either insider or outsider, as a researcher I find a space where I can take the position of both insider and outsider (see Dwyer & Buckle, 2009). Türkiye and South Africa —particularly Cape Town— have strong historical ties (with the historically oppressed communities) and given these ties to its people, Turkish migrants became part of the apartheid-defined 'Coloured'

demographic group. I am therefore not simply a foreign 'European' student — given the strong historical ties with the previously oppressed and marginalised communities denoted 'Coloured' during apartheid. This social and historical tie made it easier for me to 'become' an 'insider'. South Africa was therefore interesting for me to study as it has deep resonance for me. I believe that this is important because I am not just an 'outsider' becoming an 'insider' — but part of a historical collective of Turkish migrants to South Africa who have become proud Pan-African or 'rainbow nation' citizens over close to two centuries and closely linked to the formal development of the creole Afrikaans.[14]

In conducting this research, my positionality oscillated between insider and outsider perspectives, as elucidated by Breen (2007). While I shared a partial insider status with my participants, I remained largely an outsider. My affiliation with the University of Cape Town (UCT), one of South Africa's most prestigious higher education institutions, and my residency in Cape Town, facilitated a perception of insider status among my participants. Conversely, my outsider status was featured by differences in ethnic, racial, and religious identities. Research participants recognised that I was an outsider as soon as they saw my name in my emails to correspond with them and my accent as soon as I started speaking. I think that the relatively 'harmless' or 'innocent' position of Türkiye for South Africans compared to a citizen of a 'colonial' Western country contributed to making them feel more comfortable opening up to me because I was doing research on Pan-Africanism, a subject that is seen and perceived to be race-based. Pan-Africanism has also served many African countries in their struggle for independence from Western colonial powers and is still used as an important discursive force against the neo-colonial threat. For many of them, Türkiye was just a holiday destination where they travelled or a distant region where they watched its TV series — not an intimate threat. I think that in their eyes, as a non-South African, I was less likely to criticise my interviewees' views on Pan-Africanism than a South African or Western researcher. Thus, this insider–outsider (etic–emic) position of myself gave my participants 'rapport' and 'trust' (see Braun & Clarke, 2013, p. 45).

This dynamic of insider-outsider positionality was further contextualised by the ongoing student movement since #Rhodes Must Fall (2015–)[15] towards 'Africanisation' and

[14] For example, Ebrahim, M. H. PhD thesis (2007) 'The Transformation in the Management and Traditions of Hajj at the Cape' and his book *The Cape Hajj Tradition: Past and Present* (2009) explores historical interactions of Muslim communities at the Cape, including Turkish migrants, and how their cultural and linguistic contributions influenced the development of Afrikaans and the broader social fabric of South Africa.

[15] Fallist movements are social movements rooted in anti-colonial and anti-racist struggles. They call for equality in education, social justice, and the dismantling of structural racism. For further scholarship on Fallist movements, see Habib (2019), Kenyon and Madlingozi (2022), Martinerie (2021), and Ngcaweni and Ngcaweni (2018).

‘decolonisation’ at the University of Cape Town during the period of my study. This movement, which aimed to create a more inclusive and relevant educational environment, emphasised transformations in university curricula, its language policy, symbolic representation in its heritage symbols and architecture, institutional culture, and research priorities. The emphasis on these aspects of ‘Africanisation’ accentuated the significance of my research within the broader academic and sociopolitical landscape of UCT, reinforcing the relevance and urgency of addressing Pan-Africanism in a way that resonated with both historical and contemporary struggles for independence and decolonisation (see Ahmed, 2020; Bechuke & Emekako, 2022; UCT, 2024).

While my prolonged engagement with South African society —academically, professionally, and socially— has deepened my contextual understanding, I acknowledge that my positionality remains that of an outsider in several significant respects. As a Turkish, non-black, young, veiled Muslim woman and non-South African researcher affiliated with a historically elite white institution (UCT), I did not only occupy a position of relative privilege in terms of class, nationality, and institutional capital but was also perhaps viewed by the non-Muslim male interviewees as ‘the other’. This inevitably shaped both the research process and the interactions with participants. I did not speak any African languages, and I operated within a framework of Western academic inquiry, which diverges from many local epistemological traditions, including oral storytelling and indigenous ways of knowing. This methodological orientation may have limited my capacity to fully access or interpret certain knowledges, particularly those embedded in communal or affective dimensions of township schools. I remained aware of these asymmetries during interviews and throughout the analysis, and took deliberate steps to centre participants’ narratives, use culturally sensitive listening, and allow teachers to frame their interpretations on their own terms. However, I recognise that the power differentials —particularly related to European and global north structural privilege conducting research in Africa— cannot be denied.

This reflexive stance became central to how I engaged with participants. My presence in the classroom and in interviews often invited moments of self-explanation and narrative reflexivity from teachers. This dynamic aligns with Hall’s (1997) understanding of representation as a discursive process: I was not merely observing representations of Pan-Africanism but participating in the dialogical contexts in which these representations were constituted.

4. 4. 2 Data Analyses Techniques

Nicholls (2003) points out that the quality of studies varies because many researchers are clear about how they define their samples, but some are vague in outlining the instrument they apply to analyse the sample. Based on this comprehension, for a sharply focused research project, I will outline my research tools appropriately and explain how and why I operationalised my research design in the way I did.

I conducted *thematic analysis* (TA) as an analytic method described by Braun and Clarke (2006) that they now label their approach as a *reflexive thematic analysis* (RTA) (Braun et al., 2019) to 'thematise meanings' (Holloway & Todres, 2003, p. 347) and for 'identifying, analysing and reporting patterns (themes) within data' (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 79). Thematic analysis facilitated me with a fruitful research tool offering a 'rich and detailed, yet complex, account of data' (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 78). This approach enabled my large dataset to be handled resulting in a 'clear and organised final report' (see King, 2004, as cited in Nowell et. al., 2017, p. 2) and a 'compelling *interpretation* of the data, grounded in the data' (see Braun et al., 2019, p. 848). Using thematic analysis, I investigated socially constructed realities and experiences of my participants thematically.

In connecting this analysis to Stuart Hall's representation theoretical framework, I applied his understanding of meaning-making as a socially mediated process shaped by discourse and power relations. Hall's concept of representation as a 'process by which meaning is produced and exchanged between members of a culture' (Hall, 1997, p. 15) informed the thematic exploration of participant narratives. This theoretical lens framed the analysis, situating the identified themes within broader sociocultural dynamics and hegemonic discourses. By integrating Hall's insights, the thematic analysis contextualised recurring patterns within participants' lived realities, reflecting the interplay of individual agency and structural forces. The use of reflexive thematic analysis to examine representation aligns closely with Hall's theory, particularly its emphasis on meaning as actively constructed through cultural and social systems. Reflexive thematic analysis, rooted in social constructionism, mirrors Hall's perspective by emphasising the co-construction of meaning between researchers and data, shaped by positionality and sociocultural contexts. Hall's encoding/decoding model, where meaning is dynamically negotiated between producers and audiences, parallels reflexive thematic analysis, which iteratively generates and interprets themes. Both approaches reject fixed, universal truths, recognising meaning as socially and historically situated. Through this lens, reflexive thematic analysis becomes a critical and reflexive process that foregrounds the

role of power, culture, and context in the construction of meaning. This integration of theoretical and methodological perspectives ensures coherence between the framework and analytic outcomes.

By doing RTA, which is a *fully qualitative* approach, I acknowledge my *active* role as a researcher in knowledge production (see Braun et al., 2019). By being conscious of self-reflexivity, researchers are aware that their own experiences affect their interpretation, and they position themselves in the study to recognise how their interpretation is influenced by their own personal, cultural, and historical experiences (see Creswell, 2014). It is *reflexive* because I acknowledge that my analysis is influenced and interpreted by my disciplinary background (studying history at undergraduate and postgraduate levels and being highly engaged in African philosophy, the South African education system, textbook research, and sociological foundations during the course of my doctorate), my faith (Islam), ethnicity (Turkish), social class (upper-middle), and so on. This reflexive approach is directly linked to my insider–outsider positionality as a researcher. Adopting a non-binary stance, I positioned myself in a space where I could oscillate between insider and outsider roles (see Dwyer & Buckle, 2009). For example, my historical connection to the Turkish migrant community in South Africa placed me within a collective narrative of marginalisation and integration, facilitating a partial insider status. At the same time, my ethnic and cultural differences marked me as an outsider, shaping participants' perceptions and interactions with me.

The use of Reflexive Thematic Analysis (RTA) in this study is not only a methodological choice but a theoretical one. RTA allows for an engagement with meaning as culturally and discursively produced — a process that resonates with Hall's view of representation as constitutive. Rather than assuming themes to 'emerge' naturally from data, I understood them as representations shaped by my own positionality and the broader social discourses in which teachers operate.

Since the qualitative design is emergent, it is necessary to *simultaneously* analyse data as the data is being collected (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). Waiting until all data are gathered means, missing out on the chance to obtain more accurate and relevant data (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016).

I tracked a systematic and six-step process developed by Clarke and Braun (2006), noting that the names of the processes have evolved from the original paper: familiarisation; coding; generating initial teams; developing and reviewing themes; defining, refining, and naming themes; writing up, remarking this as a 'reflexive and recursive' process rather than

rigidly linear (see Braun et al., 2019, p. 852). I conceptualise themes as 'shared meaning-based patterns' (see Braun et al., 2019) which are 'constructed from codes' capturing the 'essence of some degree of recurrent meaning' within my dataset (see Braun & Clarke, 2016, p. 740) instead of 'groupings of data' or 'domain summaries' (see Terry & Hayfield, 2020).

This thematic approach to data analysis aligns with Stuart Hall's theory of representation, which posits that meaning is constructed through cultural systems and power dynamics rather than being fixed or inherent. Hall's critique of neutrality in representation complements reflexive thematic analysis, which emphasises recognising the researcher's positionality in shaping themes. Viewing themes as constructed cultural artefacts reflecting contested meanings aligns with Hall's focus on the dynamic and mediated nature of representation. Integrating Hall's theory establishes a cohesive framework, situating the analysis within broader cultural and social contexts. This approach ensures that the study explores representation as an interpretative and socially constructed process.

After transcribing the face-to-face meetings on my phone and the MS Teams and Zoom meetings on OneDrive, I immersed myself in the data as the first phase of thematic analysis. Drawing on Braun and Clarke's (2006) methodology, I actively read through the entire data set, seeking patterns and meanings. This process was informed by Stuart Hall's theoretical framework on representation, particularly his understanding of how meanings are constructed, contested, and mediated through cultural practices. By engaging with the data through this lens, I explored how representation shapes and is shaped by the narratives and discourses present in the interactions, focusing on the dynamics of meaning-making in the context of my research themes.

In the second phase, I coded the data concentrating on 'patterns and insights' related to Pan-Africanism, as 'representation' in the history classroom, and this was guided by the constructionist frame lens, since my application in analysing the data based on Stuart Hall's representation theory is within the broader theoretical framework of interpretivism (see Merriam & Tisdell, 2016, pp. 208–211). As the themes determined are intimately related to the data itself, I analysed the data predominantly *inductively* (bottom-up), therefore, I *open-coded* (see Braun & Clarke, 2013) the data. My analysis is thus data-driven rather than attempting to squeeze it into a predefined coding frame (see Braun & Clarke, 2006). The classification was words and short sequences of words that 'symbolically assigns a summative, salient, essence-capturing, and/or evocative attribute' (as theorised in Saldaña, 2013, p. 3). It was mostly participants' exact words on the ideas of Pan-Africanism, such as 'economic decolonisation'

or ‘political unification’. In other words, how Pan-Africanism got ‘decoded’ in the classrooms (Hall, 1980). This process is known as the *concept-indicator model* (Williams & Moser, 2019). Open coding allowed me to capture any data with a word or phrase which appears to be ‘responsive’ to my research question. During this process, I conducted a more *semantic* approach concentrating on analysing the data’s explicit content, but where appropriate and as the analysis developed, I also conducted a latent approach examining deeper, and more implicit content (as discussed in Braun & Clarke, 2019). I, therefore, broadened my analysis, where appropriate, rotating from a descriptive to an interpretative level relating to relevant literature (see Braun & Clarke, 2006) engaging with the socio-educational context in which the teachers create their meaning. Hence, I systematically studied transcribed verbal data to seek evidence of their meaning on Pan-Africanism and how this meaning manifest into a social reality (see discussion in Hardy et.al. 2004).

Then, as the third level of the TA phase, I made a master list including recurring patterns and regularities to construct categories or themes in manageable numbers (see Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). Merriam and Tisdell (2016) agree that the fewer categories a researcher has, the higher the level of abstraction would, in turn, be easier to convey the findings to others. However, a large number of categories is at odds with revealing the analysis that has placed too much into a concrete definition.

As the fourth layer of the data analysis, I developed and reviewed the themes. I have tested my *candidate* themes if they offered the best explanation of the dataset (see Terry & Hayfield, 2020). Many themes that I thought were very important and could stand on their own were gathered under a single theme in this process. I have also excluded some themes as they did not work across the data such as ‘nation-building’.

Then, I named the themes ‘succinctly articulating the central organising concept’ of my theme (see Terry & Hayfield, 2020). In the process, I named the themes in such a way that they contrasted in middle-class and working-class schools and thus enhanced the meaning. Naming themes embraced interpretative element. For example, none of the teachers in middle-class schools said they were teaching Pan-Africanism in the name of ‘history as a discipline’, but I named my theme that because that’s what they meant to do.

In the last level of the data analysis, I wrote up a final report by linking my analysis to situate my research into the ‘body of literature’ (see Terry & Hayfield, 2020). In this process I structured my data analysis chapter into two sections and positioned the themes accordingly.

Drawing from Hall's (1997) notion that representations are produced through cultural codes, I analysed teachers' narratives as symbolic acts shaped by social, racial, and class-based structures. For example, how teachers discussed Pan-Africanism in township versus former Model C schools was not only content-driven but revealed deeper cultural logics and historical structural power arrangements. The thematic codes were thus understood not as isolated semantic units, but as representations situated within a larger socio-political context.

4. 5 Fieldwork Research Challenges and Limitations

My positionality as an outsider-insider was instrumental in enabling me to conduct the research much more easily close to home than elsewhere. One of the limitations of the study is that the snowball sampling technique was effective in the Western Cape but less successful in Gauteng and KwaZulu-Natal. This disparity was due to my physical distance from these provinces and my limited familiarity with local networks, in contrast to the Western Cape, where I reside and study at the locally situated University of Cape Town (UCT). There were challenges in communicating with teachers in township schools due to limited resources, including non-functional telephones, insufficient data and Wi-Fi access, and the significant distances between locations. To illustrate, I did not receive any response to my emails sent to township schools to invite the teachers to participate in the study. I then visited these schools in Cape Town townships such as Khayelitsha, Philippi, Nyanga, Gugulethu, and Delft, to speak to administrators and get permission to interview teachers. Almost every staff member in these schools said that they had not received my emails but were willing to allow me to interview teachers at the school. However, the in-person technique of visiting schools was not possible in other provinces due to lack of responses and commitments from the teachers and the physical distances across various locations of the teachers who responded in Gauteng and KZN, which would have made it impractical. I then selected to conduct the interviews online to secure participation (for similar methodological challenges in fieldwork, see Thummapol et. al., 2019).

I received responses from Gauteng and KZN, but these were limited to middle-class schools — most likely due to their easier access to resources and information, and my physical distance as researcher from these schools. Thus, my findings are mainly for the Western Cape. Reaching out to schools in the Western Cape was also easier because of my association with a local prestigious university and my access to school networks there — both socially and through the university. Given the regional and urban predominance of the response rate, this is a study admittedly within a limited scope.

In conclusion, this chapter has outlined the key aspects of the research design and methodology, including the descriptive nature of the study, the ethical considerations, the methods of data collection and analysis, and limitations of the study. The integration of reflexive thematic analysis, informed by Stuart Hall's theory of representation, has guided the investigation of Pan-Africanism in South African high schools, considering the role of social class and the complex dynamics of meaning-making. The process of data collection and analysis, which was conducted concurrently, allowed for an ongoing refinement of the research focus, ensuring the emergence of relevant themes and insights.

Overall, the methodology chapter was not simply an articulation of steps undertaken; it reflects a commitment to theory-informed, reflexive, and contextually grounded research. In line with Hall's cultural theory, I treated data as symbolic artefacts, entangled in wider regimes of meaning, and constantly shaped by historical legacies and discursive positioning.

The next chapter will delve into the discussion of findings, focusing on the social class-based variations in the understanding and representation of Pan-Africanism in history classrooms. It will explore how the socio-economic context of the schools, alongside the social positions of teachers and students, shapes the teaching and reception of Pan-Africanism in contemporary South Africa.

Chapter 5

Discussion of Findings in this Study

This study uncovers a complex and diverse landscape of Pan-Africanism representation in South African history classrooms, shaped significantly by the respective socio-economic status of the schools. The study found that representation of Pan-Africanism differed significantly across socio-economic contexts of the schools and was also influenced by the social positions of both teachers and students. While all teachers acknowledged the importance of teaching Pan-Africanism, the motivation for doing so varied substantially depending on the socio-economic status of their schools, and the responses from their students in engaging with Pan-Africanism in contemporary post-apartheid South Africa. The findings reflect a predominant Western Cape response from the three provinces involved in the study (Western Cape, Gauteng and KwaZulu-Natal). The lack of responses from the latter two provinces was an unexpected outcome.

The analysis and discussion of the findings are divided into two parts:

Part One: Pan-Africanism in high school history classrooms in contemporary South Africa

Part Two: Representation of Pan-Africanism in high school history classrooms in contemporary South Africa

5. 1 PART ONE

Pan-Africanism in High School History Classrooms in Contemporary South Africa

5. 1. 1 The Emergence of a Contemporary Complex Picture Beyond Racial 'Determinism'

Initially at the start of my doctoral journey, I anticipated that the teachers' understandings of Pan-Africanism, as well as South African high school students' exposure to the concept, would vary significantly along the lines of their apartheid-labelled ethnic, cultural, or racial backgrounds — whether black, white, Indian, or 'Coloured'. However, the data revealed a more complex picture. For example, I expected to observe a dynamic interplay between IsiZulu identity and Pan-Africanism in KwaZulu-Natal. Yet, I found no distinct regional perspective in this province, albeit likely due to the limited responses from working-class schools. Teachers in middle-class schools in this province exhibited views on Pan-Africanism that aligned closely with those in middle-class schools in the Western Cape and

Gauteng. This finding underlined social and economic class, rather than racial ethnicity, as a significant factor in the representation of Pan-Africanism in South African schools in a present post-apartheid context.

These findings led me to focus on a class-based analysis that, in this context, is not colourblind but intersects with broader social and historical dynamics. While South African society is undeniably divided along racial lines in terms of power, class, location, and the distribution of resources (Bundy, 2007), this study found a significant influence of class dynamics over ethnic, cultural, or racial categorical influences. Building on Chisholm's (2018) call to examine the intersection of race and class and acknowledging the 'relational nature of class' (p. 233), this study argues that the contemporary insights into Pan-Africanism shared by teachers from different social strata within complex and ongoing changing political and social environments in a society in transition, 30 years after its first democratic elections after close to 350 years of colonial rule, should rather be viewed as trends (or *probabilistic causality*) rather than deterministic outcomes (Frosch & Johnson-Laird, 2011). A lot is still in flux and ever-changing, and ever-shifting socially and politically, though the long legacy of apartheid structural economic inequalities has remained largely intact in schools.

Thompson (1963) argued that class is not a structure but a historical relationship, shaped through social processes and lived experiences. This dynamic conceptualisation challenges deterministic views of class as merely an economic category, instead framing it as a fluid and relational construct shaped by historical and social contexts. The analysis of the data in this study aligns with Thompson's approach, exploring class as a product of ongoing complex struggles and related agencies rather than a fixed or universal category.

In examining the class dynamics at play in the representation of Pan-Africanism in South African classrooms, the study draws on Blommaert's and Makoe's (2012) assertion that understanding social class in contemporary South Africa must not rely on totalising or simplistic notions. They emphasise that class operates within an ideological framework of democracy, equity, and equal opportunity but remains influenced by both old and new social orders. This perspective resonates with the study's focus on concrete manifestations of class markers — such as the use of the western hegemonic English language and ongoing historical and inequitable access to educational resources. These aspects of analysis are much more useful in the South African context, than broad, deterministic categorisations. The analysis of the data therefore emphasises the historical and relational aspects of class and their roles in shaping how Pan-Africanism is represented across different social strata. These insights, while shaped

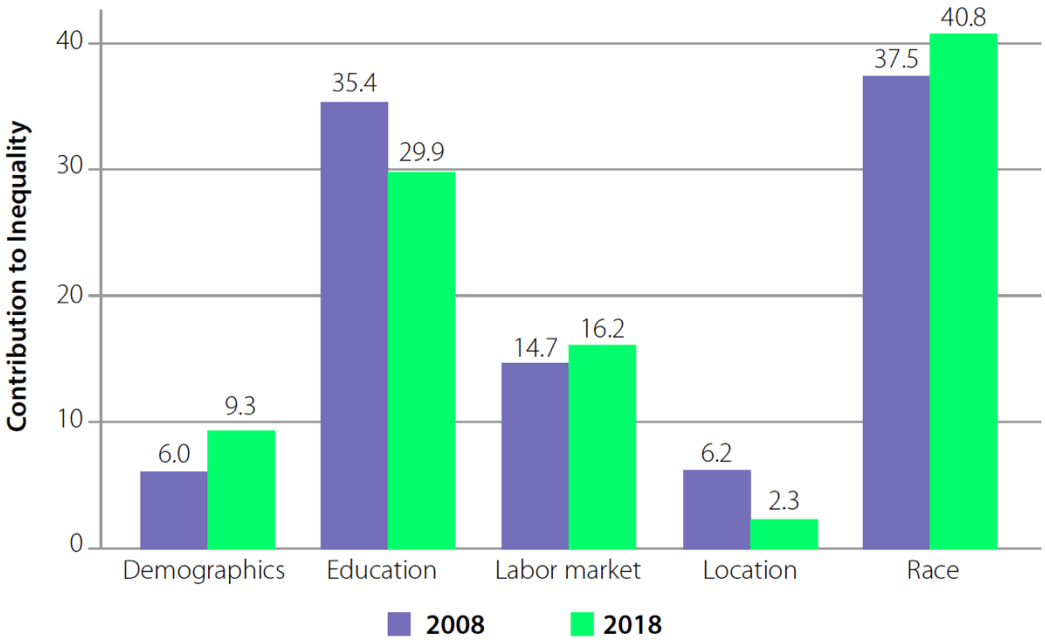
by South Africa's racialised history, prioritise class as a lens to explore the complex dynamics within contemporary educational settings in classrooms.

The legacy of apartheid has left deep-seated inequalities that persist in contemporary society, as evidenced by the ongoing disparities in education and economic opportunities. For instance, Kennemer and Knaus (2019) discuss how the educational system in South Africa continues to reflect the inequalities of the apartheid era, with significant disparities in resource allocation and curriculum design that favour white students over their black counterparts. The divergence in how social class shapes perceptions of Pan-Africanism is particularly striking given the enduring racial segregation in South African schools nearly three decades after apartheid. As Gruijters et al. (2024) observe, in 2021, the typical white student attended a school with a student body composed of 68.5% white, 3.3% Indian, 8.5% Coloured, and 19.6% black students. On the other hand, the average black student attended a school where 0.9% of the students were white, 0.7% Indian, 2.0% 'Coloured', and 96.4% black. The isolation index for Indian students was 41.6%, while for 'Coloured' students, it was 71.4% (p. 181). This high level of racial and socio-economic segregation —among the most severe globally— profoundly influenced students' perceptions and engagement with Pan-Africanism, as reported by their teachers, particularly at the intersection of race and class.

South Africa holds the unenviable distinction of having the highest income inequality globally, reflected in its Gini coefficient of approximately 0.67. This widely used statistical measure, ranging from 0 (perfect equality) to 1 (perfect inequality), highlights the extent to which income distribution within the country remains starkly uneven. Evidence indicates that income inequality has not only persisted but has also fluctuated and increased since the end of apartheid (Valodia, 2023). Among the primary contributors, race remains the most significant, with its impact on inequality rising from 37.5% in 2008 to 41% in 2018, pointing out the enduring economic disparities rooted in apartheid-era policies (World Bank, 2022). Education represents the second-largest factor, accounting for 30% of overall inequality, largely due to restricted access to higher education and limited opportunities for human capital development. The World Bank's *Human Capital Index* reveals the gravity of this challenge, estimating that children born in 2020 will achieve only 43% of their full productivity potential as adults, reflecting systemic barriers that perpetuate intergenerational inequality (World Bank, 2022).

Figure 5. 1

Decomposition of Inequality in South Africa



Source: World Bank, 2022.

Furthermore, I conducted interviews immediately after the Covid-19 restrictions eased. Some teachers in middle-class schools mentioned how they use Google Classroom while teaching Pan-Africanism during Covid and how some teachers still utilise it. Accordingly, the Covid lockdown was another indicator of how access to digitalisation changed the learning quality. In this sense, David, a history teacher in a middle-class school articulated, '… thanks to Covid, we are very much focused on the Google Classroom now'. A very similar statement was made by Ethan, a history teacher in a middle-class school in Cape Town:

> Everything which I have said to you, we have also, because of Covid, everything which we teach, we have changed into MP4 video lessons for them as well. So, the entire syllabus, particularly on this Pan-Africanist thread, is all on video lessons for them, which obviously now we [do] face to face teaching again, we do not often use at all. We will be teaching, but then on Google Classroom they have got it as revision for an assessment.

In stark contrast, learners in under-resourced and rural schools face significant barriers to digital access, as highlighted by Dimakatso, a history teacher in a working-class school: 'If you look at our schools, only science students go to the lab from Grade 8 to 12 — they do not know the computer in front of them'. The digital divide is demonstrated by the challenges faced during the Covid-19 pandemic. As Dube (2020) argues, while the South African government

promoted online learning as a primary alternative during the pandemic, this mode excluded many rural learners due to their lack of access to the internet, learning management systems, and low-tech software. Dube's study revealed that rural learners, as critical stakeholders in education, faced unprecedented challenges in adjusting to online learning, thus exacerbating existing inequalities in education. Similarly, Ndebele and Mlambo's (2021) study on South Africa's higher education found that the pandemic intensified structural disparities: Historically Black Universities (HBUs) struggled with limited digital access and institutional resources, whereas Historically White Universities (HWUs) demonstrated resilience due to their established infrastructure. Pika and Reddy's (2022) study similarly highlights how emergency remote teaching (ERT) during Covid-19 exacerbated inequalities in teaching and learning, disproportionately affecting low-income and female students and lecturers, while favouring middle-class students. These findings illustrate that while middle-class learners benefit from digital tools that cultivate a global perspective and critical awareness, the structural inequalities in access to technology and resources hinder the educational opportunities of rural and working-class learners. Mbeki's vision of the African Renaissance has largely remained unfulfilled in working-class schools, where limited resources, lack of technological access, and insufficient educational reform hinder the development of an empowered, innovative youth as envisioned in his agenda.

Moreover, as reported by their teachers, middle-class learners, often situated in better-resourced schools, have greater access to digital tools, which allow them to engage with social justice debates at both national and global levels. Platforms like X (formerly Twitter) and other online spaces play a crucial role in shaping their critical thinking and awareness of issues like decolonisation and institutional racism. These tools also influence their construction of African-related identities by exposing them to a diversity of voices and perspectives. As Sarah, the history teacher, aptly observed, 'The modern child is a global child … if they have access, they have access to a lot'. Access to digital resources not only shapes their knowledge but also fosters a cosmopolitan outlook, enabling them to view African identity within a global context.

The findings point to an important intersection between social class, access to resources, and identity construction. While middle-class learners increasingly define their African belonging through a digital and global lens, poor black students are left with limited opportunities to engage critically with these ideas. This also means that middle-class students are exposed to a wide range of online debates, diverse discourses on Pan-Africanism on the continent and within the African Diaspora, while their resource-deprived counterparts rely on the teachers' political agency and their own lived experience in xenophobic post-apartheid

townships where bread and butter issues and competition for limited resources to sustain livelihoods prevail.

This shift represents a critical departure from the past, where working-class black schools were central to movements of intellectual resistance and Pan-African thought of Sobukwe and others. This divergence raises questions about the role of post-apartheid socio-economic inequalities in shaping educational outcomes and identity construction.

Has the sense of disempowerment in under-resourced schools led to an erosion of the critical historical consciousness that previously defined these spaces? Addressing this question requires an exploration of how poverty, teacher training, and resource allocation influence students' engagement with African identity and social justice. It also calls for a critical discussion on the structural inequalities in the education system that perpetuate these trends, ultimately shaping the trajectories of Pan-Africanism and African consciousness in contemporary South Africa.

Furthermore, the language barrier presented by English, the medium of instruction in working-class schools, significantly affects students' educational experiences and outcomes. As Soudien (2012) observes, English, once closely associated with the colonial project, has been reimagined in a globalised world as a seemingly neutral tool for economic and social advancement. However, as Stuart Hall's (1996) theorisation of cultural hegemony highlights, language is never neutral; it operates as a mechanism through which dominant groups maintain power by shaping what is seen as valuable or normative. However, while English can facilitate access to global opportunities, it often excludes those who are less proficient, perpetuating inequalities, as Kock et al. (2018) observed. This dynamic is evident in working-class schools, where students struggle with limited English proficiency and less qualified teachers, in contrast to middle-class schools, which often employ educators with advanced qualifications, including postgraduate degrees in subjects like English. In my research, for instance, all teachers in middle-class schools were exclusively white and held Master's degrees, a level of qualification absent among educators in working-class schools. Combined with superior provision to resources, and the privilege of English as hegemonic language, middle-class students benefited from being equipped with essential assessment skills in the curriculum such as comprehension, judgement, extrapolation, and empathy — critical components of history education. Claussen and Osborne's (2013) analysis of cultural capital aligns with Hall's insights, showing how students with greater access to hegemonic cultural capital —typically those from middle-class

backgrounds— achieve greater success in subjects like science because of their familiarity with culturally valued knowledge and practices in a capitalist society where such knowledge counts.

The historical foundations of this inequality can be traced back to the language policies of Bantu Education, which mandated mother-tongue instruction in primary schools. While ostensibly supportive of cultural preservation, this policy often left students ill-prepared for the transition to secondary education conducted in English or Afrikaans (Argaw, 2016; Kamwangamalu, 2003). This linguistic barrier entrenched educational disadvantage, as many students struggled to master a foreign medium of instruction, limiting their opportunities for higher education and skilled employment (Mlambo et al., 2024). Furthermore, the enduring legacy of Bantu Education continues to affect historically disadvantaged institutions, which face challenges such as inadequate resource allocation and diminished institutional reputation (Africa & Mutizwa-Mangiza, 2017; Nyahodza & Higgs, 2017).

However, I do not suggest, as with the point on poverty, that working class teachers are necessarily stereotypically of poorer quality (due to language) as they do provide the cultural capital on critical political awareness of significantly important issues such as Afrophobia (a different form of literacy), largely absent in middle-class schools — where there is currently no need to. While middle-class students may not face the same need to engage with these issues, working-class teachers actively construct meaning around critical social realities, empowering students to recognise and question them. This can be understood through Stuart Hall's (1997) representation theory, where representation is not merely about transmitting pre-existing meanings but is a process in which meaning is actively produced and shaped within specific cultural and social contexts. Thus, while working-class students may lack access to institutional resources, they gain significant awareness through teachers who help them engage critically with the social realities affecting their communities. This process of meaning-making resonates with Hall's assertion that representation is a site of struggle, where both cultural and ideological meanings are contested. The role of teachers in this context becomes even more critical, as they not only provide students with the tools to engage with and challenge the injustices in their communities but also co-create knowledge through reflective dialogue. This approach, rooted in Hall's concept of representation, may enable students to not just passively receive information but to critically engage and ultimately transform their conditions, enhancing their social consciousness and agency. Thus, despite the lack of material resources, the pedagogical approach adopted by teachers may serve as a powerful mechanism for fostering social consciousness and agency among working-class students.

This finding is consistent with Paulo Freire's (1970) critique of traditional educational models that treat students as passive recipients of knowledge. Instead, Freire advocates for an approach that encourages active, critical engagement through dialogue, where both teachers and students co-create knowledge. In contexts where institutional resources are limited, the role of teachers becomes even more critical, and the extra pedagogical burden they carry, unlike their more comfortable middle-class peers, should be recognised. Through reflective dialogue and fostering critical thinking, teachers empower students to engage with the social issues surrounding them. This process not only enhances students' awareness of the injustices in their communities but also equips them with the tools to challenge and transform these conditions. Thus, despite the lack of material resources, the pedagogical approach adopted by teachers can serve as a powerful mechanism for fostering social consciousness and agency among working-class students.

This socio-economic class disparity in educational standards is evident as discussed in this data analysis chapter of the study, where direct quotations from teachers' statements illustrate variations in English language proficiency and knowledge. It is crucial to note that the majority, if not all, of the teachers interviewed from middle-class schools possessed robust educational backgrounds, enabling them to address Pan-Africanism with greater scholarly depth and detail. For example, Elizabeth, a history teacher from a middle-class school in KwaZulu-Natal with an Honours degree in the history of Congo, indicated that she incorporated additional content on Pan-Africanism into her lessons based on her 'own notes'. Similarly, Maria, another teacher in Cape Town, was recognised with the best Master's thesis award by the internationally renowned Georg Eckert Institute for her work on history textbooks, further highlighting the advanced academic credentials of teachers in these schools. Furthermore, the teachers in middle-class schools were particularly supportive during my fieldwork, demonstrating their own understanding and familiarity as researchers themselves with the challenges involved in conducting research.

However, there is a stark irony in this finding as Pan-Africanism promotes indigenous languages in Africa. The teachers in white middle-class schools tend to be mono-lingual in the Eurocentric language of English, while the working-class schools thrive in African multilingualism — more aligned to the appropriate teaching literacies required to teach Pan-Africanism and a decolonial imperative.

The substandard teaching and learning practices observed in working-class schools were also significantly influenced by overcrowded classrooms, as evidenced by the experiences

shared by teachers in these settings. Aphelele, a history teacher from a working-class school, poignantly highlighted the stark contrast between affluent and impoverished areas, illustrating this disparity through the visible differences in social surroundings, facilities, water and sanitation provision and infrastructure. These teachers are evidently often left feeling hopeless, incompetent and ineffective in their work. Aphelele's observation accentuates a broader socio-economic divide, which impacts educational quality and accessibility. He said:

> You can see most of the white areas is quiet. The streets are quiet. But here you can see for yourself up and down, up and down. What does it tell you? These people are not working. And there are many carwashes on the road. Have you seen them? The source of income. That is the township. You can see the gap between that side and this side. The rich versus the poor. The inequalities that I talk about. It is a huge difference. That is why I am saying the white teacher can come and teach at the school can last even a day. Just come and 'ahh, I do not want to come back here'.

This observation points to the broader ongoing socio-economic divide that impacts educational quality and accessibility. Aphelele's statement highlighted the contextual challenges that hinder effective teaching in under-resourced schools, particularly for teachers unfamiliar with the lived realities of students in these settings. Even highly qualified middle-class white teachers, despite their academic content knowledge expertise, may in all likelihood struggle to connect with students or address the complexities of teaching Pan-Africanism in such environments. They would be found incompetent on the basic level of indigenous knowledges, clan histories, African languages, metaphors and proverbs — crucial for teaching African history. This disparity demonstrates the necessity for a deeper understanding of social dynamics and appreciation of teachers' significant struggles within working class African communities to improve educational outcomes, and to appraise 'representations' of African content more cautiously.

Aphelele further emphasised the profound impact of the apparent inequalities on the educational experiences of students. His assertion that teachers of different racial/ethnic/cultural backgrounds might struggle to adapt to the conditions in overcrowded working-class schools highlights a critical aspect of the systemic challenges faced by these institutions. The overcrowding issue, emphasised as a primary concern, compounds the difficulties in delivering effective education. He noted:

> It is painful, but they have to be told. The inequalities that is painful for me in South Africa. The deepened inequality. What is happening in the country. So that is when it comes to education. That is why I am saying, for me, coming from a black township, I can teach at any school. But a person of a different race,

> I do not think they last for a day or two given the situation here at the school and the resources. First, overcrowding is the main problem.

Aphelele's reflections highlighted the multifaceted challenges facing working-class schools, particularly in historically marginalised communities. His commentary on racial and professional adaptability further illuminated the ongoing impact of systemic inequalities. The overcrowding he described was not merely a logistical issue but a symptom of broader structural disparities, reflecting historical inequities that remain unaddressed. Aphelele noted the significant challenges of teaching large classes —comprising 50 to 60 students— while simultaneously managing administrative tasks such as marking and providing feedback. These observations are consistent with the findings of Hoffman et al. (2016), who contend that teachers in poorly resourced schools often prioritise meeting fundamental requirements, as they face obstacles like overcrowded classrooms and scarce resources. Likewise, accountability in these settings is typically focused on adhering to more straightforward procedures and administration rather than fostering innovative teaching methods or comprehensive student growth. Matsepe et al. (2019) similarly found that high school teachers in Limpopo Province face significant challenges in overcrowded classrooms, including difficulties in engaging learners and fostering critical thinking and problem-solving skills. Aphelele's reflection on the hardships faced by students, many of whom come from disadvantaged backgrounds, including orphaned or single-parent households, demonstrates the profound inequalities that exacerbate educational difficulties in these environments. This dynamic further illustrates how systemic inequities constrain both teaching practices and learning opportunities in under-resourced schools.

The intersectionality of race, class, and professional preparedness in South African education became evident as teachers from diverse racial and socio-economic backgrounds struggled to adjust to these conditions. Based on teachers' observations, it is evident that while education served as a site of political mobilisation and ideological contestation during the apartheid resistance years, the current context —characterised by persistent and, in some cases, deepening inequalities— reinforced the structural disparities shaping the experiences and perspectives of both teachers and reportedly their students. This may have led to a noticeable decline in political consciousness within schools, reflecting broader patterns of depoliticisation in the democratic era. Thomas (2009) engages with Paulo Freire's critique of the exclusion of the masses from transformative processes, highlighting the pitfalls of attempting to 'deliver' liberation to them rather than fostering their active participation. This critique provides a compelling lens for analysing the shortcomings of post-apartheid political leadership in South

Africa. These failures are exemplified by the ANC leadership's prioritisation of aligning the South African economy with the interests of both domestic and international capital, often at the expense of the majority population.

A similar pattern emerges in the findings of Dryden-Peterson and Robinson (2023) who documented significant changes in how history education connects the past and present. In the late 1990s, history education framed the present as a continuation of collective struggles for equity, emphasising the necessity of systematic economic transformation to create opportunities. By 2019, however, they found that teachers portrayed apartheid history as a distant past, disconnected from the contemporary realities of inequity, violence, and unemployment. The mechanisms for change shifted from collective action to the rare successes of individuals, reflecting the broader depoliticisation and neoliberal individualism characteristic of the democratic era in South Africa. However, they nature of politicisation of the students (e.g. political party membership) is not clear in this study, as the students themselves were not interviewed.

5. 1. 2 Teachers and the Shared (though Differentiated) Apartheid Experiences

This doctoral study highlights how Pan-Africanism is differentially represented in contemporary South African history classrooms, considering the unique context where virtually all teachers experienced apartheid (albeit respectively as white beneficiaries and the black exploited and oppressed). During apartheid, white schools (reflected in today's middle-class fee-paying, quintile 4 and 5, or ex-model C schools) were traditionally not sites of political struggle against the regime, while black schools (reflected in today's working-class, no-fee, township, quintile 2 and 3 schools) were sites of political ideologies (teaching and reading Biko, Fanon and Pan-Africanism in its various forms). Both teachers and students were political activists in such township schools, engaging these philosophies, ideologies and concepts in and outside the classrooms to fight white supremacy and apartheid capitalism. In this regard, the findings were unexpected, and contrary to the historical role of township schools as sites of Pan-Africanist thought and activism, as discussed by Wieder (2003), who highlight how Cape Town classrooms during apartheid were spaces of intellectual resistance against the apartheid regime (see also Hyslop, 1999; Kallaway, 2002).

Though the study does not entail interviews with students directly, all students taught by the teachers (who participated in the study) belong to the supposed 'born free' generation (born from 1994 onwards). While these students share a historical 'labelling' due to the significant period in South Africa's history of when they were born, the findings indicate

hugely differentiated ongoing economic legacies and discrepancies along social class reflected between the two school groups as categorised for the data analysis purposes in this study. Whilst township teachers were acutely aware of the historical legacies which often informed their political agency in their teaching, teachers in historically white middle-class schools were not always critical of their own apartheid privilege and the emergence of a new black elite in attendance in these schools.

The schools in my sample, which were working-class township schools in contemporary South Africa established between the mid-1980s and early 2000s, stand in stark contrast to the middle-class ex-Model C schools, which are largely products of the apartheid-era educational system. These ex-Model C schools, initially designed to serve the privileged white minority, have undergone significant transformations since the end of apartheid, yet their historical legacy continues to shape their educational practices and societal role. In contrast, the township schools, which emerged during and after the transitional period, reflect the ongoing struggles for equity and access to quality education in the post-apartheid South Africa legacy of systemic underdevelopment. The teachers in these schools, unlike those in the ex-Model C schools, are working within these challenging conditions and often face additional constraints due to the historical and systemic factors affecting their schools.

5. 1. 3 Curricula Gaps and Interpretive Teaching of Pan-Africanism

Pan-Africanism is not explicitly defined in the South African CAPS curriculum, but it features implicitly within themes related to African nationalism, decolonisation, and liberation movements. In Grade 11, it is addressed under topics exploring African unity and resistance to colonialism. By Grade 12, the curriculum expands to include discussions of political organisations beyond the ANC, such as the PAC and Black Consciousness movements, which embody Pan-Africanist elements.

The data revealed that both middle- and working-class teachers primarily addressed Pan-Africanism in Grade 11, with some placing greater emphasis on it in Grade 12. Some teachers also tackled this topic in Grades 9 and 10. Most of the teachers have covered Pan-Africanism in particular in the case study of Ghana in Grade 11 in *Topic 4: Nationalism*, and in Grade 12 in *Topic 2: Independent Africa* where they discussed the decolonisation of Congo and Tanzania and in the case study of Angola in the *Africa in the Cold War* unit of the same topic. Many teachers referred to Pan-Africanism as an African nationalism in competing with Afrikaner nationalism for the South African case in the topic of nationalism in Grade 11. Some teachers made connections with Pan-Africanism when teaching W.E.B. DuBois and Black

Consciousness Movement in *Topic 3: Civil society protest 1950s to 1970s in Grade 12*. A number of teachers addressed Pan-Africanism when they taught *pre-colonial Africa* in Grade 10.

I observed no significant differences in the use of textbooks between middle-class and working-class schools. Although a range of CAPS-compliant textbooks were available, teachers predominantly used certain popular textbooks, particularly *In Search of History.* For example, Kate, a middle-class schoolteacher in Cape Town, said: 'Oxford is a bit more accessible. It is a slightly simpler language, slightly less content. So, for the kids who struggle, it is a good kind of baseline for them to manage'. I found that the only bookstore in Cape Town carrying textbooks primarily stocked books from specific publishers.[16] While I cannot speak to the situation in other provinces, this was generally the case for the participants in my study.

This study emphasises the critical role of teachers in shaping how complex concepts like Pan-Africanism are taught, particularly when textbooks fall short in addressing such politically and socially charged topics. This research demonstrates how teachers interpret and adapt educational material to bridge the gaps left by textbooks, enabling students to engage with multifaceted topics in meaningful ways. Teacher agency, in this context, emerges as pivotal, as this study found that teachers frequently contextualised the ideas, themes, values, and concepts associated with what they understood as 'the Pan-African vision'. Despite guidance from curriculum designers and provincial education departments on the duration and implementation of schemes of work,[17] achieving a perfect alignment between the prescribed curriculum and classroom practices remains challenging (Stein et. al., 2007). The concept of agency, defined as the 'dynamic interplay of iterative, projective, and practical-evaluative dimensions', takes into account how this interaction changes in different contexts for action (Biesta & Tedder, 2007). It emphasises the capacity to influence how we respond to these contexts (Biesta & Tedder, 2007, p. 133). This concept is particularly relevant in the teaching of Pan-Africanism, where the educational and social contexts, shaped by power dynamics and cultural *representations*, play a significant role in shaping teacher practices.

5. 1. 4 Class-based Representations of Social Justice and Historical Literacies

Classroom discussions on Pan-Africanism were shaped by both student attitudes and teacher agency. In middle-class schools (with racially mixed classes, which expectedly

[16] These publishers were New Generation Publishing, Oxford University Press, Via Afrika, Maskew Miller Longman.
[17] This information is based on my interviews with teachers.

typically include children of the political and economic new black elite), a bottom-up approach prevailed, driven by students' curiosity and interest in exploring African unity and identity. This enthusiasm for social justice issues on the continent and globally created a conducive environment for critically engaging with Pan-Africanism, enabling teachers to build on students' ideas and deepen their understanding of the subject. In contrast, working-class schools exhibited a more top-down approach, where teachers (all former anti-apartheid activists) played a central role in initiating and sustaining discussions on Pan-Africanism. This was often necessitated by the presence of openly expressed xenophobic attitudes that these teachers experienced among their students, who sometimes displayed a sense of South African exceptionalism and narrow nationalism.

The divergent expressions of teacher agency across these societal settings demonstrate the pivotal role teachers play in navigating complex contemporary educational landscapes in South Africa. In middle-class schools, teachers critiqued the inaccuracies and oversimplifications in existing textbooks and adapted or supplemented materials to provide a more comprehensive perspective on Pan-Africanism. By doing so, they capitalised on the organic exchange of ideas fostered by their students' curiosity. Conversely, in working-class schools, the scarcity of resources on Pan-Africanism and the prevalence of Afrophobic attitudes, as a result of competing resources for basic economic survival in the townships, constrained classroom discussions — giving the concept instead a localised interpretation within lived realities. Teachers in these contexts were often strained and burdened to exert greater agency to counter biases and ensure meaningful engagement with Pan-Africanist ideals in the absence of resource support. Within these stressful teaching environments, these teachers were therefore more engaged in class discussions based on their political agency and life testimonies shared of living under apartheid and their struggle against oppression (as their 'truths') than through an appraisal of history education skills such as 'historical content accuracy'.

Hoffman et al. (2016) found that teachers in well-resourced schools view professionalism as autonomy and high teaching standards, while those in under-resourced schools focus on compliance with basic requirements due to challenges like overcrowding and limited resources. Similarly, accountability in well-resourced schools is tied to student performance, whereas in under-resourced schools, it centres on procedural compliance to simply survive yet another day against all odds.

The study emphasises the complexity of teacher agency, highlighting how it is shaped not only by individual capacity but also by the societal ecological conditions in which teachers operate. Priestley et al.'s (2015) 'ecological' view of teacher agency, which considers factors such as personal experiences, aspirations, beliefs, values, and professional training. In particular, this research reveals how curriculum structure and available resources affect teachers' agency in different school settings. For instance, in working-class schools, limited textbook content on Pan-Africanism necessitated a more resourceful and creative approach, with teachers having to work with minimal structural support. In contrast, middle-class teachers, with better access to resources, were able to critique and adapt existing materials, demonstrating how the educational context shapes teachers' ability to navigate and implement curriculum content effectively. This finding mirrors Thomas and Yoon's (2014) argument that teachers' practices are deeply influenced by the contextual conditions in which they work, highlighting the dynamic interaction between teachers' agency and their environment. Stuart Hall's work on encoding/decoding further illuminates this dynamic —which if applied as a lens in this study— helps to analyse how teachers, as cultural agents, actively interpret and reshape, or 'decode' curriculum materials within the specific sociocultural contexts they inhabit.

Findings from this study revealed that teachers may either bypass the topic, adhere strictly to the textbook, introduce their own interpretations, or tailor discussions to align with students' societal interests and their own (the teachers') broader concerns around historical literacy. Teachers' experiences, expertise, beliefs, and goals shaped these variations, which were further influenced by classroom dynamics. In the South African context, teachers' and students' perceptions of Pan-Africanism in this study were influenced by various factors, including their backgrounds, experiences, and socio-economic status. Both socio-economic groups had markedly different understandings of African history and Pan-Africanism, shaped by the respective communities in which they were raised and the material and online resources they accessed. The socio-economic divide also influenced how working-class teachers approached the teaching of Pan-Africanism, focusing on *their* perceptions of students' interest in the topic and how social stratification impacted their pedagogical choices to adopt innovative survival strategies in the history classroom.

Teachers' views on the importance of Pan-Africanism, and their thoughts on its contemporary significance were all shaped by their own social and historical positioning. The degree to which Pan-Africanism was instrumentalised (taught and used) in the classroom often depended on whether teachers relied solely on textbooks, integrated other resources, drew on

their own lived experiences, or tailored discussions to align with students' interests. Consequently, students' exposure to Pan-Africanism was mediated by the historical and socio-economic contexts in which both they and their teachers were situated, leading to a bifurcated handling of the concept.

In middle-class schools, teachers used various resources beyond textbooks to teach Pan-Africanism, contextualising it within historical concepts like 'relevance', 'cause and effect', and 'continuity and change' which might help students understand Pan-Africanism's origins in the Diaspora and its modern significance for racial and economic equality. Conversely, in working-class schools, teachers often relied on their own life experiences (imparting this through deploying oral history in the classroom) in the absence of teaching resources besides textbooks, addressing Pan-Africanism from a purely experiential point of view, and focusing on current South African social and political issues influenced by students' Afrophobic attitudes. Inadvertently, whilst working class students may gain from this political cultural capital in such teaching and learning, they may miss out on engaging in critical history education skills and literacies (working with debate, African intellectual philosophies and a multitude of perspectives applied in required formal assessments). For instance, in middle-class schools, teaching Pan-Africanism through deploying critical skill in interpreting a range of sources and perspectives, within the evolving historical context of the concept, might help students connect past events with present issues, preparing them as more historically informed future decision-makers — whichever choice of decision they may choose to make economically, politically or socially.

In contrast, working-class school students lacked exposure to concrete historical understandings due to socio-economic barriers already described. Naicker (2018) highlights disparities between well-resourced private schools and underfunded public schools in low-income areas. He argues that working-class schools in the Western Cape face challenges from poor infrastructure and a lack of resources, with economic inequalities exacerbating gaps in access and outcomes. The country's linguistic diversity further complicates inclusive education, as students not learning in their mother tongue are disadvantaged. Despite a strong legal framework, Naicker (2018) notes that inclusive education policies often lack effective implementation. According to Sayed (2002), the enduring disparities in teacher education in South Africa can be directly traced to the apartheid-era policies that enforced a fragmented and racially stratified system. He explains that this 'system of systems' consisted of separate training institutions and curricula for different racial groups, with resources distributed highly unequally along racial lines. Sayed argues that this structure was not only inefficient and costly,

but also deeply embedded in the political logic of segregation. For the black population in particular, restricted educational opportunities often confined higher education options to teacher training, thereby reinforcing systemic inequalities (p. 382).

Post-1994 educational reforms in South Africa sought to address these entrenched disparities and inefficiencies; however, significant inequalities persist among teachers (Sayed, 2002). These disparities directly impact students in working-class schools, where teachers themselves may rely more heavily on experiential knowledge. As a result, working-class students' preparedness to make informed social, economic, or political decisions later in life is often shaped more by personal and shared lived experiences (which are of significant importance in understanding the use of invisibilised narratives in history education as pedagogical strategy, as opposed to westernised decontextualised historical literacy skills development devoid from the African reality). In this sense, students in both middle-class and working-class schools (in the context of this study) may equally by default more likely receive a deficient model of teaching, as the former would be deprived of the benefit of African oral history and testimony in such teaching, and the latter will lack the necessary critical skills in working with a wide variety of both primary and secondary sources for interpretation etc.

Due to the systemic barriers, lack of training, negative attitudes, and socio-economic challenges hindering the progress towards an inclusive educational framework in post-apartheid South Africa (see Brown, 2016; Chikoko & Mthembu, 2023; Nel et al., 2016; Seeko & Mathebula, 2023; Walton & Engelbrecht, 2022), working-class students would therefore be more at risk to lag behind in scholarly literacies.

According to Amsler (2011), teachers typically exercise their agency in settings that a re segregated and isolated, using instruments formed by experience and institution, and in wa ys that are both productive and barren (Sayed et al., 2016).

However, this study does not suggest a hierarchical structure of knowledge superiority (middle-class knowledge) versus knowledge inferiority (working class knowledge). It recognises instead a finding of *a different kind of knowing located in the reality of the 'lived experience' of working-class teaching*, where political agency was very strong from the teachers' point of view. Järvelä (2000) discusses experiential learning in relation to fostering deeper understanding through direct experiences and enhancing teachers' abilities to address diverse classroom dynamics. The concept is applied to real-world teaching challenges, where reflective learning and engagement with various perspectives play key roles in improving educational outcomes. Nevertheless, this absence in teaching critical Pan-African values means

students in working class schools learn *something else* (a type of learning which we have not yet ascertained in this study) as alternative 'powerful knowledge' — as Milner (2017) argues, 'it may not be essential for them to engage in this work of critique and exposure'.

5. 1. 5 Teachers' Perceptions of Students' Contemporary Engagement with Pan-Africanism

The responses of teachers to students' reactions to Pan-Africanism varied significantly across different school types yet exhibited consistency within each type. There were, however, different conceptualisations of Pan-Africanism between black and white pupils in racially/culturally diverse middle-class schools. In those spaces, teachers reported that *black* South African students generally embraced Pan-Africanism as an empowering ideology, seeing it as a way to forge a broader African identity that connected South Africa with the rest of the continent and the African Diaspora. In contrast, *white* students expressed empathy toward Pan-African ideas but engaged with them primarily through a regional lens, often focusing on the South African new politically constructed identity for negotiation in isolation ('rainbow' and 'ubuntu'). This contrast in engagement highlights the role of cultural and social positioning in shaping how Pan-Africanism is understood and internalised by students. Stuart Hall's (1990, 1997) argument that identity is not fixed or inherent but is constructed through cultural processes, particularly representation, provides a valuable framework for interpreting these differences. This reinforces the idea that Pan-Africanism is not merely political but also deeply rooted in cultural identity and community building (Radney, 2024).

In this study, white students' sympathy for Pan-African principles, while framing their identities more strongly around South African nationalism, reflects the influence of 'rainbow nation' rhetoric. Often adopted by white middle-class students, this 'new' South Africa rhetoric promotes non-racialism and unity but tends to avoid deeper engagement with Pan-Africanism's calls for systemic transformation, consequently sidelining crucial issues of social and economic justice in contrast to their black counterparts. The prominence of 'rainbow nation' rhetoric and concepts like '*ubuntu*' can be seen as a response to this dynamic, reflecting an effort to reconcile South African nationalism with an inclusive vision. However, such ideologies were deeply intertwined with the sociopolitical and economic structures that favoured the middle-class (see McDonald, 2010). Gqola's (2001) critique of post-apartheid nationalism focuses on the limitations of the 'rainbow nation' discourse, which it is argued, while ostensibly inclusive, fails to confront the entrenched racial and class inequalities underpinning South African society.

Moodley and Adam (2000) note that non-racialism in South Africa is often idealised as colour-blind, exemplified by Mandela's vision of a unified national identity transcending racial categories. However, this 'rainbowism' is at odds with the persistent realities of racial division and heightened ethnoracial consciousness (p. 54). In middle-class schools, the regionalised and limited application of Pan-Africanism among white students highlights these tensions, as their engagement often prioritised national identity over the transnational solidarity at the heart of Pan-Africanism. This contrast between black and white middle-class students' relationships to Pan-Africanism reflects the enduring challenges of reconstructing an inclusive South African identity in the post-apartheid era.

Surprisingly, despite their teachers' agency to promote a more 'Pan African' historical conscience, teachers reported that black students in working-class schools displayed limited interest in this concept despite similar black racial demographics across the two school social class categories. This finding shows a new emerging trend in South African black working-class schools which were historically sites of mobilisation for Pan-Africanist and Black Consciousness mobilisation against apartheid. Ludlow (2016) notes that the struggle for liberation in these schools was closely tied to the creation of political awareness through life stories and resistance narratives — which explains the ongoing oral history method still deployed by the teachers in these schools. However, in the present context, it appears that the connection to these past struggles is weakening. This, in contrast to when South African township teachers, influenced by the ideals of nonracialism (Wieder, 2005), have sought to instil a Pan-African consciousness in their students in the fight against apartheid.

This finding in the study reinforces the theory that meaning is actively produced and shaped within specific contexts (Hall, 1997). Furthermore, Soudien's (1998) work on the experiences of African children in 'Coloured' schools highlights how racial categorisation and identity formation in education systems have always been fraught, potentially influencing contemporary students' engagement with political ideologies such as Pan-Africanism. Based on my interpretation of the data, the emerging disinterest in Pan-Africanism among black students in working-class schools reflects these broader shifts in educational and political landscapes, suggesting that the historical role of schools as sites of political mobilisation is no longer as salient as it once was.

Moreover, during apartheid, the experiences of politically active figures, who gained political and historical awareness outside of formal education (in community halls, underground reading groups and intellectual debates), underline the role of informal spaces in

fostering political consciousness but also critical thinking and historical consciousness amongst the oppressed in the townships, especially in the face of apartheid's systemic exclusion of African history. This exclusion was countered by informal spaces such as homes, streets, and community organisations, where alternative forms of learning about African heritage and political struggles took place (Rodwell, 2024). One significant example of this counter-hegemonic educational effort was the National Education Crisis Committee's (NECC) development of the booklet *What is History?* (1987), which went beyond a basic introduction to historical knowledge. Rooted in the NECC's vision of a people's education for people's power, the text functioned as a radical pedagogical tool, equipping students and teachers in township schools with the skills to question dominant narratives, interrogate sources, and understand history as a constructed and contested process. By promoting inquiry-based learning and critical engagement, it laid important foundations for a democratic and decolonised approach to history education — one that continues to resonate with current efforts to foreground marginalised voices.

In light of these earlier traditions of grassroots political learning, the reported weakening of Pan-Africanism's influence in contemporary working-class schools may reflect a broader transformation in how young people engage with political ideologies today. Unlike the past, where schools and community spaces served as vital platforms for political mobilisation and historical recovery, today's youth appear to rely less on these formal and semi-formal institutions. This shift suggests that the role of high schools as sites of political and historical consciousness formation is no longer as central, raising important questions about how such awareness is cultivated in the current South African context.

As mentioned earlier, historically, working-class black schools were at the forefront of fostering African consciousness and Pan-African ideals, particularly during apartheid when these schools were pivotal sites of resistance and critical thought. The intertwining of popular history and liberation became a defining characteristic of South African historical writing in the 1940s, as *The Educational Journal* of the Teachers' League of South Africa (TLSA) emphasised that liberation and history are 'inextricably linked', requiring a reinterpretation of South Africa's past (Bam, 1993, p. 50). Teachers then, not only deployed experiential oral history methodology (sharing of personal, community and intergenerational stories), but also worked with a variety of People's History resources which promoted the teaching of critical skills in historical understanding. Examples are The South African Committee for Higher

Education (SACHED)[18], an anti-apartheid NGO that had produced educational resources during the 1980s, providing an alternative to apartheid-era history lessons. *SACHED Histories* and other resources were developed by qualified and experienced history educators who were also political activists. Such activism was essentially about promoting critical thinking through the dialogue method of Paulo Freire (1970), and the TLSA, for example. Trade Unions also engaged the workers' movement in historical literacies, and so did underground reading groups (see Cooper, 2007). Pan-Africanism has historically emphasised the importance of education as a tool for liberation and empowerment. The works of Paulo Freire, as discussed by Strong and Nafziger (2021), highlight the role of popular education movements in fostering critical consciousness among oppressed populations, a principle that aligns with SACHED's objectives of creating equitable educational opportunities. Freire's engagement with African revolutionary thinkers illustrates how educational praxis can serve as a vehicle for social change (Strong & Nafziger, 2021), a notion that is central to both SACHED's mission and the broader Pan-African educational agenda.

It is striking that critical and skills-based African history resources once widely available in township schools from the apartheid 1980s (though clandestinely disseminated) into the democratic era until at least 2004 have now virtually disappeared from classrooms. Materials such as the NECC's *What is History?*, the SACHED books, the *UNESCO General History of Africa* volumes (distributed with a teachers' guide to all schools in 2004 by the South African History Project), and the oral history resource *Our Community in Our Classrooms* are no longer used or even visible in most township schools today. These resources were not only content-rich but also pedagogically innovative, encouraging historical inquiry, critical thinking, and the inclusion of African perspectives. Their disappearance (also raised by the #RMF protest movement in 2015 – indicating an apparent absence of African History in schools) raises curious questions: were they simply displaced by the rigid structure of the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS), or quietly phased out in favour of teacher-produced summary notes geared towards exam performance? The fate of these African

[18] The South African Committee for Higher Education (SACHED) was established in the 1959 as a response to the restrictive apartheid education system. SACHED aimed to provide alternative education opportunities to those marginalised by apartheid policies, particularly black South Africans who were denied access to quality higher education. Throughout the 1970s and 1980s, SACHED played a crucial role in developing non-formal educational programs, producing anti-apartheid educational materials, and promoting critical engagement with African history and Pan-Africanism. Its efforts were integral to the broader People's Education Movement, which sought to challenge the ideological underpinnings of apartheid-era curricula and foster a more inclusive, democratic education system (see Nonyongo & Ngengebule, 1998; South African History Online, 1990; Taylor & Habib, 1998).

History materials, many of which were also distributed to public libraries in all provinces, remains unclear.

However, the post-apartheid era seems to have ushered in a significant change, marked by diminished engagement in such schools due to structural challenges and broader socio-economic disillusionment. This emerging trend can be attributed to the persistent cycle of poverty, inadequate resources, and a sense of hopelessness in many poor black schools. These schools often lack the technological infrastructure that facilitates exposure to global debates and ideas. Consequently, their students may feel disconnected from broader movements like Pan-Africanism and issues like decolonisation or institutional racism, which are increasingly mediated through digital platforms. The United Nations (2023), in its report *Peace, Dignity, and Equality on a Healthy Planet*, highlights the risk of widening inequalities due to disparities in access to information.

The diminished engagement with Pan-African ideals in working-class schools could be explained due to the government's ongoing struggle to address poverty and socio-economic inequality, which remain pervasive in historically marginalised communities. High rates of youth unemployment and limited economic prospects have fostered a profound sense of disillusionment and frustration among young South Africans. Barrar (2010) highlights that township youth often attribute their hardships to structural inequalities, such as inadequate access to quality education and employment, which hinder their economic advancement. Maringira et al. (2022) similarly note that many young South Africans perceive a gap between their ambitions and socio-economic realities, a stark contrast to the optimism their parents experienced during the political transition (see also Richards et al., 2023).

This frustration has, at times, manifested in scapegoating African immigrants, whom some youth perceive as competitors for scarce resources. In this context, Pan-Africanism, which once symbolised unity and inspired resistance during apartheid, now appears disconnected from the immediate concerns and struggles of many young South Africans. Consequently, the perspectives of students in working-class schools have become a key force shaping how Pan-Africanism is represented and understood. The rise of exclusionary sentiments and the diminished emphasis on Pan-African ideals in these schools underscore a broader societal shift, reflecting the challenges of addressing persistent inequality and fostering inclusive narratives in a post-apartheid era.

Educational disparity in South Africa, perpetuated by systemic inequalities, underlines the link between social class and educational opportunity. Research by Anyon (2008) reveals

that children from working-class families are often limited to schools with less comprehensive curricula, which focus more on rote memorisation than on critical thinking and independent research. In contrast, schools serving middle-class, affluent, or elite students provide broader, more conceptual learning experiences due to the systemic support to do so. As Chisholm (2018) argues, these disparities reinforce social inequities, preparing students for futures aligned with their social class. Hammett and Staeheli (2013) highlight that the material and spatial inequalities in educational opportunities, as well as disparities in teacher expertise, stem from the legacy of apartheid. Neoliberal economic policies have further exacerbated these structural disparities in educational resources and outcomes, as the prioritisation of appeasing foreign investors and domestic business interests often comes at the expense of addressing citizens' needs. This dynamic, facilitated by South Africa's dominant party system and global power relations, led to the ANC's shift from the RDP[19] to a neoliberal[20] economic strategy, resulting in growing inequality, deepening poverty, and the erosion of democratic principles (Habib & Padayachee, 2000).

Addae and Quan-Baffour (2022) highlight how Afrophobia in South Africa, rooted in socio-economic inequalities and exacerbated by negative stereotypes about African migrants, undermines Pan-African solidarity and disrupts social cohesion. Dube (2019) also emphasises that the attitudes of black South Africans towards African migrants are shaped by socio-economic factors, political attitudes, and historical contexts, influenced by issues such as job competition, limited resources, and negative media portrayals.

These findings align with research in the post-apartheid context, which shows that the intersections of race and class are evident in the educational experiences of predominantly black schoolchildren from different socio-economic backgrounds. Gruijters et al. (2024) revealed significant school segregation along racial and socio-economic lines, exacerbated by South Africa's bifurcated and semi-privatised school system. This system, shaped by neoliberal development strategies, perpetuates inequalities in school resources and outcomes, often reflecting the disparities entrenched during apartheid (Gruijters et al., 2024; see also Badat & Sayed, 2014; Branson et al., 2012; Frempong et al., 2011; Taylor, 2019; Van der Berg, 2008). My findings support this evidence, demonstrating how variations in educational content and approach maintain social inequalities across generations.

[19] The Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP), adopted by the ANC in 1994, was a development plan aimed at economic growth, basic needs provision, and addressing past injustices. However, it faced challenges due to vague strategies, unrealistic targets, and limited resources for implementation (Thomas, 2009).
[20] For discussion on neoliberal education in South Africa and political economy of transition see, Alexander (2002), Bond (2000), and Vally (2007).

In conclusion, this first part of the main findings of data analysis highlighted that despite the end of apartheid and the hope for a society based on social justice, the reality for many South African youth remained starkly different. Working-class students face vastly unequal educational opportunities. The neoliberal education system, with its inherent inequalities, hinders the development of critical thinking skills and awareness of social justice and decolonisation among working-class school learners — a significant departure from the anti-apartheid resistance and depth of political education in these same categories of schools. Overcrowded classrooms and limited access significantly restricted the time and opportunities available for teachers and students to qualitatively engage with and discuss Pan-Africanism in a scholarly way. Limited access to digital resources, driven by poverty, language barriers, or inadequate technological infrastructure, restricts students' exposure to diverse perspectives and debates beyond the confines of the textbook, further deepening existing inequities. On the other hand, middle-class black students, with access to better resources and digital tools, are able to engage more critically with Pan-Africanism, connecting it to global debates and shaping their identities in a broader context. These students' heightened exposure to social justice issues, facilitated by both traditional and digital platforms, fosters a cosmopolitan outlook on African identity; whereas white students tend to engage with it through a more localised, South African lens, reflecting the influence of South African nationalism and the 'rainbow nation' rhetoric.

The next section presents a thematic analysis of how Pan-Africanism is represented in middle-class and working-class schools, highlighting the contrasting approaches shaped by socio-economic contexts.

5. 2 PART TWO

Representation of Pan-Africanism in High School History Classrooms in Contemporary South Africa

5. 2. 1 Using Representation as an Analytical Framework

I use 'representation' in the context of this study to signify the teaching methods and understandings of Pan-Africanism deployed in the classrooms by teachers and how students engage with the concept, drawing on Stuart Hall's (1997) theory of representation. Using this theory, I examine how teachers and students engage with Pan-Africanism, considering the diverse teaching methods and contextual influences Hall (1997) emphasises that meaning is not inherent in concepts, but is constructed through language, signs, and cultural practices.

These differing representations of Pan-Africanism are shaped by the varied 'conceptual maps' held by both teachers and students, which are influenced by their distinct socio-economic environments. Using Hall's (1997) constructionist theory of representation, the teaching of Pan-Africanism is understood as a dynamic process, where the meanings attached to the concept are actively constructed in classrooms, rather than simply transmitted as fixed truths. This aligns with Hall's view that meaning is fluid and negotiated, depending on the cultural and political contexts in which it is produced. Therefore, in this study, the diverse representations of Pan-Africanism in South African classrooms are not merely reflective of historical facts or the personal intentions of individual teachers but are part of an ongoing and complex process of constructing collective meaning through language, symbols, and shared cultural practices.

Based on this key finding on representation, I therefore analyse the data within the following two sub-sections:

1) the representation of Pan-Africanism in middle-class (fee-paying, quintile 4 and 5, or ex-model C) schools;
2) and the representation of Pan-Africanism in working-class (no-fee, township, quintile 2 and 3) schools.

This analysis in each social class category is in turn presented around three key focus areas that emerged from the research findings:

(1) 'Students' engagement with Pan-Africanism';

(2) 'Teachers' perceptions of Pan-Africanism in the history textbooks;

(3) 'Teachers' pedagogy on Pan-Africanism'.

5. 2. 2 Pan-Africanism in Middle-class Schools

The findings showed that student interest in Pan-Africanism significantly prompted and drove in-depth classroom discussions. Teachers noted that students who chose history as an elective exhibited a strong passion for *social justice,* but it would be safe to assume that there are different interpretations to what this could mean from a social class perspective, and teachers in these schools were not entirely clear on what that meant in their classrooms in terms of Pan-Africanism. This enthusiasm for 'social justice' led teachers to enhance textbook content with alternative sources, enriching the exploration of 'Pan-Africanism'. Teachers also adopted this approach because they recognised Pan-Africanism's importance to the field of

history in teaching about the continent and South Africa's place in it. They tailored the topic for classroom discussion based on different historical periods and contexts, highlighting its global implications, especially concerning the African Diaspora. While teachers acknowledged Pan-Africanism's role in economic decolonisation, they considered political unification 'unrealistic'.

5. 2. 2. 1 Students' Engagement with Pan-Africanism

Based on the findings of this study, in South African middle-class schools, a growing interest in Pan-Africanism has emerged, often linked to a broader sense of identity and belonging particularly among black students. High school learners, particularly those who elect to study history, express an increasing desire to engage with African history as a significant aspect of their personal heritage. Elizabeth, a teacher from KwaZulu-Natal, observed a distinct shift across all grades from Grade 8 to Grade 12, where students are increasingly 'wanting and demanding to learn more about African history'. This trend suggests a deepening of historical awareness, with students seeking to root their identity in a more elaborated understanding of the African continent and its past.

Several teachers echoed this enthusiasm. Maria, a teacher from Cape Town whose students were exclusively female, emphasised that Pan-Africanism has become a strong 'drawcard' among older students, particularly her Grade 12 girls, who 'really latch onto the idea'. Maria's comment highlighted that Pan-Africanism was more than just an academic subject for these students; it represents a framework through which they explore their sense of belonging, empowerment, and identity. In this regard, Pan-Africanism was positively received as a means of self-definition, both individually and collectively. This aligns with Rasool's (2019) assertion in her Masters' thesis that the involvement of young African women in Pan-African social movements, particularly on platforms like Twitter (X), has transformed the way Pan-Africanism is understood and practiced. Traditionally, Pan-Africanism was dominated by male intellectuals, and the voices of women were often marginalised. However, as Rasool argues, Twitter has provided young African women with a space to share their experiences and engage with issues related to race, gender, and class. This has allowed them to challenge and reshape the discourse around Pan-Africanism, integrating intersectional ideologies that were previously excluded from mainstream Pan-African thought. Thus, the enthusiasm among Maria's students for Pan-Africanism can be seen as part of a broader movement in which African women are redefining the scope and inclusivity of the Pan-African discourse.

In line with this broader shift, Maria's observations about her Grade 12 girls highlighted how Pan-Africanism has become an important tool for these students to explore their identities and sense of empowerment. For these young women, Pan-Africanism represented more than just an academic subject — it was a framework for understanding their place in the world, for asserting their sense of self, and for connecting to the broader African struggle. Maria's students' engagement with Pan-Africanism as a means of self-definition mirrored the way in which Pan-Africanism was being redefined through the intersectional voices of African women, both online and in educational settings. This growing inclusivity and empowerment within the Pan-African movement signalled a broader shift towards recognising and amplifying the experiences and perspectives of African women in the fight for African upliftment. Representation of Pan-Africanism in this context can be seen in the ways these female students engage with its principles, reinterpreting them to better align with their own experiences, and actively contributing to its evolution.

Sarah, another teacher from Cape Town, emphasised the connection between African identity and personal empowerment, noting that her students' sense of belonging to Africa directly influenced their self-perception. This correlation between identity formation and empowerment demonstrated how Pan-Africanism resonated beyond mere intellectual curiosity — it held a transformative potential for students as they navigate questions of self-definition within a broader sociopolitical context.

The interplay between identity and education was further highlighted by several teachers who critiqued the existing curriculum. Elizabeth, teaching in Cape Town, noted the predominance of European history in the curriculum, arguing that this imbalance fuelled a 'distinct drive or need' for Pan-Africanist perspectives. The students' desire to 'be unified through learning about their history and culture' pointed to a critical engagement with their heritage that challenged the Eurocentric focus of traditional curricula. Kate, another Cape Town teacher, corroborated this view, observing that many of her students seek 'to understand African identity and what that means', signalling a deeper quest for knowledge that was intrinsically tied to the Pan-Africanist discourse. Mamdani's (1998a) study, which highlights epistemological issues within higher education, supports these observations by critiquing the marginalisation of African history in traditional curricula. He argues that this exclusion hinders students' ability to engage critically with their heritage. Mamdani advocates for the integration of Africa-centred perspectives and emphasises the importance of historical depth, underlining the need to connect past events with contemporary issues. His critique points to the epistemological challenges inherent in existing educational systems and calls for a restructured

curriculum that offers a more nuanced understanding of Africa's history and its ongoing relevance today. In a similar vein, Mamdani's (1998b) exploration of post-apartheid educational reforms also stresses the need to decolonise the curriculum, particularly in South African universities. He critiques the persistence of Eurocentric educational frameworks and advocates for an African-centred approach that allows students to engage with their histories in ways that are not shaped by colonial legacies.

Elizabeth's critique of the curriculum can indeed be understood as a response to the broader societal and educational shifts sparked by movements like #RhodesMustFall (#RMF). The movement, which gained significant momentum in South Africa, not only brought attention to the dominance of colonial legacies in higher education but also called for a broader decolonisation of knowledge, particularly through the inclusion of African perspectives and histories that had long been marginalised or excluded. The students' desire to learn about their own history and culture aligns with the movement's push for African-centred education, while Kate's students' quest to understand African identity further emphasised the need for a curriculum that truly reflects African history and culture. This critique, therefore, highlighted the ongoing struggle for educational equity and decolonisation.

Underlying these reflections was a shared recognition among teachers that African identity, as explored through Pan-Africanism, was central to their students' educational experience. As Sarah noted, 'so much of this is related to identity', a point which suggested that Pan-Africanism served as a lens through which students critically interrogated their sense of self. Yet, as Sarah also observed, many black African students felt that African identity was racially exclusive, asserting that those who were not black cannot be considered African. This highlighted a tension within the discourse, where Pan-Africanism, while unifying, also raised questions about inclusivity and the boundaries of an 'African' identity.

Teachers observed that the demographic composition of the classroom significantly influenced students' engagement with Pan-Africanism. Black students, in particular, demonstrated a strong interest in Pan-Africanism, frequently identifying as Pan-Africanists who embraced both African and South African identities. Teachers in middle-class schools observed that these students often navigated this dual social identity. This was in contrast to white students, who were more inclined to identify with a South African identity, sometimes

described as ‘rainbowism’ or ‘charterism’, which emphasised national affiliation over racial identity.[21]

In interpreting this within the context of South African politics, it is important to consider the negotiation processes surrounding nation-building after apartheid. The post-apartheid era saw the construction of a national identity that sought to reconcile the fragmented racial and cultural identities within South Africa. The concept of ‘*ubuntu*’ —a philosophy emphasising interconnectedness, shared humanity, and community— has become central to this reconciliation, and placated white fear of possible retribution. *Ubuntu*’s inclusive nature is deeply aligned with the ideals of post-apartheid nation-building, fostering a collective national identity that transcends racial divisions. This shift in national identity also draws on Thabo Mbeki’s pivotal 1996 speech, ‘I am an African’, in which he framed a multi-racial South African identity within a broader African context. Mbeki’s rhetoric, especially amid the adoption of South Africa’s post-apartheid Constitution, presented an inclusive vision of South Africa as both an African nation and a distinct entity. His speech advocated for the recognition of a shared African history and future, asserting that African identity transcended colonial and apartheid legacies, embracing all South Africans, including whites, as part of the African continent’s collective journey.

However, McDonald (2010) critiques the transformation of *ubuntu* from its traditional roots in communal well-being to a market-oriented concept in post-apartheid South Africa. McDonald argues that neoliberal policies have shifted *ubuntu*’s focus from social solidarity to individual economic gain. This market-driven redefinition of *ubuntu* has not only diluted its core values but has also contributed to increased social inequalities, undermining the philosophy’s original intent of collective harmony and community support. Gqola (2001) critiques ‘rainbowism’ as a narrative that, while promoting national unity, suppresses discussions of racial, gender, and class inequalities, ultimately denying deeper engagement with past injustices under white supremacy.

For black students, embracing both African and South African identities resonated with Mbeki’s call for a broader African identity, as articulated in his vision of an ‘African

[21] The pinnacle of Charterism was the adoption of the Freedom Charter in 1955 at the Congress of the People in Kliptown, Johannesburg. This landmark document, drafted by a diverse group of activists, including Oliver Tambo, Nelson Mandela, and Walter Sisulu, encapsulated the aspirations of the anti-apartheid movement. The Freedom Charter directly challenged the racial segregation and oppression inherent in apartheid. It envisioned a South Africa where all national groups, regardless of race, color, or sex, would enjoy equal rights and opportunities (ANC, 1955).

Renaissance'. This vision of Pan-Africanism, which extended beyond political and historical struggles, emphasised cultural solidarity across the continent, offering a sense of belonging that transcended national borders. In contrast, white students' preference for a South African-centric identity, aligned with ideas of 'rainbowism' or 'charterism,' can be interpreted as a reflection of their investment in a negotiated national identity. This identity focuses on peacebuilding and the democratic processes initiated after 1994, rather than embracing an African identity that transcended the nation-state. These differing perspectives highlighted the ongoing negotiations of identity in South Africa, shaped by race and ethnicity, history, and the evolving political landscape since the end of apartheid. This divergence in identity formation among students underscored the intricate interplay of race and class within South African educational settings. This observation aligns with Wolpe's (1988, as cited in Soudien 2004) assertion that neither race nor class alone can fully elucidate the nature of South African social formation or capture the complete narrative of social division (p. 90).

Maria's reflections highlighted the dual identity of black South African students, noting that they often saw themselves as both South African and African, with a strong connection to Pan-Africanism. David, a teacher in Cape Town, similarly noted that black students, particularly in middle-class settings, were more likely to identify with Pan-African ideals. Elizabeth emphasised that African or black girls showed a strong affinity for Pan-Africanism, motivated by a desire to reclaim voices that had been historically marginalised. She noted that these female students were actively questioning their place within the broader historical and cultural context of Pan-Africanism, highlighting the often-overlooked gender dimensions in the historiography of the movement (for some exceptions see Adi, 2018; Adi & Sherwood, 2003). Elizabeth said:

> The ones who are really interested in this ideal concept of Pan-Africanism are African or black girls. The idea that those voices were silenced for so long that now they must come to the forefront. And so, to say, yes, where do I fit in the grander scheme of this thing? So, I definitely believe that my grade 12 girls are very vocal about that and where do they fit in.

David's statement highlighted the complex interplay between political consciousness, racial identity, and the legacy of colonialism in shaping students' understanding of Africanism. His observation suggested that black students who were politically aware were more likely to adopt an Africanist identity, which was likely rooted in the broader sociopolitical context of resistance against colonial domination. By embracing Africanism, these students may seek to reclaim their African heritage and challenge the historical narrative imposed by colonialism.

However, David also acknowledged that this identification was not purely ideological but was also shaped by personal experiences and societal narratives, particularly negative portrayals of 'white' people. These perceptions may arise from the historical and ongoing impact of colonialism and apartheid, in which white people were often seen as oppressors and symbols of the colonial system. Thus, for some black students, identifying with Africanism could be a way to assert their autonomy, dignity, and pride in their African heritage, while also rejecting the oppressive influence of colonial and apartheid-era structures. David's mention of resistance to colonial legacies featured the role of Africanism not just as an ideological stance but as a response to the historical injustices faced by black South Africans. It suggests that for these students, embracing Pan-Africanism was a form of resistance, a means of redefining themselves outside the confines of colonial constructs, and reasserting control over their identities in a post-apartheid society.

Teachers' accounts of black South African students revealed a complex relationship between racial and national identities, where Pan-Africanism served as a significant framework for understanding and navigating these intersecting identities. This understanding of identity formation in South African classrooms not only highlighted the broader socio-political implications of educational contexts but also reflected the enduring impact of historical legacies on contemporary identity politics. Interestingly, this complexity extended beyond black students, as teachers' perspectives on apartheid-era categorised *white middle-class students* suggested a different engagement with Pan-Africanism as previously discussed. White middle-class students' interest in Pan-African ideas as a form of 'sympathy' rather than authentic identification may also be interpreted through an Afro-Pessimist lens. According to this view, even if these students express an affinity for Pan-African thought, they are still situated within a racialised system that privileges whiteness and marginalises blackness. The sympathy that some white students express toward Pan-African ideas may not transcend the underlying structural inequality, and thus, their engagement with African identity can be seen as performative, reflecting a more superficial or detached understanding of black struggles and identity. This echoes Afro-Pessimism's critique of the impossibility of true solidarity or escape from the racialised social order (Poll, 2018).

Kate observed that her white students who selected history were often motivated by 'social justice' concerns, leading them to engage with Pan-Africanism. However, she highlighted that while some students appreciated their connection with Africa, it remained an uncommon sentiment. For instance, Kate pointed out one particular student who was highly passionate about his African identity, learning isiXhosa and engaging deeply with African

culture, but she was quick to underscore that such a connection was ‘unusual’ within her broader cohort of white students.

Similarly, Ethan, a white history teacher in Cape Town, contextualised white students’ engagement with Pan-Africanism and Black Consciousness as stemming from the moral and intellectual demands of these philosophies. Describing Black Consciousness as a ‘philosophy born in struggle’, he explained how it necessitated empathy, particularly among white students, by urging them to confront the lived realities of racial inequalities both historically and in the contemporary world. According to Ethan, this approach made Pan-Africanism accessible and compelling to all students, regardless of race, by framing it as part of an ongoing discourse on social justice.

These teachers’ reflections suggest that white middle-class students, though rarely adopting an African identity, were nonetheless drawn to Pan-Africanism’s emphasis on justice and equity – even if silent on structural economic privilege. The pedagogical strategies employed by the teachers appeared to mediate students’ understanding of Pan-Africanism, particularly by situating it within broader historical and social contexts that made it relevant and engaging for students. This suggests that the teachers were not only aware of their role as mediators in presenting Pan-Africanism but also actively shaped how students, especially those from traditionally less-involved backgrounds, interpreted its core ideas. This analysis highlights that while racial identity remains a powerful force in shaping responses to Pan-Africanism, the ways in which the subject was taught and framed by teachers played a significant role in expanding its appeal and relevance across different student groups.

Based on teachers’ reflections, it becomes clear that white students in middle-class schools exhibit a stronger sense of South Africanness than Africanness. Kate, whose class has few black students, observed that history teachers in her school use an identity chart in Grade 10 to introduce South African history. She added, ‘This is a history confronted in our own methodology where they have created a kind of identity chart of who they are’. According to her, some of them identify as South African, but hardly anyone says they are African. Some feel a stronger connection to their European ancestry, often because of family ties, such as grandparents from Europe. ‘So, it varies. It depends on the kids’, she added. This suggests a sense of identity that transcends geography and is influenced by personal heritage, revealing the complex and fragmented nature of identity among these students.

Similarly, Sarah remarked that ‘many South Africans do not fundamentally see themselves as African’, indicating an ambivalence towards African identity. She pointed to the

tension among white students, particularly those who, despite being born and raised in South Africa, struggle with the notion of Africanness due to their racial background. She said, 'You have that tension between people saying, even as a white person, I consider myself to be African, South African. I was born here, my family, my mum, and my dad and whatever'. She added: 'But, because I am white, I am not African. Those debates rage on but a lot of it also depends on how you identify and where you position yourself as an educator and as a person'. Sarah's observation reflected the enduring complexity of African identity in post-apartheid South Africa. Her comment on the struggle of white South Africans to identify as 'African' highlighted the deep-rooted racial divisions that persist in the country's collective consciousness. This tension spoke the constructed boundaries of race that continue to shape identity. It is indeed significant that almost three decades after Thabo Mbeki's (1996) 'I am an African' speech, the concept of inclusivity he championed seemed to have lost traction. Mbeki's address sought to redefine South African identity by emphasising a shared African heritage, asserting that all South Africans, irrespective of race, are integral to the continent's history and future. This could be due to the persistence of racialised thinking, where the historical association of Africanness with blackness continues to exclude non-black South Africans from fully embracing the African identity.

The perspective articulated by David, who is white and whose classroom was predominantly white, reflected a distinctive interpretation of Pan-Africanism and Charterism, demonstrating how socio-political ideologies are reframed within specific racial and cultural contexts. David perceived Pan-Africanism as exclusively relevant to black individuals, while he viewed Charterism as a more inclusive form of African nationalism, one that transcends racial boundaries to encompass all people living in Africa. He described his teaching of 'three forms of African nationalism' —Africanism, Charterism, and Pan-Africanism— positioning Charterism as a 'uniquely South African' response to African nationalism, grounded in the ideals of the Freedom Charter. Charterism, for David, was inclusive by design, defining 'African' as anyone residing in Africa, regardless of ethnicity, and in this sense, he presented it as parallel to Pan-Africanism. However, David distinguished between the two ideologies by arguing that Charterism was primarily focused on Africa, whereas Pan-Africanism had a broader, global orientation. His emphasis on the Freedom Charter, which was a foundational document of the African National Congress (ANC) that advocated for equality and non-racialism, reflected a political orientation that sought to bridge divides among different racial and ethnic groups within South Africa.

He elaborated that ‘almost everybody likes to think of themselves as a Charterist rather than an Africanist because our students have become a very black-and-white in their understanding’. He further explained that they perceive Africanists as exclusionary, as one must be ‘African to belong’, whereas Charterism ‘goes out of its way to define itself regardless of race, gender’, and similar factors. Consequently, he described Charterism as a ‘friendlier approach’ for his predominantly white, middle-class students. He observed that students find Pan-Africanism ‘a little bit too broad’ and tend to evaluate it based solely on their perceptions of ‘right’ and ‘wrong’ without expanding on it, which he deemed problematic. ‘They do not think in nuanced terms’, he added. While some students have come to appreciate Pan-Africanism, he noted that he had not observed any student shifting from a Charterist to a Pan-Africanist perspective. He said:

> White students obviously want Charterism because that includes them. So, there is definitely a distinction between the long race lines between who believes what. More liberal-minded students do find Charterism appealing, and Pan-Africanism, I think, speaks to them a little bit more than it would to white middle-class kids.

When I further asked if white South Africans also consider themselves African, David responded, ‘Exactly! And that is why Charterism is so appealing — because, [although] I am white, I am still African’. He also emphasised the importance of understanding the historical and cultural roots of Charterism in South Africa as part of the anti-apartheid struggle. He reflected that ‘there are very deep links and emotions attached, not necessarily to Charterism, but to the whole struggle movement, which is why it is so very fixed in everybody’s mind… Charterism serves some purpose for South Africa’.

These patterns of engagement among students in middle-class schools align closely with Achille Mbembe’s (2007) notion of Afropolitanism, which challenges the traditional framing of Pan-Africanism as a purely racial ideology. Afropolitanism, as articulated by Mbembe and Balakrishnan (2016, pp. 29–30), moves ‘beyond Pan-Africanism’, recognising that not all Africans are black and not all black people are African. It instead offers a critical orientation that situates African identities within a global frame, emphasising the interconnectedness of Africa and the world. Teachers in these schools often described students’ embrace of Pan-Africanism through ethical and cultural lenses —particularly via *ubuntu* and social media activism— rather than through explicitly political or racialised struggle narratives. In this way, their engagements resonate with Mbembe’s assertion that ‘there is no world without Africa, and there is no Africa that is not part of the world’ (Mbembe & Balakrishnan,

2016, p. 29). The cosmopolitan outlook and *ubuntu*-centric orientation expressed by many students thus reflects a form of Afropolitan consciousness, shaped by their schooling environments, access to digital spaces, and proximity to global discourses.

The central factor influencing the perceptions of Pan-Africanism in middle-class schools was not solely race/ethnicity but a confluence of identity, heritage, and historical narrative. In these schools, a broader African identity was less compelling. Some white students gravitated towards narratives, such as Charterism, that affirm their inclusive belonging to South Africa without the racial exclusivities often associated with Pan-Africanism. Thus, the dynamics of class, race, and history must be critically examined to fully understand the students' divergent responses to African identity. The role of social media is crucial in this context, as it provided an accessible platform for students to engage in real-time discussions about race, identity, and social justice, allowing them to connect with global movements and amplify their voices on issues of racial inequality.

5. 2. 2. 1. 1 Impact of Digitisation: #Fallist Movements 'Matter' (2015–)

The impact of digitisation on the consciousness of South African students, particularly regarding social movements like #RhodesMustFall (2015), which sought to challenge institutional racism at the University of Cape Town (UCT) (Timalsina, 2021), #FeesMustFall (2015), the widest student demonstrations since the demise of apartheid (Fihlani, 2019), and #BlackLivesMatter (2020), a global response to the murder of black unarmed George Floyd by a white police officer, demonstrates how digital platforms have become central to shaping the discursive landscape surrounding race, ethnicity, and identity. These movements, challenging institutional racism and advocating for social justice, have provided students with a framework to engage critically with decolonisation and Pan-Africanism. The findings suggest that the visibility and immediacy of social media debates have had a significant influence, particularly in middle-class schools, where access to technology enables students to participate in these global conversations.

Teachers in these contexts reported an observable shift in students' awareness, linking their engagement with movements such as #RhodesMustFall (#RMF) and #FeesMustFall (#FMF) to an increased sensitivity to decolonisation and racial justice issues. For instance, Sarah observed a re-emergence of Pan-Africanism in student discourse. She noted that following the 2015 and 2016 student movements, some students no longer identified exclusively with South Africa but began to align themselves with broader African identities. She noted:

> Some teachers do teach about Pan-Africanism because the students are interested in that because it is very much since 2016, it is back in the students' vocab. … I was teaching at a school where the students said, when we talked about nationalism, they did not see themselves as identifying with South Africa as a nation, but they saw themselves as identifying with Africa. So, their shift was to Pan-Africanism, which was interesting. And that came after the 2015 Rhodes Must Fall and then Fees Must Fall. And then there was a definite shift in class with some students who were embracing a Pan-Africanist narrative.

This shift underscores how the localised fight for social justice can catalyse a broader, more inclusive form of identity politics, where Pan-Africanism becomes a tool for reinterpreting national and regional affiliations. Sarah's testimony reveals how digital engagement with these movements fosters a collective consciousness among students, one that transcends national boundaries and embraces a Pan-African ethos. Similarly, Maria's observation that students 'resonate quite a lot with the idea that there is a shared past and that a connection to a shared past pulls people together regardless of their ethnic origins, regardless of where they find themselves in the world' suggests that digital media plays a powerful role in fostering a sense of global solidarity among students. These statements reflect a broader trend in which digital engagement with movements like #BlackLivesMatter (#BLM) allows students to view their experiences through a lens of shared historical and contemporary struggles.

In a similar vein, Ethan highlighted the pedagogical importance of teaching Pan-Africanism in schools. He emphasised that students' awareness of movements like #FeesMustFall and #BlackLivesMatter reflects their understanding of the continued relevance of decolonisation and racial justice theories. This engagement indicates that digital media is not merely a tool for disseminating information but a space where students develop a critical consciousness, linking historical struggles with contemporary issues. As Ethan suggested, teaching Pan-Africanism equips students to contextualise global movements within local realities, facilitating a deeper understanding of justice and solidarity.

The role of digital media in shaping students' political consciousness is further evidenced by Maria's reflections. She noted that the visibility of #BlackLivesMatter, following the murder of George Floyd, allowed students to make direct connections between historical racial struggles and contemporary forms of racism. This immediacy of social media discourse helps students bridge the gap between abstract historical narratives and the lived realities of racial injustice. Maria observed that students, who previously viewed America as a symbol of freedom and progress, began to question these assumptions in light of the systemic racism exposed by the #BlackLivesMatter movement. This re-evaluation of global power dynamics

highlights the role of digital media in challenging hegemonic narratives and fostering a more critical, globally interconnected worldview.

Similarly, Kate explained that students engaged with social justice issues tend to be active participants in online debates, particularly those surrounding racial struggles in the United States. She attributed this engagement to their consumption of American media. Kate's observation also suggested that students' confidence in using the English language played a significant role in their participation, and revealed that students were not passive consumers of information but actively interpreted and reinterpreted racial and social justice issues across different contexts. The interconnectedness of these debates, facilitated by digital platforms, enabled students to view racial justice through a transnational lens, with Pan-Africanism offering a framework for making sense of these connections.

These insights resonate with Rasool's (2019) research, which highlights how American-born Africans —who, according to Nielsen (2018), have the greatest access to internet channels among African millennials— used Twitter between 2012 and 2018 to develop a more inclusive Pan-African movement. This movement fostered new ideologies, social and political activities, and intersectional leadership that diverged from the mainstream approaches of 20th century Pan-Africanism. Rasool's (2019) findings provide a useful framework for understanding how such digital Pan-African activism might extend to South African high school students.

The pervasive influence of American media not only exposed these students to U.S.-based racial justice movements but also appeared to inspire their active engagement in digital spaces. Platforms like Twitter (X) likely played a dual role: enhancing their awareness of global racial injustices and introducing them to new forms of Pan-African ideology. Kate's students' participation could thus be seen as a local manifestation of the broader digital Pan-African movement described by Rasool.

In conclusion, the testimonies of teachers across various middle-class schools illustrate the profound influence of digitisation on shaping students' political consciousness. Protest movements such as #RhodesMustFall, #FeesMustFall, and #BlackLivesMatter have not only reintroduced Pan-Africanism into student discourse globally but have also fostered a shared understanding of historical and contemporary struggles for racial justice. The heightened engagement with these movements, facilitated by digital platforms, suggests that students are increasingly viewing their identities and struggles through a Pan-African lens, one that transcends national borders and aligns with global movements for justice and equality. These

findings highlight the importance of digital media in shaping the social realities of race and identity among South African students, particularly in an educational context where middle-class access to technology enables a deeper engagement with global justice issues.

5. 2. 2. 2 Teachers' Perceptions of Pan-Africanism in the History Textbooks

5. 2. 2. 2. 1 Pan-Africanism Representation as 'Narrow Nationalism'

The study highlights a prevailing perception among teachers that the representation of Pan-Africanism in South African history textbooks was framed within a narrowly African nationalist context. This representation was characterised by a fragmented approach, focusing on disjointed case studies rather than offering a cohesive thematic analysis. This trend in middle-class schools suggest a correlation between socio-economic status and the pedagogical and intellectual approach to Pan-Africanism.

For example, Sarah reported that Pan-Africanism was 'very little in textbooks as part of nationalism; the section on nationalism and the development of nationalism'. She further underlined that the emphasis in her experience was predominantly on nationalism when discussing Pan-Africanism in the classroom. Similarly, Colleen indicated that Pan-Africanism was briefly covered within the broader discussion of nationalism in Grade 11. This view was supported by Ethan, who observed that the curriculum shifts of 2003 and 2011 have entangled Pan-Africanism with competing nationalisms, namely Afrikaner and African nationalism, thus diminishing its broader implications. As Ethan articulated:

> If you see, [Pan-Africanism] is actually based on nationalisms. So, the curriculum for Grade 11 used to be referred to as 'competing nationalisms'. So, in the South African context, it is more from 1900 onwards, and it is the competing Afrikaner nationalism and African nationalism. And then a few years ago, they introduced into the Grade 11 curriculum from the Grade 12 curriculum, they brought it into [Grade] 11 that the issue of the competing nationalisms of Arab nationalism and Jewish nationalism, Zionism is also there. So, you have got the two competing nationalisms, not Pan-Africanism *per se*.

Olivia expressed similar views, noting that her understanding of how Grade 11 and 12 classes addressed African history was that the primary focus was not on Pan-Africanism. 'It is much more, in Grade 11 is on African nationalism, and notion of imagined Africa that could possibly link to a more Pan-Africanist ideal'. Kate similarly observed that the curriculum and textbooks frame Pan-Africanism within the context of nationalism, stating that they 'talk about the idea of a sense of connection to Africa, a sense of black nationalism. So, it is framed in terms of nationalism'. According to Kate, Pan-Africanism was 'put into the nationalism section

of the curriculum. They basically put Pan-Africanism connected to the story of nationalism in Ghana'. Similar thoughts were expressed by Sarah:

> In the curriculum, it is Grade 11. It is an extension of nationalism in Grade 11. So, you have nationalism that focuses as generally the origins of… it goes into African nationalism in South Africa and Afrikaner nationalism in South Africa. And then it goes into as well the independence of Ghana. And obviously, Pan-Africanism is linked to that. And then the positives and negatives of nationalism.

In addition to the representation of Pan-Africanism in the context of nationalism in curricula and textbooks, teachers in middle-class schools noted that Pan-Africanism was not addressed as a concept, idea, or theme, but rather through various case studies. It was discussed peripherally, with a focus on individual leaders. Stephen mentioned that Pan-Africanism was not treated as a central theme but was referenced indirectly through key figures who aspired to African unity. Similarly, Catharina observed that while Pan-Africanism appeared within the context of decolonisation, it was not taught as a standalone idea. Instead, case studies, such as those on Ghana or Angola, were used to briefly touch on the topic, often framed within African socialism, socialism, or nationalism. She said:

> We have African socialism is [sic] discussed. … regular socialism, capitalism, democracy. We cover a little bit of Ghana and Angola but that [sic] are case studies. We teach independent Africa. I teach Pan-Africanism when I teach decolonisation in Africa. Then I look at Kwame Nkrumah, Tourè, [the] Pan-African movement in South Africa, the PAC. I teach Garveyism, the ideology. I teach Congo. We look at the role of Pan-Africanism; what was it about. We look at the independence of Ghana and the Ghanaian struggle for independence against the British colonial power. That is the context in which we study Pan-Africanism. So, Pan-Africanism we do not study *per se*, but we look at Pan-Africanism in relation to the Ghanaian story and the rise of Ghanaian nationalism.

Teachers like David felt that the curriculum focused more on the character flaws of leaders like Kwame Nkrumah rather than on the broader ideals of Pan-Africanism. David described Pan-Africanism as being subsumed under the broader study of nationalism, with little effort made to define or explore Pan-Africanism independently of individual leaders' shortcomings.

The case study method, used predominantly to teach African history, often reduced the complexity of Pan-Africanism to specific national contexts, according to the teachers. In this sense, Olivia highlighted that the curriculum presents Pan-Africanism primarily through the lens of decolonisation efforts in countries like Ghana, rather than as a continental philosophy.

Olivia pointed out that the focus was more on isolated cases like Ghana or Congo, without a broad Pan-African perspective. She put it as follows:

> … because it is so narrowly focused, it does not embrace. I mean they do talk about some of the challenges that face all African states, but I believe when it is taught the focus remains in Congo and Tanzania because people believe that that is where the question will come from. I think that we are not talking about challenges, they do not look at it in a broad African perspective, it is quite a few countries here and there [that] are mentioned but the detail is in those case studies.

5. 2. 2. 2. 2 Pan-Africanism Representation as 'Cold War' Politics

Olivia also criticised the framing of African countries' histories through the lens of Cold War politics. She argued that African independence movements were often portrayed as mere battlegrounds for Cold War superpowers, reducing African agency and overshadowing the continent's internal political dynamics. For example, the killing of Patrice Lumumba was discussed in terms of Cold War geopolitics, rather than African struggles for sovereignty. She further mentioned that while the economic and political challenges faced by post-colonial African states were briefly mentioned, they were not examined in depth. She felt that Pan-Africanism was only superficially referenced, with little exploration of its roots or relevance in addressing the contemporary challenges facing Africa. Instead, textbooks were perceived as focusing on African history through a European or Cold War-centric lens. She said:

> I think [it] is the major focus of the reason why the curriculum [is] existing [in] Africa, I mean, the Independent Africa study is the focus on the Cold War, so that, Africa is not necessarily looked at in terms of its own history and its own focus and its own issues, but rather almost as a tool of the Cold War. So, there is a big emphasis, I mean, a big section on Angola. But even then, the focus is much more about Angola as a weapon in the Cold War. The same in terms of the Congo. We are looking at it as Western attempts by the West to influence what is going on in Africa. It is really about Cold War politics. You know, so Patrice Lumumba is killed because he was seeking aid from Russia. And, the support for Mobutu, because he supported Western capitalism, and how that becomes a focus of Cold War politics.

5. 2. 2. 2. 3 Pan-Africanism Representation as 'Coherence'

One interesting reflection by Olivia concerned the textbooks' anti-colonial tone, which she interpreted as 'claiming Africa for black people'. While she acknowledged that this sentiment was understandable given the continent's colonial history, she criticised the lack of deeper engagement with the true meaning of Pan-Africanism and its potential to unite the continent 'beyond anti-colonial rhetoric'.

The teachers in middle-class schools who participated in this study agreed that the curriculum and textbooks on Pan-Africanism lacked a cohesive theme and were overly focused on isolated case studies. They further described the texts as *vague*, *disjointed*, and *disconnected* from broader historical or thematic contexts. For example, Catharina observed that 'the textbooks are very vague on it; it is not very detailed'. She considered that 'the text sometimes can be very dangerous. She noted that the texts were 'vague enough to be dangerous', highlighting the risks associated with curricular ambiguity. Educational literature frequently emphasises that vagueness in textbooks or curricula can leave key concepts open to misinterpretation, which may result in either positive or negative outcomes, depending on the learner's prior knowledge, values, or biases. For instance, Freire's (1970) concept of the 'banking model of education' suggests that when learners are presented with unclear or insufficiently critical content, they are more likely to passively absorb ideas without questioning them. In this context, Pan-Africanism's vague representation could foster superficial understandings or be interpreted in ways that reinforce existing stereotypes or biases, which could hinder critical engagement with the subject.

Similarly, Colleen expressed that 'Pan-Africanism is not covered very well in the textbooks. It is very disjointed. So, we get random definitions of Pan-Africanism throughout, but nothing really concrete about the ideology of Pan-Africanism'. Maria, too, critiqued the representation of Pan-Africanism in South African textbooks, noting the fragmented and insufficient portrayal of this significant movement. According to her, textbooks provide only superficial references to key figures such as Frantz Fanon, W.E.B. DuBois, and Marcus Garvey, which are presented in a disjointed manner. She described this as 'randomly deliberated', indicating a lack of depth in the coverage of these intellectuals and their contributions to Pan-African thought. Moreover, she pointed out that the curriculum approached early African nationalism in a fragmented manner, particularly in the Gold Coast (modern-day Ghana), where the National Congress of British West Africa (NCBWA) was often introduced as a Pan-Africanist movement. However, Pan-Africanism as a formal topic only appeared several pages later, in connection with Kwame Nkrumah, despite the movement's earlier influence on African nationalist thought. This structure, Maria argued, gave the impression that Pan-Africanism emerged sporadically rather than being a continuous, interconnected movement. She emphasised this point by stating, 'things are kind of happening without people really making contact with one another', which distorted the collaborative and transnational nature of early Pan-Africanist activism.

Another crucial aspect Maria critiqued was the omission of connections between South African Pan-Africanist leaders and global figures. While South African textbooks cover the rise of African nationalism, including movements like the African National Congress (ANC) and the Pan Africanist Congress (PAC), they failed to highlight how South African leaders were in dialogue with prominent Pan-African thinkers like Marcus Garvey and Casely Hayford. As Maria explained, black liberation figures such as Charlotte Maxeke and Pixley Seme were part of this global network of intellectual exchange, but the textbooks did not reflect this. Instead, South African students only encounter Pan-Africanism towards the end of the topic, when the discussion shifts to the Gold Coast. This fragmented approach, Maria argued, diminished South Africa's role in the broader Pan-Africanist narrative and gave students a skewed understanding of the Pan-African movement's global reach.

Maria's critique resonated with Jan whose reflection on how Pan-Africanism was presented in textbooks highlighted a lack of coherence. He noted that the content appeared disjointed and isolated:

> When I look at the content, it does not flow together or get stitched together very neatly. I would say these are almost like separate little bags or separate little boxes of questions [and] content that we have to cover. They are covered in isolation. They are not covered as one big thing.

Jan attributed this disjointedness to the highly regulated nature of textbooks, which conform strictly to government requirements. However, he critiqued how this regulation limits the depth and breadth of Pan-African content. 'Unfortunately, at least at the Grade 9 level, especially the textbooks are very limited in terms of the content that they give learners to look at', he stated.

> And because of the limited time available for teachers to teach, a lot of textbooks gloss over or water down or condense certain concepts and certain ideas. Pan-Africanism is barely mentioned, at least within the context of the Sharpeville Massacre[22] in Grade 9. So, it is very problematic across all textbooks that there is limited content available.

Jan further pointed out that Pan-Africanism was scarcely discussed beyond its relation to the PAC and Robert Sobukwe, which limits students' exposure to the movement's broader history and significance across the continent. In addition, he expressed frustration with the

[22] The Sharpeville Massacre occurred on 21 March 1960 in Sharpeville, South Africa, when police opened fire on a peaceful protest organised by the Pan-Africanist Congress (PAC) against the apartheid government's pass laws, which restricted the movement of black South Africans. The demonstration, involving about 5,000 to 7,000 people, turned deadly when police killed 69 people and injured at least 180. This event marked a turning point in South African and global resistance to apartheid, leading to increased international condemnation and the radicalisation of anti-apartheid movements (see Lodge, 1983).

curriculum's presentation of historical events, noting that it presented an isolated view of both Pan-Africanism and other significant events:

> If I were to compare the two together, the Grade 9 curriculum mentions the Cold War and it goes up to the date 1961 or thereabouts, and then immediately skips to 1989 and the end of Communism, there is no mention of what happened in those intervening 20 or more years. In the same way, it only mentions perhaps Pan-Africanism in the context of the PAC and the beliefs of Robert Sobukwe, but it then immediately goes on to other content.

The treatment of Pan-Africanism in the classroom, as expressed by teachers, appeared to isolate the concept, presenting it primarily as an 'idea' tied to nationhood rather than a comprehensive ideology with broader implications. Teachers noted a disconnection between the foundational principles of Pan-Africanism and its representation in the curriculum. Sarah highlighted this disjunction by stating, 'what has not been well done is the link between the influence of Pan-Africanist ideas on resistance within South Africa'. She further critiqued how the curriculum constructed independence through a lens of nationhood, exemplified by 'Rhodesia becoming Zimbabwe and Northern Rhodesia becoming Zambia', rather than emphasising the Pan-Africanist ideologies that shaped leaders like those of Tanzania. This narrow focus on nationhood has, according to Sarah, marginalised the transnational nature of Pan-Africanism, reducing its role to a backdrop for nationalist movements rather than a driving force behind broader continental resistance.

Furthermore, Pan-Africanism in South African textbooks was mostly framed within the context of the PAC and ANC, according to the teachers interviewed. Mishqah, for instance, pointed out that Pan-Africanism was often taught as the ideology behind the PAC, which emphasised 'Africa for Africans'. However, she critiqued this as an exclusive vision that limited itself to certain groups. Similarly, Olivia argued that while Pan-Africanism was mentioned, it was not deeply explored. It was presented as part of South African history rather than as a broader continental movement. She highlighted that figures like Robert Sobukwe and Anton Lembede were referenced, but the focus remained localised and disconnected from a larger Pan-African framework.

Jan and Colleen also criticised the limited scope of Pan-Africanism's representation. Jan noted that in Grade 9 textbooks, only a few pages were dedicated to Pan-Africanism, and the content focused narrowly on the formation of the PAC in 1959. The disagreements between the ANC and PAC took precedence, leaving out a more comprehensive explanation of Pan-Africanism as a global movement. Similarly, Colleen pointed out that while the split between

the ANC and PAC was mentioned, there was little focus on the PAC's ideology or what Pan-Africanism truly stood for. The narrative in textbooks often presented the PAC as merely a faction rather than a key player in Pan-Africanist thought.

The perspectives of teachers in middle-class South African schools on 'lack of coherence' could be ascribed to their high levels of qualifications in the field, up to Masters' degree levels, and their own research as these prestigious schools tend to be able to afford to attract the more qualified teachers. These teachers therefore have more scholarly insights, such as their argument that the current curriculum and textbook structure offered 'a limited' and 'fragmented' view of Pan-Africanism, reducing both the complexity of its history and its relevance to contemporary education. The issue was not merely the lack of content but also the manner in which the content was presented, often skewed and offering only superficial engagement with critical historical concepts. Teachers emphasised that it was predominantly discussed within the narrow framework of nationalism and was often reduced to fragmented case studies, rather than being presented as a cohesive and interconnected theme. According to these teachers, this disjointed approach limited students' understanding by focusing on individual leaders, while neglecting the broader transnational significance of Pan-Africanism. Furthermore, the vagueness and lack of coherence in the textbooks hindered critical engagement, perpetuating Eurocentric or Cold War-dominated narratives. As a result, students were left with a superficial and incomplete understanding of Pan-Africanism, undermining its historical relevance and potential to inspire critical thinking about African unity and resistance. In response to these limitations, these teachers could often and more easily turn to alternative research resources outside the official curriculum to provide students with a more comprehensive and multifarious view. The next section will therefore explore why and how these middle-class schoolteachers rely on these various resources to address these gaps.

5. 2. 2. 3 Teachers' Pedagogy on Pan-Africanism

5. 2. 2. 3. 1 Representation of Pan-Africanism within the Discipline of History

Alongside students' interest in Pan-Africanism and teachers' concerns about its underrepresentation in textbooks, the most prominent theme regarding its representation in middle-class schools was the emphasis teachers placed on teaching the subject within a historical framework, particularly highlighting the historical development of both Africa and South Africa. Some teachers expressed concerns about the curriculum's failure to address the contemporary relevance of Pan-Africanism. They argued that the textbooks do not show the

impact Pan-Africanism had on other countries or how the concept is still being used today. For them, this lack of continuity limits students' understanding of the enduring effects of Pan-Africanist ideas on modern African political and social structures. By situating Pan-Africanism within the broader context of history, teachers highlighted its relevance to both past and contemporary issues. To them, this framing could enable students to comprehend not only the Pan-African movement's origins but also its ongoing impact on modern African and global politics.

For instance, teachers tinted the anti-colonial struggle and its resonance with current political movements, such as the Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF) and Black Lives Matter (#BLM), thereby linking historical events with contemporary social dynamics. Interestingly, the EFF, despite its relatively recent emergence in the South African political landscape, represents a form of left-wing populism that challenges the post-apartheid 'rainbow nation' narrative. This combination of black nationalism with a populist economic agenda has allowed the EFF to carve out a distinct space in South Africa's political discourse, particularly among younger generations who feel disconnected from the established political elites (Hurt & Kuisma, 2016). By linking these movements to the anti-colonial struggle, teachers help students understand how contemporary political dynamics were deeply intertwined with historical legacies.

This pedagogical strategy reflected a belief that Pan-Africanism cannot be fully understood in isolation from its historical context. Teachers, therefore, *historicised* and *contextualised* the subject, using a variety of sources beyond the prescribed textbooks. In doing so, they attempted to provide students with a more multifarious understanding of how Pan-Africanism has evolved and how it continued to shape political and intellectual movements today. As articulated by the teachers, Pan-Africanism was taught not merely as a historical concept but as an ideological thread that ran through the broader fabric of African and global history.

A notable aspect revealed in the teachers' perspectives was the degree of agency they exercised in expanding the curriculum. While the South African curriculum provided a structure for teaching Pan-Africanism, many teachers went beyond these boundaries to offer a more comprehensive understanding. For instance, Elizabeth highlighted that students need to 'understand what [Pan-Africanism] is, especially if we look at the history of Africa, which is a key topic in Grade 12'. Similarly, Kate argued that it was impossible to fully comprehend South African or African history without including Pan-Africanism. She noted, 'I do not think you

can leave [Pan-Africanism] out because you do not understand South African history if you do not teach it, and you do not understand African history if you do not teach it'. Kate stressed that understanding the ideological importance of Pan-Africanism was essential to making sense of post-1940s African history and political change, even if students were not required to adopt Pan-Africanism as a belief system. Her goal was for students to 'understand things', rather than merely memorise them for tests.

Catharina, for instance, believed that understanding Pan-Africanism was essential for students to grasp the *decolonisation* period and the *Afrocentric* view of history. She explained, 'I teach it because my kids need to understand what Pan-Africanism is in order to understand the decolonial period… and you need to understand where the black communities were in relation to Europe'. Her approach included teaching Pan-Africanism alongside other ideologies such as African socialism, providing students with a broader intellectual framework for understanding the movements that shaped post-colonial Africa. Catharina integrated these ideologies into her course on Independent Africa, making sure students understand the connections between Pan-Africanism, African leaders, and ideologies like Black Power, exemplified through figures such as Malcolm X.

> My introduction course is into Independent Africa, I look at all the different ideologies at play. They must be able to look at African leaders, and then say he is an African sociologist. Even we do Black Power in America, how Malcolm X became a Pan-Africanist. So, it is not just the government curriculum. But it is important for kids to understand it otherwise it is going to create a mess in order to understand the politics. That is why we teach it.

Catharina's approach illustrated that teachers were not constrained by the formal government curriculum in these middle-class well-resourced spaces, but rather used their pedagogical spaces as a foundation to broaden students' understanding of Pan-Africanism. She explained, 'I follow the curriculum, but I make it bigger. So, kids understand all of that'. This expansion of the curriculum demonstrated teachers' agency in shaping how Pan-Africanism was taught, highlighting the importance they place on ensuring students see the movement's broader historical and contemporary significance. Elizabeth and Margaret both acknowledged that figures like Patrice Lumumba and Julius Nyerere were briefly mentioned in the textbooks, but they used these figures as starting points to discuss the broader themes of Pan-Africanism, such as African unity and cooperation beyond national borders. In the notes Elizabeth used, she commented:

> … there is a cartoon that I speak to my kids about … an outline of Africa with [Lumumba's] face in the middle, and the idea that he was really pushing for the idea of Pan-Africanism and as the unity, unification of African staying together for themselves, both on an economic and a political front.

Several teachers emphasised the importance of connecting Pan-Africanism to present-day political and social movements. Kate, for example, argued that Pan-Africanism was still highly relevant because its ideas continued to influence modern political organisations such as the Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF) and movements like Black Lives Matter. By making these connections, Kate ensured that students saw Pan-Africanism not as a historical relic, but as an active force in contemporary politics. She explained, 'We talk about organisations like the EFF and how they sort of take those ideas in certain directions. We talk about Black Lives Matter. We make the connection to the current day'.

Kate also had a particular interest in intellectual history and strived to link historical figures, such as Steve Biko, to current movements like Rhodes Must Fall, which focus on decolonising the curriculum. She stressed that these ideas did not emerge spontaneously in 2015 but are deeply rooted in historical struggles against racism and colonialism. Her teaching traces these ideological roots back to earlier periods, such as Grade 10 work on the pseudoscientific racism of the slave trade and Grade 11 studies on the resistance to these ideas. The goal, Kate explained, was to help students 'trace those ideas about negative views of race, and then the positive sense of how you resist that by kind of creating a positive identity'.

The perspectives shared by teachers showed that Pan-Africanism was not taught merely as an isolated political movement but as an essential component of intellectual history. Sarah, for example, stressed the importance of teaching students the historical roots of Pan-Africanism. She highlighted key figures such as Marcus Garvey, noting that his early ideas, like encouraging African Americans to return to Africa, were foundational to the development of Pan-African thought. According to Sarah, it was crucial for students to understand how Pan-Africanism grew from these early ideas into a broader movement that influenced post-World War II struggles for African independence.

Sarah believed that students must appreciate the continuity of Pan-Africanism from its American and Jamaican origins to its resonance with African nationalism and the push for decolonisation. She noted, 'They need to understand the background before they can go forward'. In other words, to her, students must understand how the roots of Pan-Africanism were intertwined with the broader African liberation movements of the twentieth century.

Teachers' reflections also revealed how they perceived gaps in the formal curriculum's representation of Pan-Africanism. Many felt that the official textbooks and syllabi provide a limited portrayal of the movement, prompting them to supplement these resources with additional materials. Catharina's and Kate's expansions of the curriculum are prime examples of how teachers work to fill these gaps, ensuring that students receive a more comprehensive understanding of Pan-Africanism and its connections to broader African and global struggles.

Stephen's approach similarly revealed the importance of integrating Pan-Africanism into a broader narrative of African nationalism. He thought the influence of figures like Marcus Garvey on the rise of the ANC and explored how Garveyism and African nationalism played a role in the ANC's growth in the 1930s and 1940s. To him, this method of linking Pan-Africanism to the development of African self-determination helped students understand the ideological underpinnings of movements that shaped South Africa's history.

The teachers' perspectives provided valuable insights into the representation and teaching of Pan-Africanism in South African middle-class schools. Their approaches revealed a strong emphasis on the need to historicise and contextualise the movement, going beyond the formal curriculum to provide students with a more multifaceted understanding of its relevance to both African history and contemporary politics. These teachers acted as agents of intellectual expansion, drawing connections between Pan-Africanism and various ideologies, and linking it to modern movements such as Black Lives Matter and the EFF. By supplementing the curriculum and broadening students' perspectives, they challenged the limitations of textbook representations, providing a richer and more critical engagement with Pan-Africanism.

The teaching of Pan-Africanism in middle-class South African schools was shaped by a combination of resource availability, teacher agency, and the limitations of the prescribed curriculum. Teachers, perceiving the underrepresentation of Pan-Africanism in textbooks and recognising the importance of historical literacy for their students, supplemented the curriculum with additional material. This practice was often driven by the belief that textbooks offered only superficial coverage of the topic, leaving significant gaps that needed to be filled through extra resources and personal engagement with African thinkers.

For example, Kate emphasised the necessity of reading beyond the textbook to truly grasp the complexity of Pan-Africanism, which she referred to as 'a sphere of philosophy'. She explained that some teachers limited their instruction to what was written in the textbook, but she insisted that Pan-Africanism required a much deeper engagement with African thinkers like Steve Biko, W.E.B. DuBois, and Marcus Garvey. According to Kate, reducing Pan-

Africanism to a slogan or a simple definition from the textbook was inadequate for understanding its full scope as a philosophical movement.

> I read Biko, and I read DuBois, and I read a little bit of Garvey, and like trying to actually expose yourself to the African thinkers so that you actually understand. Because I think, sometimes with concepts like Pan-Africanism, it becomes like a slogan, like a short little thing that you sum up. It is a huge, complex, whole body of thought, and it is basically like a sphere of philosophy and if you think that you are going to understand it just from reading like a little block in a textbook.

Similarly, Elizabeth highlighted the superficial treatment of Pan-Africanism in textbooks and felt that teachers had to 'fill in the gaps' for their students. She noted that Pan-Africanism was only briefly mentioned in the Grade 12 curriculum under a section called 'Independent Africa' and that it was barely discussed in any meaningful detail. This lack of depth prompted her to elaborate on the concept for her students, much like her colleague Ethan, who stated that while they adhered to the CAPS (Curriculum Assessment Policy Statements) framework, they often taught much more than the syllabus required. This was also reflected in Sarah's approach, who used the textbook merely as a source rather than the foundation of her lessons. Maria similarly admitted that she used 'extra notes always' because she felt like 'the textbook often is just not enough'. She further added: 'Certainly, I do not like only using it and I think that the girls respond quite well to the inclusion of more stuff to the story that they are receiving'.

The role of teacher agency was crucial in determining how Pan-Africanism was taught. Margaret, for instance, supplemented the official curriculum with notes from SACHED. She believed that these materials, which focused on African history and Pan-Africanism, were more comprehensive than what the textbooks offered. Similarly, David encouraged his students to engage with challenging readings, such as works by the African thinker Leo Africanus,[23] although he acknowledged that not all students were inclined to explore these early African history travellers' materials further. Consequently, teaching Pan-Africanism in middle-class schools reflected a notable shift in educational practices. Margaret's use of SACHED materials —once primarily utilised in working-class schools as a form of resistance— demonstrated the incorporation of alternative historical perspectives into middle-class education, and that these

[23] Leo Africanus (c. 1494–c. 1554), born Al-Hasan ibn Muhammad al-Wazzan al-Fasi, was a Moorish diplomat, historian, geographer, and author from Granada. His works, such as *Description of Africa*, challenge Eurocentric historical narratives by emphasising Africa's intellectual and cultural richness. This makes him a valuable figure in understanding the complexities of African identity and unity, resonating with Pan-Africanist ideals of promoting African pride and historical consciousness (see Zhiri, 2006).

anti-apartheid educational archives have somehow surprisingly survived in some white middle-class schools.

Meanwhile, David's efforts to introduce complex African historical narratives highlighted an attempt to expand students' historical consciousness, though full engagement varied. These examples illustrated how resistance-era educational materials were being repurposed to foster African pride and historical awareness in contemporary classrooms, signalling a gradual broadening of the curriculum to include diverse African perspectives.

Teachers also navigated the tension between teaching what the syllabus required and offering a more comprehensive view of Pan-Africanism. Kate, for instance, explained that she introduced Pan-Africanism as a general concept before connecting it to African nationalism in South Africa and Ghana. Margaret echoed this approach, drawing on her alternative educational materials to challenge the often limited or skewed representations of Pan-Africanism in the textbooks.

Additionally, some teachers noted the link between the representation of Pan-Africanism and the broader historical context, such as decolonisation. Elizabeth, for example, pointed out that the textbooks associated Pan-Africanism with figures like Lumumba, who was portrayed as a leader advocating for African unity beyond ethnic or national interests. Margaret similarly referred to Nyerere's philosophy, noting that while African nations had to operate within colonial-era borders, the Pan-African ideal encouraged cooperation across these artificial boundaries.

> Lumumba was known as a Pan-Africanist because he wanted African countries to unite in their struggle against colonialism and also to cooperate with each other beyond national borders, and he said, although we have to work within our national borders, which were artificial. And this is also echoed by Nyerere, who basically says, look, we have got to work within these borders. We know they are artificial, but we have to cooperate beyond them.

Overall, the teaching of Pan-Africanism in middle-class schools involved a combination of adhering to the curriculum while supplementing it with additional materials to provide a more robust understanding of the concept. The availability of resources, teachers' personal engagement with Pan-African thinkers, and the relatively lower social stress in these schools allowed for a more expansive and nuanced teaching of Pan-Africanism compared to working-class schools. This dynamic highlighted not only the agency of teachers in shaping the educational experience but also the significant role that class plays in access to knowledge and the depth of historical understanding that students are privileged to receive.

5. 2. 2. 3. 2 Diverse Teachers' Interpretations of Pan-Africanism

In the context of South African middle-class schools, teachers approached the teaching of Pan-Africanism with more complex interpretations that draw from historical and contemporary perspectives. While adhering to the curriculum, these teachers demonstrated significant autonomy in framing the discourse, allowing for a richer, multi-faceted exploration of Pan-Africanist ideas. One notable strategy, as seen in the case of Sarah, involved teaching the evolution of Pan-Africanism in response to changing historical circumstances. Her approach acknowledged the fluidity of ideologies, reflecting broader shifts in political and social conditions. Similarly, Catharina's method emphasised a bifurcated approach, distinguishing between pre- and post-decolonisation perspectives. She divided Pan-Africanism into two phases: the decolonial period, which focuses on African liberation, and the post-apartheid era, where the concept of 'Africa for the Africans' evolved into a broader discussion of African identity. She remarked, 'we look at *old-school and new-school versions* of it'.

Kate's teaching strategy further illustrated how Pan-Africanism was dissected into different schools of thought. She structured her lessons to explore the differences between figures like W.E.B. DuBois, Marcus Garvey, Kwame Nkrumah, and Booker T. Washington. Each of these individuals embodied distinct strands of Pan-Africanism, ranging from Garvey's Black separatism to DuBois's advocacy for Black integration within American society. Kate's detailed explanation also highlighted how historical figures such as Steve Biko and Anton Lembede were situated within broader Pan-Africanist thought, particularly in relation to the complexities of Black consciousness and non-racialism.

> I try to map it out quite carefully to show that there are different versions of Pan-Africanism. … then as we are doing all the other sections of work, we trace those ideas. So, I sort of say to them, okay, is this more like a DuBois kind of idea? If you are looking at someone like the ANC and Nelson Mandela, or if you are looking at the Pan-Africanist Congress, it is more influenced by someone like Marcus Garvey.

Kate's pedagogy, in particular, highlighted a critical pedagogical principle: the complexity of historical movements and figures cannot be distilled into simple narratives. She actively encouraged her students to engage with the contradictions and evolving views within the Pan-Africanist movement, emphasising that even within the same organisation, leaders like Nelson Mandela and Anton Lembede exhibited shifts in their thinking over time. This approach not only deepened students' understanding of Pan-Africanism but also fostered critical thinking, as they were invited to analyse which figures or movements aligned with particular ideological strands, to her.

Kate further expressed her belief that students should grasp the complexity of people and history, emphasising that it cannot be distilled into simple narratives suitable for a curriculum. She aimed to convey to her students that their classwork represented a specific level of detail, shaped in part by the curriculum's requirements, though she enjoyed some flexibility in emphasis. While the Department of Basic Education (DBE) provided information sheets regarding the duration for implementing these schemes of work, she admitted to not opening those emails, choosing instead to follow her own approach. Nonetheless, she underscored that she adhered to the curriculum.

Pan-Africanism is represented in South African classrooms through a variety of pedagogical strategies that integrate both historical and cultural elements, enabling students to connect with the concept on multiple levels. Many teachers explore African history from different perspectives, linking it to Pan-Africanism by highlighting a common past and shared destiny. For example, Maria, a history teacher, finds success in connecting Pan-Africanism to Rastafari culture and the music of Bob Marley, particularly his performance at Zimbabwe's Independence Day and the song 'Africa Unite', which is explicitly Pan-Africanist in its message. She explains:

> I recently actually taught Pan-Africanism to my Grade 8 … and one of the aspects is Bob Marley singing at Harare at the independent day of Zimbabwe and singing Africa Unite, which is a Pan-Africanist song. So, we explore a little bit of that, and these are like 14-year-olds responding really well to the idea of Pan-Africanism and the idea of the emotional, psychological bond that comes with a shared past, shared destiny.

Maria deliberately used cultural elements familiar to her students to make Pan-Africanism more accessible, recognising that reggae music and the Rastafari movement resonate with many students, providing an entry point to deeper discussions. She reflects:

> I have also found that what helps with teaching Pan-Africanism is to go into reggae and Rastafari and to talk quite a lot about Jamaica because there is something that they can connect to like Bob Marley. For example, reggae music and Rastafari are cultural and religious reference points in the present of the kids have a connection to, which then you can use as a way into the deeper layers of history. I have had some great success teaching it from that perspective, using the music, using the visuals of Haile Selassie, and the imagery that goes along with Rastafari.

By associating Pan-Africanism with familiar symbols like Bob Marley and Haile Selassie, Maria effectively tapped into the students' existing cultural awareness, making the historical and ideological components of Pan-Africanism more tangible and emotionally engaging.

Margaret adopted a more historical approach, particularly focusing on pre-colonial African civilisations to instil pride and knowledge of Africa before European colonisation. She drew on Africa's global connections and intra-African relationships during the pre-colonial period, teaching her Grade 10 students about African leadership and trade relations with the Arab world, the Middle East, and the Far East. She believed this broader historical framing was essential for understanding Pan-Africanism:

> I want the children to really have a broader understanding of Africa before it was created at the Berlin Conference into these notions of countries. So, I do a whole kind of a start the year with pre-colonial African settlements, and we look at relationships and trade and leadership and forms of government in Africa and pre-colonialism and we look at everything from foreign trade around Africa to inter-African settlement of trade, which, to me, is really that notion of Pan-Africa. … Africa had these relationships with different settlements had relationships with each other and with the rest of the world prior to colonialism. And we look at trade with Arab nations, we look at trade with the Middle East and the Far East.

Margaret's emphasis on pre-colonial history highlights Africa's significant role in global trade and governance, presenting a counter-narrative to colonial histories that often depict Africa as passive or isolated. Furthermore, she focuses on the prominent role of women in pre-colonial African societies, contrasting it with the often-oppressive roles of women in Europe during the same period:

> Also, we look at the leadership of women. It is sort of seen as something new within the world, but in Africa, it was not new. … I try and bring in a lot of intersectionality between women and African forms of government, and trade, and just to get it in still a sense of pride and knowledge of Africa before we look at the carving up of Africa and the notion of a European form of civilisation. So, for me, that is really trying to look at Pan-Africanism, pre-colonisation.

This perspective not only offered students a broader understanding of Pan-Africanism but also built a sense of pride in Africa's past accomplishments, situating Pan-Africanism within a historical context that predates colonialism and celebrates African leadership and global influence. Additionally, in her matric (Grade 12) classes, Margaret moved beyond the prescribed curriculum to introduce historiography, helping students critically engage with the diverse interpretations of Africa's post-colonial successes and challenges. Although not formally part of the syllabus, she believed it was essential for her students to grasp the complexity of African histories and avoid simplistic, monolithic narratives, hoping this would enable them to recognise that 'there are different ways of assessing Africa, according to historiography'. By introducing historiography, Margaret encouraged her students to critically

evaluate African history through multiple lenses, challenging dominant interpretations and fostering a more nuanced understanding of Africa's post-colonial trajectory. This critical approach reinforced the complexity of Pan-Africanism as both a historical and ideological movement.

An interesting finding in the middle-class schools of Cape Town was the detailed study material prepared by Ethan, head of the history department at a prestigious, long-established institution. Ethan's notes outlined the ideas of prominent Pan-African thinkers and activists, providing a chronological overview of the Pan-African movement and integrating key figures from both the Diaspora and the African continent. These notes, which circulated and were taught in various high schools, were employed by some teachers, while others supplemented them with alternative sources. For example, Kate, one of the teachers, mentioned, 'I use some of what [he] put together, but then I also like using videos. So, I try to introduce mine'. She further noted that Ethan's notes offered a comprehensive approach to the curriculum, incorporating a wide range of texts and historical sources, which she adapted to her teaching.

Ethan explained that due to limitations in the curriculum, his department taught Pan-Africanism extensively by scaffolding content from Grade 10 through to Grade 12. In Grade 11, they selectively focused on certain figures, introducing students to thinkers like Booker T. Washington, W.E.B. DuBois with his concept of double consciousness, and Marcus Garvey, among others. The students explored Pan-Africanism from the First Pan-African Conference to the 1945 Manchester Conference, where African voices began to take prominence. Ethan noted a particular focus on Kwame Nkrumah, Julius Nyerere, and the significance of African-led Pan-African movements.

Ethan's study material also connected Pan-Africanism to the South African context, including discussions on the formation of the ANC Youth League and its Pan-Africanist leader, Anton Lembede. According to Ethan, his school was one of the few to cover Lembede extensively. The notes also explored the divergent Pan-Africanist views within the ANC, contrasting Robert Sobukwe's nationalism with the more inclusive vision of the Freedom Charter in 1955. Ethan highlighted the influence of the All African People's Conference in Ghana on Sobukwe's ideas, which eventually led to the formation of the PAC.

In Grade 12, students were tasked with researching Pan-Africanist theories and connecting them to the philosophy of Black Consciousness. Ethan explained that this approach allowed students to draw links between theorists such as W.E.B. DuBois and Steve Biko,

offering them a deep understanding by the time they encountered the National Senior Certificate (NSC) examination topic on Black Consciousness. This structured, multi-year approach to teaching Pan-Africanism, with its integration into the broader historical curriculum, set these schools apart from others. This case illustrated not only the pedagogical strategies employed by history teachers but also how Pan-Africanism was adapted and represented in fee-paying schools, reflecting varying interpretations and applications of the ideology across South African educational contexts.

The representation and teaching of Pan-Africanism in middle-class schools often went beyond the limited and fragmented treatment offered by the textbooks. Teachers identified the textbooks' isolated approach and sought to create more meaningful connections between Pan-Africanism and broader historical contexts. For example, some teachers integrated the ideas of W.E.B. DuBois, particularly his notion of double consciousness from *The Souls of Black Folk*, into the Grade 12 unit on the Civil Rights Movement in the USA. By doing so, they illustrated the contradictions faced by Black Americans and how these echoed the broader Pan-African struggle. Kate noted that providing students with extracts from DuBois's work allowed for a deeper exploration of the shared experiences of Black identity in both African and diasporic contexts.

Similarly, Sarah linked Pan-Africanism with key figures and events such as Marcus Garvey, DuBois, and George Padmore, along with the Manchester Conference of 1945. By referencing these figures and the conference, Sarah highlighted how Pan-Africanism was not merely a concept in African history but part of a global movement towards liberation. This approach not only enriched students' understanding of Pan-Africanism but also emphasised its role in African history through the presence of figures like Kwame Nkrumah, who emerged as significant actors in the fight for independence.

The diverse approaches to teaching Pan-Africanism in South African middle-class schools revealed a commitment to exploring its historical, ideological, and cultural depth. Teachers like Sarah, Catharina, and Kate brought different perspectives to their classrooms by dissecting the evolution of Pan-Africanism, exploring its different phases and ideologies through figures such as DuBois, Garvey, and Mandela. Meanwhile, Maria and Margaret integrated cultural elements like reggae and Rastafarianism, and pre-colonial African history to foster a sense of pride and connection with Africa's past, demonstrating Pan-Africanism's relevance beyond textbooks. Ethan's structured approach offered a multi-year curriculum scaffolded to ensure a deep understanding of Pan-Africanist thinkers and movements.

Together, these strategies underscored the importance of both historical rigor and creative pedagogy in making Pan-Africanism a dynamic, critical component of South African education. Teachers consciously moved beyond simplistic narratives, encouraging students to grapple with the complexities of African history, global connections, and intellectual traditions, ensuring that Pan-Africanism was taught as an interconnected and multifaceted ideology that spans continents and eras.

5. 2. 2. 3. 3 Representation of Pan-Africanism in a Global Context

In middle-class South African classrooms, teachers approached the teaching of Pan-Africanism by highlighting its global dimensions, connecting African history and struggles to those of the African diaspora. This approach went beyond South Africa or even the African continent, illustrating how Pan-Africanism was a global movement with far-reaching implications. Teachers like Kate and Margaret, in addition to Maria, enriched their lessons by linking local movements to global contexts, encouraging students to see Pan-Africanism as part of a wider historical and ideological framework. This suggested an understanding that Pan-Africanism encompassed not just a geographical identity but also a shared global experience of colonisation, imperialism, and resistance.

Kate, for instance, structured her lessons to explore the differences between various Pan-Africanist thinkers, such as W.E.B. DuBois, Marcus Garvey, Kwame Nkrumah, and Booker T. Washington. By dissecting these different schools of thought, Kate illustrated to her students how Pan-Africanism not only addressed African unity but also connected to global ideas and struggles. For example, she showed how Nelson Mandela's ideas were influenced by Garvey's Pan-Africanist vision, while movements like the Pan-Africanist Congress of Azania (PAC) were shaped by Garvey's Black separatism. This globalised understanding of Pan-Africanism might help students engage with complex ideas, tracing parallels between the experiences of black people in South Africa and African Americans, thus fostering a deeper understanding of shared struggles across continents.

Margaret's approach to teaching pre-colonial African history by incorporating the continent's global connections and influence demonstrated how Pan-Africanism can be understood in a broader global context. By introducing her students to Africa's trade relationships with the Arab world, the Middle East, and the Far East, she provided a counter-narrative to colonial portrayals of Africa as isolated or passive. This method underscored Pan-Africanism's ability to challenge Eurocentric views of history and assert Africa's significant role in global affairs. Furthermore, by highlighting the role of women in pre-colonial African

societies and contrasting it with their roles in Europe during the same period, Margaret illustrated how Pan-Africanism not only reclaims African history but also critiques global gender narratives.

Maria, in turn, used cultural elements, such as reggae music and the Rastafarian movement, to connect Pan-Africanism with global struggles. She drew connections between the South African political context and the African diaspora, using Bob Marley's performance at Zimbabwe's Independence Day as an entry point to discuss African unity and the Pan-Africanist message in his song 'Africa Unite'. This allowed students to see how the Pan-Africanist struggle transcended national borders, linking the liberation of African nations to the broader fight for black liberation worldwide.

In her teaching, Maria also conveyed Pan-Africanism as a philosophy and movement that emphasises the shared past of all people of African descent, including the diaspora. She explained,

> I understand it as a movement or a set of ideas and philosophies, which argues that people of African descent, wherever they find themselves in the world, share a common past, which then informs a shared experience of especially like the trauma of colonialism and imperialism, the enslavement of millions of people for the imperial project and taken across the oceans or continent. So, there is a shared past, a shared experience with that trauma, but there is also a shared connection to African history and that means that there is a collective identity regardless of wherever they are and ethnicity and that their destiny is woven with one another. So, no people of African descent are free until all people wherever they are free.

This interpretation, strongly influenced by Marcus Garvey, also integrated ideas from W.E.B. DuBois, Malcolm X, and Steve Biko. Moreover, Maria applied this concept of a shared destiny to her Grade 12 students when teaching the Civil Rights Movement. She highlighted how figures like Malcolm X, Stokely Carmichael, and Martin Luther King Jr. spoke about the global nature of black oppression. As Malcolm X argued, even if African Americans achieved civil rights victories, such as the Voting Rights Act or Civil Rights Act, if black people in South Africa were still under apartheid, true freedom remained elusive. Maria believed this message resonated strongly with her students, helping them to see the interconnectedness of global struggles for justice and the idea that the fight for freedom anywhere is a fight for freedom everywhere.

Pan-Africanism was positioned as a tool for enriching the understanding of South Africa's political struggle by framing it within global anti-imperialist movements. For example, Maria emphasised that drawing parallels between local and global black liberation

movements helped students see South African history as interconnected with global history, rather than as an isolated narrative. This integration suggested a teaching methodology that enhances students' political consciousness by linking local struggles to the broader experience of colonised people.

> Teaching Pan-Africanism in my experience has always been to enrich and complexify the South African condition. It has always been to enrich it because it has been really cool to draw connections between movements in South Africa like for example, the Black Consciousness Movement to what is happening in America at that very point. So, like the ideas that Steve Biko is writing and thinking about are not foreign to black Americans at that time, and that connects what is often for the kids, like South African history is happening in a parallel universe almost to the rest of the world. So that is a cool connection that can be made, and it really enriches South Africa and our experience of living in a country that those are the people who we owe our country to at the moment. So that is a cool layer of it.

Maria's description of connecting Steve Biko's ideas to movements in America demonstrated an effort to break down the idea of South African history as being isolated from the broader history of the black world.

> I think connecting the political struggle in South Africa against the apartheid government to global anti-imperial struggles is beneficial for students' understanding what it means to be human to understand what choices people make when they are fighting for justice.

By incorporating these global elements into their lessons, teachers intended to help students contextualise Pan-Africanism within both African and global histories. They explored the idea that the struggles for freedom in South Africa, the USA, and other parts of the world were interconnected. This multidimensional approach to teaching Pan-Africanism encouraged students to see the movement as not merely historical but as an ongoing, global fight for justice and equality for people of African descent. Teachers aimed to instil in their students the understanding that Pan-Africanism was not confined to Africa but was a global philosophy that speaks to the collective identity and destiny of black people everywhere.

5. 2. 2. 3. 4 Representation of Pan-Africanism in the Context of the Continent's Economic Decolonisation

In middle-class schools, Pan-Africanism was represented not only as a historical and political movement but also as a crucial force for economic unity and decolonisation. Several teachers emphasised its importance for African countries' ongoing struggles against neo-colonialism and neo-liberal economics, connecting these themes to contemporary issues. Stephen, for example, expressed his strong empathy for Pan-Africanism in terms of economic

integrity, distancing himself from African leaders who collaborated with neo-liberalism. His teaching highlighted solidarity with 'people who were struggling on the ground' rather than African elites who perpetuated neo-colonial practices. Stephen's classroom discussions often focused on the 'continuing underdevelopment of African states by powers like the US, Russia, China, and mining monopolies from Australia, Britain, and Canada'. He stressed that, while he personally identified with the struggles of African countries for economic self-determination, his positionality as a white South African made him cautious about claiming the Pan-Africanist label, believing that Africans may not regard him as one.

Similarly, Jan expressed strong views on the economic dimensions of Pan-Africanism, stating, 'From an economic point of view, I have found myself to be absolutely Pan-Africanist'. However, he adopted a more sceptical stance towards the political manifestations of Pan-Africanism, citing the inefficacy of organisations like the African Union. For Jan, the failure of African leaders to 'get their own house in order' impeded the political effectiveness of Pan-Africanism, a recurring theme among fee-paying schoolteachers who viewed 'economic unity' as a more realistic goal than 'political unification'.

Sarah shared a complementary view, framing Pan-Africanism within the incomplete decolonisation of Africa. She argued that no African nation had fully broken free from the economic structures established during colonialism, noting that 'the institutions in those nations were set up in such a manner as to benefit the metropole'. This perspective underscored her belief that political independence had not been accompanied by 'economic liberation', a sentiment echoed by other teachers who critiqued the persistence of colonial-era economic ties. Maria similarly focused on the economic recovery of African nations from colonialism, stressing the importance of 'sharing a destiny where people can live fulfilling lives where people are looked after and safe, have food, clothing, housing'. She connected these ideas to Pan-Africanism's potential for creating a united African front against neo-colonial powers. She also highlighted that she 'do not want to live anywhere else'. And she 'want to be part of that solution'.

David emphasised the importance of reconstituting links among African people to resist Western dominance. He believed that Pan-Africanism had a role in countering 'Western monopoly capital' and in 're-forging those links' that had been severed by colonialism. Elizabeth, too, highlighted the ongoing relevance of Pan-Africanism in addressing Africa's colonial legacy, suggesting that until this legacy was 'rooted out', Pan-Africanism would remain essential in the continent's pursuit of unity and self-determination.

Catharina and Margaret offered more nuanced perspectives, both identifying as Pan-Africanists while acknowledging the complexities of the movement in the contemporary context. Catharina saw Pan-Africanism as essential for Africa's economic growth and self-sufficiency, while also recognising her own capitalist tendencies. She described herself as a realist who believed in the need for 'Africa to get together and get stronger independently off the West'. Margaret, in contrast, linked Pan-Africanism to both political and economic challenges to neo-colonialism, emphasising the role of leaders like Nyerere and Lumumba who sought to create 'an African form of socialism' that would challenge colonial and neo-colonial structures alike.

Colleen and Elizabeth both saw Pan-Africanism as a unifying force for African people, with Elizabeth stressing the importance of African unity 'for the benefit of Africans' and Colleen asserting that Pan-Africanism was about 'joining together to fight a common oppressor'. However, Colleen also noted the diversity of African nations as a challenge to political unification, pointing out the significant 'divergency' between African countries and cultures. She argued that while economic cooperation might be possible, political unity across such a diverse continent was unlikely in her lifetime.

In sum, teachers in fee-paying schools conveyed a deep understanding of Pan-Africanism's historical and economic significance, with many emphasising its relevance to ongoing struggles against neo-colonialism. Their teachings went beyond the prescribed curriculum, incorporating contemporary examples and highlighting Pan-Africanism's role in addressing Africa's economic and political challenges. This approach positioned Pan-Africanism not as an outdated or purely historical movement, but as a living, evolving ideology with practical implications for today's Africa, particularly in relation to economic independence and decolonisation. Teachers like Stephen, Jan, and Sarah exemplified this critical engagement with Pan-Africanism, bringing their personal perspectives and empathy into the classroom while maintaining a focus on the broader implications for African unity and self-determination.

To conclude, according to the middle-class schoolteachers, Pan-African history should be taught or seen as a discipline and in a far more significant way given the influence of Pan-Africanism both in the economic decolonisation of the continent and democracy in South Africa. It should be clearly defined, historicised, contextualised, and explained how it was born and spread throughout the Diaspora and Africa, and linked to its practical implications today, such as shaping the politics, and its impact on African consciousness for decolonisation and as

a stand against the threat of neo-colonialism. This understanding of the importance of teaching the subject led teachers to utilise different sources other than the prescribed textbooks. Pan-Africanism was therefore taught in these institutions along with basic concepts of historical thinking such as historical significance, cause and consequence, and continuity and change.

5. 2. 3 Pan-Africanism in Working-Class Schools

Based on the data collected in this study, the nurturing and shaping of Pan-Africanism in working-class (township) schools, in the absence of resources, primarily relied on the experiential knowledge of the teachers themselves, with a few exceptions. Many teachers reported adopting the tenets of Pan-Africanism in response to the xenophobic (or Afrophobic) attitudes exhibited by their pupils towards other African-born individuals in the history class, a trend that mirrored findings in earlier studies on xenophobia in South African schools. For instance, Vandeyar and Vandeyar (2014) explored how xenophobia in schools is linked to broader societal tensions, noting that students frequently exhibit discriminatory attitudes towards their peers from other African countries. Similarly, Chimbga and Meier (2014) found that secondary schools in South Africa play a crucial role in either perpetuating or alleviating xenophobic sentiments, depending on how they address these issues within the curriculum and school culture. Dube and Setlalentoa (2024b) highlighted the challenges faced by learners from migrant backgrounds, emphasising how a lack of knowledge about Pan-Africanism among students contributes to the perpetuation of xenophobic attitudes. This is further corroborated by Krüger and Osman (2010), who examined xenophobia in Johannesburg's inner-city schools, noting that immigrant learners often experience alienation and hostility. Nnadozie and Morojele (2024) also documented the experiences of African migrant learners, highlighting how these learners face both direct xenophobic violence and the subtle erasure of their identities in the school environment. Collectively, these studies provide important context for understanding the xenophobic challenges reported by teachers in South African classrooms and reinforce the need for educational interventions rooted in Pan-African values to combat such discrimination. In this context, the indifference or apathy exhibited by students towards Pan-Africanism had led teachers to assume the primary role of representing it within the classroom.

Students' disinterest or disdain towards Pan-Africanism in South African classrooms can be understood within the broader historical and socio-political context of xenophobia, particularly in the post-apartheid era. This lack of engagement with diasporic Pan-African ideas is not merely an issue of academic disinterest but is also deeply connected to the racial and national tensions that have shaped contemporary South African society. The role of teachers in

representing Pan-Africanism becomes crucial as they attempt to instil a sense of unity and African identity in a context where xenophobic sentiments persist and often lead to extreme violence in these township communities. Against this backdrop, Harris (2002) discusses how xenophobia, as a social pathology in post-apartheid South Africa, has been partly driven by a sense of disillusionment with the promises of liberation, economic inequality, and the perception that 'others' are encroaching on scarce resources. This mindset has contributed to the marginalisation of Pan-African ideals, which, by their nature, call for solidarity and unity across African nations and peoples. In this climate, the idea of Pan-Africanism, which promotes inclusivity and cooperation, may be seen as a threat to a sense of national purity or to the resources that dispossessed and impoverished black South African citizens feel entitled to.

Neocosmos (2010) further elaborates on the relationship between citizenship, nationalism, and xenophobia in post-apartheid South Africa. He argues that the concept of 'native foreigners' —those perceived as not belonging or being 'other'— has been central to the rise of xenophobic attitudes. In this context, students may be less inclined to embrace Pan-Africanism because they are socialised into a nationalism that prioritises South African identity over broader African unity. The xenophobic rhetoric of the nation-state creates an environment where people are encouraged to draw distinctions between themselves and their continental neighbours, seeing them as competitors rather than allies. Thus, the apathy towards Pan-Africanism can be framed as a reflection of the nationalistic and xenophobic narratives that have been constructed in response to economic hardship, migration, and a reimagining of South Africa's place within Africa and the global community. Teachers, in that regard, assumed the role of educators and activists, attempting to counterbalance the prevailing xenophobic ideologies by promoting Pan-African values that encourage solidarity, unity, and African pride.

Social location emerged as a pivotal factor in the teaching of Pan-Africanism, with teachers frequently contextualising contemporary South African issues, such as tribalism and Afrophobia, through a Pan-African lens. By localising these discussions, they bridged broader Pan-African ideals with the lived realities of their students. Issues like Afrophobia were often framed within a broader African context, while tribalism was addressed within a distinctly South African framework, highlighting the historical and ongoing complexities of uniting diverse black South African ethnic groups. The legacy of apartheid, which forcibly displaced millions of black citizens into designated tribal homelands while reserving urban centres for white populations, entrenched tribal divisions and rivalries that persist to this day. The apartheid government's policy of 'separate development' aimed to create distinct tribal homelands, fostering a sense of tribal exceptionalism that often pitted different ethnic groups

against one another. This is evidenced by Mlambo and Masuku (2023), who note that apartheid's segregation policies were designed to build tribal superiority, leading to a hierarchy among groups such as the Zulu, Sotho, Venda, and Tsonga, where members of one tribe often felt superior to those of another. Similarly, Makhado and Tshisikhawe (2021) argue that apartheid education reinforced these divisions, embedding tribalism and xenophobia within the societal structure. This 'divide and rule' strategy fostered enduring social fractures that are especially pronounced in economically disadvantaged areas. Resource scarcity further exacerbates these divisions in underfunded schools, where the lack of diverse teaching materials, cultural exchange initiatives, and opportunities for inter-ethnic engagement limits efforts to foster unity. Such dynamics are particularly prevalent in regions marked by severe socio-economic deprivation, where historical injustices intersect with contemporary struggles for resources and recognition (Adjai & Lazaridis, 2013; Popke, 2000; Strauss, 2019; Osman, 2018).

To address this issue, teachers in working-class schools adopted a more proactive stance by integrating Pan-African principles into lessons on African 'nationalism'. Kagiso explained, 'When teaching African nationalism, Pan-Africanism was further emphasised'. He elaborated,

> To be honest, in terms of our history, we do not have a topic that focuses on Pan-Africanism, but the only thing we focus on [is] African nationalism. So, I try to use the ideas of Pan-Africanism to make them understand African nationalism. We do not have a direct topic that focuses on Pan-Africanism.

Similarly, Lindokuhle viewed Pan-Africanism as a means of fostering a sense of nationalism in both South Africa and the broader continent. He explained, 'I can define Pan-Africanism as just a simple thing; just to unite the black South Africans, to unite the black Africans. So that they can develop a sense of pride, a sense of confidence. A sense of nationality'. This perspective highlighted how, in working-class contexts, Pan-Africanism was often interpreted as a tool to build solidarity and national identity. Lindokuhle's view demonstrated a more practical application of Pan-Africanism, aimed at instilling self-assurance and unity among black Africans and South Africans.

To address the perceived gaps in the textbooks on the subject, these teachers often drew on their own *lived experiences* during the apartheid era. This reliance on personal narratives reflected a unique form of 'cultural capital', as theorised by Pierre Bourdieu (1977), enabling them to create more relatable and inclusive learning environments for their students. In the context of South African education, these personal histories become a critical resource for teachers, particularly in the absence of limited subject content. According to Biesta et al.

(2017), teacher agency emerges through the interplay between individual experiences and institutional structures, highlighting how teachers' narratives from the apartheid era shape their pedagogical approaches and influence their interpretation of the curriculum. This aligns with Priestley et al. (2015), who argue that teachers' engagement with the curriculum is not a passive process but one mediated by their identities, histories, and contexts, as suggested by Hall (1997). Therefore, the integration of lived experiences into teaching can be seen as an act of resistance, challenging Eurocentric and hegemonic narratives while fostering a more critical and transformative educational space, as advocated by hooks (1994). This dynamic showed the potential for teacher agency to disrupt entrenched educational inequalities and promote a more complex understanding of Pan-Africanism and social justice in the classroom. Furthermore, working-class schoolteachers recognised the significance of Pan-Africanism for the political unity of the continent.

Three main themes will be discussed surrounding Pan-Africanism for working-class schools within the 3 focus areas mentioned earlier: These are 'Students' engagement with Pan-Africanism' ('Students' indifference to Pan-Africanism'); Teachers' perceptions of Pan-Africanism in the history textbooks: 'Teachers' agency in using Pan-Africanism to combat Afrophobia'; 'Teachers' pedagogy on Pan-Africanism'.

5. 2. 3. 1 Students' Engagement with Pan-Africanism: Indifference to Pan-Africanism

The discourse surrounding Pan-Africanism within Capetonian working-class schools revealed a pronounced disinterest among students, as articulated by teacher Aphelele: 'The students are not inclined towards Pan-Africanism whatsoever'. This sentiment was echoed by fellow teacher Dimakatso, who passionately described her struggles to engage students with Pan-African themes, viewing it as integral to the concept of 'decolonisation'. Despite her enthusiasm, students frequently preferred to explore European history and African-American movements, gravitating towards figures like Malcolm X and the Black Power movement, which resonated more deeply with their interests and identities. This preference, as noted by Dimakatso and confirmed by other teachers, went beyond a mere academic choice; it revealed a deeper negotiation of historical narratives and identity formation. Dimakatso expressed her frustrations, underscoring this trend:

> We found out that Pan-Africanism, yes, I taught them, but they do not like it. No one writes it, I promise you. They like European [American] history, like Black Power from America. Oh, they like it. Every year, most of the learners choose Black Americans like Malcolm X and the Cold War. So, if

> decolonisation is the best —me, as a teacher, I like it very much— but I found out that the learners do not choose it. And when you go to the nearby schools to ask, that group of teachers, we make a group, all the teachers are crying.

Similarly, Bandile highlighted the importance of African history, stressing that students should understand 'their own histories before they understand outside history'. However, he also pointed out that students often choose American history over African history, particularly in Grade 12 where they have options like the Cold War, the Angolan Civil War, or the Black Power Movement in the US:

> Our learners must understand their own histories before they understand outside history. In paper one, in Grade 12, it is a Cold War. Then African Angola and the third one is the Black Power Movement in the US. Then we are having a choice of choosing in this. So, we did the Cold War and the Black Power in America.

For black working-class learners, the Black Power Movement might provide a sense of empowerment and confidence, especially for students in a post-apartheid South Africa grappling with issues of identity and belonging in a society favouring the elite and in which white people still own the land and wealth and attend the best schools. The figures associated with Black Power, like Malcolm X, may symbolise defiance against systemic oppression and the fight for equality, which may feel more immediate and relevant to students than abstract concepts of Pan-African unity, which can seem distant or disconnected from their daily realities in which their economic prospects are significantly diminished. In fact, Pan-Africanism as a concept suggesting social mobility for black African people in a 'post-colonial' context can be triggering in a classroom in a trapped socio-economic environment where there has been little progress or change since apartheid.

This disinterest in Pan-Africanism appeared to reflect an active alignment with narratives that students found more compelling or reflective of their personal experiences and struggles. To address this, rethinking how Pan-Africanism was taught —by connecting it to contemporary global black movements and grounding it in students' everyday lives— could make the subject more relevant and impactful.

The perspectives shared by teachers and academics revealed significant insights into the phenomenon of South African *exceptionalism* and its implications for the teaching of Pan-Africanism in schools. This concept, often grounded in the alleged belief that South Africans are distinct or superior compared to the rest of the continent, reflects a complex interplay of historical legacies, identity formation, and sociopolitical dynamics (Lazarus, 2004). Surveys

have revealed that many South Africans perceive themselves as exceptional, which at times translates into a sense of superiority over their continental counterparts. A comprehensive report concluded that such violence is driven by a confluence of factors, including urban deprivation, intense competition for jobs and housing, and a pervasive understanding of 'exclusive citizenship' (Pillay et al., 2008). These elements collectively foster an environment where the notion of South African exceptionalism exacerbates social tensions and fuels xenophobic attitudes, leading to violence against foreign nationals (Mafukata, 2023). This perspective is supported by Tsheola et al. (2015), who argue that the frustrations stemming from socio-economic disparities have fuelled xenophobic attitudes, complicating the narrative of a tolerant and inclusive society. Lindokuhle supported this, stating, 'South Africans prefer to see themselves as part of Europe. Our children are Eurocentric; they are not Afrocentric'. This sentiment pointed to a pervasive orientation among students towards Eurocentric ideals, evidenced by their preferences for travel destinations. Lindokuhle elaborated:

> So even us, in South Africa, we have got our own people who do not see themselves as part of Africa. South Africans prefer to see themselves as part of European [sic]. Our children are Eurocentric, they are not Afrocentric. If I can take two planes and put them in front of a school, a plane that will take you to Ghana and a plane that will take you to Turkey, which one? All of them [would] say they want to go to Turkey. They would prefer to go to Turkey instead of going to an African country, they always prefer to go to Europe. They are Eurocentric. They are not Afrocentric.

The hypothetical scenario of presenting two planes —one to Ghana and another to Turkey (Türkiye)— revealed a stark preference for the latter, suggesting that students' aspirations and cultural alignments were heavily influenced by Eurocentric narratives. Lindokuhle's observation highlighted a failure of the education system to instil an appreciation for African heritage and culture, fortifying a disconnect from the continent's broader historical and cultural narratives. Furthermore, it is curious to note that Lindokuhle's example also illustrated how he perceived my 'outsider' position as a researcher from Türkiye. This perception accentuated the complexities of insider-outsider dynamics in research, particularly in contexts where geographical and cultural affiliations can shape the interpretations and interactions of participants.

Emily, a teacher educator, added another layer to this discussion by noting the resistance students exhibit towards South African or Southern African history. She stated, 'many of them want to identify with America or with Europe', a phenomenon she attributed to the legacies of colonialism. This resistance not only reflected the students' preferences but also

signalled a broader educational challenge: the need to create curricula that resonate with students' lived experiences and identities.

Cebo K., a public history researcher and author whom I interviewed for my research, argued that South Africa has a problematic history of 'so-called South African exceptionalism', which likely has its roots in the ANC. He articulated the systemic issues rooted in South Africa's educational policies. Cebo highlighted the ANC's role in shaping the curriculum but critiqued its failure to promote an African-centred approach to history. By not prioritising an African perspective, the ANC has inadvertently perpetuated a curriculum that lacks the depth and critical engagement necessary for fostering a Pan-African identity. Cebo's assertion that early education ministers ceded control to external consultants, leading to frameworks like Outcomes-Based Education, suggested a missed opportunity to ground education in African histories and narratives. This disconnect contributes to the persistence of Eurocentrism and the fragmentation of identity among South African students, particularly in working-class contexts. This perspective on exceptionalism mirrors Mahmood Mamdani's (1993) critique of post-colonial educational systems, in which he argued that educational reforms often failed to prioritise African knowledge and histories, reinforcing colonial legacies and marginalising indigenous intellectual traditions (see also Abraham, 2020).

The rise of ethnicity and tribalism as central themes of conflict in South Africa, particularly during and after the Jacob Zuma era (2009–2018), is rooted in the country's complex sociopolitical history. Zuma's presidency was marked by the revival of ethnic identity politics, often linked to his Zulu heritage and the political dynamics within the African National Congress (ANC). The period saw a resurgence of ethnic-based factionalism, with some leaders appealing to ethnic loyalties to consolidate power. This development, exacerbated by increasing socio-economic inequality and political corruption scandals, further deepened divisions within the national psyche (see Baloyi, 2024). Scholars such as Baloyi (2018) and Mlambo and Masuku (2023) have documented how these themes have infiltrated social and political discourses, revealing an increasingly fragmented national identity. Mamdani (1996) argues that mainstream nationalists at independence sought to address colonial oppression through deracialisation and anti-imperialism, focusing on internal reforms and restructuring state relations. However, without rural power reforms, deracialisation could not lead to democratisation, as the traditional tribal authority structures undermined democratic progress. Electoral politics became a contest not just for civil representation but also for control over rural areas through appointed chiefs, perpetuating patrimonial clientelism. As a result, democratisation remained superficial, with urban politics reflecting tribal tensions, further

exacerbated by the retention of customary rural power (p. 289). This explains the lack of autonomous civil society and the persistence of ethnic political organisations in post-colonial Africa (Szeftel, 2000). This fragmentation posed a critical challenge for teachers seeking to foster a sense of unity and belonging among students in a country still grappling with its complex historical legacies and contemporary political and economic challenges.

During apartheid, teaching non-racialism in South African schools, particularly in working-class (township) schools, was essential in resisting the regime's divisive policies. Non-racialism fostered solidarity across ethnic and racial lines, offering a powerful counter-narrative to the state-imposed racial hierarchy. However, in post-apartheid education, this focus seemed to have shifted. Jan, a teacher with experience in both middle-class and township schools, highlighted this change through a poignant classroom moment in a working-class school where a Grade 11 student questioned the concept of different races. The student's inquiry —'Sir, why did God create different human races?'— emphasised a troubling disconnect in how young South Africans perceived their ethnic identities. Jan elaborated that the student was not referring to the distinctions between so-called 'black' and 'white' individuals but rather between different black South African ethnic groups, such as Xhosa and Zulu. This question revealed a deeper issue: internalised racism. By perceiving ethnic distinctions as racial differences, students internalise a hierarchical view of identity rooted in Apartheid-era divisions. Jan's assertion that 'being a Pan-Africanist is useless' without first addressing local ethnic divisions underscored a critical challenge. His viewpoint suggested that before students can engage with broader African unity, they must first confront the social and historical realities of their own society. This shift from teaching non-racialism to navigating ethnic divisions highlighted the evolving challenges in post-apartheid education. To continue the legacy of non-racialism while fostering Pan-Africanism, educational frameworks must now address these internal ethnic distinctions, ensuring that efforts towards social cohesion remain relevant and effective.

The voices of teachers and academics converged on a critical assessment of the challenges posed by South African exceptionalism and Eurocentrism within the educational landscape. This issue was particularly pronounced in working-class schools, where a lack of resources and supportive curriculum often perpetuated narratives that marginalise African histories and cultures. Insights from teachers underlined the pressing need for a transformative curriculum that actively addresses ethnic divisions and promotes a deep engagement with African histories and cultures. Such an educational paradigm shift is essential for nurturing an

identity that goes beyond local distinctions, fostering a robust sense of collective belonging among African youth.

5. 2. 3. 2 Teachers' Perceptions of Pan-Africanism in the History Textbooks: Pan-Africanism as Agency to Combat Afrophobia

The interviews with teachers from working-class schools revealed a significant theme regarding the representation of Pan-Africanism in the classroom, particularly in relation to students' Afrophobic attitudes towards migrants from other African countries. Notably, *every* teacher interviewed expressed the necessity of incorporating Pan-Africanism into their teaching to combat these prejudiced views, suggesting a proactive approach to fostering a more inclusive understanding of African identity among their students. This need arose in part because refugees and migrants tended to settle in townships where resources were limited and competition for jobs and housing was high. Everatt (2011) highlighted this demographic reality, noting that individuals from different racial backgrounds did not live 'cheek by jowl' with foreigners, 'competing for jobs, houses, opportunities' (p. 18).

Teachers reported that derogatory terms used to describe other African citizens were prevalent among their students, revealing an entrenched Afrophobia that necessitated intervention. As articulated by Lindokuhle, 'While we are busy trying to convince them, they still use those funny words in order to describe these foreigners from other African countries. Sometimes they call it *Queta*'. Such remarks showed the challenging environment in which teachers operate, as they grappled with deeply ingrained prejudices. Lindokuhle continued: 'They are just insulting words. So, they are words full of hatred and dislike'. Kagiso similarly noted that 'they usually call them with names'. Along the same lines, Mandlenkosi elaborated on the implications of this language, indicating that it reflected a broader societal tendency to dehumanise fellow Africans. Mandlenkosi explained what he understood from Pan-Africanism and stated, 'They need to realise that they are one people', elaborating further:

> So, I always tell my learners in my classes because there are derogatory words they use for foreign nationals where they call them *amaquecha*, which means foreign nationals. They refer to them as *amaquecha*, so I do not know the meaning of that because some of them speak languages that we do not understand. So, there is a tendency of referring to them as *amaquerere*. … So, the foreign nationals are referred to as *amaquerekere* and then they use the township lingo and then instead of calling them *amaquerekere,* they call them *amaquecha*. It is also derogatory. It is some sort of a shortened version of this one. … here in the townships … the language used by … especially those who come from the prisons, they have got different ways of expressing themselves of which who have not gone there … So, we fit in Pan-Africanism when we *conscioustaise* [deliberate use of township slang, meaning 'raise awareness

among’] our learners. It is not on that would refer to other people as *amaquecha* because we are also the *queschas*.

Mandlenkosi further contextualised his teaching within the framework of current sociopolitical events, specifically mentioning Operation Dudula[24], a movement advocating for the expulsion of foreign nationals. He posited that this phenomenon illustrated the necessity of instilling a sense of unity among Africans: ‘If Pan-Africanism is key to keeping us together as Africans, we do not need to discriminate against Africans from other countries’. He continued, ‘… because in our understanding, Africa is one country, which is meant for all Africans, but it was divided during the colonial era. Then the countries from Europe were the ones who divided Africa’. This sentiment aligned with Kagiso’s assertion that educating students about migration can counteract Afrophobic attitudes:

> I do teach Pan-Africanism as a reference to the topic as a way of trying to make them understand what I am trying to deliver in class. I do dwell much on Pan-Africanism simply because of the current situation of South Africa. If you can check in South Africa where more than a number of Africans who come into South Africa, especially our learners, they do not understand the reason behind that. They know nothing about the issue of migration, people who come from other countries. So, in trying to make them understand the reality and the importance of being united… I know maybe they say that they are selling drugs, all those things, but we cannot necessarily define the entire society based on one person. So, by putting Pan-Africanism in front, I am trying to make them understand the importance of seeing each other as equal or respecting each other, uniting as Africans.

The teachers’ narratives revealed a collective solidarity on the shared understanding that their pedagogical approach must confront misconceptions about migration and identity. Mandlenkosi stated:

> The only difference between us and those our African brothers, they are only coming into the country after 1994. The only difference is that we came first than our African brothers. All of us, the black people in Southern Africa have come from the Great Lakes, from the region of Great Lakes in the Central Western part of Africa. So, these are our brothers, and we do not need to perceive them as invaders. They

[24] Operation Dudula is a South African movement known for its anti-immigrant stance and vigilante actions aimed at expelling undocumented foreign nationals from the country. The formation of the movement in Soweto occurred in the aftermath of the July 2021 riots, which erupted following the imprisonment of former president Jacob Zuma for contempt of court. These riots, fuelled by widespread anger over his incarceration, provided a backdrop for the emergence of the group, which sought to address issues related to immigration, crime, and unemployment in South Africa. Its methods have sparked significant controversy, with accusations of promoting xenophobia and violence. Initially framed as a grassroots initiative addressing social issues, Operation Dudula has expanded its influence by registering as a political party to participate in the 2024 South African general elections. Critics, including human rights organizations, argue that its rhetoric and actions exacerbate Afrophobic sentiments and undermine social cohesion. Despite this, the group has garnered support from sections of the population frustrated by high unemployment and perceived government inaction on immigration issues (see Al Jazeera, 2022; Charlie & Ford, 2023; Mashale, 2024).

> are not invading any space in our country because they are our own brothers. They were just left behind because of the partitioning of the African continent. So that is how we integrate Pan-Africanism. Otherwise, we do not have a specific lesson that relates to that.

This perspective challenged the notion of foreign nationals as intruders, instead framing them as compatriots shaped by historical circumstances, including colonial partitioning. Lindokuhle further articulated the complexity of xenophobia in South Africa, suggesting that it arose from a lack of awareness about the continent's shared history: 'Xenophobia in South Africa … has certainly not only economic roots but also many people just not knowing the past or choosing to be selective about what it means to be South African'. Lindokuhle observed that the curriculum's focus, particularly in Grade 12, there was a tendency to prioritise local and international history over African history. This gap in knowledge perpetuated misconceptions and contributed to Afrophobia:

> Mostly in Grade 12, [Pan-Africanism] is being portrayed as a way to also unify the whole people of this continent. But specifically, the so-called black Africans. I think one of the reasons was to try to avoid issues of Afrophobia and also xenophobia which is happening in our country today. But in Grade 12, we do not dwell much on African history, we prefer local history and international history. That are things such as the Cold War, human civil rights of America, black powers, Vietnam War in China. We prefer, we tend to run away from our African history. And I do not know the reason why, but it really now shows that there is a problem simply because now the black South Africans are involved in Afrophobia, in xenophobia, meaning that they are not quite aware of the history of this continent.

Furthermore, many teachers in working-class schools stated that they covered Pan-Africanism by addressing the aid of other African countries in the fight against apartheid. Thus, according to the teachers, students needed to understand how the other African states had helped them gain their freedom from the institutionalised racist regime, yet their students adopted Afrophobic attitudes against other African-born people. For instance, Lindokuhle articulated:

> Obviously, I am trying to avoid what is happening today, xenophobia, Afrophobia. I normally used to bring those ideas to the learners, tell them where we are coming from. Where we were as black people during the regime of apartheid? We were just around the world, around the African continent held by the international community helped also by the African continent in order for us to attend democracy 1994. So, I used to convey that so that they cannot see other Africans from other countries as animals.

As a result, it should come as no surprise that in working-class schools, it was very likely that migrant pupils or students whose parents were citizens of another African country were exposed to daily microaggressions, as pupils' Afrophobic feelings were deeply ingrained.

It was very noteworthy that Lebo observed that her students deliberately concealed the fact that one of their parents was a citizen of another African country:

> There is a lot of xenophobia in the country. … [Students] do not want to equate themselves with other African countries, they do not want to see them as one, but they are one. We are all the same. There are some students whose parents are Africans, one from South Africa and one from another country, and they see this as a *stigma*. They try to hide that.

In summary, the insights gleaned from these interviews underscored the vital role teachers played in mediating the representation of Pan-Africanism in classrooms, particularly in countering entrenched Afrophobic attitudes among students through teachers' oral testimony of the struggle against apartheid. Their efforts to educate and promote unity were crucial in challenging prevailing misconceptions and fostering a more inclusive understanding of African identity. By addressing the historical context of migration and encouraging critical reflection on these issues, teachers helped cultivate a more positive perception of African unity among their students, thereby contributing to a more cohesive society. It should also be pointed out that this finding shows the shortcomings of the education system to support teachers teaching in working class schools by providing textbooks aligned to the reality of the African classroom where oral testimony counts as valid knowledge.

5. 2. 3. 3 Teachers' Pedagogy on Pan-Africanism

5. 2. 3. 3. 1 Teachers' Reliance on History Textbooks

None of the history teachers interviewed in working-class schools consulted sources other than the textbooks and the notes given to them by the Ministry of National Education, which were summaries of the textbooks. For instance, Dimakatso explicitly mentioned that the extra notes they distributed were simplified versions of the textbook material, supplied by the Ministry. This reliance on Ministry-provided materials indicates a limited range of sources and a lack of supplementary materials available at these schools, beyond the official curriculum. The Ministry's handouts were designed to standardise content delivery across diverse textbooks, which helped ensure consistency in the key information taught. However, this reliance on Ministry-provided materials might restrict teachers' ability to tailor the content to suit their specific students' needs or incorporate alternative perspectives that could enhance the curriculum. Bandile noted:

> I am giving them extra handouts. I am not relying only on the textbook. They are handouts that we are receiving from the Department of Education. So, we are giving them those handouts. It is a part of what

> is said in the textbook and simplifies it. Because if you look at the handouts that were coming from the department, it is assisting us because as schools are using different textbooks, we are not using one textbook. So that information about education, it gives us the key content that we need to report using this textbook. But this is the content that I must follow.

Similarly, Kagiso mentioned that although he did not give students extra notes, he relied on his own explanations (often oral testimony) to clarify textbook content. He highlighted the importance of supplementing official content with 'extra additional information' to ensure that students understand the material more comprehensively. However, this method still heavily relied on the content provided by the Ministry, as teachers' personal input was limited by the material available and their individual experiential knowledge of Pan-Africanism. This reliance on limited official content on Pan-Africanism hindered a rich and nuanced exploration of Pan-African history, particularly in schools where teachers lacked access to diverse resources.

The heavy reliance on textbooks and materials provided by the Ministry highlights a significant pedagogical constraint: teachers' limited autonomy in shaping their lessons. Standardisation inadvertently restricted their ability to tailor lessons to meet the diverse needs of students. This approach can be linked to Paulo Freire's (1970), critique of the 'banking concept' of education, which thrived during apartheid, where enforced memorisation of content was the norm. This pedagogical model was deeply resisted during apartheid, as it was seen as a mechanism for oppression, limiting critical thinking and the development of independent thought. Today, in these very same schools, the remnants of this pedagogy persist due to teacher survival strategies in the hopeless context of poverty and mass education, reinforcing alienation from historical content on Africa among students.

Freire's (1970) theory reveals how education systems can entrench power imbalances by treating students as passive recipients of knowledge, rather than active participants in their learning. This aligns with the situation observed in South African classrooms, where students were still subjected to alienating educational practices, leading to a lack of engagement and critical reflection. As Govender (2020) argues, this perpetuated reification —turning social relations and structures into things that seem natural or inevitable— further entrenching inequalities in education. In these settings, students remained distanced from the learning process, not fully able to connect with the content or its broader implications.

Larger class sizes and limited access to technology added to these difficulties, and teachers were often required to strictly 'follow' the curriculum with minimal deviation, limiting the incorporation of external resources. This lack of access also reflected systemic issues related to resource distribution, as many working-class schools lacked funding for libraries,

educational journals, or digital platforms. Consequently, reliance on official handouts became a necessity, further entrenching disparities between these schools and those in wealthier areas, where teachers had more flexibility to enrich the curriculum.

The limited range of materials had significant implications for students' engagement and critical thinking. Textbooks often presented history in a linear, factual manner, which did not encourage students to question or critically engage with the material. Pan-Africanism, as a subject, lent itself to debates about identity, history, and the intersection of global and local movements. However, the absence of diverse perspectives in classroom materials deprived students of the opportunity to explore these complexities fully.

The limited and often abstract content found in textbooks has significantly contributed to students' disengagement with Pan-Africanism in working-class schools, especially when the material feels disconnected from their daily lives. This echoes bell hooks' (1994) assertion that education must empower individuals to recognise the external forces that shape their self-perception in order to attain authenticity. Without this recognition, individuals are at risk of being defined inauthentically by these external influences, reinforcing alienation. Pan-Africanism, however, holds the potential to resonate deeply with students when presented through diverse and relatable narratives. Unfortunately, the lack of such resources has resulted in a narrow and static representation of this history —or one-dimensional as Marcuse (1964) observes— failing to capture its full dynamism and relevance. In this context, education has the power to foster self-consciousness, enabling individuals to resist alienation and societal expectations. An inquiry-driven teacher, in contrast to simply enforcing predetermined standards, challenges conventional norms and inspires students to think critically (Dewey, 1927). By doing so, education becomes a tool for deepening engagement with Pan-Africanism, helping students connect its significance to their own lives (see Oskay & Ballard, 2024).

Marx's theory of alienation further contextualises this issue: alienation occurs when individuals are disconnected from their labour, cultural identity, or the products of their work. In the case of working-class students, narrow, abstract textbook content alienates them from the rich, complex history of Pan-Africanism, presenting it as distant and irrelevant to their everyday lives. Instead of experiencing Pan-Africanism as a dynamic, living movement with immediate relevance in which they also have agency to shape and reshape its meaning, students encounter it as a foreign, academic concept. This detachment is both intellectual and emotional, as students fail to see how Pan-Africanism intersects with their own struggles for social and political justice, which is deeply connected to both the redistribution of resources and the

recognition of marginalised identities, as Fraser (2001) argues, true justice requires both redistribution and recognition — principles central to Pan-Africanism.

Moreover, this alienation extends to the educational process itself, where students are positioned as passive recipients of a predetermined historical narrative rather than active participants who can engage with, relate to, or reshape it. This can foster disillusionment, rendering the core ideals of Pan-Africanism —unity, liberation, and self-determination— seemingly inaccessible (see Gramsci, 1971). Consequently, the transformative potential of Pan-Africanism is undermined by the very educational structures meant to convey its significance.

In the context of South African working-class schools, however, teachers —despite facing their own socio-economic challenges, limited access to resources, large class sizes, and educational shortcomings— make a concerted effort to teach Pan-Africanism in ways that resonate with their students. Even when textbooks are lacking, these teachers engage with students' lived realities, such as the experience of Afrophobia, to make the teachings of Pan-Africanism relevant and relatable. Through this approach, teachers bridge the gap between abstract historical narratives and the contemporary struggles students face, striving to make the subject matter more meaningful and empowering. This resonates with Freire's (1970; Freire & Vittoria, 2007) ideas on dialogical education, where learning is co-constructed through real-life connections. Freire emphasised that education should be rooted in the lived experiences of students, allowing them to critically engage with and reshape the world around them. By making the teachings of Pan-Africanism relevant to students' experiences, teachers in these schools embrace Freire's belief that education should empower students to act upon and transform their world.

The failure to integrate diverse perspectives limited students' ability to develop critical thinking skills. Without exposure to competing viewpoints or varied lenses, working-class students were more inclined to rely on rote memorisation —a practice reminiscent of rote-learning methods enforced during apartheid— rather than engaging in inquiry-based learning. In an educational landscape that increasingly prioritised critical thinking and global awareness, this reliance on a narrow range of materials disadvantaged working-class students, placing them at a distinct educational and intellectual disadvantage compared to their middle-class peers.

In conclusion, the reliance on textbooks or Ministry-provided materials and the lack of additional resources in working-class schools presented a significant challenge to the teaching

of Pan-Africanism. While teachers expressed a desire to enhance student understanding, they are often constrained by systemic limitations, including a lack of autonomy and access to diverse educational materials. These constraints limited the depth of students' engagement with Pan-African history and reflected broader educational inequalities that impact critical thinking, engagement, and identity formation in South African classrooms.

5. 2. 3. 3. 2 Representation of Pan-Africanism as a Localised Concept

In working-class schools, Pan-Africanism was frequently represented as a 'fixed' or 'rigid' concept, often 'isolated' or 'detached' from broader historical and contemporary contexts. Teachers tended to focus primarily on struggles within South Africa and its immediate neighbours, such as Zimbabwe and Mozambique —often reflecting a sensitivity to Afrophobia, or on specific African countries such as Ghana, Congo or Tanzania— which were included in the curriculum as case studies. Though grounded in important decolonial values, the unintended outcome is a 'narrowly framed' perspective of Pan-Africanism, reinforcing a localised and somewhat insular view of African unity and struggle. The curriculum and classroom discussions, focused primarily on isolated cases and internal struggles, limited students' exposure to the transnational and global dimensions of Pan-Africanism, particularly its ties to the African Diaspora and broader African solidarity.

The divergence in local versus global representations of Pan-Africanism highlights how working-class schools' interpretations of Pan-Africanism (as a disillusional concept far removed from their lived realities) differ from the ANC's elitist vision of an aspiring African 'Renaissance,' as promoted during Thabo Mbeki's presidency, which often carried European cultural undertones.

Mandlenkosi's observation illustrated this disparity: 'When you go to tertiary institutions, you will be told about the struggles of the African people in the Diaspora'. This gap highlighted that such critical discussions were deferred until higher education, and even then, only for those fortunate enough to continue their studies. As a result, the understanding of Pan-Africanism among students in working-class high schools has remained confined to local or national contexts. This decontextualised approach likely restricted their ability to fully engage with African history, limiting their awareness of its global significance and diminishing their grasp of Pan-Africanism's relevance today.

The lived experiences of the teachers in this context became even more meaningful when considering that all the teachers involved in this study were black and had been directly

engaged in the historical struggles during apartheid. For example, Lebo, the only young teacher interviewed, considered as a 'born-free' and working in a working-class school, stated that she made a conscious effort not to bring her personal ideas into the classroom. Instead, she aimed to present diverse perspectives (though her limited access to knowledge on Pan-Africanism meant she relied heavily on textbook material). This finding was further supported by Sarah, a teacher educator with extensive experience in history education.

> If you talk about schools where teachers themselves have experienced the struggle, and they have personal knowledge from their lived experience of Pan-Africanism and the role that Pan-Africanism played in encouraging resistance in Africa and in South Africa, then they teach that in that manner. So, I think it is a lot about people picking and choosing from the curriculum based on their own knowledge base and their own interest base.

This aligns with research indicating that teachers' personal histories significantly influence their pedagogical approaches (Dryden-Peterson & Siebörger, 2006; Dryden-Peterson & Robinson, 2023). Dryden and Siebörger (2006) argue that history teaching in South Africa often reflects broader societal transitions, where teachers act as 'memory makers', blending testimony with formal content to present a nuanced historical narrative. Such studies highlight the ongoing negotiation between historical memory and curriculum, showing how teachers' lived experiences shape the transmission of Pan-African ideals in post-apartheid education.

Oral testimony of long oppressed people is by default brought into history classrooms, even by the most qualified teachers, because historical content is not dislocated from real lives and struggles and can never be expected to be. These communities have a wealth of resources in indigenous knowledge, but due to lack of systemic support for teachers they struggle to incorporate such knowledges in the history classroom. The curriculum also favours western disciplinary methods.

The perspectives shared by the teachers often centred on South African-specific narratives, particularly within the contexts of local political struggles and anti-apartheid discourses. While these interpretations provided valuable insights into the country's historical and socio-political landscape, they tended to prioritise local experiences over the broader, transnational dimensions of Pan-Africanism. Notably, many African teachers integrated oral history and oral testimony into their teaching, drawing on lived experiences and community narratives to convey Pan-African ideas. This approach, rooted in African traditions of knowledge transmission, offers a culturally resonant and valid perspective. Alan Wieder (2008)

emphasises that oral histories provide a powerful tool for linking personal and collective experiences to broader social issues, thereby making Pan-Africanism more relatable and immediate in the classroom.

For instance, Kagiso's approach to teaching Pan-Africanism stemmed from a desire to reconnect his students with their cultural roots, stating, 'Based on the way I am presenting Pan-Africanism to them, I take Pan-Africanism from the root of our cultures and then I try to rebuild it to the entire South Africa and then make them understand'. While this emphasis on local cultural heritage was significant, it simplified the broader ideals of Pan-Africanism, which encompassed shared social, political, and economic struggles across Africa and its Diaspora. Dimakatso articulated a palpable frustration regarding her students' apparent indifference towards South Africa's historical context, reflecting:

> I do not know why they do not want, maybe they do not know [where] their parents come from. Because even their mothers are very like you, their parents [were] the youth. They do not know about apartheid, democracy or what is this. Maybe because I am there. It is only two years now and I will go to take a pension. [indicating her belonging to the 1976 Soweto uprising generation]. *So, I know everything. I am the primary source, not the second. I am an eyewitness, I was there.* I do everything. Even most of them, … do not know even what happened in 1994. *They just are reading books. But me, … I was there.* They do not take it.

Dimakatso's reflections showed how her personal engagement with South Africa's liberation struggle profoundly influenced her teaching. Moreover, it shows that teaching African history as a black teacher (who lived through apartheid) was potentially triggering and traumatic. This would hardly be the case for her white 'competent' peers, who may find a cartoon on Patrice Lumumba of great pedagogical value, whilst for black African teachers his assassination touches a raw nerve, and a cartoon would be an unthinkable representation. This is even more traumatising if such black teachers still find themselves in the same socio-economic conditions as under apartheid. This teacher's frustration, particularly with students' lack of appreciation for firsthand experiences, highlighted a critical issue: while teachers brought personal histories into the classroom, their framing of Pan-Africanism was often restricted to South Africa's anti-apartheid struggle – likely because of the national imperatives for justice for such teachers, such as the unfinished 'business' of South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commission and the unresolved land issue.

It is thought-provoking how an assumed non-triggering topic such as Pan-Africanism can catalyse emotions in the history class amongst black teachers in working class schools

around the unfinished business of the TRC. Aphelele's frequent references to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) exemplified this. He explained:

> They [the students] become interested first [in the] TRC. Some of their grandfathers were involved in the struggle. Some of them, they were killed. They were in exile. … *They know those things.* And we have to explain what we [are struggling for], [and on top of that] to a perpetrator. The victim [of] apartheid atrocities. It means [talking about] apartheid crimes [as] the freedom fighters… You see [on of this they get amnesty, blanket amnesty, all those things.

Dimakatso's focus on the TRC reflected how South African history, particularly post-apartheid reconciliation, dominated the teaching of Pan-Africanism in his classroom. While the TRC is undoubtedly significant, Aphelele's focus overlooked the broader scope of Pan-Africanism, which extended beyond South Africa to other African nations and the Diaspora. Bandile also reinforced this localised approach, saying:

> In that part, it [Pan-Africanism] is case studies. If they choose South Africa, that is whereby African nationalism and Afrikaner nationalism or else you choose Ghana. But I am always focusing to South Africa because I want them [to] learn us, to understand their own history here in South Africa. That is [the] only area that I am always focusing [on] in Grade 11 into South African case study that is African and Afrikaner nationalism. Then in paper two is South African history most because it is the Black Consciousness in South Africa and road to democracy in South Africa. Then the third one is a globalisation. Even in that, you have a choice to choose out of these 3 [to] choose 2. So, focus again is about *our own history* because we believe that a nation without history is like a tree without [a] foot.

Dimakatso asserted that South African history was mandated by the educational department:

> South African history, the department forced [us] to teach it because, without South African history, the student does not know about our democracy. *We are coming from apartheid. We are supposed to teach them deeply. They must know their background as a South African. Political*. Yeah. So, they [can] afford to ask [us] to teach them.

Whilst white middle-class history teachers emphasised a 'deep' *academic* understanding of Pan-Africanism, working class black teachers focused on a 'deep' *experiential* understanding – representing the concept in a radically different way.

When discussing Pan-Africanism, Dimakatso clearly showed her understanding of it exclusively within the South African context and criticised today's leaders.

> You come to South Africa as old people, we are *ashamed*, we take our hands because it is not the same even, we teach about Pan-Africanism.

> The world now, the way they do not talk about South Africa and talk about the wealth. If you notice, if you read about our leaders Anton Lembede, they act different from these leaders. … Sometimes they [the students] ask the questions like, everything is right to yourself, education, they fight for you for the education, but if this education of ours as black students. Where is your child near us? Where is yours? You have a better education now. Is that right? They fought for us but if you look at our schools only science students that they go to the lab from Grade 8 to 12, they do not know the computer in front of them. And these children of today, they are asking you everything. *Why? Why, why, why?* And EFF, All of them, they fight fight fight.

Dimakatso expressed her admiration for Steve Biko and the Black Consciousness Movement:

> Biko, proud man, black. They [the students] like it. They know he was killed by apartheid. … All teachers, we like ideas [of] that Black Consciousness Movement. And Steve Biko is the best leader. Because he does not benefit from this democracy. He fought for the blacks to get what they want in their land.

Aphelele similarly acknowledged Pan-Africanism's significance in addressing broader inequalities, he further suggested that the ideology emerged in response to the struggles faced by black South Africans. He noted:

> The ideology of Africanism came in the 1940s by the ANC Youth League. Anton Lembede, they were the driving force within the movement they saw the ANC as the nationalist movement. So, they came up to be more radical because it was trying to address the challenges that were faced by the black people at that particular time.

> We agree to disagree. The negotiated settlement, the compromises that we made, the sunset clause, the negotiations. The Truth and Reconciliation. We are here today. Look at what is happening in KZN. It shows the deeper inequalities. Look what happened to the pandemic. It shows the deeper inequalities. If you watch TV and 400 schools in Durban have been destroyed. Where are these 400 schools? Rural areas, township schools. Now what happened to those learners? Will the white school accommodate those learners? That is why I am trouble of what? Inequalities. The deep inequalities. Even now the pandemic has shown us because, during the pandemic, we used the rotation system because we cannot take all the learners. Because of the population of the learners that we have in our school, 1650, but the school does not accommodate all of them. That is why I am saying Pan-Africanism, to me, it was the struggle for independence, equality against segregation. People must learn all things.

Aphele's reflections suggested an understanding of Pan-Africanism as a means to confront deep-rooted economic and social inequalities, yet his framing remained closely tied to South Africa's context. When asked whether teaching Pan-Africanism in the classroom was harmful to the South African government's nation-building design, which was non-racial, he

said, ‘to some extent, yes, it is’. His statements made it clear that he appreciated the need to teach the concept in the context of class and racial struggle in South Africa, and the challenging and shifting issue of positionality.

> Because we have to redress it. We have not redressed that. We have got political freedom, not economic freedom. And it was a negotiated settlement. It was not total freedom. The economy is still in the hands of the white people. That is the unfortunate part. And the majority of people are still landless. And it is still not working. And we talk of Pan-Africanism that everybody must be equal irrespective of race. But the unfortunate part, you have to mention the race because of the inequalities that still exist in our own government.

Black history teachers in townships schools used emotive language (‘hate’, ‘anger’ etc.) in their representation of Pan-Africanism in their history classes. In this context, it would be even perhaps inappropriate to assume a ‘lack of understanding of history’, or a ‘lack of history literacy skills’ as the issue of representation (encoding / decoding) is much more complex.

> I always ask myself, if you are an educator, you are a white person teaching this lesson in the classroom. There are black students. How do you approach it? Because it is very *sensitive*. The *perpetrators* and the *victims*. How do you teach this in class? Maybe I am asking you a wrong person. But you understand that more. *It is very, very sensitive, very sensitive.* Even that section of the creator, the crisis of the apartheid, how do you teach it as a white teacher in front of the class. It was apartheid, it was racial, is [it] not it? White oppresses blacks. They are here in the class, both races. How do you teach it? These are the question I always ask myself. Are you objective or just keep it? ‘Let me teach another section instead of teaching this one’. For instance, if I can go and teach it two different race groups, many people become *uncomfortable*.

Aphelele further pointed out gaps within the TRC:

> Even still there are gaps within the TRC. There are many questions that were not answered in the TRC because the foot soldiers and the masterminds, some of them, they were never brought to book. The victims … some of the families were unable to identify the grave of their loved ones. So, to some extent, even the white people, especially Pieter Willem Botha, he saved many whites who were involved in that catastrophe of the apartheid atrocities because he did not want to go to the TRC.[25]

Mandlenkosi similarly understood Pan-Africanism in the South African context and interpreted it as a framework for addressing the specific failures of South Africa’s post-apartheid state. He harshly criticised the ANC-led government for its perceived betrayal during

[25] P.W. Botha, who served as South Africa’s president from 1978 to 1989, refused to testify before the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) established in 1995 to address the human rights violations of the apartheid era. His refusal to participate was widely criticised, highlighting tensions between the pursuit of justice and reconciliation in post-apartheid South Africa. See, for example, Krog (1998).

the liberation struggle. This critique conforms McKinley's (2021) argument that the ANC, since 1994, has disempowered South Africa's workers and poor, undermining their potential to achieve deeper democratic change. Activist teachers showed evident disillusionment with black political leaders like Mandela and imparted these sentiments in their classrooms, providing sharp insights into the contradictions of 'freedom' in South Africa, and the deep economic fault lines that betrayed the majority of South Africans (the black poor in these schools).

> Our country, this place, so-called negotiation. It was started somewhere in America. CIA was involved in all this. Mandela came out of prison, a billionaire. He was a multimillionaire. And then the question I am always posing to my learner is, 'do you get paid for working in prison?' So where did he get all this money? If we agreed that he did not sell out? Yes, he did not sell out. That is fine. But where did he get all these millions that he came out of prison? … So, our struggle is not a struggle proper. It is the fake one. Right in the middle of the way they changed the detectives because *there is no difference between pre-1994 and post-1994. Because we are still stuck in the same areas, stuck with the same jobs, stuck with the same opportunities.*
>
> This same guy is the one who accepted the so-called Orania.[26] So, that the Afrikaners could settle there and practice their culture, their traditions, their everything. So, what kind of freedom is that? And when as an African person, if I want to go there and buy [inside] aside there, I am not allowed. So, what kind of freedom do we have here? Of course, the freedom of the textbooks, not the real freedom.

This sentiment finds resonance in Moemedi Kepadisa's, the education officer of the Azanian People's Organisation (APO), elegiac letter to Sobukwe, where he laments the country's regression, attributing it to greed, corruption, and the abandonment of the collective vision forged during the struggle. Kepadisa's reflections reinforce Mandlenkosi's critique, emphasising the disillusionment with black political leadership and the betrayal of the majority's aspirations, while reaffirming the need to continue the struggle for justice and change (Rodwell, 2024). Mandlenkosi further emphasised the need for educating Pan-Africanist politicians, specifically referring to the PAC, to mobilise the masses effectively:

> So, the Pan-Africanists still have quite a lot to do because they need to educate their members and then so that when they push for what they believe in for their philosophy, then they care that they could have

[26] Orania is a privately-owned Afrikaner town in the Northern Cape province of South Africa, established in 1991 as a cultural homeland for the preservation of Afrikaner identity and heritage. The town operates on strict racial and cultural exclusivity, with a population composed almost entirely of white Afrikaners who adhere to its vision of self-determination. Orania has been a point of contention in South Africa's post-apartheid era, drawing criticism for perpetuating segregation and racial division, while its proponents argue for its legitimacy within the framework of cultural rights and minority protections. It embodies a complex interplay of Afrikaner nationalism, socio-economic isolation, and debates surrounding race and identity in contemporary South Africa (see, The Guardian, 2019).

> the masses behind them. That is the only way, and Pan-Africanism is the only way out of this … we are not to discriminate the other people. We will embrace them only after we have achieved what was taken away from us. That is what our Africanism stands for.

Mandlenkosi's localised view of Pan-Africanism focused on the need for real, substantive freedom —beyond what is taught in textbooks— highlighting the ongoing economic disparities and racial divisions in South Africa. By referencing Orania, he pointed to the persistence of apartheid-era segregation, illustrating how Pan-Africanism, in his view, was a tool to combat these localised injustices. This politicised understanding of Pan-Africanism also showed that the teachers in these schools continued to grapple with persistent societal inequalities which overshadowed their role as history teachers. The Freedom Charter's declaration that 'South Africa belongs to all who live in it, black and white' (1955) was echoed in the South African Constitution (1996), which affirms, 'We, believe that South Africa belongs to all who live in it, united in our diversity'. Thabo Mbeki's 1996 'I Am an African' speech further developed this notion, asserting that African identity is not defined by colonial history, but by the shared experiences and heritage of all its people, regardless of race or background. Yet, this perspective contrasts with the views expressed by the teachers, who argued that the country still predominantly belonged to white individuals.

Besides, teachers in those spaces interpreted and taught Pan-Africanism primarily related to the African continent. For example, Dimakatso framed Pan-Africanism as a historical struggle against colonisation, yet her perspective was largely confined to Africa's past and the continental context. She remarked, 'The struggle, [of] all the African countries, not South Africa, [is a] struggle because firstly [for becoming] independent. It is the first time we independent, we [were] colonised by the European countries even in South Africa'.

This nationalist understanding was also reflected in the teachers' narratives about students' curiosity. Kagiso observed that students often asked about divisions within Africa, particularly tribalism, stating,

> Pan-Africanism encompasses that … the idea of division … [to say this one is] Xhosa and [that one is] Zulu, or this one is a Zimbabwean. That is not the ideas of Pan-Africanism. Pan-Africanism seeks to see us united, seek to see *Africa as one*.

Kagiso's interpretation of Pan-Africanism, though supportive, remained primarily focused on unifying black ethnic groups within South Africa. His view, while promoting African unity, overlooked the broader continental and diasporic connections that contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of Pan-Africanism. Kagiso further elaborated on his

belief in Pan-Africanism, emphasising the need for unity within Africa and addressing internal divisions: 'I subscribe in Pan-Africanism ideologies. I believe in *one Africa*. So, being into Pan-Africanism, it sits not only to rebuild the unity amongst blacks'. And he linked Pan Africanism with his notion of *ubuntu* ('I am because of you'):

> Pan-Africanism is also about seeing someone who is not even taking care of someone who is seen as nothing but taking that person into something. That is what I always tell my learners. Even though you think that maybe you are from a rich family you have something… sharing is also a part of Pan-Africanism. Because you want to see someone succeed.

Kagiso's view remained focused on internal African issues, emphasising values like sharing and uplifting others within Africa. While this perspective had its merits, it overlooked the transnational and global dimensions of Pan-Africanism, particularly its connections to the African Diaspora and the broader struggles for black liberation beyond the continent. This approach reflected a conscious effort among teachers to instil values of solidarity and mutual support, but it often lacked the theoretical depth and historical breadth that could better resonate with students' lived realities. Kagiso further illuminated his understanding of Pan-Africanism. He emphasised that the core idea of Pan-Africanism was about uniting Africa and addressing the divisions within the continent, which he believed had significant impacts on African societies:

> The reality is that we need to understand the ideas behind Pan-Africanism because Pan-Africanism, it is all about uniting and seeing *one Africa*. The idea is that in Africa, we are different, like we are divided, and that has a huge impact when it comes to our societies. So, teaching Pan-Africanism can play a key role in developing our countries.

Kagiso also pointed out the moral grounding of Pan-Africanism in spirituality, after asserting that it could benefit the nation. His statement could be interpreted as a response to me, as a researcher, acknowledging my Muslim identity and connecting the moral principles of Pan-Africanism to Islamic spirituality.

> It is very much helpful on the basis that the way that we are all the creation of Allah, we are created by God. The fact that now as an individual, I am going to have some differences — who am I to make see differences on you? Pan-Africanism is going to make us aware of things the way they happen, and the way things should be.

While Kagiso's explanation highlighted the potential of Pan-Africanism as a tool for addressing Africa's internal divisions and fostering unity to drive development, it, like broader

teaching approaches in working-class schools, remained largely focused on local issues, not making connections to the African diaspora and global black liberation movements. By focusing narrowly on local struggles, this interpretation limits students' ability to grasp the full historical and ideological scope of Pan-Africanism. His statement emphasised symbolic representations of African unity, such as national flags and anthems, which resonated with pride in African identity. He stated:

> That would be very powerful to be taught about the history of this kind of continent, very powerful. That is why today we have got our national flag, as South Africans, our national flag, we have got the African flag, or as we see our African national anthem, we also sing the African anthem. So, Africanism is very powerful.

Lindokuhle's focus on nationalist symbols like the African anthem and flag showed a more surface-level representation of African unity, without engaging with the deeper ideological and historical roots of Pan-Africanism. His representation of Pan-Africanism was steeped in nationalistic and cultural symbols.

Bandile also expressed concern about students' understanding of the continent, stating, Pan-Africanism 'can assist even our learners to understand the whole continent of Africa. Even if you look [at] modernisation, in terms of development, in terms of technology, you will find that the continent of Africa is still behind other continents'. Bandile's perspective emphasised the practical potential of Pan-Africanism in addressing Africa's developmental challenges, focusing on how unity could drive progress in areas like technology and modernisation. While he shared a common theme of African pride and solidarity with Kagiso and Lindokuhle, Bandile's interpretation linked Pan-Africanism to concrete developmental concerns rather than just symbolic markers of identity. However, similar to his colleagues, his approach remained largely focused on internal continental issues.

Similarly, Aphelele framed Pan-Africanism primarily within a continental context. He defined it as 'African identity, African unity, a sense of belonging — Africa first.' Aphelele also offered a critical view of how political leaders had historically misused Pan-Africanism. He observed that while leaders like Jomo Kenyatta, Marcus Garvey, and Muammar Gaddafi initially championed Pan-African ideals, many later distorted the concept for personal or political gain, often resulting in authoritarianism. His remarks highlighted the tension between the original ideals of Pan-Africanism and the ways in which some leaders manipulated these ideas to serve their own interests. He stated,

> Some of them, these African leaders, they became dictators because Pan-Africanism does not allow dictatorship. It allows African people to unite, to strive for their freedom to be independent, to be critical thinkers, to stand up for their human rights. But some of these African leaders, they became *abusive. They violated the rights of other people.*

His perspective indicated that he viewed Pan-Africanism as fundamentally opposed to oppression, emphasising that its true purpose was to promote unity and the empowerment of African people. However, while Aphelele's critique highlighted the negative consequences of leadership misuse, his representation of Pan-Africanism remained somewhat confined. He focused predominantly on the historical struggles against colonialism and the failures of specific leaders without adequately addressing the complexities of contemporary Pan-Africanism. By focusing primarily on past resistance without adequately addressing current transnational issues, Aphelele's radical perspective did not fully resonate with the lived realities of students, who must grapple with both historical and contemporary challenges.

In conclusion, while black teachers in working class schools predominantly relied on textbooks as their primary resources, they often infused their personal experiences into classroom dynamics. Insights gleaned from schools where teachers had lived through the struggle revealed a different pedagogical approach. These teachers' personal experiences with Pan-Africanism and its role in fostering resistance both in Africa and South Africa informed their teaching methods. Consequently, it can be argued that they selectively drew from the curriculum, tailoring their lessons based on their own knowledge bases and areas of interest as a survival form of representation.

The findings of this study clearly indicated that the 'social location' and lived experiences of teachers in working-class schools significantly influenced their representation of Pan-Africanism within the unfinished business of the TRC (amongst others), distinguishing them from their middle-class counterparts. The comprehension and delivery of Pan-Africanism in these classrooms were either framed through the lens of South Africa's liberation struggle against apartheid, and/or its immediate neighbours, such as Zimbabwe and Mozambique. While this perspective may have reflected a sensitivity to Afrophobia, it risked oversimplifying the complexities of Pan-Africanism by focusing primarily on local narratives. Additionally, the inclusion of only specific African countries, such as Ghana, Congo, and Tanzania, as case studies in the curriculum may have inadvertently perpetuated a nationalist and essentialist understanding of the broader Pan-African movement. This selective emphasis by teachers risked constraining students' awareness of the diverse and multifaceted nature of Pan-

Africanism, ultimately undermining a more comprehensive exploration of its principles and implications.

5. 2. 3. 3. 3 Representation of Pan-Africanism as Political and Economic Unification of the Continent

The discourse surrounding Pan-Africanism in South African schools revealed distinct interpretations based on the socio-economic backgrounds of the teachers, particularly regarding the practicality and relevance of Pan-Africanism in today's politics. For example, according to Lindokuhle, Pan-Africanism was 'supposed to [be] used to close the boundaries to South Africa and other African states'. He advocated for a political structure akin to the United States or the European Union, proposing a single president for Africa, a unified currency, and a common flag. This perspective accentuated a vision of a consolidated political entity that transcended national boundaries, aiming for a level of unity that could potentially lead to greater cohesion and strength on the global stage. He said,

> [Unification] first should be political. There should be between our government. Well, I prefer the suggestion which was suggested by Fidel Castro[27] during his years that Africa is supposed to have one president like the United States of America. By then, the president of the United States of America, which is made of plus-minus 15 nations. Even the African continent is supposed to have one president, one currency, one flag. Almost everything is supposed to be one, but unfortunately, there is South Africa, Zimbabwe… Africa is supposed to be like the United States of America or the European Union.

Lindokuhle's remarks suggest an association with Communist ideology, as indicated by his reference to Fidel Castro's suggestion. By advocating for a system similar to the US, which he mentions in relation to Castro's influence, the teacher aligns Pan-Africanism with Communist thought. This blending of Pan-Africanism with Communism could reflect his personal ideological stance, combining the push for African unity with socialist principles.

Similarly Kagiso noted that Pan-Africanism could 'assist us in building the united states'. He emphasised the necessity of achieving economic unity before political unification can be realised. He argued that Africa's division stemmed from historical injustices and cultural differentiations, which are exacerbated by colonial legacies. Addressing economic fragmentation, he believed, was crucial as it laid the groundwork for political integration. Kagiso believed that a unified political structure, underpinned by economic stability and

[27] Fidel Castro (1926–2016) was the leader of the Cuban Revolution and the long-time president of Cuba. He established a socialist government in Cuba following the revolution of 1959 and governed the country for nearly 50 years.

cooperation, would not only enhance the continent's economic prosperity but also create a more cohesive political framework that aligns with the principles of Pan-Africanism; the sentiment on economics shared with white teachers in middle-class schools. He expressed,

> It (should be) started with economic unification, because if we can check, Africa is divided not in a sense of, even in political, our way of doing, our culture. We seek to differentiate our cultures; we seek to divide ourselves. It is simply caused of the ills of the past, and we take that as something that is normal. So, bringing Pan-Africanism into the centre, then it will play an important role because it will make us united in order for the benefit of our economy as Africans, the benefit of our politics. Because you need to understand that we cannot shift away from politics. Politics governs everything. So, having a unified political structure that seeks to see us all under one umbrella, then that will play important role in building Africa.

Mandlenkosi emphasised the unity of African people and the creation of a borderless African continent. This reflected a shared aspiration among these teachers for a Pan-African identity that unifies the continent's diverse political and cultural landscapes. This statement highlighted the interconnectedness of political and economic aspirations within the context of Pan-Africanism. This emphasis on political and economic unity by working-class schoolteachers reflected a broader aspiration for a Pan-African identity that could unify the diverse political and cultural landscapes of the continent. It acknowledged that while economic issues were critical, the establishment of a unified political entity could serve as a catalyst for addressing other systemic issues, fostering a stronger collective identity, and promoting regional stability. Overall, the teachers' views suggested a belief that a unified political approach, supported by economic reforms, was essential for the realisation of Pan-African ideals and for the advancement of the continent as a whole.

To conclude, the representation of Pan-Africanism by teachers in working-class schools highlighted the complexity of educational inequality and the vital role of teachers as political agencies and mediators of this concept. While students often displayed indifference or apathy towards Pan-Africanism, teachers (who evidently emerged from the anti-apartheid struggle) adapted the curriculum to address burning local issues such as tribalism and Afrophobia through a Pan-African lens and using oral testimony. Although these teachers did not openly challenge the limitations of textbooks, they integrated Pan-African principles into their lessons on African nationalism. Their reliance on limited resources, their own oral testimonies, and on particularly textbooks, shaped their representation of Pan-Africanism. Furthermore, they recognised the contemporary relevance of Pan-Africanism for the political and economic unity of the continent. By highlighting these varying interpretations of Pan-Africanism within South

African education, this study demonstrates how socio-economic contexts influence teachers' approaches to the subject. Though they benefitted from insightful political teachings and agencies of their activist teachers and their oral histories, the students in under-resourced schools not only missed out on a more comprehensive understanding of Pan-Africanism but also the tools necessary to connect their learning to broader social justice movements both in South Africa and beyond.

5. 3 Summary: Class-Based Differences in Representing Pan-Africanism

The analysis of Pan-Africanism in middle-class and working-class schools reveals significant differences in how the subject is represented, shaped by varying socio-economic contexts. These differences can be understood through the lens of Stuart Hall's (1997) theory of 'representation', which emphasises the role of power, culture, and context in the production and interpretation of meaning. Hall's framework suggests that representation is not simply a reflection of reality, but a process through which meaning is constructed, often influenced by broader social, political, and economic forces. The representation of Pan-Africanism in these schools illustrated how socio-economic factors influenced the way students and teachers interpreted and engaged with African identity.

The findings of the research align with Hall's (1990) view that cultural identities are formed through complex processes of negotiation. In middle-class schools, this was evident in how students actively engage with broader discourses and global ideas of solidarity and resistance as a result of their access to these discourses and debates online, made possible with their wealth of resources, whilst working-class students engaged with the concept of Pan-African, through negotiating local realities and severe material contestations for a limited supply of basic living resources (in their local townships) and a political scepticism. These working-class schools often presented Pan-Africanism through a more localised lens, focusing on South African and regional struggles, such as those in Zimbabwe and Mozambique. This approach, while rooted in immediate, lived experiences, often lacked the global perspective that could connect students to broader Pan-African narratives. Teachers in these schools, working within resource constraints, were limited in their ability to present a comprehensive, multi-dimensional view of Pan-Africanism. However, this localised focus did not necessarily imply a narrow or inadequate interpretation. Rather, it reflected a more immediate, practical engagement strategy with the lived realities students faced, where the urgency of addressing local issues such as Afrophobia and national political challenges took precedence.

The disparity in resources between middle-class and working-class schools was a key factor influencing the representation of Pan-Africanism. In working-class schools, teachers' abilities to expand on the prescribed curriculum in innovative methodologies such as oral testimony and experiential teaching methods, encouraged students to engage with Pan-Africanism through personal narratives and lived experiences. Notwithstanding the dearth of historical literacy and subject content in these history classes, which put the students at significant disadvantage, these teachers were clearly grappling to impart a form of learning that was rooted in the communities' own indigenous histories and struggles.

5. 3. 1 Cultural Contexts and Interpretations

The differing representations of Pan-Africanism in middle-class and working-class schools were also shaped by the cultural contexts in which they were taught. In middle-class schools, Pan-Africanism was often linked to global cultural movements, such as reggae and Rastafarianism, and discussed in terms of economic decolonisation and the fight against global inequalities. This broader perspective resonated with students' engagement with global justice movements, framing Pan-Africanism as part of an ongoing struggle for equality and human dignity. Teachers in these settings critiqued the narrow, nationalistic portrayal of Pan-Africanism in textbooks and curricula, advocating for a more inclusive, transnational understanding that could better capture the complexities of African unity and solidarity. However, there were noticeable silences on ongoing economic disparities and their own privilege in a society with a largely unresolved past.

This contrasted with the working-class schools, where teachers often framed Pan-Africanism through the lens of regional political and economic struggles, advocating for immediate solutions to local issues. Both perspectives reflected the diverse ways in which Pan-Africanism was interpreted within different socio-economic and cultural contexts.

The contrast between these middle-class orientations and the representations emerging from working-class schools further highlights the classed nature of Pan-Africanist imaginaries. While middle-class schools tended to express an Afropolitan or *ubuntu*-inflected version of Pan-Africanism that emphasised cultural unity, ethical citizenship, and global belonging, teachers in working-class township schools described student engagement —where present— as more grounded in the historical and political legacy of resistance movements. In these contexts, Pan-Africanism was often associated with the principles of the Pan Africanist Congress (PAC) and Black Consciousness, emphasising African unity as a political imperative to combat marginalisation, poverty, and Afrophobia. This framing corresponds to earlier Pan-

Africanist traditions rooted in the liberation struggle and racial solidarity, which remain powerful interpretive frameworks in under-resourced, post-apartheid township schools.

This contrast exemplifies how the concept of Pan-Africanism is mediated differently across classed contexts. In middle-class schools, students' engagement with Pan-Africanism was more likely to take on a cosmopolitan, cultural, and ethical form —aligning with Mbembe's Afropolitanism— while in working-class schools, representations reflected a more materially grounded, historically rooted, and struggle-based conception of Pan-Africanism. These diverging frames reflect not only differences in material conditions but also access to cultural capital and global discourses. The juxtaposition of these two orientations — Afropolitan cosmopolitanism versus liberationist Pan-Africanism— reveals how class and context mediate the representation of Africa in history classrooms, not only as a geographic and cultural space but also as a political project and horizon of possibility.

5. 4 Conclusion

The contrasting representations of Pan-Africanism in middle-class and working-class schools not only revealed the impact of socio-economic disparities on education but also shaped the dynamics of my interactions with teachers in these distinct contexts. Whilst teachers and historically white middle-class schools often patronised me, offered unsolicited research support and 'tips' on how to do research, and also assumed I was one of 'them' (from Europe), teachers in township tended to be more circumspect and sceptical, assuming I was the privileged 'other'. Aphelele was pointedly confrontational in this assumption, assuming I am not a 'black' person: 'I think *you people* are used to how many learners? 10 in class?'

This response in the field, brought me to reflect on my positionality as a researcher within these schools, which reveals the complexities of navigating insider-outsider dynamics. Aphelele's comment points to a perception of me as an outsider, not only in terms of ethnicity and cultural background but also in relation to my presumed familiarity with smaller, resource-rich educational settings. This interaction highlights a dual-layered positionality: as a non-black individual, I was viewed as distanced from the lived realities of South African township schools, and as a researcher from a prestigious historically white academic institution, I was perceived as representing a context of privilege, where challenges like overcrowded classrooms and systemic inequalities were less prevalent or absent during my high school years. This perception influenced how my presence was received and shaped the interactions I had with teachers. Aphelele's remark, while possibly rhetorical, conveyed the tangible frustrations of

educators working in deeply impoverished communities with limited resources. Reflecting on the constraints faced by working-class schools, he described the broader context of poverty and unemployment, stating,

> This school is a no-fee school, do not charge any fees. I am sure when you were driving here, you have seen that… It is an informal statement here. So, you can see it is like a Sunday where it is a working day. Most of the people are not working here. It is an impoverished area. …. But despite that, …. you have to give them education, so they eliminate themselves from poverty. That is what we want. It is not easy.

The interaction also served as a reminder of the importance of humility and sensitivity in ethnographic research, especially when engaging with individuals whose lived and historical experiences differ starkly from my own.

By recognising and addressing the resource disparities between these schools, teachers can work towards a more inclusive approach to teaching Pan-Africanism that empowers all students, regardless of socio-economic background, to engage with and contribute to the ongoing struggle for justice, equality, and solidarity across the African continent and its Diaspora. The next chapter will explore how the common and shared understandings teachers held about Pan-Africanism.

Chapter 6

Common Understanding of Pan-Africanism Across School Contexts

6. 1 Introduction: Shared Representations and Their Significance

This chapter explores cross-cutting themes that emerged across all the schools involved in the study — regardless of their social class context. While the earlier analysis has emphasised the divergence in how Pan-Africanism is represented in working-class and middle-class schools, the data also reveal a striking convergence in how teachers define and frame the concept. In particular, one dominant thread stands out: the widespread understanding of Pan-Africanism as a concept that is closely linked to black racial identity. Whether in working-class or middle-class schools, teachers overwhelmingly represent Pan-Africanism as something that belongs to 'black Africans', both historically and in its current meaning.

This shared representation is significant because it exposes the limits of state-sanctioned, non-racial narratives of African unity. While the Department of Basic Education (DBE) frames Pan-Africanism as an inclusive continental identity project rooted in *ubuntu* and constitutional ideals of unity in diversity, teachers' interpretations often operate within a different cultural and historical logic. Drawing on Stuart Hall's (1997) theory of representation, this chapter considers how teachers' shared understandings are not simply reflections of policy or curriculum but are constructed meanings, shaped by cultural codes, lived experience, and sociopolitical history. In this sense, Pan-Africanism is not a fixed idea with a universal meaning but a contested site of representation in which meanings are constantly being produced, reproduced, and resisted in everyday pedagogical practice.

6. 2 Pan-Africanism as Black Identity

Across all interview sites, Pan-Africanism was almost universally represented by teachers as a concept that pertains to black Africans. While the political or cultural dimensions of the concept varied by context, its racialised association remained constant. Teachers frequently described Pan-Africanism as a 'black solidarity project' or as 'something for Africans to take pride in', implicitly or explicitly equating African-ness with blackness. This association extended to their classroom interpretations as well: they noted that students — particularly those from black communities— were 'the ones who understand it', while white or coloured students were said to feel disconnected or disengaged.

Muna's explanation provided a critical insight into this exclusive identification of Pan-Africanism with blackness. She highlighted the historical legacy in South Africa, where the term 'black' was considered derogatory, leading to the adoption of 'African' as a preferred term for black people. Consequently, being an Africanist automatically became associated with the black racial group. This racialised association was bolstered by Mandlenkosi, who explicitly stated that Pan-Africanism was about embracing 'all the people who have this black pigmentation', while Kagiso echoed this, stating, 'It conscientises us about the reality of blacks, but in reality, we are not yet conscious'. Although Kagiso emphasised that all people living in Africa are Africans, his framing suggested that Pan-Africanism predominantly concerns black individuals, reflecting the post-apartheid sociopolitical legacy. He was careful not to explicitly exclude white South Africans, but his statement implied that Pan-Africanism has primarily addressed the lived realities of black Africans.

The strong connection between Pan-Africanism and black identity also resonated in Aphelele's account. He explained that Pan-Africanism stemmed from the black intellectual tradition and was driven by leaders who fought against white colonial oppression. He explicitly linked the ideology to the global black struggle, including the Civil Rights and Black Power movements in the United States, framing Pan-Africanism as a global project aimed at reclaiming black rights and power. According to Aphelele, Pan-Africanism was not just about African unity but about reclaiming black humanity in a world still shaped by white supremacy. He pointed out that discussing these issues openly often led to accusations of racism, complicating efforts to advocate for black identity and rights. This interpretation of Pan-Africanism as inherently tied to the black experience was a recurring theme across schools and reflected broader cultural understandings embedded within the South African historical context. For Lindokuhle, the ideological reach of Pan-Africanism extended across continents, but always with blackness at its core. He did not see it as a project of inclusive African identity, but as one intrinsically tied to black solidarity and emancipation. Similarly, many teachers and students understood Pan-Africanism as a legacy that must be carried on by black youth, especially in the context of continuing social and economic inequality.

This interpretation was not confined to working-class or majority black schools. In middle-class schools, similar sentiments prevailed. Colleen, for instance, viewed Pan-Africanism as a 'black African struggle'. Ethan, a history teacher at a privileged school, went further to assert that being a Pan-Africanist necessarily meant being black. When asked whether Pan-Africanism also included people who lived in Africa irrespective of race, he responded unequivocally, 'No, people who are black'. This understanding was reinforced

through his teaching practice, including inviting an emeritus professor who had been part of the Black Consciousness Movement to speak to his class. During the talk, a white student questioned the relevance of Black Consciousness today. Ethan viewed this question as coming from a place of privilege and pointed to the enduring need to be 'conscious of black'. He saw the professor's answer — 'You must be conscious of black as opposed to Black Consciousness' — as a powerful affirmation of Pan-Africanism's ongoing relevance as a project of black empowerment.

These accounts confirm that, in practice, Pan-Africanism was not being represented in history classrooms as a multi-racial or pan-ethnic philosophy of unity. Instead, it was overwhelmingly discussed and understood in racial terms, often framed as a continuation of the black liberation struggle. While this framing reflects the ideology's historical roots and continues to offer empowerment and affirmation for many black students, it also reinforces racial boundaries that may marginalise others who do not identify as black but who are equally part of the African context.

From the perspective of representation theory, this widespread framing reflects what Stuart Hall (1997) would describe as the construction of meaning through dominant cultural codes. Rather than understanding Pan-Africanism as a pluralist political philosophy, teachers were using shared racialised cultural codes to anchor its meaning. The historical memory of colonialism, apartheid, and black resistance movements acts as a backdrop for this representation. In Hall's terms, teachers were not merely reflecting a reality — they were actively fixing meaning through a representational system shaped by experience, discourse, and ideology.

6. 3 Navigating Identity and Blackness in Pan-Africanism

Teachers' reflections revealed how Pan-Africanist discourse, often centred on black identity, posed challenges for those whose personal or racial identities did not neatly align with this framing — illustrating what Stuart Hall describes as the politics of representation, where meaning is constructed through culturally dominant narratives that can both include and exclude. As Stuart Hall argues, representation is not a reflection of reality but a way of constructing meaning through discourse. In this context, the dominant association of Pan-Africanism with blackness becomes a site of contestation, shaping who can be recognised as 'African' and whose identities remain marginalised. This prevailing perception was deeply influenced by the historical context of South Africa, a country characterised by its complex

multi-ethnic landscape. Teachers, particularly those in middle-class schools or those previously classified as 'Coloured', grappled with the implications of framing Pan-Africanism primarily as a 'black' identity issue. This complex understanding indicated the need to explore a broader interpretation of Pan-Africanism that encompasses the diverse realities of all South Africans. Their perspective suggested a broader, more inclusive understanding of humanity that transcended racial boundaries, emphasising a shared struggle among all people.

Ayesha's perspective proved this need for broader inclusivity. She highlighted the intertwined histories of various ethnic groups in Cape Town, recognising that a significant portion of the population has European ancestry. Her comments pointed to the importance of acknowledging these diverse backgrounds, which complicated the idea that Pan-Africanism could be solely defined by black identity. This recognition was crucial in a nation like South Africa, where a singular focus on blackness might overlook the multi-faceted nature of African identity.

Colleen's hesitance to identify as a Pan-Africanist stemmed from her awareness of the intricacies surrounding ethnicity in Africa. Her reflections highlighted the challenge of navigating personal identity within the broader context of South Africa's historical legacy of apartheid and racial division. Similarly, Maria expressed a sense of emotional connection to Africa while grappling with the complexities of being a white South African. She acknowledged the interconnectedness of South Africa with the continent but also recognised the political implications of her racial identity in relation to Pan-Africanism. This hesitance echoed Hall's view that identities are not fixed but are formed within and through representation. Colleen and Maria's reflections show how historically rooted racial categories continue to shape their sense of belonging, even as they attempt to claim a Pan-African affiliation.

David and Elizabeth articulated their discomfort with the exclusivity of Pan-Africanism as it was often perceived. David noted that some black South Africans would argue that non-black individuals cannot claim African identity, reinforcing the notion that Pan-Africanism has come to be associated predominantly with black identity. This sentiment echoed Maria's observation about the government's role in shaping the understanding of Africanness, which she felt primarily included black South Africans. Kate's scepticism regarding the political construct of Pan-Africanism further revealed the challenges faced by teachers in discussing this ideology in a multi-racial, multi-cultural context. Her concerns about who was deemed

‘African enough’ showed the contentious nature of identity politics in contemporary South Africa.

The teachers’ reflections painted a complicated picture of how Pan-Africanism was understood within the framework of race, identity, and history. While many acknowledged the importance of an inclusive perspective, their experiences illustrated the complexities of navigating personal and collective identities in a country grappling with its apartheid and long colonial past. The discussions exhibited a critical need for dialogue around these identities to foster a more layered understanding of Pan-Africanism that includes diverse South African teachers’ and students’ voices and experiences.

Teachers’ perspectives also highlighted the complexities of race and identity surrounding the perception of Pan-Africanism among students. Muna, who had majority-‘Coloured’ kids in her class, articulated the challenges that arose from these diverse backgrounds. She observed that many of her students perceived Pan-Africanism as a black ideology. This sentiment was reflected in her ‘Coloured’ students’ remarks, such as, ‘I am not going to be associated with a black ideology’. Muna, previously classified as ‘Coloured’ during apartheid, explained this perspective with a sense of resentment, asserting that the term ‘African’ should encompass all South Africans. She argued that being African necessitated an acknowledgment of the diverse beliefs and cultures present within the continent. However, she noted that ‘in this country, Africanism, being an Africanist is something that has got to do with black people’, leading many ‘Coloured’ students to feel disconnected from the identity — a departure from the Biko definition of ‘black’ as inclusive of all oppressed people in South Africa.

Moreover, Muna remarked that, in her Grade 12 class on BCM, her ‘black students are more inclined to listen because they feel at ease with their identity; to them, this is their legacy, and some feel they are the next generation’. She noted that during discussions among her students, one black student told a ‘Coloured’ student, ‘You need to listen to us because we are the next African leaders’. For Muna, ‘they are drawing from this concept that they need to carry on the legacy left by their forefathers’. Similarly, when I asked Bandile, whose classes consisted exclusively of black students, whether his students understood Pan-Africanism, he replied, ‘They do understand that because if you are talking about an African, you are referring to them, so they understand Pan-Africanism’.

6. 4 Textbook Representations and Historical Erasures

Many teachers asserted that the representation of Pan-Africanism in textbooks was exclusionary and limited to black individuals. Muna explained, 'If I take the textbook version… it is a closed-off mindset… catering for one race'. This critique aligns with Maposa's (2014) PhD analysis of four Grade 12 South African history textbooks focusing on postcolonial Africa, which revealed that the concept of Africanness is predominantly associated with blackness, effectively excluding whites (often referred to as Europeans) and Arabs. This racial framing is shaped by Pan-Africanist discourses and South African policies, where 'black' is often officially replaced with 'African'. While exceptions such as 'black African' hint at broader racial identities, including 'white Africans' or 'Arabic Africans', the dominant narrative equates Africanness with blackness. Figures like Ruth First and movements like Black Consciousness further feature the contested yet expansive understanding of Africanness, highlighting the tensions within these representations (Maposa, 2014).

Muna lamented that the contributions of 'Coloured' individuals were frequently downplayed in textbooks, stating that this fostered a perception that African identity was solely tied to blackness, alienating students who did not identify as black. She illustrated her point by referencing the figures in her textbooks, noting that while prominent black leaders were highlighted, there was scant information about the contributions of 'Coloured' or Indian communities during apartheid. Muna pointed out the lack of context regarding the Indian Congress's role, expressing frustration over how her textbooks prioritised narratives centred on black experiences, particularly those associated with the BCM. Although she expressed admiration for the BCM and Steve Biko's legacy, she found it challenging to convey to her 'Coloured' students that they, too, could claim a connection to these movements, as the dominant narrative was overwhelmingly focused on black experiences.

In Muna's view, her 'Coloured' students believed that Pan-Africanism was not meant for them, reinforcing textbooks' narratives that positioned black figures, such as Steve Biko and Malcolm X, as central to the African identity. As indicated by her, when discussing these prominent black leaders, her 'Coloured' students often felt they did not fit into that narrative, as it seemed exclusive to black individuals. However, this perceived exclusion contrasts with historical precedents in 'Coloured' radical politics, where African consciousness and Pan-African ideals flourished. As Soudien (2019) illustrates, 'Coloured' intellectuals played a crucial role in shaping radical political thought in South Africa. The New Era Fellowship (NEF), a prominent example, was deeply committed to non-racialism and anti-colonialism. Its

leaders positioned 'Coloured' communities as integral to the broader African liberation struggle, fostering a strong African consciousness that defied racial divisions. The emergence of 'Coloured' students' current perceptions, therefore, signals a shift from this historical legacy.

This disjuncture between historical realities and contemporary perceptions can be further understood through Stuart Hall's theory of cultural identity and representation. Hall (1990) posits that identities are not fixed or essentialist but are fluid, formed within specific historical and discursive contexts through ongoing processes of negotiation and difference. He emphasises that cultural identities are constructed within systems of representation, which can either include or exclude certain groups from dominant narratives. The textbooks' portrayal of Africanness as synonymous with blackness thus operates as a form of representational power that shapes how students see themselves and others. For Hall, identity is always 'a "production" which is never complete, always in process', meaning that the exclusionary narratives in textbooks effectively limit the possibility of diverse African identities being recognised and affirmed in educational spaces.

Furthermore, Hall's critique of cultural essentialism helps explain why Muna's 'Coloured' students feel alienated from Pan-Africanism despite their communities' historical involvement. The textbooks reproduce a narrow, essentialist identity that equates being African with blackness, thereby erasing the multiplicity and hybridity that Hall argues is central to cultural identity formation. This exclusion in representation contributes to what Hall describes as the 'politics of difference', where identity formation is simultaneously a site of contestation and struggle for recognition. Therefore, expanding the textbook narratives to reflect a more inclusive and historically accurate vision of Pan-Africanism would align with Hall's vision of identity as a contested, dynamic, and plural process.

6. 5 Tensions Between Black-Centred Pan-Africanism and Social Cohesion in South Africa

This study also highlighted the need for more inclusive representations of South African history and identity in education and pedagogy, as conflating Pan-Africanism solely with an essentialist black identity (for example, not for 'Coloureds') risked marginalising other groups within the South African context. Yet, ironically 'Coloured' is an imposed apartheid demographic category enforced on indigenous San and Khoi people (amongst others), with evidence of thousands of years of first settlement in southern Africa. Apartheid education has erased this ancient history through racist propaganda and divide and rule strategies amongst

black people themselves, disturbingly still evident in schools today as became evident in this study. In line with Kgari-Masondo's (2019) call for an 'un-silencing' approach in history education, which addresses the historical silences created by colonial and apartheid narratives, and Shabangu's (2024) argument for theorising Indigenous archives to challenge Eurocentric frameworks, this study highlights the importance of rethinking the curriculum to include diverse historical perspectives that have been marginalised. Pillay's (2024) study on Afrophobic 'hypernationalism' similarly critiques how identity politics in contemporary South Africa continue to reflect these historical divisions. The #PutSouthAfricansFirst movement, for instance, draws on nationalist rhetoric to exclude African migrants, reinforcing existing racial and ethnic divides within the country. Bertram's (2019) work draws attention to the importance of identity and inclusion in history education and supports critiques of the marginalisation of the history of 'Coloured' communities in South Africa. Bertram's conception of 'powerful knowledge' emphasises the importance of a more inclusive historical narrative that includes multiple perspectives to counter these historical erasures. Similarly, Ndlovu (2009) argues that history education plays a crucial role in the nation-building process, and that history curricula, in both Zimbabwe and South Africa, should be more inclusive and unifying in order to foster social cohesion and create a shared national identity.

However, this focus on black identity in Pan-Africanism created tensions around the movement's role in fostering social cohesion in South Africa, a country still grappling with the legacy of racial division. It was clear from the teachers' perspectives that Pan-Africanism was overwhelmingly seen as a movement for 'black' unification only or as 'black nationalism'. This understanding of Pan-Africanism would therefore be seen as an ideology diametrically opposed to South Africa's non-racial nation-building, reconciliation, and social cohesion — while the terms of the new *modus vivendi* were being fought for (see Mbembe & Balakrishnan, 2016, p. 29). The teachers' perspectives showed that Pan-Africanism had an antipathetic and self-exclusionary effect on the non-black population of South Africa.

Several teachers expressed concerns about how Pan-Africanism's identification with blackness might alienate non-black students and create further divisions rather than unity. Muna, for example, explained that while she believed Pan-Africanism and nation-building could theoretically coexist, the reality in South Africa was more complex. The deep association of Pan-Africanism with blackness, in her view, created a paradox. She stated that because Pan-Africanism was framed as a black ideology, it risked reinforcing existing racial divisions rather than helping to bridge them. Muna raised a key question: if Pan-Africanism was predominantly understood as a movement for black people, 'where do my white, if I had a white kid in my

class, and ‘Coloured’ children in my class fit into that?’ For her, this was not just an academic question but a practical concern about inclusivity in the classroom. She suggested that if Pan-Africanism were framed more broadly, as a philosophy meant to unite all Africans regardless of race, it could potentially contribute to nation-building. Yet, as it currently stood, Muna believed that its narrow focus on blackness hindered its capacity to unify.

Elizabeth echoed Muna’s concerns but was more explicit in her critique. Rather than fostering a sense of unity or shared identity, Elizabeth believed that the movement’s exclusive focus on blackness exacerbated the existing racial fractures in South African society. For her, this division was not just a theoretical issue but one that manifested in everyday classroom dynamics. Some students identified with Pan-Africanism, while others felt disconnected or excluded from the concept. So, to her, ‘It is almost like another layer that you are adding to the current division and strike that is being felt’. This, according to Elizabeth, undermined the potential of Pan-Africanism to contribute to national unity.

Bandile offered a more cautious view on the relationship between Pan-Africanism and social cohesion. While he acknowledged the importance of African unity, he argued that South Africa needed to focus on resolving its internal issues before extending its vision to the broader continent. In his view, South Africa’s deep-rooted social and racial divisions made it difficult to jump to a pan-continental vision of unity. Bandile’s perspective revealed a pragmatic approach to Pan-Africanism, one that prioritised national cohesion before broader continental goals. He pointed to the country’s current struggles with social cohesion, implying that Pan-Africanism, as it was currently understood, did little to address the internal fractures that still plagued South Africa.

Aphelele, meanwhile, took a more layered stance. He acknowledged the importance of uplifting black people and addressing the legacies of apartheid, but he also recognised the challenges in reconciling Pan-Africanism with a vision of non-racial unity. He expressed support for the ideal of the ‘Rainbow Nation’ but was critical of its one-sided nature, suggesting that true reconciliation required more than just symbolic gestures. Aphelele’s critique reflected his belief that Pan-Africanism should not be viewed as an exclusionary movement but as one that could help uplift the black majority, while also fostering broader national unity. However, he also acknowledged that the ongoing inequalities in South Africa made it difficult for Pan-Africanism to fully transcend its focus on blackness.

Ethan, on the other hand, offered a more theoretical and historical perspective on the issue. He saw Pan-Africanism as intrinsically linked to the BCM and viewed the two as part of

the same struggle for black identity and empowerment. Drawing on Hegelian dialectics, Ethan framed the relationship between blackness and non-racialism as a process of synthesis, where the struggle for Black Consciousness was a necessary step toward achieving a non-racial society. For him, Pan-Africanism's focus on black identity was not inherently divisive but rather a crucial part of a broader historical process. He believed that teaching Pan-Africanism in schools was essential for fostering a deeper understanding of South Africa's racial history and moving toward a more inclusive, non-racial future.

The Hegelian dialectic, which is that triangle: with Black Consciousness, you have the thesis that whiteness is oppressing blackness. Then, you have the antithesis —therefore, you need Black Consciousness— ultimately leading to the synthesis, which is a non-racial society. There is no difference today, in 2022; the same holds true. So, I can say to you, our objective, based on our Constitution, is a non-racial, non-sexist society. But to achieve that synthesis, you still have to work with the thesis and the antithesis; that is the reality.

Yet, even within Ethan's framework, there remained an implicit tension between the particular focus on blackness and the broader goal of national unity. While he saw Black Consciousness and Pan-Africanism as necessary tools for addressing historical inequalities, the question remained: could this emphasis on black empowerment be reconciled with a vision of social cohesion that included all South Africans, regardless of previously defined race?

Here, Stuart Hall's conceptualisation of cultural identity becomes especially relevant. Hall (1990) argues that cultural identities are not fixed essences rooted in some shared past, but rather positional and constantly in the process of becoming. From this view, Pan-Africanism can be understood not as a static ideology tied exclusively to blackness, but as a dynamic and evolving discourse shaped by historical conditions and political struggles. Applying Hall's insights, the teachers' conflicting views reflect deeper struggles over who gets to define South African identity and whose histories are remembered or silenced. The tension between black-centred Pan-Africanism and a broader, inclusive vision of national identity signals the challenge of reconciling particular historical experiences with the goal of shared belonging. Hall reminds us that identity is always formed through difference and representation; thus, the politics of curriculum and pedagogy in post-apartheid South Africa are inherently about negotiating these contested narratives.

The varied perspectives on Pan-Africanism in South African schools revealed a deeper conflict between its historical roots in black resistance and its potential role in fostering a more inclusive national identity. For many teachers, Pan-Africanism remained a movement closely

tied to black identity, raising important questions about its relevance in a racially diverse society still marked by the legacy of apartheid and colonialism. While some expressed concerns about its divisive effects, others believed that Pan-Africanism could contribute to a more inclusive future if framed correctly. However, these differing views highlighted the complexities of teaching Pan-Africanism in a country where race, identity, and nation-building remained deeply contested. As Soudien (2023) suggests, the South African education system continues to be shaped by both persistent and emerging forms of racial and class-based oppression. Chisholm (2018) emphasises that disparities in educational quality, driven by social class, perpetuate broader social inequities, which indirectly affect how concepts like identity and resistance are framed and understood within the school environment.

This disconnect between teachers' and students' views and the Department of Basic Education's (DBE) vision highlights the challenges in using education to promote social cohesion. While the DBE and the South African government advocate for a Pan-Africanism that fosters a non-racial, cohesive society, the exclusionary views prevalent in classrooms often reflect structural economic inequalities. This tension mirrors the broader debate from the first African Renaissance Conference, held in Johannesburg in 1988, which debated how Africans had been alienated from their reality and consciousness (Bam, 2000). Mamdani (1999) linked this intellectual detachment to the Dark Ages, enslavement, and colonialism, suggesting that the African Renaissance represents a reclaiming of self through a redefined historical consciousness. This vision sought to include all Africans —black, Afrikaner, white, Arab, and Indian— within a unified Pan-African framework. Yet, schools struggle to balance this inclusive vision with the realities of the economically bifurcated post-apartheid South Africa.

CHAPTER 7

CONCLUSION

7. 1 Summary of Key Research Findings

This doctoral study examined the main research question on the various representations of Pan-Africanism in contemporary post-apartheid South African high school history classrooms from the perspectives of practicing teachers, and how (from their perspectives) students understood and engaged with these representations. Drawing on Stuart Hall's concept of representation (1997) and his reception theory (1973), this research highlighted both the explicit and implicit forms of Pan-Africanism in its representation in schools, particularly when textbooks and resources in schools fall short, highlighting the agencies of teachers in mediating its meaning within contrasting cultural and economic contexts in contemporary South Africa. As Apple and Christian-Smith (1991) argue, a common fallacy is the assumption that textbook material directly reflects what teachers teach. In reality, the process of understanding, negotiating, and transforming textbook content involves both teachers and students (Foster, 2011). Studies (e.g., Apple, 1991; Foster & Crawford, 2006a; Porat, 2004) emphasise this dynamic, noting that educators and learners collaboratively reinterpret and reshape the meanings of texts. Similarly, Bertram and Wassermann (2015) observe that textbook studies often overlook how educators mediate these texts in practice. Focusing solely on the ideological, symbolic, or representational aspects of textbooks fails to capture the dynamic processes of communication, mediation, and interpretation that occur in classrooms (Chisholm, 2008). Drawing on Stuart Hall's encoding/decoding model (1973), this research explores how teachers, as cultural agents, actively interpret and reshape, or 'decode', curriculum materials, reshaping their meanings within specific sociocultural contexts. Branford's (2024) study of elite South African schools exemplifies this dynamic. Through interviews with history teachers in top-performing schools, Branford demonstrates how teachers navigate state-mandated curricula, either reinforcing or resisting the prescribed approach. Teachers' interpretations of history are influenced by their own political perspectives, school environments, student aspirations and interactions — leading to varied pedagogical choices and positionings in classrooms in relation to contested topics, such as Pan-Africanism. Branford's analysis reveals the tensions between official curricula and teachers' agency in shaping historical narratives. This complex interplay between textbooks, teachers, and students (as form of 'representation')

is crucial in understanding how Pan-Africanism is engaged with in contemporary South African high school history classrooms.

This study contributes to existing scholarship in the field by uncovering how socio-economic factors influence teaching strategies adopted by teachers, informed by their own perceptions of Pan-Africanism and its role in contemporary South Africa. The representation of Pan-Africanism by the participating teachers revealed an intersection with themes of race, ethnicity, culture, identity, and teacher agency. The study highlighted the importance of understanding pedagogy as operating within an ecology, where various interconnected factors —such as economic conditions, available resources, and cultural contexts— shape the teaching and learning experience.

A well-established scholarship tradition exists on critical insights into the broader socio-economic inequalities in post-apartheid South African education — focusing primarily on structural and systemic issues such as policy implementation, resource allocation, and systemic disparities. This study has attempted to visible the layers within these structures, policies and systems through the perspectives of high school history teachers, of how teacher agency interfaces in classrooms in the representation of significant historical and political concepts like Pan-Africanism.

Previous research on Pan-Africanism in South African history education has primarily focused on its theoretical underpinnings and its potential as a tool for social justice and reconciliation. For example, Lumumba-Kasongo (2018) argues that decolonisation, democracy, and economic freedom can be achieved through education, with a Pan-African curriculum emphasising multiculturalism, inclusiveness, and unity in diversity. On the other hand, Shabangu (2024) argues that post-apartheid reforms in South Africa have not adequately confronted the colonial legacies within history education. He advocates for the inclusion of indigenous archives —such as *Umlando* (oral histories), *Izithakazelo* (clan praises), and *intwaso* (ancestral knowledge)— to establish a more inclusive and contextually relevant historical framework. Similarly, Ndille (2018) examines how African states have attempted to restructure their education systems to reflect indigenous knowledge and cultural identities. However, these efforts have often been hindered by the enduring influence of colonial frameworks, the dominance of Western epistemologies, and the globalised nature of contemporary education. This tension between indigenous knowledge and colonial legacies reflects the broader challenges faced by African education systems in striving for decolonisation and the creation of more culturally resonant curricula.

Whilst this is true, there is a need (particularly relevant in the South African context) to understand how teachers perceive their agency and role in resolving these contradictions and tensions, and how they mediate meaning in representing key concepts such as Pan-Africanism in decolonisation of the history curriculum. How do teachers deal with this pedagogical responsibility and state policy expectation of their role? How do they mediate this role in differentiated forms of representation in their perspectives of students and their responses to such contested concepts?

There is a gap in understanding how Pan-Africanism is actually represented in contemporary high school history classrooms in South Africa. This study tried to avoid the trap of a reductionist deterministic analysis of schools and teachers in this regard. In so doing, it attempts to shed new light on representation as the complex and shifting interplay between socio-economic factors, educational practices, teachers' agency and the assumed deterministic constructions of Pan-African identities.

In this study, nearly all teachers who responded through the snowball research sample methodology had experienced apartheid. This could explain their enthusiasm to participate in a contentious post-apartheid study, and the reason perhaps why they engaged with conviction on the issue of Pan-Africanism, Despite having experienced apartheid in very different and contrasting ways —oppressed black people versus white beneficiaries— each of these teachers now teaches students who belong to the so-called 'born free' generation in South Africa.

Within this historical context of the study, this research unexpectedly revealed the existence of bifurcated representation(s) of Pan-Africanism by teachers in contemporary South African high school history classrooms. What is clear from the study is that South African schools are still battling the systemic economic inequalities legacies of apartheid, particularly along social class lines. Teachers' diverse social and economic experiences of apartheid have largely shaped —and continue to shape— how they represent contested concepts in the history classroom and their students' responses, even if in surprising new ways (such as in historically middle-class white schools with the economic and political desire to be part of the country and continent).

Frehiwot's (2011) doctoral study on post-independence Ghana illustrates how educational reforms under Kwame Nkrumah sought to institutionalise Pan-Africanist ideals by embedding African history, culture, and unity into curricula. However, the effectiveness of these reforms was constrained by class disparities, resource limitations, and broader political pressures, mirroring the contemporary South African context.

South Africa, still in the process of redefining itself as a young democracy, is grappling with its own political role in the African Union and the world. Teachers (finding themselves with expected pedagogical responsibilities in this context) face the challenge of delivering the Pan-African ideal in a way that resonates with the wider complexities of the present-day fractured South African reality. Teachers' expected roles in shaping historical consciousness on Pan-Africanism are intertwined with multiple influential and competing factors for their students in society, including family, youth identity politics, religion, social media, and party politics. While teachers play a key role in the classroom, they cannot be expected to do so without the necessary systemic support for quality learning experiences in schools.

The findings further highlighted the complex intersections of race and class within South African schools, showing how these dynamics led to diverse and sometimes unintended and unexpected representations of Pan-Africanism which troubled assumptions such as that it would have a strong political presence amongst students in black township working-class schools. Here, instead, was found a strong dichotomy between the African-conscious politically motivated teachers, and their disillusioned students. Historically, these schools were key sites of Pan-African mobilisation and political consciousness during apartheid, as reflected in the accounts of the Teachers' League of South Africa (TLSA), whose members used education as a tool for resistance and empowerment (Wieder, 2001). Moloi (2011) further illustrates how these schools (during the anti-apartheid struggle) fostered a strong ethos of Black Consciousness, inspiring students to engage in political activism and resist racial oppression, thereby contributing to South Africa's broader liberation movements. Due to lack of resources and everyday economic hardships in the townships, despite the strong efforts of black activist teachers to use their agency to instil African consciousness and to try and build on the anti-apartheid struggle legacy, these students were said to instead openly display a strong leaning towards racist and xenophobic (Afrophobic) tendencies. An unexpected finding was the strong Pan-African understanding in middle-class schools; these schools would have been white and largely typically apolitical during apartheid. Due to technology, social media and resources, these schools are emerging as more globally connected, including to the continent and Pan-African Diasporic discourses and aspirations for benefitting from economic and political opportunities in the world (the confidence and desires to become business and political leaders etc.).

The findings indicated that in middle-class schools, according to their teachers, students showed a strong interest in Pan-Africanism, driven by a passion for 'social justice', albeit not defined precisely what that is understood as economically versus how students would define it

in impoverished township schools. More importantly, it is not clear whether these were 'politically correct' responses from these teachers, rather than what their students actually thought about Pan-Africanism.

However, these schools' demographic composition influenced how Pan-Africanism was perceived: black students often aligned more closely with Pan-Africanist ideals, while white students, although interested, tended to connect more with a South African inclusive *ubuntu* identity, sometimes referred to as 'rainbowism' or 'charterism'. Both groups, however, were influenced by contemporary social movements such as #RhodesMustFall (2015–), #FeesMustFall (2015–) and #BlackLivesMatter (which emerged in 2013, but gained significant global momentum in 2020). This heightened their shared awareness of social justice and decolonisation, as these movements are part of a broader decolonial struggle, with students' increased awareness of social justice being central to their understanding of Pan-Africanism (Ahmed, 2020, Maluleka, 2021). As Maluleka (2021) illustrates, this study similarly demonstrates how middle-class students' access to digital platforms and social media has become a crucial tool for engaging with debates and global discourses on racial justice, decolonisation, and Pan-Africanism (from whichever perspective).

Student interest in Pan-Africanism in working-class schools appeared more sceptical as represented by their teachers, with many students expressing Afrophobic attitudes towards migrants from other African countries. As indicated previously, this may certainly stem from socio-economic insecurities and localised competition for resources, as suggested by Mapokgole (2014), who argues that the 'rainbow nation' narrative often overlooks the inequalities experienced by poorer black communities. Daki (2022) further notes that such insecurities may foster exclusionary attitudes rather than solidarity, particularly in township schools where Zimbabwean teachers frequently encounter xenophobic behaviour.

Across both middle-class and working-class schools, teachers shared a recognition of the curriculum's limitations and a commitment to broadening students' understanding of Pan-Africanism within available means. However, the socio-economic challenges specific to working-class communities shaped both the delivery and reception of these lessons. Limited student interest in Pan-Africanism in these contexts mirrored the broader social and economic difficulties faced by these communities, shaping *how* Pan-African concepts were perceived and valued. Chimbga and Meier (2014) emphasise the critical role of schools in fostering social cohesion, particularly in addressing societal issues such as xenophobia. This parallels the efforts of teachers in South African working-class schools to navigate socio-economic barriers

and political tensions about contemporary discontent with 'African leaders' and 'unity' in their classrooms when teaching Pan-Africanism. This finding is in line with Clark's (2011) observation that lower income and education levels can contribute to xenophobic attitudes.

Soudien (2019) and Wassermann (2018) have pointed to the ways in which personal and professional experiences intersect to influence the teaching of history and culture. These contributions provide valuable context for understanding the complexities of how Pan-Africanism is taught in South African schools. Having said that, this study did not involve directly interviewing teachers about their personal histories; the primary focus was on the representation of Pan-Africanism in the classroom. In this regard, it is important to acknowledge the challenges I faced in pursuing a 'life story' research methodology in working with history teachers in South Africa as 'an outsider' with 'a foreign accent' — especially in black township schools. Probing teachers' personal lives in this context would have been difficult and sensitive. However, incorporating these key aspects into future research could provide a more comprehensive picture of how teachers' identities and experiences shape their teaching practices and, in turn, influence students' understanding of Pan-Africanism, through their particular 'representation' of the concept.

The insights gained from this study could be enriched by future research that incorporates triangulation in its methodology, specifically exploring the intersection of teachers' biographies and their representations of Pan-Africanism in contemporary history classrooms. Such a study would offer a deeper understanding of the ways in which personal experiences inform pedagogical choices and could yield further insights into the nuances of teaching African history in contemporary South Africa.

Schools are inherently complex, contested spaces shaped by layered histories, structural inequalities, and shifting identities. This complexity influenced not only the findings of this study but also their interpretation. My own position as a non-South African, middle-class researcher from UCT inevitably shaped the research encounter — both enabling access through institutional affiliation and creating social distance from participants. While efforts were made to practice reflexivity and mitigate extractive tendencies, it is likely that my positionality influenced what was shared, how it was shared, and how I interpreted it. Moreover, the use of non-African methods—such as the reliance on written interview transcripts, English-language dialogue, and a predominantly Western analytical framework— may have filtered or flattened dimensions of meaning that might be more richly conveyed through African oral tradition or

in mother-tongue expressions. Recognising these limitations is not to undermine the research but to offer a more honest account of its scope, potential, and constraints.

Across all the schools in the study there was a glaring common understanding that *being African* —whether global, continental, or South African-centred Africa— was predominantly identified with *being black*. Pan-Africanism was thus grasped as a concept associated with *black* ethnic/cultural/racial groups. In particular, when discussing Pan-Africanism, teachers often referred to or explicitly articulated the notion of 'black African', whether in reference to South Africans, all Africans on the continent, or those in the Diaspora. Teachers, as cultural producers, 'encode' Pan-Africanism with specific meanings associated with blackness, which students 'decode' according to their own cultural contexts and experiences. Hall's framework highlights how messages about identity and race are constructed and interpreted, shedding light on the ideological function of these representations in education.

This understanding, however, contrasted with the broader, more inclusive definitions of Pan-Africanism found in contemporary academic literature, which seeks to embrace all Africans, regardless of race or ethnicity. As Eze (2013) points out, modern Pan-Africanism encompasses both historical and metaphysical dimensions, extending beyond mere racial consciousness. It envisions a shared human experience, one that seeks to empower marginalised and oppressed communities worldwide. Central to this vision is the Pan-African ethos of *ubuntu* — a philosophy that promotes interconnectedness, mutual respect, and the idea that societies should support one another in the pursuit of justice and liberation.

Pan-Africanism is not a static, singular concept; rather, it is a contested and dynamic representation. Hall's (1997) theory illuminates the complex interplay between official discourse, local meanings, and evolving scholarly interpretations of Pan-Africanism, highlighting how representations of African unity shift across different spaces and times.

7. 2 Recommendations for Further Research

Building on the findings of this research, using Hall's (1997) theory on representation, several directions for further study can deepen the understanding of Pan-Africanism's representation in South African classrooms and its broader educational and societal impacts, which could inform future policy and pedagogy. Comparative studies across different African countries and within various South African regions can reveal how historical contexts and educational policies influence the teaching of Pan-Africanism. Longitudinal studies tracking changes over time could show how representations and perceptions evolve in response to

political and social shifts. In-depth qualitative and mixed method studies would provide valuable insights into the views of school going youth on Pan-Africanism and its influence on their identities and attitudes towards social and economic justice and decolonisation. These research directions could collectively contribute to a richer and more multi-layered understanding of Pan-Africanism's role in education and both the challenges and potential to foster social cohesion and unity in South Africa and beyond.

Figure 7. 1

Illustrative Framework: Application of Stuart Hall's Theory of Representation and Reception to Pan-Africanism in South African History Classrooms

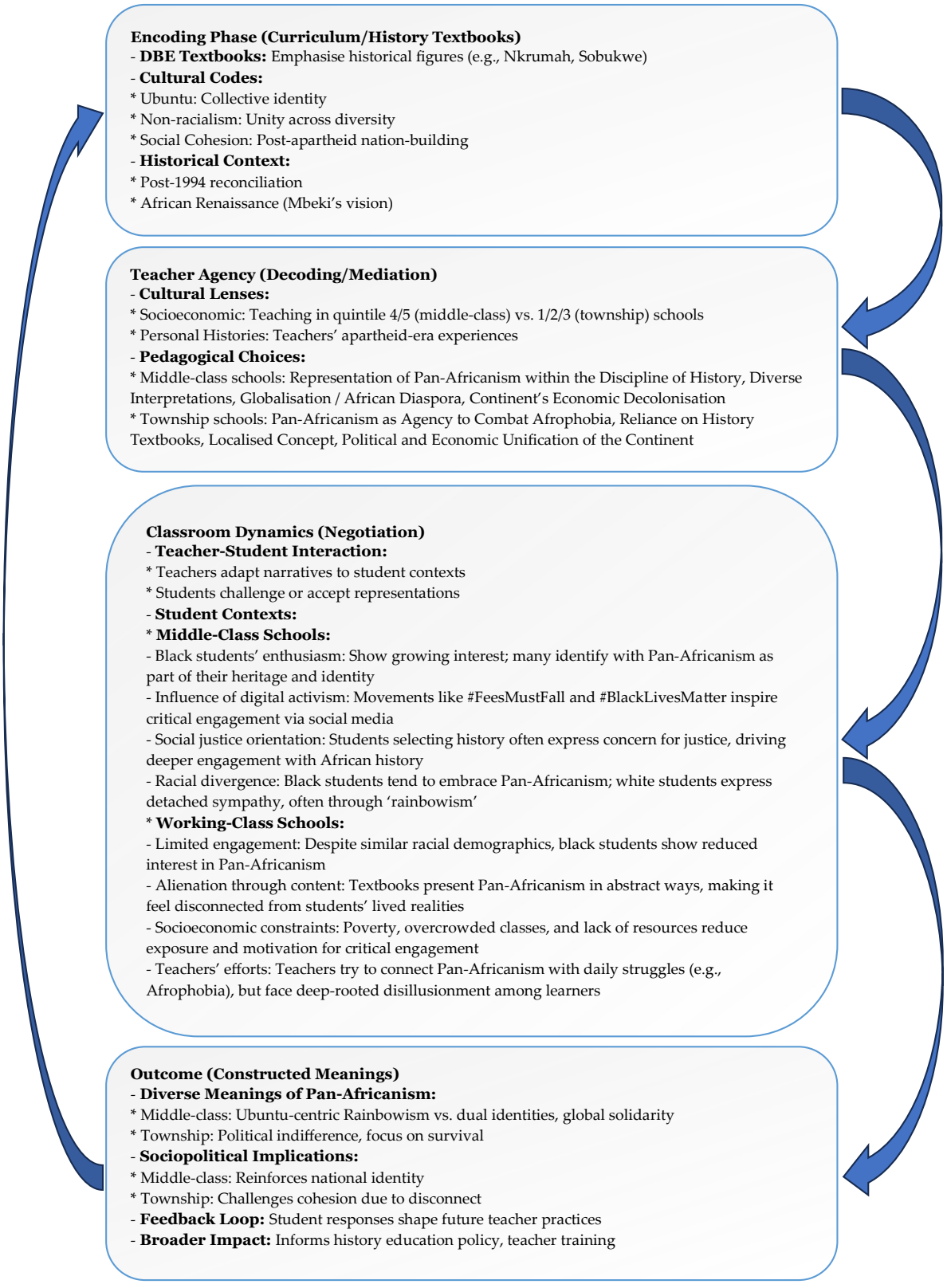
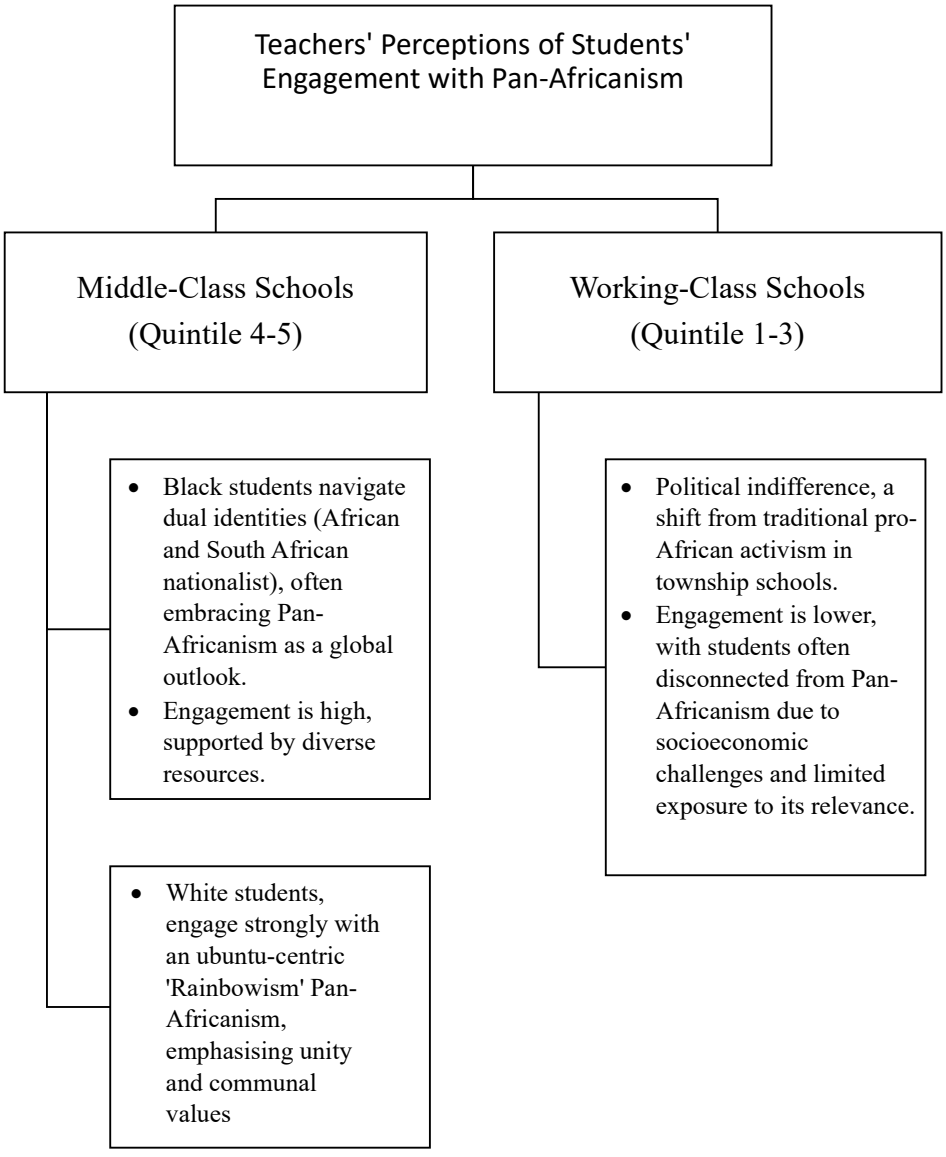


Figure 7. 2

Illustrative Framework: Teacher's Perceptions of Students' Engagement with Pan-Africanism



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List of Appendices

Appendix A: Ethical Clearance Letter from Western Cape Education Department

Western Cape Government
Education

Directorate: Research

meshack.kanzi@westerncape.gov.za
Tel: +27 021 467 2350
Fax: 086 590 2282
Private Bag x9114, Cape Town, 8000
wced.wcape.gov.za

REFERENCE: 20220222-36
ENQUIRIES: Mr M Kanzi

Mrs Esma Karadağ
89 Duiker Gate
Capricorn Beach Estate
Muizenberg
7945

Mrs Esma Karadağ,

RESEARCH PROPOSAL: PAN-AFRICAN HISTORIOGRAPHY THROUGH THE LENS OF CONTEMPORARY SOUTH AFRICAN HISTORY TEXTBOOKS AND THEIR REPRESENTATIONS IN THE CLASSROOM.

Your application to conduct the above-mentioned research in schools in the Western Cape has been approved subject to the following conditions:

1. Principals, educators and learners are under no obligation to assist you in your investigation.
2. Principals, educators, learners and schools should not be identifiable in any way from the results of the investigation.
3. You make all the arrangements concerning your investigation.
4. Educators' programmes are not to be interrupted.
5. The Study is to be conducted from **22 February 2022 till 31 May 2022.**
6. No research can be conducted during the fourth term as schools are preparing and finalizing syllabi for examinations (October to December).
7. Should you wish to extend the period of your survey, please contact Mr M Kanzi at the contact numbers above quoting the reference number.
8. A photocopy of this letter is submitted to the principal where the intended research is to be conducted.
9. Your research will be limited to the list of schools as forwarded to the Western Cape Education Department.
10. A brief summary of the content, findings and recommendations is provided to the Director: Research Services.
11. The Department receives a copy of the completed report/dissertation/thesis addressed to:

The Director: Research Services
Western Cape Education Department
Private Bag X9114
CAPE TOWN
8000

We wish you success in your research.

Kind regards,
Meshack Kanzi
Directorate: Research
DATE: 22 February 2022

Appendix B: Ethical Clearance Letter from Gauteng Department of Education

GAUTENG PROVINCE
Department: Education
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

8/4/4/1/2

GDE RESEARCH APPROVAL LETTER

Date:	**19 September 2022**
Validity of Research Approval:	**08 February 2022– 30 September 2022** **2022/461**
Name of Researcher:	**Karadağ E**
Address of Researcher:	**141, Coral Sands**
	Muizenberg
	Cape Town
Telephone Number:	**081 238 2622**
Email address:	**Krdesm001@myuct.ac.za**
Research Topic:	**Pan-African Historiography through the Lens of Contemporary South African History Textbooks and their Representations in the Classroom**
Type of qualification	**PhD**
Number and type of schools:	**2 Secondary Schools**
District/s/HO	**Johanneburg East and Gauteng North**

Re: Approval in Respect of Request to Conduct Research

This letter serves to indicate that approval is hereby granted to the above-mentioned researcher to proceed with research in respect of the study indicated above. The onus rests with the researcher to negotiate appropriate and relevant time schedules with the school/s and/or offices involved to conduct the research. A separate copy of this letter must be presented to both the School (both Principal and SGB) and the District/Head Office Senior Manager confirming that permission has been granted for the research to be conducted.

22/09/2022

The following conditions apply to GDE research. The researcher may proceed with the above study subject to the conditions listed below are met. Approval may be withdrawn should any of the conditions listed below be flouted:

Making education a societal priority

Office of the Director: Education Research and Knowledge Management
7th Floor, 17 Simmonds Street, Johannesburg, 2001
Tel: (011) 355 0488
Email: Faith.Tshabalala@gauteng.gov.za
Website: www.education.gpg.gov.za

Appendix C: Ethical Clearance Letter from KwaZulu Natal Department of Education

KWAZULU-NATAL PROVINCE
EDUCATION
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

OFFICE OF THE HEAD OF DEPARTMENT

Private Bag X9137, PIETERMARITZBURG, 3200
Anton Lembede Building, 247 Burger Street, Pietermaritzburg, 3201
Tel: 033 392 1063
Email: Phindile.duma@kzndoe.gov.za

Enquiries: Phindile Duma **Ref.**:2/4/8/41135

Mrs E Karadag
Capricorn Beach Estate
CAPE TOWN
7945

Dear Mrs Karadag

PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN THE KZN DoE INSTITUTIONS

Your application to conduct research entitled: **"PAN-AFRICAN HISTORIOGRAPHY THROUGH THE LENS OF CONTEMPORARY SOUTH AFRICAN HISTORY TEXTBOOKS AND THEIR REPRESENTATIONS IN THE CLASSROOM",** in the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education Institutions has been approved. The conditions of the approval are as follows:

1. The researcher will make all the arrangements concerning the research and interviews.
2. The researcher must ensure that Educator and learning programmes are not interrupted.
3. Interviews are not conducted during the time of writing examinations in schools.
4. Learners, Educators, Schools and Institutions are not identifiable in any way from the results of the research.
5. A copy of this letter is submitted to District Managers, Principals and Heads of Institutions where the Intended research and interviews are to be conducted.
6. The period of investigation is limited to the period from 19 September 2022 to 31 August 2025.
7. Your research and interviews will be limited to the schools you have proposed and approved by the Head of Department. Please note that Principals, Educators, Departmental Officials and Learners are under no obligation to participate or assist you in your investigation.
8. Should you wish to extend the period of your survey at the school(s), please contact Miss Phindile Duma at the contact numbers above.
9. Upon completion of the research, a brief summary of the findings, recommendations or a full report/dissertation/thesis must be submitted to the research office of the Department. Please address it to The Office of the HOD, Private Bag X9137, Pietermaritzburg, 3200.
10. Please note that your research and interviews will be limited to schools and institutions in KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education.

UMGUNGUNDLOVU DISTRICT
PINETOWN DISTRICT

Mr GN Ngcobo
Head of Department: Education
Date: 22 September 2022

GROWING KWAZULU-NATAL TOGETHER

Appendix D: Ethical Clearance Letter from the University of Cape Town

African Studies and Linguistics

Harry Oppenheimer Institute Building, Engineering Mall
University of Cape Town, Private Bag X3, Rondebosch, 7701, South Africa
Tel: 021 650 4034
Email: yolande.isaacs@uct.ac.za
Website: www.africanstudies.uct.ac.za

14 March 2022

Confirmation of Research Ethics Approval Esma Karadag [CAS/310821/EK/13]

This is to confirm that Esma Karadag's research proposal, "*Pan-African Historiography through the Lens of Contemporary South African History Textbooks and their Representations in the Classroom*" under the supervision of Dr June Bam-Hutchison and Prof Azeem Badroodien (School of Education), has been reviewed by the African Studies and Linguistics Department Ethics Committee.

The department and supervisors are satisfied that the research carries no significant risk or harm to human subjects. We are further satisfied that appropriate informed consent and confidentiality/anonymity/data protection mechanisms are in place.

It is a condition for the acceptance of Ms Karadag's proposal that she complies consistently with strict ethical standards. This will entail proceeding only on the basis of the consistently informed consent of interviewees and will require regular monitoring of ethical issues which may emerge as the project develops.

Should you have any questions or concerns, please contact her supervisors at june.bam-hutchison@uct.ac.za and azeem.badroodien@uct.ac.za.

Kind Regards,
yisaacs
Yolande Isaacs

Appendix E: Grade 11 and 12 History Textbooks List in the LTSM Catalogue of DBE

Grade 11 history textbooks list in the LTSM catalogue of the DBE[28]

Maskew Miller Longman (Pty) Ltd	Focus History Grade 11 Learner's Book (2013)	Johannesson B, Fernandez M, Wesson J, Jacobs M, Seleti Y
Heinemann Publishers (Pty) Ltd	Spot On History Grade 11 Learners' Book (2015)	C. Dugmore, T. Nicol, B. Cloete, L. Minter
Oxford University Press	In Search of History Grade 11 Learner's Book (2012)	J. Bottaro, P. Visser, N. Worden
New Generation Publishing Enterprises cc	New Generation History Grade 11 Learner's Book (2012)	F Frank, CA Stephenson, R Subramony, L Sikhakhane
Macmillan South Africa (Pty) Ltd	Solutions for all History Grade 11 Learner's Book (2012)	E. Brink, C. Fowler, A. Grundlingh, E. Varga, J. Verner, M. Willemse
Via Afrika	Via Afrika History Grade 11 Learner's Book (2012)	J. Manenzhe, A. Proctor, G. Weldon
Shuter and Shooter Publishers (Pty)Ltd	Shuters Top Class History Grade 11 Learners Book (2012)	Middlebrook, Patricia
Vivlia Publishers & Booksellers (Pty) Ltd	Viva History Grade 11 Learner's Book (2014)	K. L. Angier, J Hobbs, P. McMahon, R. L. Mowatt, G. Nattrass

Grade 12 history textbooks list in the LTSM catalogue of the DBE

Maskew Miller Longman (Pty) Ltd	Focus History Grade 12 Learner's Book (2013)	Mario Fernandez, Lindsay Wills, D
Heinemann Publishers (Pty) Ltd	Spot On History Grade 12 Learners' Book (2015)	C. Dugmore; M. Friedman; L. Min.
Oxford University Press	In Search of History Grade 12 Learner's Book (2013)	J. Bottaro, P. Visser, N. Worden
New Generation Publishing Enterprises cc	New Generation History Grade 12 Learners Book (2014)	F Frank, Thembi Mbansini, Roshn.
Macmillan South Africa (Pty) Ltd	Solutions for all History Grade 12 Learner's Book (2013)	J Verner, E Brink, C de Nobrega, M
Via Afrika	Via Afrika History Grade 12 Learner's Book (2013)	S. Grova, J. Manenzhe, A. Proct
Vivlia Publishers & Booksellers (Pty) Ltd	Viva History Grade 12 Learner's Book (2014)	K. L. Angier, R. L. Mowatt, J.T. Hobbs, E. A. Horner, J. L. Maraschin, N. Mhlaba

[28] https://www.education.gov.za/Curriculum/LearningandTeachingSupportMaterials(LTSM).aspx

Appendix F: Summary of Empirical Fieldwork — Teacher Participants and School Contexts

A. Overview of Fieldwork

- **Fieldwork Period:** February 2022 – September 2022
- **Provinces Covered:** Western Cape, Gauteng, KwaZulu-Natal
- **Number of Participants:** 37 in-service History teachers (Grades 10–12, FET phase)
- **Minimum Experience:** All teachers had at least 5 years of teaching experience
- **Sampling Strategy:** Combination of purposive and snowball sampling
- **Recruitment:** 1,500 invitations were sent through provincial education department mailing lists
- **Mode of Interviews:** Combination of face-to-face and virtual platforms (Zoom or MS Teams), depending on the participant's availability and location
- **Interview Length:** Between 35 minutes and 1.5 hours

B. Description of School Contexts

- **Working-Class Schools (Q1 – Q3):**
    - Located in historically disadvantaged township areas
    - Severely limited access to resources (libraries, internet, and learning materials)
    - Teachers often rely exclusively on CAPS-prescribed textbooks; pedagogy tends to represent Pan-Africanism through locally contextualised narratives
    - Students generally show limited engagement with Pan-Africanism, often prioritising exam success over critical engagement
- **Middle-Class Schools (Q4 – Q5):**
    - Located in suburban or urban areas, often historically white-designated
    - Better-resourced schools with access to digital platforms and enrichment materials
    - Teachers tend to adopt a more comparative and historically analytical pedagogy, linking Pan-Africanism to broader global and temporal contexts
    - Students' engagement shaped by digital literacy and post-#Fallist discourse and debates

C. Ethical Considerations

- **Ethical Clearance:** Obtained from the University of Cape Town and the Departments of Education in Western Cape, Gauteng, and KwaZulu-Natal (see Appendices A–E)
- **Informed Consent:** Written or verbal consent obtained from all participants
- **Anonymity and Confidentiality:** No real names were collected; all data anonymised and securely stored