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*T. Ras Makonnen: Pan-Africanism in practice*

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**T. Ras Makonnen: Pan-Africanism in Practice.**

Lee Hughes

A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements of

Sheffield Hallam University

for the degree of Master of History by research.

December 2019.

## **Candidate Declaration**

I hereby declare that:

1. I have not been enrolled for another award of the University, or other academic or professional organisation, whilst undertaking my research degree.
2. None of the material contained in the thesis has been used in any other submission for an academic award.
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### **Abstract.**

This thesis will provide a biographical account of T. Ras Makonnen. It will focus specifically on his life as a Pan-African activist. In three parts, we will explore the development, implementation and shortcomings of Makonnen's Pan-African vision. This will be achieved by analysing Makonnen's formative years in Guyana, North America and Europe. We will then explore Makonnen's successes in Manchester. And finally, we will assess Makonnen's limitations in Ghana, where he sought to implement Pan-Africanism on a national and international scale.

## Introduction.

The Abyssinian Crisis of 1935 marked a critical juncture in the life of the Guyanese migrant George Thomas Nathaniel Griffith. Griffith, who travelled to America from British Guyana in the early 1930s, was employed by the North American YMCA and lectured part-time at the predominately Afro-American Cornell University. His tenure in the United States saw the accelerated development of a growing racial consciousness as he was introduced to the debates on race between W.E.B Du Bois, Booker T. Washington, Marcus Garvey and George Padmore. Yet, the Abyssinian Crisis triggered a metamorphosis in Griffith which was profound on multiple levels. Whilst the Crisis affected Afro-American society to the point where they “almost completely lost their sense of perspective”<sup>1</sup> towards events in Africa, Griffith took the radical decision to completely commit himself to the cause of opposing Italian aggression in Abyssinia and pledge himself to a West Indian-led Pan-African movement which centred around anti-colonialism.<sup>2</sup> This metamorphosis involved him shedding his birthname of Griffith and adopting the pseudonym T. Ras Makonnen.<sup>3</sup> The symbolism in this act is manifold. Makonnen was the birthname of the Ethiopian Emperor, Haile Selassie, which has connotations of prestige, power and legitimacy. Also, as Griffith was born in British Guyana, he was a colonial subject. A change of name meant that Griffith was effectively not only losing his national identity, but also the links to slavery and colonialism that his association with British Guyana brought. Moreover, in becoming Makonnen, Griffith was establishing a mythos which was based on a romanticised link to Africa through his alleged familial links there. Griffith, or Makonnen as he would be known for the rest of his life, elevated himself to a position whereby he became not only an advocate for the cause

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<sup>1</sup> L. Rollins, ‘Ethiopia, African Americans, and African-Consciousness: The Effect of Ethiopia and African Consciousness in Twentieth-Century America’, *Journal of Religious Thought*, (1998), 54/55:2/1, p. 13.

<sup>2</sup> B. Schwarz, in B. Schwarz (ed), *West Indian Intellectuals in Britain*, (Manchester University Press, 2003), p. 6. Schwarz goes on to argue that the Abyssinian Crisis was *the* colonial issue of 1930s. Anger towards the invasion of Abyssinia by Italy – and the country’s perceived abandonment by democratic nations - saw the unification of African diaspora militant Marxists, humanitarians, anti-colonialists and feminists, who coalesced around opposition to the invasion. Una Marson, who gave her life unswervingly to the Abyssinian cause, stated that “it took over her life”. Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> K. K Prah, *Beyond the Colour Line: Pan-Africanist Disputations, Selected Sketches, Letters, Papers and Reviews*, (Africa World Press, Inc, 1998), p. 21.

of Pan-Africanism, but also an authoritative figure amongst the African diaspora and the wider Pan-African movement.<sup>4</sup>

The thesis will use two approaches. Firstly, it will present a biographical analysis of the Pan-Africanist, T. Ras Makonnen. The biographical approach is important due to Makonnen's position within the Pan-African historiography. Makonnen was not a theorist in the Padmore or Du Bois' mould, rather, he was someone who worked 'on the ground'; he was an organiser, an agitator, and someone who, whilst working alongside Padmore for much of his life, developed his own Pan-African ethos and worldview. This approach – where we focus exclusively on Makonnen - is important as it adds depth to the historical analysis of Pan-Africanism which otherwise tends to focus on the metropole and the interplay between groups rather than the efforts of individual activists. Moreover, the appeal of studying Makonnen as a solo actor within the Pan-African sphere broadens our understanding of the interplay between Pan-Africanist activism and communities. Through this line of enquiry, new networks between individuals, communities and nations are uncovered. Secondly, the thesis will explore how a Pan-Africanist worldview and ethos is developed. This will be achieved through analysis of Makonnen's early life in British Guyana: his early experiences, his growing understanding of anti-colonialism and Pan-Africanism, and what lessons he learnt in those formative years; his time in Manchester will be explored: where he implemented Pan-Africanism, and the bonds that he formed there; and finally, in Ghana, where the shortcomings of his ethos were laid bare. Such an approach, which has a definitive narrative arc – a beginning, middle and end – fits neatly alongside the biographical approach that the thesis has used.

The recurrent theme which underpins this entire thesis is Pan-Africanism. Yet, as with any dynamic concept - especially one which has profound racial, cultural, political and socio-economic connotations - it can become fluid and amorphous, depending on context and the intent of those who espouse it. The German historian Immanuel Geiss wrote in 1974, that Pan-Africanism embraced "intellectual and political movements among Africans and Afro-Americans who regard or have regarded

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<sup>4</sup> Makonnen was born George Thomas Nathaniel Griffith. To avoid confusion, the thesis will continuously use the pseudonym, Makonnen, throughout the thesis.

Africans and people of African descent as homogenous.” Moreover, he associates Pan-Africanism with ideas which stress the cultural unity and political independence of Africa “including the desire to modernise Africa on a basis of equality of rights.”<sup>5</sup> Adi argues that the exact definition of Pan-Africanism cannot be found – the vagueness of the term reflecting the fact that Pan-Africanism has taken different forms at different historical moments and geographical locations. Pan-Africanism, and Pan-Africanist thought however, is principally connected to the modern dispersal of Africans both as captives in the Atlantic slave trade and with the creation of the modern African diaspora. This is typically accompanied by the emergence of global capitalism, European colonial rule and anti-African racism. Pan-Africanism, therefore, evolved into a loose variety of ideas, activities, organisations and movements that sometimes resisted the exploitation and oppression of all those of African heritage.<sup>6</sup> Continuing from Adi’s definition, Davidson states that Africa’s experience of being ‘civilised’ by the West created a dichotomy, whereby African intellectuals and elites within the diaspora and those on the African continent had contrasting visions, both imagined and actual, of what Africa was and what it meant to those of African heritage. The Pan-African ideals of cultural unity and the political independence of Africa jarred against the reality of 20<sup>th</sup> Century Pan-African nationalism which borrowed from European (white) notions of nations and nation building.<sup>7</sup>

This thesis was made possible by the availability of Makonnen’s memoir, which was narrated to and compiled by Kenneth King, in 1973. Without the memoir, this thesis would have been difficult but not impossible as scholars have already borrowed heavily from the text. Secondary sources on Pan-Africanism or African diaspora activism tend to lift excerpts and quotes from the memoir to add depth or context to their own argument; the thesis uses this approach but in reverse: the Makonnen memoir acts as a framework whereby secondary and primary sources are used to add context to it. This way we can assess what impact Makonnen had, where his Pan-African ethos worked, and ultimately, what his shortcomings were. Oftentimes, using

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<sup>5</sup> I. Geiss, *The Pan-African Movement*, (Methuen & Co, Ltd, London, 1974), pp. 3-7.

<sup>6</sup> H. Adi, *Pan-Africanism. A History*, (Bloomsbury Academic, 2018), p. 3.

<sup>7</sup> W. Ackah, *Pan-Africanism: Exploring the Contradictions, Politics, Identity and Development in Africa and the African Diaspora*, (Ashgate, 1999), p. ii.

the memoir has proven to be less than straightforward. King's work was published in 1973, long after Makonnen's star had waned, and as such contain passages and recollections that are prone – in the author's opinion – to hyperbole and exaggeration; within Makonnen's recollections there are instances where he exhibits a need for recognition, and crucially, to be considered relevant and legitimate within the Pan-African world. One example relates to Makonnen aiding a group of Nigerian seamen – which the author took at face value - yet when additional primary source material was discovered in the form of interviews, it transpired that Makonnen had embellished certain facts to make the story sound more exciting. This brings us to the second set of primary sources that were utilised: interviews with West Indian men who lived in Manchester. The input of Gaisie, Fini, Downie et al has been crucial in providing a counter-narrative to the one Makonnen and the secondary sources argue. They highlight levels of apathy towards Makonnen's time in Manchester and indifference towards the issues discussed at the Manchester Congress. Furthermore, Makonnen's correspondence with St. Clair Drake and other notable figures within the North American Pan-African world have been critical in highlighting the former's efforts at establishing and maintaining trans-Atlantic links. The letters are also revelatory in the honesty that Makonnen displays when expressing his frustration towards the lack of progress in post-war West Indies. Alongside these primary sources the thesis has utilised newspaper articles and located a copy of *International African Opinion*. The aim of this thesis is not to simply fact-check Makonnen's memoir, rather, it is to argue that Makonnen was a crucial actor within the Pan-African world and whose efforts were integral to the success of the Pan-African movement in Manchester.

Chapter one will introduce the reader to T. Ras Makonnen and outline how Makonnen's experiences in early life helped to shape his Pan-African ethos and worldview. We will explore Makonnen's life in Buxton, Guyana, and reference these key themes: Guyana's embedded slave heritage; his father's international businesses; the concept of *Osusu*; and Makonnen's alleged familial links to Africa. Continuing with Makonnen's formative years, we will assess his attitude towards the NPC (Negro Progress Convention) and the UNIA (Universal Negro Improvement

Association). Continuing, the chapter will chart Makonnen's move to the United States and the development of his Pan-African ethos which started with his involvement with the American YMCA and Max Yergan. Mention will be made of Makonnen's interpretation of the debates between Du Bois, Washington and Garvey. An argument will be presented that historians wrongly place Makonnen as a collaborator with Padmore and we need to focus more on Makonnen as an independent actor. Finally, the chapter will explore Makonnen's subsequent move to Europe and his role within the IAFE (International African Friends of Ethiopia) and the IASB (International African Service Bureau).

Chapter two will argue that Makonnen successfully implemented his Pan-African vision in Manchester. Here, we will briefly outline the demise of the IASB and Makonnen's subsequent move to Manchester. We will argue that through his collaboration with the Manchester Cooperative movement, Makonnen further developed his understanding of *Osusu*, which he believed could be used in Africa. The chapter will then extensively explore Makonnen's business ventures in Manchester and highlight how international cooperation helped to establish the Ethiopian Teashop and Cosmopolitan restaurants. It will be argued that the businesses were important spaces not just within the Pan-African world, but also the metropole. Continuing with Makonnen's business ventures we will introduce Makonnen's foray into publishing and his developing relationship with St. Clair Drake. The chapter will then provide examples of Makonnen's Pan-African vision in action through the legal defence of African diaspora defendants in court. Furthermore, we will assess Makonnen's impact in Manchester by assessing the reactions of the African diaspora towards him. The chapter will end on the Manchester Congress and its importance within the wider Pan-African world.

Chapter three will chart Makonnen's move to post-independence Ghana in 1957. His tenure in Ghana should have marked the zenith of his efforts as a Pan-Africanist, yet, as the chapter will argue, it was there where his Pan-African ethos was found wanting. To argue this, we will introduce Nkrumah into the narrative and outline his Pan-African vision for Ghana and Africa. We will assess why Makonnen decided to leave Manchester and migrate to Ghana, with emphasis on his financial concerns and

his growing restlessness in England. Continuing, the chapter will explore the partnership that existed between Padmore and Makonnen and assess the difficulties both faced from a hostile civil service and their reaction to the ethnic rivalries that existed in Ghana. The chapter will end by arguing that both Makonnen and Padmore's Pan-African vision was incompatible with Pan-African nationalism in Ghana.

## Chapter 1.

### Becoming T. Ras Makonnen. The Development of a Pan-Africanist.

This chapter will explore the themes and experiences that helped to develop the Pan-African ethos of T. Ras Makonnen. To achieve this, we will explore Makonnen's formative years growing up in British Guyana and how the legacy of slavery, his father's international business ventures, and the West African cooperative tradition of *Osusu* helped to shape his worldview. Mention will also be made of his alleged familial links to Ethiopia. We will then explore Makonnen's opinion towards the burgeoning black radicalism that was prevalent throughout Guyana and the West Indies. Specifically, the chapter will outline his attitude towards the NPC (Negro Progress Convention) and the UNIA (Universal Negro Improvement Association). The chapter will then focus on Makonnen's move to America and his involvement with the American YMCA. Moreover, we will briefly explore Max Yergan's influence on Makonnen with regards to how he appraised the theories and debates between Booker T. Washington, W.E.B Du Bois and Marcus Garvey. We will explore the start of Makonnen and George Padmore's working relationship and mention the notable differences in approach that existed between the two men. Focus will then shift to Makonnen's growing awareness of the Abyssinian Crisis and his subsequent decisions to change his name and relocate to Europe. The chapter will plot Makonnen's work with the small group of Pan-African activists centred around C.L.R James and Padmore in the IAFE (International African Friends of Ethiopia) and IASB (International African Service Bureau). We will conclude this chapter by analysing how Makonnen's Pan-African ethos developed up to this point through analysis of an article he penned in *International African Opinion*.

### Makonnen's formative years in British Guyana.

Makonnen was born in 1900 in the small freedman village of Buxton, Guyana, which was a British colony. The village bore the cultural, economic and societal impact of slavery deeply and slave traditions were still deep rooted there.<sup>1</sup> Makonnen's grandmother was one of the founder members of Buxton and wielded tremendous power and influence within the village's social and political apparatus. Slave customs and prejudices were still commonplace and *Obeah* men still held rank within the village, 'curing' those with illness or those affected by 'ju-ju'. Furthermore, those with heritage linking them to specific countries or ethnic groups in Africa, such as the Congolese or the Coromante, were, Makonnen argues, typically held in distrust as they were "prone to revolt" or were "bloodthirsty" and "dangerous".<sup>2</sup> Moreover, his grandmother was married to a man named 'Baird', who also had two or three other wives, a custom that was a legacy of Guyana's slave history. Whilst the legacy of slavery still loomed large over Buxton, there was little desire in challenging the slave customs and traditions that still existed.<sup>3</sup> Family friends and peers of Makonnen's would often leave Guyana for an English education and upon arriving back home would easily transition into the white colonial political and social infrastructures that were in place. Makonnen claims that advantageous opportunities were available to all men if they had the wherewithal to seize them. Even stating that there was little desire amongst his generation to dwell on Guyana's slave history, as the wish to take advantage of new opportunities and progress forwards was much more appealing.<sup>4</sup>

Whilst Makonnen's grandmother and other elders in the village still adhered to slave customs, his father – also called George Thomas Nathaniel Griffith<sup>5</sup> - embodied the spirit of entrepreneurialism that prevailed in post-slavery era Guyana. Upon completion of his primary education, Makonnen went to work alongside him in his mining businesses. Whilst he spent a relatively small amount of time working

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<sup>1</sup> D. Dabydeen & J. Gilmore, et al, *The Oxford Companion to Black British History*, (Oxford, 2007), p. 283.

<sup>2</sup> Makonnen, p. 3.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid*, p. 8.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid*, p. 4.

<sup>5</sup> Makonnen was given the same name as his father. He used to sign his Cornell textbooks as G.T.G. K. King, *Pan-Africanism from Within*, (Diasporic Africa Press, 2016), p. 17.

alongside his father, Makonnen was quick to learn the basics of business. A key tenet of his father's mining business, which Makonnen would adopt later in life, was the importance of international cooperation.<sup>6</sup> His father was in partnership with a Chinese man named Evan Wong<sup>7</sup>, and together, they had international contacts in Scotland, Syria and Holland. Partnerships like the one his father was involved in were not uncommon. His business was a microcosm of what was happening throughout Guyana in the early twentieth century. The colonial authorities offered financial and business initiatives to quell the labour drain resulting from workers freely migrating throughout the West Indies. Indeed, free passage and financial rewards were offered throughout India and Asia, to those who wished to settle and work in Guyana.<sup>8</sup> Therefore, through working alongside his father, Makonnen, from an early age, was accustomed to the practicalities of business, the fluidity of labour and the importance of forging trans-national partnerships.

An additional factor, which was crucial in Makonnen's formative years, was Buxton's use of the West African Mutual Trust Cooperative system called *Osusu*. Communities, families and groups of friends used a localised economic system of contributions, whereby small donations would be put into the 'box' and the collective wealth would be used to enhance the community through purchasing land for agriculture or used to support individuals or families who were destitute.<sup>9</sup> *Osusu* has its roots in West Africa and is an essential part of the traditional West African economy and was inherent in pre-colonial culture. Ijah argues that the advent of colonialism in Africa, and by default, colonialism elsewhere, saw a marked increase in the use of *Osusu* Mutual Trust Funds. *Osusu* was a natural way to circumvent the Western deification of money and typically increased community cohesion and prosperity.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> The business ventures mentioned here will be explored at length in Chapter 2.

<sup>7</sup> Robert Victor Evan Wong was the son of a wealthy Chinese merchant. Born in Georgetown, Guyana, Wong's family was involved in the Gold and Bauxite mining industries in Guyana and were prominent figures in Guyana's attempts to expand the merchant and professional classes with migrants. Aged 26, Wong entered politics and became the first person of East-Asian descent elected to a national legislature in the Americas. J. De Barros, *Reproducing the British Caribbean: Sex Gender, and Population Politics After Slavery*, (North Carolina Press, 2014), p. 130.

<sup>8</sup> British Guiana: Colonisation Scheme, Offer of Guarantees, *The Times of India*, 11<sup>th</sup> Feb 1920.

<sup>9</sup> Makonnen, p. 6.

<sup>10</sup> A. Ijah, 'An Evaluation of the Indigenous Practice of *Osusu* Cooperatives among the Benin's of South-South, Nigeria', *An International Journal of Arts and Humanities*, (2014), 3:1, p. 3.

Furthermore, Makonnen stresses in his memoirs that he had direct familial links to Africa, and Ethiopia specifically. He cites his grandfather as migrating to Guyana from Ethiopia, in the company of a Scottish miner whom he had met in Eritrea, to seek his fortune in the mining areas on the Guyanese-Venezuelan borderlands.<sup>11</sup> His recollection, whilst warranting some degree of caution – the claim was made later in his life, presumably because he wanted to reinforce his status and legitimacy as a Pan-Africanist – does deserve mention. Whilst his peers were keen to take advantage of the possibilities that were available to them, they were largely, Makonnen argues, disinterested nor even cared about Guyana's slave history.<sup>12</sup> Whereas Makonnen, according to his memoirs, displayed an acute awareness of his African heritage and the legacy of slavery combined with an appreciation of the opportunities that had since become available.

### **Black Radicalism in British Guyana and the West Indies.**

During Makonnen's formative years, growing up in Buxton and working alongside his father, Guyana was undergoing tremendous social and political change. Labour disputes and strikes were commonplace, fuelled by growing unemployment, discontent and unrest. Putnam argues that this unrest was further fuelled by the migration of workers between the islands of the West Indies, and throughout Central and Southern America. This migration saw an exponential rise in the dissemination and distribution of radical ideas and literature which were centred on two aspects: a growing racial awareness, and a realisation amongst the West Indian diaspora that they shared common experiences, history and heritage; the West Indian diaspora was becoming increasingly interrelated. Moreover, as West Indian migrants tended to be literate and remained in contact with friends and family at home, any radical ideas, often read in publications such as *Negro World* or *Atlantic Voice*, were widely shared. It also saw the proliferation of moderate and radical racial self-help groups, societies and political movements which were beginning to flourish across the West Indies.<sup>13</sup> In Guyana, two such groups, the NPC (Negro Progress Convention) and the

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<sup>11</sup> Makonnen, p. 12.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid, p. 8.

<sup>13</sup> B. Josiah, 'Organising Within the Diaspora: Claude H. A. Denbow, Howard University, And the League of Coloured Peoples', *The Journal of African America History*, (2010), 95:2, p. 230.

UNIA (Universal Negro Improvement Association) were in the ascendancy. The NPC, born out of opposition to the migration of East Indian, Asian and Chinese labour into Guyana, placed themselves as champions of the Guyanese middle-classes and those of West Indian heritage. The UNIA, led by Marcus Garvey, held much broader appeal throughout the West Indies as its focus was centred on African revivalism and nationalism within the African diaspora and the spreading of that message through trade disputes and political agitation.<sup>14</sup>

Assessing Makonnen's opinion towards the UNIA and the NPC, we find evidence which highlights a somewhat naïve and contradictory attitude towards the different approaches that the UNIA and NPC had. Here, Makonnen opines the differences between the "respectable" NPC and the "crude" ideology of Garveyism.<sup>15</sup> He believed that the Garveyism under the UNIA in Guyana was overtly racist towards those of Indian heritage and condemned the ideology as discriminatory.<sup>16</sup> Meanwhile, he was much more appreciative of the NPC, which championed the Guyanese bourgeoisie and actively promoted positive discrimination through job allocation and promotions; the NPC believed that any post-slavery opportunities should only be available for those of Guyanese descent and sought to explicitly exclude East Asian migrants. The primary issue for the NPC was East Indian migration into a country which they believed was failing to uphold the greatness of the black race and that was putting the interests of East-Asian migrants first. Moreover, the NPC were guilty of stoking already existing tensions between the Indo-Guyanese and native Guyanese communities, which resulted in the boycotting of Indo-Guyanese stores and the harassment of their workers. For example, if a business was owned by someone of Indo-Guyanese descent, then the NPC would either boycott the store or set up a rival business which employed an exclusively native Guyanese workforce. Whilst considering this, it is important to note that Makonnen's appreciation of the 'black revivalism' under the NPC was underpinned by the group's effectiveness at 'levelling the playing field' between the masses and the Guyanese who spoke "King

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<sup>14</sup> G. Shepperson & St. C. Drake, 'The Fifth Pan-African Conference, 1945 and the All African People's Congress, 1958', *A Journal of African and Afro-American Studies*, (2008), 8:5, p. 37.

<sup>15</sup> Makonnen, p. 31.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid*, p. 32.

George's English". To Makonnen, this meant giving equal opportunities to those who could not readily travel to England to receive a university education and therefore reap the social and financial benefits that such an undertaking inevitably brought.<sup>17</sup>

Considering Makonnen's later years as a Pan-Africanist in the international mould, it is safe to argue that his gravitation towards the NPC is certainly revelatory.<sup>18</sup> Makonnen's experience of working alongside his father was the antithesis of the NPC narrative; international cooperation was the bedrock of the father's success. This point needs to be explored further. Here, we need to separate two aspects of Makonnen's identity: that of Makonnen as an individual, and as a man of African descent. Whilst the two are not mutually exclusive, they do shed some light on the apparent contradictions that arise here. Makonnen worked alongside his father, whose Chinese partner, Evan Wong, was held in high regard. As a result, he had first-hand experience of the benefits of international cooperation. So as an individual, he clearly understood that cooperation led to prosperity. Moreover, as Makonnen's family were affluent - his grandmother was the village matriarch, and his father was a businessman - it could be argued that Makonnen's support for the NPC was based on them acting as a middle-class vehicle for the radical shift in racial awareness that was spreading throughout the West Indies. As studies such as Ragatz's 1928 study, *The Fall of the Planter Class in the British Caribbean*, were being increasingly circulated, Makonnen and his peers were much more racially aware than previous generations.<sup>19</sup>

Whilst the methods employed by the NPC may have elicited a somewhat sympathetic response in Makonnen, his impression of Marcus Garvey's UNIA highlights more complex feelings. Throughout Guyana, and the West Indies, strikes and riots were commonplace, and most were conducted under the banner of Garveyism. The

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<sup>17</sup> Makonnen, p. 30.

<sup>18</sup> This statement is strengthened further when we consider Makonnen's links to Evan Wong, whose presence in Guyana would have been opposed by the NPC.

<sup>19</sup> Makonnen, p. 2. Makonnen cites Ragatz's work as being pivotal to the realisation of the slave network that was imposed on the West Indies. Considering early 20<sup>th</sup> Century Guyana had high illiteracy rates and limited educational opportunities for non-whites, Makonnen's mention of this study highlights his family's social status and those of his peers. O. Ishmael, *The Transition of Guyanese Education in the Twentieth Century*, (Georgetown, 2012), p.11.

colonial Governor observed that “[Garveyism] was a gigantic folly and appealed to the worst sentiments of the negro race.”<sup>20</sup> It was recognised, albeit without an appreciation of the scale, that a “colour clash” was underway which threatened to drastically alter the socio-political landscape of the West Indies. Indeed, it was not uncommon for groups of armed men, sometimes numbering into the hundreds, to roam the Guyanese countryside inciting violence and calling for “all you white bitches...go back where you came from.”<sup>21</sup> Looking beyond these events, which Makonnen argues were “designed to incite you into blackness”, we find him appreciating how Garveyism successfully mobilised the African diaspora, regardless of class or nationality.<sup>22</sup> A generation were, through Garveyism, becoming acutely racially aware and crucially, they were highly organised. The success of Garveyism had at its core the use of newspapers, which in turn fuelled a self-confidence and led to an increased sense of unity and solidarity amongst Africans and the African diaspora.<sup>23</sup> It was this aspect of Garveyism that Makonnen appreciated. The UNIA succeeded where the NPC failed: their message transcended class and national boundaries. The newspaper images of 60,000 black people mobilised in Madison Square Garden and the *Negro World* editorials penned by Eric Walrond - who wrote short stories which were centred on racial pride, immigration and discrimination - not only appealed to intellectuals and the masses alike, they also helped to soften national rivalries throughout the West Indies, as prejudices and stereotypes throughout the West Indies were commonplace.<sup>24</sup> “There was something in Garvey’s opinion and philosophy to make most of us stop and reflect on why the black man was making no headway.”<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> A. Ewing, ‘Caribbean Labour Politics in the Age of Garvey, 1918-1938’, *Race & Class*, (2013), 55:1, p.37.

<sup>21</sup> A. Ewing, p.37.

<sup>22</sup> Makonnen, p. 31.

<sup>23</sup> R. Lewis, ‘Marcus Garvey: The Remapping of Africa and its Diaspora’, *Critical Arts*, (2011), 25:4, p. 477.

<sup>24</sup> Makonnen, p. 32.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid, p. 34.

### America: Development of a Pan-Africanist.

Makonnen left Guyana for North America in 1927. He arrived in New Orleans days after Marcus Garvey had been deported from the same city. Makonnen studied at Beaumont, Texas, and later, Cornell University, where he became involved in the YMCA.<sup>26</sup> His original intention was to go onto study mineralogy at San Saba, Texas. Clearly his ambition was to build upon the mining experience he gained working with his father. Yet, Makonnen abandoned his ambitions to study mineralogy and instead sought employment with the North American YMCA.<sup>27</sup> His apparent *volte-face* with regards to his further education could possibly be attributed to two factors: his social station and his experience of the political and social upheaval in Guyana. Makonnen was always forthright about his middle-class background and cites the influence of the church and the YMCA in Guyana as being important influences when growing up. Notably, the church played an important role in countering the old slave traditions and *Obeah* men in Guyana.<sup>28</sup> Furthermore, by extension, he was similarly appreciative of the institution of the YMCA in providing a stable environment for “black men after they had worked all day”.<sup>29</sup>

Makonnen’s tenure with the North American YMCA marks a critical point in the development of his Pan-African consciousness. As a secretary within the Texan branch of the ‘Y’, Makonnen’s role was to find solutions to the extreme inequalities that existed in Afro-American communities and wider American society. Moreover, this work involved the continuation of the *Osusu* tradition that he was accustomed to back in Guyana. In the YMCA, this initiative was called the ‘community chest’, but the principle was still the same. Individuals in areas which had high levels of poverty, such as in Harlem, were urged to save small amounts of money each month and through YMCA lobbying, find a wealthy backer to contribute the rest and open a branch of the ‘Y’ there.<sup>30</sup> Whilst this work certainly provided Makonnen with practical

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<sup>26</sup> J. Munro, *The Anticolonial Front: The African America Freedom Struggle and Global Decolonisation, 1945-1960*, (Cambridge University Press, 2017), p. 52.

<sup>27</sup> D. Dabydeen & J. Gilmore, et al, p. 238.

<sup>28</sup> Makonnen, p. 37.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid, p. 41.

<sup>30</sup> Makonnen, p. 42.

experience working with Afro-American communities and alleviating poverty there, it also marks the point where his understanding of the debates surrounding the problems faced by the African diaspora matured. This development can be attributed, in part, to the work of Max Yergan, who, as the YMCA's singular black international representative was well renowned throughout the YMCA, black America and Africa. Makonnen's impression of Yergan was of a man who had a "high calling" within the Afro-American and diaspora communities.<sup>31</sup> Yergan's role as both an advocate for interracial cooperation and the wider Pan-African movement is somewhat understated due to the apolitical nature of the 'Y'. Yet, during Yergan's tenure in the United States – before he moved to South Africa – he was considered by Du Bois to one of the "New Negroes" who would attain a position of power and influence in Afro-American communities.<sup>32</sup>

Nevertheless, Yergan's influence on Makonnen's theoretical understanding of the debates surrounding the social and political advancement of African Americans and Pan-Africanism in general is apparent. Yergan was critical of the "false dichotomy" surrounding the racial debates between Du Bois and Booker T. Washington.<sup>33</sup> He believed that any polarisation within the Afro-American community was unfavourable and he sought to "transcend the limits of categorisation...believing that he owed debts of gratitude to both of them."<sup>34</sup> Considering this, Makonnen's work within the 'Y' allowed him to travel between states on visits to various universities, most notably, Howard and Cornell, which accepted Afro-American and African diaspora cohorts, and participate in the debates on race that took place there. It was travelling between Afro-American universities where Makonnen began to fully understand and formulate his own critiques the debates of race between Du Bois, Washington, and Garvey.

The first theorist who Makonnen critically appraised was Booker. T Washington. Washington was already well known in Guyana when Makonnen was young; those

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<sup>31</sup> Makonnen, p 44.

<sup>32</sup> D. Anthony, 'Max Yergan in South Africa: From Evangelical Pan-Africanist to Revolutionary Socialist', *African Studies Review*, 34:2, (1991), p. 29.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid.

<sup>34</sup> D. Dabydeen & J. Gilmore, et al, p. 283.

aware of the progress that was being made in North America would have pictures of Washington on display in their homes.<sup>35</sup> Moreover, the basis of the NPC's message of race-based entrepreneurialism had Washington's core values at its heart. Washington's strategy for black progression was born out of the racial violence that blighted the American South in the late 19<sup>th</sup> Century. Rather than directly oppose Jim Crow law, he proposed that black progress could be made through entrepreneurialism and education.<sup>36</sup> Furthermore, after the abolition of slavery, millions of enfranchised black workers lacked the necessary skills to compete in the rapidly industrialising economy of the United States. Washington's fear was that migrant labour would supplant them and further weaken their position. His proposal was the establishment of technical colleges which would be funded by middle class Afro-Americans, North American philanthropists, church leaders and politicians; this was outlined in the 'Atlanta Compromise' which would submit Southern Afro-Americans to white political rule and due process in law.<sup>37</sup>

Makonnen's criticism of Washington's approach was two-fold. Firstly, he argued that the United States government was already in the process of creating agricultural and mechanical colleges in the American South. Therefore, through his appeals to the Northern states for philanthropic funding, Washington was inadvertently letting the Southern States get away with contributing little towards the funding of black educational and technical colleges which perpetuated the problem of Afro-Americans relying on white benefactors to progress. Whilst this argument was already widely used throughout black circles, Makonnen went further, arguing that a historical parallel already existed in British attempts to 'civilise' Africa. He postulated that "do-gooders" from the North would take it upon themselves to educate and inform the Southern black communities, yet they themselves were neither sufficiently educated nor qualified to teach them those technical skills. Meaning, that the "do-gooders" were doing more harm than good.<sup>38</sup> Further compounding his criticism of Washington, Makonnen cited the work of Stoddard and

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<sup>35</sup> Makonnen, p. 28.

<sup>36</sup> N. Huggins, *Harlem Resistance*, (Oxford University Press, 2007), pp. 19-20.

<sup>37</sup> D. Lewis, *W.E.B. Du Bois: A Biography 1868-1963*, (Holt, 2009), p. 180.

<sup>38</sup> Makonnen, p.53.

others who argued that black parity would not be immediately attainable; it would require a long-term strategy that would be realised in the future. To Makonnen, the Northern philanthropists, who sought to educate and 'civilise' the black population of the American South were reinforcing and perpetuating the notion of Afro-Americans being unable to flourish without white benefactors guiding them.<sup>39</sup>

A second figure within the Afro-American community who Makonnen critiqued was W.E.B Du Bois. Du Bois provided the counterargument to Washington's 'industrial' strategy by advocating a 'classical' approach. This meant promoting higher education amongst the Afro-American communities, thereby equipping them with the intellectual and social skills which would help redress the issues caused by racial inequality. Du Bois argued that those who were capable would flourish within this environment and achieve positions of social and political prominence in their respective communities and the United States. The 'talented tenth', as Du Bois called them, would then go on to become the future leaders both within the United States and Africa.<sup>40</sup>

Concerning Du Bois, Makonnen presented two points of criticism: that of Du Bois' personal attitude towards Washington, and historical flaws in Du Bois' argument. Firstly, concerning the debate between the two men, Makonnen claimed that much of the criticism Du Bois levelled at Washington stemmed from the fact that he was more successful in gaining the ear of the philanthropists.<sup>41</sup> Secondly, Makonnen stated that the Du Bois model had been tried and tested in India, citing failed British attempts to 'civilise' India through education. Makonnen's comparison here is valid. British attempts to Anglicise Indians through education succeeded only in exacerbating and widening India's social divisions. Makonnen believed that a similar approach with Afro-Americans would dilute – through an exclusively white

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<sup>39</sup> Makonnen, p. 54.

<sup>40</sup> H. Adi & M. Sherwood, *Pan-African History: Political Figures from Africa and the Diaspora since 1787*, (Routledge, 2003), p. 49.

<sup>41</sup> Makonnen, p. 53.

curriculum – the identity of those who studied there, whereby they would lose part of their black identity in the process.<sup>42</sup>

Critically, whilst Makonnen's opinions on the ideas and debates surrounding Washington and Du Bois were valid, they were not entirely original. Makonnen's conclusions were already commonplace as the debates on the 'negro question' in North America had been ongoing for decades. Why Makonnen's opinion warrants attention is that he was approaching the question from a fresh point of view: that of a migrant of African descent who had first-hand experience of the issues being debated. Prior to the early 20<sup>th</sup> Century influx of migrants from the West Indies into North America, the dialogue between Washington and Du Bois had been framed by the media as irrelevant. White commentators used pseudo-science to deconstruct their ideas and argued that no amount of eulogising about racial equality would hide the fact that "a negro is a negro...races must accept they are what they are; they must accept these differences and dwell apart."<sup>43</sup> Through arriving in North America, and discovering the debates which were centred on their own futures, Makonnen and others viewed them from a fresh perspective; they viewed them through the prism of their experiences in the West Indies: economic stagnation, a burgeoning racial awareness throughout the West Indies and its diaspora and a desire for self-reliance in the post slavery era.<sup>44</sup>

Arguably, the most pertinent of Makonnen's reassessments was that of Marcus Garvey and Garveyism. Granted, many in Guyana were aware of the race debates between Washington and Du Bois, but it was Garveyism that had a real, profound socio-political effect within the country. Whilst Makonnen had already formed his own opinion on Garveyism, it was not until he arrived in North America that he began to appreciate the scope of Garvey's ambition and its shortcomings. Firstly, during Makonnen's tenure in North America, Garveyism was entering a critical stage

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<sup>42</sup> H. Ikhlef, 'Constructive Orientalism: Debates on Languages and Educational Policies in Colonial India, 1830-1880' in Bagchi, Fuchs & Rousmaniere (eds.), *Connecting Histories of Education: Transnational and Cross-Cultural Exchanges in (Post-)Colonial Education*, (Berghahn, 2014), p. 157.

<sup>43</sup> H. L. B. "THE FATE OF THE NEGRO. Critic of Booker Washington and Prof. Du Bois Declares Laws of Nature Decree Black Man's Elimination in America", *New York Times*, 6<sup>th</sup> July 1907.

<sup>44</sup> Makonnen, p. xiii.

whereby Garvey and his lieutenants were beginning to lose control of events that were carried out in their name; the injection of class-based Marxist rhetoric into the debates surrounding race was largely to blame for this.<sup>45</sup> Moreover, Makonnen recognised that an interconnected system of self-reliance, much like *Osusu*, already existed within Afro-American and African diaspora communities, therefore negating much of Garvey's message. Here, Makonnen argued that Afro-American and African diasporic communities were left largely ignored as Garvey tended to focus his attention solely on the West Indian communities. Makonnen stressed that Garvey's intent: to emulate and rival white institutions, fell on deaf ears, particularly amongst the West Indian communities. The West Indians, Makonnen argued, wanted to create their own institutions, not copy others.<sup>46</sup> Patsides mirrors Makonnen appraisal of Garveyism and adds that Garvey's bias towards West Indian audiences was something that sent out mixed messages to other black communities. Garvey's bias stemmed from the West Indian colonial and migrant mentality that they shared, and consequently he tailored his message to appeal to that specific group. Yet, the words he frequently employed – *independence, freedom, status* – had different meanings dependent on the audience.<sup>47</sup> However, Makonnen's reappraisal of Garveyism clearly left its mark. His memoirs highlight an appreciation of Garveyism that was somewhat lacking when he lived in Guyana. Looking beyond Garveyism's failures, Makonnen saw the potential and opportunities that were available when espousing a comprehensive narrative: one which celebrated the heritage of Africa and the African diaspora and sought to unite these disparate groups.<sup>48</sup>

Men such as George Padmore and C.L.R James were in the vanguard of a new wave of West Indian activists, whose experiences in the West Indies coupled with the groundwork laid by Garvey found a highly receptive audience in North America. It is here that we need to introduce Padmore into the narrative surrounding Makonnen, as both men would closely collaborate until Padmore's death. Regarded in black

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<sup>45</sup> Ewing, p. 36.

<sup>46</sup> Makonnen, p. 55.

<sup>47</sup> N. Patsides, 'Allies, Constituents or Myopic Investors: Marcus Garvey and Black Americans', *Journal of American Studies*, (2007), 41:2, p. 280.

<sup>48</sup> Makonnen, p. 55.

university circles as a militant, Padmore was already established as a future revolutionary leader in the black world.<sup>49</sup> His pamphlet, *The Life and Struggles of Negro Toilers*, published in 1931, presented a simple binary argument: to “raise some of the most economic and political problems so that the white workers will have more than a sentimental interest in the Negro toiling masses.”<sup>50</sup> James argues that this work placed imperialism and anti-colonialism at the heart of the interwar black experience.<sup>51</sup>

Makonnen’s account of how and where he first met Padmore is somewhat contradictory and almost certainly romanticised. He recalls his first encounter with Padmore occurring at Howard University, where he remembers Padmore being an outspoken militant who railed against any outside interference in the predominantly black university. Padmore, who was there to protest the visit of the British Ambassador to Howard, spoke about the necessity of seeing university as a place of consciousness, rather than a place where you subject yourselves to individuals because of their academic status: “question them...don’t treat them as gods.”<sup>52</sup> Yet, Makonnen also recounts a different tale within his memoirs which involves him reading Padmore’s *The Life and Struggles of Negro Toilers* and then embarking on a personal odyssey to meet its writer. Makonnen supposedly travelled to New York to hunt down the author and after apparently arriving at the publishers and questioning the editor, Jay Lovestone, he supposedly came to realise that the author was George Padmore; this knowledge was apparently deduced after talking to Lovestone about the author’s character. It seems to be the case that both instances of Makonnen and Padmore meeting are embellished with minor fictions. Both accounts are obtained from Makonnen’s memoirs, written in 1973, certainly during a period of self-reflection regarding his own relevance within the Pan-African world.<sup>53</sup>

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<sup>49</sup> Makonnen, p. 101.

<sup>50</sup> L. James, *George Padmore and Decolonisation from Below: Pan-Africanism, The Cold War and the End of Empire*, (Palgrave Macmillan, 2015), p. 36.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid, p. 37.

<sup>52</sup> Makonnen, p. 101.

<sup>53</sup> It is unclear how or when Padmore became aware of Makonnen, or indeed, what his initial thoughts about him were. Leslie James provides some clues when she describes Padmore’s writing and organising as never being separate, distinct spheres; rather, his writing was a form of action which

Yet, before we further introduce Padmore into the narrative, we need to reflect on Makonnen and Padmore's relationship at this point and differentiate between the outlook of both men. Some historians tend to place Makonnen as a collaborator with Padmore and overlook his role as an independent actor within the Pan-African movement; or indeed, Makonnen's criticism towards Padmore, and his development of original ideas concurrent to Padmore.<sup>54</sup> An argument can be made that Makonnen's role as an independent actor tends to be overlooked by academics due to the dominance of Padmore in the historiography of African and communist studies. This approach does a disservice to Makonnen's personal development during this early period and historians need to highlight that whilst both men certainly worked together, Makonnen did not necessarily always share Padmore's worldview or methods; he was an independent actor and not simply an add-on to the Padmore narrative. During Makonnen's tenure working within the 'Y' he was developing a Pan-African ethos that centred around black self-reliance in the *Osusu* tradition – "entirely African directed [and] avoiding the entangling alliances that hampered black objectives"; "at the grassroots, Pan-Africanism meant that, whatever their country, blacks should be able to look after each other."<sup>55</sup> Padmore's involvement with the communist party was always viewed with suspicion by Makonnen. He believed that any African movement would always be compromised if it existed as a smaller wing of a larger, more powerful, white organisation. For Makonnen, this approach was anathema to the Pan-African movement; outside interference would only serve to dilute and hamper black objectives, very much in

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meant that he organically became involved with anyone interested in imperialism and its relevance in contemporary politics. His home was a centre for people from the colonies. James, p. 10

<sup>54</sup> Examples of this include: "Makonnen was a close collaborator of...Padmore." B. Schwarz, in B. Schwarz (ed), *West Indian Intellectuals in Britain*, (Manchester University Press, 2003), p. 135; "Among Padmore's colleagues...were Ras T. Makonnen." M. Sherwood, in D. Killingray (ed), *Africans in Britain*, (Frank Cass, 1994), p. 165; Pennybacker uses a quotation which describes Makonnen as Padmore's 'Man-Friday' in S. Pennybacker, *From Scottsboro to Munich: Race and Political Culture in 1930s Britain*, (Princeton University Press, 2009), p. 79.

Some academics have sought to reappraise Makonnen's role within the Pan-African movement as an independent actor. Hakim Adi and Marika Sherwood devote a chapter to Makonnen in, H. Adi & M. Sherwood, *Pan-African History: Political Figures from Africa and the Diaspora since 1787*, (Routledge, 2003), p. 117-122 In his chapter on 'Black Internationalism and Empire in the 1930s, Marc Matera utilises exclusively Makonnen sources in M. Matera, *Black London: The Imperial Metropolis and Decolonisation in the Twentieth Century*, (University of California Press, 2015), pp 63-64.

<sup>55</sup> Makonnen, p. xiii.

line with what Marcus Garvey espoused.<sup>56</sup> He certainly had a point: Padmore's work within the Communist Party, whilst making some notable gains – specifically, the International Conference of Negro Workers in Hamburg, 1930 – was ultimately directed by, and at the whim of, his white benefactors in Moscow. This point is proven with the removal of the International Trade Union Committee of Negro Workers in 1937 as the Soviet Union sought to improve relations with the western European powers.<sup>57</sup>

### **Towards Europe, and London.**

Makonnen's work with the YMCA meant that he was able to travel between universities in North America and he stayed in regular contact with African diaspora students. One such group that warrants attention is the Ethiopian student cohort at Cornell, New York, with whom Makonnen debated regularly. He developed particularly close bonds with this group of students at the onset of the Abyssinian Crisis in 1935. It was also during the Abyssinian Crisis that he decides to adopt the Ethiopian pseudonym, Ras Makonnen. The change in name is highly symbolic and marks a critical point in Makonnen's life whereby he decided to fully commit himself to raising awareness of events in Ethiopia and to Pan-Africanism. At a practical level, by adopting the moniker, Makonnen, he became an "insider" within the Ethiopian student cohort; he also claimed that he was regularly mistaken for an Ethiopian whilst in North America, so the name change was organic.<sup>58</sup> By adopting Makonnen as a pseudonym he was metaphorically and literally shedding his links to Guyana and the West Indies, and by extension, his identity as a citizen born into an ex-slave colony. Moreover, he instantly elevated himself into a position whereby he was not merely an advocate for the cause of Pan-Africanism, he became an authority within the movement. This point is illustrated by the interest that the Ethiopian cohort had in utilising Garveyism to raise awareness of the Abyssinian Crisis and them asking Makonnen to share his experiences of Garveyism.<sup>59</sup>

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<sup>56</sup> Makonnen, p. xiii.

<sup>57</sup> D. Dabydeen & J. Gilmore, et al, p. 283.

<sup>58</sup> Makonnen, p. 110.

<sup>59</sup> Ibid.

Subsequently, Makonnen decided that he would move to Europe to be closer to “where things were coming to a head [and] see things for myself.”<sup>60</sup> Makonnen’s decision here was shared by many in the Pan-African world. Matera argues that individuals were drawn to Europe, and London specifically, who shared “a constellation of causes and ideas.”<sup>61</sup> Furthermore, their convergence on the metropole created a point of contact where ideas on Pan-Africanism, socialism and anti-colonialism were readily shared.<sup>62</sup> The apparent swiftness and ease with which Makonnen was able to give up his life in America is attributed by historians to the racial symbolism of the conflict in Ethiopia and the *laissez-faire* attitude of European governments towards events in Africa. Afro-Americans increasingly viewed the Abyssinian Crisis to be emblematic of wider issues surrounding race in the interwar years. Ethiopia was regarded as the last true independent black kingdom<sup>63</sup> in the world and white aggression there was viewed by many Afro-Americans as having very local dimensions: a contest between coloniser and colonised – black and white – was just as relevant in Harlem as it was in Africa.<sup>64</sup> The Afro-American press spoke of the crisis in stark terms: the *Pittsburgh Courier* suggested a conspiracy on the part of the western powers to advance its own agenda at the expense of Ethiopia; *Crisis* stated bluntly that the “rape of Ethiopia is the rape of the Negro race.”<sup>65</sup> Crucially, the Abyssinian Crisis triggered a resurgence in Garveyism and Pan-Africanism which crucially focussed the attention of Pan-Africanist thinkers and activists, socialists and anti-colonialists onto one specific issue. Various African American groups were

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<sup>60</sup> Makonnen, p. 110.

<sup>61</sup> Matera, p. 63.

<sup>62</sup> *Ibid*, p. 2.

<sup>63</sup> Mention needs to be made of Liberia. Makonnen considered Ethiopia to be the last truly independent black nation. He believed Liberia to be the carrier of “an outdated western civilisation.” Moreover, he suggests that the imposition of a ruling class in Liberia was like a “cancer” in the country. Makonnen, p. 278.

<sup>64</sup> A. Putnam, ‘Ethiopia is Now: J. A. Rogers and the Rhetoric of Black Anti-Colonialism During the Great Depression’, *Rhetoric and Public Affairs*, (2007), 10:3, p. 420.

<sup>65</sup> S. K. B. Asante, ‘The Afro-American and the Italo-Ethiopian Crisis 1934-1936’, *Race & Class*, (1973), 15:2, pp. 175-176.

formed which expressed solidarity with Ethiopia and African diaspora violence against Italians was not uncommon during the Crisis.<sup>66</sup>

Makonnen's tenure in North America ended in 1935, where, after a brief stopover in London, he arrived in Denmark. Ostensibly, Makonnen chose Denmark to pursue veterinary studies.<sup>67</sup> Yet, the Ethiopian student cohort at Cornell advised Makonnen that there was a growing movement in Denmark that was opposed to Italian aggression in Africa which was highly sympathetic to the Ethiopian plight. Whilst living in Copenhagen and working at the university there, Makonnen created a situation which led to him being deported from the country and forced to London. He had penned an article in which he claimed to have proof that the Danish government were exporting mustard to Italy, which was being used to manufacture mustard gas. He went so far as to criticise the "highly enlightened" Danish farmers for reading international markets and profiting from the war. Judging by the Danish government's reaction of swiftly deporting him from the country, we can assume that his additional comments about Italians thriving on Danish exports did little to help matters.<sup>68</sup>

Whilst Makonnen was preparing to leave North America, a group of black radicals based in London, with Amy Garvey and C.L.R James at its core was coalescing around organising opposition to the Italian invasion of Ethiopia. The group, called International African Friends of Ethiopia (IAFE) had one primary objective: to organise propaganda efforts in defence of the African state in the weeks before the Ethiopian invasion. The group, Matera argues, came to encompass a varied constellation of individuals, ideas and causes whose trajectory was aligned in London and focused on anti-colonialism and anti-imperialism. London was at the centre of a trans-colonial and transatlantic crossroads and as a city it offered freedom of expression against empire and provided Africans and the African diaspora a vantage

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<sup>66</sup> L. Rollins. 'Ethiopia, African Americans, and African Consciousness: The Effect of Ethiopia and African-Consciousness in Twentieth-Century America', *Journal of Religious Thought*, (1998), 54/55, p. 14.

<sup>67</sup> K. K. Prah, *Beyond the Colour Line: Pan-Africanist Disputations, Selected Sketches, Letters, Papers and Reviews*, (Africa World Press, Inc, 1998), p. 22.

<sup>68</sup> Makonnen, p. 112.

point, against the machinations of fascism and the British government's response to it.<sup>69</sup> In 1935, upon briefly arriving in London *en-route* to Denmark, Makonnen mused that "Britain was really in a ferment – seething, in fact, like an African pot."<sup>70</sup> This was highlighted at Trafalgar Square, where an IAFE rally had been organised. Seeing the rally advertised in a newspaper, Makonnen went along and listened to speeches by Amy Garvey, Jomo Kenyatta and others who argued that "no race has been so noble in forgiving, but now the hour has struck for our complete emancipation."<sup>71</sup> Makonnen gave an impassioned speech to the crowd afterwards which broadly invoked the struggle of imperialism in Africa and compared events in Ethiopia to the Japanese invasion of Manchuria.<sup>72</sup> It could be argued that the speeches and rhetoric had little to no effect on the primarily white audience. The Manchester Guardian reported that the crowd was a mixture curious of onlookers and vendors selling communist, socialist and fascist magazines, who would have struggled to hear anything above the noise.<sup>73</sup> Nevertheless, the rally served to deepen Makonnen's investment in the idea of a united Africa being at the forefront of opposition to empire.<sup>74</sup>

Regarding the IAFE, Makonnen stressed the importance of the characters at the forefront of the organisation. C.L.R James – who was a pioneering and influential voice in post-colonial literature<sup>75</sup> - and Amy Garvey, were both highly regarded people within the Pan-African movement. Such a grouping of minds served as a magnet for people to listen to what the group had to say.<sup>76</sup> Yet, whilst those within the IAFE were all working towards a common objective, their political beliefs and ideas about how to realise that goal varied widely, causing some tensions within the group. This is especially true regarding those on the Left such as James and Padmore. James often struggled to articulate his contradictory dual position as both a Trotskyist

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<sup>69</sup> M. Matera, *Black London: The Imperial Metropolis and Decolonisation in the Twentieth Century*, (University of California Press, 2015), pp. 63-64

<sup>70</sup> Makonnen, p. 147.

<sup>71</sup> Matera, p. 65.

<sup>72</sup> Makonnen, p. 114.

<sup>73</sup> Italy and Abyssinia, *The Manchester Guardian*, 26<sup>th</sup> August 1935.

<sup>74</sup> Matera, p. 65.

<sup>75</sup> E. Said, *Culture and Imperialism*, (Chatto & Windus, London, 1993), p. 54.

<sup>76</sup> Makonnen, p. 112.

and a Pan-Africanist.<sup>77</sup> Whilst Padmore had resigned his membership of the Hamburg based ITUCNW (International Trade Union Committee of Negro Workers) in 1933<sup>78</sup> and was subsequently expelled from the Communist Party in 1934, he came to embody the growing independent spirit of black activists and intellectuals during this period. It was Padmore's encounters with African intellectuals, black journalists and members of the West African Students' Union (WASU) which reinforced his commitment to Pan-Africanism and organising people of African descent independently.<sup>79</sup> Makonnen's recollection of how Padmore came to wholly support Pan-Africanism differs slightly from the historical narrative presented here. Makonnen claims to have 'won' Padmore round to a Pan-Africanist viewpoint.<sup>80</sup> Yet considering that Makonnen only briefly stopped over in London whilst *en-route* to Denmark in 1935, and settled in London in mid-1936<sup>81</sup>, this claim is highly questionable. In the opinion of the thesis, Makonnen, who made this claim in his memoirs, published in 1973, wanted to establish his relevance during this crucial period of Pan-Africanist alignment in London; it is not a claim that Makonnen needed to make. When he arrived in London in mid-1936, he would begin a 20-year collaboration with Padmore and play a central role within the Pan-African Federation that was established in London, and later, in Manchester. The claim, which was made in his memoirs, written in later life when Makonnen was taking stock of the impact he had on the Pan-African movement most likely stems from the more present failures that he experienced in Ghana with Padmore, which the thesis will explore in depth in chapter three.

By autumn 1936, following the resignation of James, the IAFE became moribund. A new group, the Pan-African Federation for the defence of Africans and People of African descent, was formed around Padmore, Jomo Kenyatta and Nancy Cunard – Kenyatta was a protégé of Padmore and future President of Kenya and Cunard was a

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<sup>77</sup> K. Worcester, 'C. L. R. James and the Development of a Pan-African Problematic', *Journal of Caribbean History*, (1993), 27:1, p. 54.

<sup>78</sup> Padmore had to flee Nazi Germany after the *Negro Worker* office was ransacked by ultra-nationalists.

<sup>79</sup> Matera, p. 79.

<sup>80</sup> Makonnen, p. 114.

<sup>81</sup> Matera, p. 65.

British upper-class heiress who devoted much of her life to fighting racism and fascism. Whilst initially their meetings were informal gatherings at Bogey's Bar in the Royal Hotel, London, the group secured a meeting place at 2 Calthorpe Street. Due to Padmore's prodigious knowledge of, and correspondence with, prominent African personalities and African politics, the Pan-African Federation became the go-to place for African intellectuals, anti-colonialists, revolutionaries and bourgeois African nationalists. This was furthered by Padmore's decision to elect a committee which embraced radical anti-colonial elements. Makonnen, Wallace-Johnson, Nyabongo, and the Nigerian, Louis Nwachukwu Mbanefo - a member of the WASU - were all present at the meeting where discussion focused on developing a "programme for Africa". Mbanefo argued that an information bureau should be established regarding African problems and those exploited by the European powers. Unanimous agreement was reached whereby only through the socialisation of Africa and socialisation of Europe through revolution would the liberation of Africa be realised. Thus, by June 1937, the International African Bureau Service (IASB) was established. Makonnen's role within the IASB was as publicity secretary.<sup>82</sup>

Makonnen welcomed the formation of the IASB and praised the group's direction and ambition. He also criticised existing African and West Indian organisations, such as Moody's LCP (League of Coloured People), which he chided as being "mild." Makonnen particularly resented Moody's involvement with Donald Cameron, who, he claims, stood in defence of Britain's colonial empire<sup>83</sup>; Makonnen states that he "turned on the League of Coloured People and its chairman Harold Moody", whom he both "publicly denounced."<sup>84</sup> Nevertheless, the IASB decision to omit 'Pan-African' from the group's title and instead opt for 'service' was a deliberate choice as it distanced them from Du Bois's Pan-African movement as they sought to make a clean break from the past. This lessened the possibility of attacks against them from Du Bois's old critics and allowed them to build upon the work of Du Bois but be

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<sup>82</sup> Matera, pp. 80-82.

<sup>83</sup> Donald Cameron was born in British Guyana and went on to assume numerous administrative roles in Britain's colonies and mandates. O. Furley, 'Cameron, Sir Donald Charles (1872-1948)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, Accessed Online.

<sup>84</sup> Makonnen, p. 160.

independent of him.<sup>85</sup> Crucially, whilst Makonnen's feelings towards the objective of the IASB do not differ from his peers, he did highlight some differences in approach that were at odds with the 'unanimous' decision reached at the initial committee meeting to include the liberation of Africa through socialisation. According to Makonnen, there was a common understanding that any group which was committed to the liberation of Africa should be totally independent and free from external entanglements. This meant, specifically, dealing "ruthlessly" with any man entering the organisation with one foot in the communist camp. Furthermore, this approach does somewhat contradict the socialisation of Europe and Africa aspect which Padmore had advocated. It was Makonnen's belief that socialisation meant advocating *Osusu* in the West African and West Indian tradition. This would incorporate elements of his experience working with the YMCA in North America and Scandinavia, coupled with his knowledge of 18<sup>th</sup> Century attempts at co-operatives in England. "Really it was the only sensible move for a people that lacked any primitive accumulation of capital."<sup>86</sup>

Makonnen was unambiguous in his desire to have the IASB split entirely with outside influences and European leadership – implying white influences. He believed that the only input which they should permit would be from other anti-colonialist groups such as Indian nationalists or their Scottish and Welsh counterparts. This approach is enforced in an IASB pamphlet where the criteria for membership was based purely on race: Africans and those of African descent, regardless of religion or national and political leaning, were allowed active membership; associate membership was given to whites or Europeans who sympathised with the aims of the IASB; whilst affiliated membership, which was offered to trade unions, political movements, and fraternal or cultural organisations, was allowed only if the IASB was able to play a central role in co-ordinating their efforts.<sup>87</sup> Whilst they were aware that this could attract criticism – Padmore and Makonnen were concerned about being labelled as fascists

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<sup>85</sup> Makonnen, p. 117.

<sup>86</sup> Ibid, p. 118.

<sup>87</sup> IASB, 'International African Service Bureau: For the Defence of Africans & Peoples of African Descent, *International African Service Bureau*, 1937.

- they were steadfast in their determination to accept no compromise nor any merger with outside agencies.<sup>88</sup>

This ethos resulted in Makonnen and Padmore obtaining the lease for the IASB headquarters – a flat in London – from a man called Bresiano, the leader of an independent African orthodox church whose parishioners were cocoa farmers. Bresiano was keen to offer good terms as he was embroiled in a battle to break the British monopoly on cocoa and find independent African buyers for his parishioner's goods.<sup>89</sup>

From the flat, Padmore and Makonnen organised and expanded the operations of the IASB. A journal, *International African Opinion*, was established in 1937, in which Padmore, Makonnen and James regularly contributed. The initial issue which carried the IASB motto: *Educate, Cooperate, Emancipate. Neutral in nothing affecting African people*, contained the group's *modus-operandi*. The journal, acting as a constitution of sorts, outlined 3 key points which explained what the bureau was, why the group existed and its objectives. The IASB existed simply to enlighten public opinion amongst Africans and people of African descent and support the rights of other colonial subjects to self-determination, democratic rights and civil liberties. They argued that never since the emancipation of Africans from slavery had African people been so aware of the injustices that faced them. This was exemplified, they stated, by the flagrant disregard that the imperial powers had for the guarantees made for Africans by the League of Nations and the Kellogg Peace Pact. The IASB presented the case that the tipping point was the "brutal Italian fascist war against Abyssinia". Throughout the pamphlet, language was used that described Africans as being one homogenous group which had closed ranks and placed their collective will in a future that would be led, not by imperialist powers, but rather, by the will of the common people. Furthermore, they wished to enlighten public opinion amongst the British working and middle classes as to the true condition of the various colonies,

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<sup>88</sup> Makonnen, p. 117.

<sup>89</sup> Ibid, p. 118.

protectorates and mandated territories of Africa, West Indies and other colonial areas.<sup>90</sup>

Makonnen's input into *International African Opinion* was more than just administrative. His efforts in getting the publication off the ground was integral to the paper's success and was critical in establishing financial security for IASB. Firstly, Makonnen had arrangements in place which enabled the cost of printing the publication to be defrayed.<sup>91</sup> Secondly, Makonnen was not averse to artificially boosting the reach of the paper. This included him writing fake letters of support from the "Congo and many other places" and Nancy Cunard writing under an alias professing support from a branch of the bureau "here and there in Africa."<sup>92</sup> Moreover, apart from a number of Europeans sending unsolicited money to Makonnen – who was in charge of the IASB finances – physical sales of the paper also generated a moderate income. Makonnen attended leftist meetings in London and sold the paper outside. This would typically result in him making a nuisance whilst selling copies of the paper so that organisers would pay him to leave. Another avenue of income was at IASB rallies which were held at Hyde Park. Makonnen employed a "tall, outstanding Negro" called Monolulu, who was a race-course tipster to work the crowd. With his crude rhetoric, Monolulu and Makonnen would form a double act where the former would draw a crowd with anti-Hitler monologues and references to British culture and Judeo-Christianity. When the crowd's attention was sufficiently piqued Makonnen would 'intervene' and denounce the 'buffoon' on stage and present himself as a "new type of Negro...We, unlike those of you who are praying for peace are asking for war." With the audience's interest piqued, the performances ended with them both selling newspapers or asking for donations from those present.<sup>93</sup> The resultant funds meant that after printing costs, Makonnen was able to make considerable savings from selling the paper. The savings were then set aside

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<sup>90</sup> IASB, 'International African Service Bureau: For the Defence of Africans & Peoples of African Descent, *International African Service Bureau*, 1937.

<sup>91</sup> D. Dabydeen & J. Gilmore, et al. p. 225.

<sup>92</sup> Makonnen, p. 120.

<sup>93</sup> Ibid, p. 119.

by Makonnen, who, without the IASB's knowledge or consent, placed them in a savings account in the bureau's name.<sup>94</sup>

Furthermore, the sixth edition of *International African Opinion*, published on February-March 1939, saw Makonnen pen a polemic within. The piece, entitled: *A Plea for Negro Self-Government*, prophesied a global conflict which would be more devastating than that 20 years previously. "The world today is more interdependent and interconnected as it has never been in its past history...as crisis sharpens, humanity and all its achievements are threatened by Fascism". Makonnen framed this statement by pointing out that Fascism's ally – power and guns – were threatening to destabilise the world. He argued that in any confrontation with fascism, the loser, no matter the outcome of any conflict, would be Africa. Africa's future, he continued, did not belong with the materialistic West, as some African and West Indian leaders were advocating; Africa would be at the mercy of the European nations as was the case post-1918. Therefore, Africans and the African diaspora should not pursue Western materialism as it would lead to the exploitation of those who cannot resist it. He also stated that 'races' which were previously exploited but had since embraced European materialism were now in the process of oppressing Africa and the African diaspora. Makonnen used the example of Jewish imperialism and Indian nationalism, which he claimed, was making inroads into North and East Africa, respectively. Moreover, Makonnen urged the reader to avoid seeking refuge in the notion that the emancipation of slaves was egalitarian in nature; on the contrary, he stated that commonwealth rule in the West Indies was plutocratic and that true black independence was still at the whim of the crown in England. Therefore, Africa must strive for complete national independence with total control over its economic, social and political institutions.<sup>95</sup>

Makonnen's article within *International African Opinion* provides us with a window into how his Pan-African worldview had developed since he left Guyana and the United States. Clearly, the article is underpinned by a looming sense of conflict

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<sup>94</sup> Makonnen, p. 119.

<sup>95</sup> R. Makonnen, 'A Plea for Negro Self Government', *International African Opinion*, Feb-Mar 1939.

amongst the European powers, yet we find in Makonnen's prose a sense of resignation and almost indifference to war. The real threat, he argued, would be Africa's vulnerability after any conflict was resolved, much as it was post-1918. It is here that we see Makonnen's burgeoning Pan-African ethos come to the fore. By arguing that Africans and the African diaspora should forgo Western materialism, he is stating a case for them to follow their own path. Moreover, it appears that Makonnen argued that the process of emancipation was never completed, as evidenced in his urging of Africans to completely sever their links with the commonwealth and adopt independent institutions that were wholly African led. Such a message clearly draws on what Garvey espoused earlier in the century. Yet, Makonnen goes further by castigating those who were previously subjugated and argued that Jewish and Indian influence in Africa was malignant in nature. However, in consideration of the foregoing analysis, Makonnen does lean heavily towards polemic and offers little in the way of solutions as to how any of the above would be achieved. The article is split between him attacking the 'West' whilst espousing his own vision of Africa. Yet, crucially, this approach highlights a blind-spot in Makonnen's argument: he was portraying Africa and Africans as a homogenous mass and was ignorant towards the existing political and social structures in Africa.<sup>96</sup> The crucial point regarding Makonnen's polemic, however, is not in the style or the message of the prose, rather, how its writer was perceived by those who read it. Emanuel Abraham, who in the early 1970s would become Minister for Mines in Ethiopia, stated "that of the various blacks" in 1930s London, Makonnen was the real 'go-between' in England; he was seen to be the "closest to the Ethiopians".<sup>97</sup>

In conclusion, this chapter has introduced the reader to the themes and experiences that helped to shape Makonnen's worldview and the subsequent development of his Pan-African ethos. His early life in Buxton, Guyana, clearly left an indelible mark on Makonnen. In particular, the experience of working alongside his father in the family mining business, and his relationship with Evan Wong, are lessons that Makonnen carried with him into later life. This point will be explored further in Chapter 2 when

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<sup>96</sup> This is a point that will be explored in depth in Chapter 3.

<sup>97</sup> E. Abrahams, 'The Case for Ethiopia', *Journal of African Society*, (1935) 30:6, p. 374.

we analyse his business ventures in Manchester. Another point is the impact that *Osusu* had on Makonnen, not just in the context of Guyana, but his belief that it could be used as a socio-economic basis for any future independent African state. The chapter has highlighted Makonnen's somewhat contradictory and naïve interpretation of both the NPC and UNIA in Guyana. His positive appraisal of the NPC, especially when considering their attitude to East-Asian migrants – which would have included Evan Wong – is revelatory. However, it could be argued that he was blindsided by the plethora of emerging narratives on race within the West Indies and more than likely, his young age. After moving to America, it appears that Makonnen's development and awareness of the debates on race accelerated sharply. His decision to become more involved with the American YMCA, which involved searching for solutions to alleviate Afro-American poverty, not only supplemented his theoretical understanding of the debates between Du Bois, Washington and Garvey, it also bolstered his belief in *Osusu* as a practical approach for black self-reliance. This chapter also introduced a figure into the narrative who Makonnen would work closely with, George Padmore. Here, the author has attempted to distinguish between the different approaches of the two men and argue that Makonnen deserves greater mention within the Pan-African historiography than simply as Padmore's 'collaborator'. Finally, the chapter charted Makonnen's move to Europe, and London. Whilst Makonnen worked with the YMCA he did occasionally lecture at some universities and as such, became close with a cohort of Ethiopian students during the Abyssinian Crisis. His subsequent move to Europe also facilitated a metamorphosis in him whereby he changed his identity and became 'Makonnen' the Pan-African activist. His move to London places Makonnen in a well-established historical narrative which includes the activities of the IAFE and IASB. Here, we find Makonnen working alongside notable names in the Pan-African world, such as C.L.R James, Amy Garvey and George Padmore. It is here where we see Makonnen's development into a Pan-Africanist take place; he was not simply an administrative figure within the London group, rather, as evidenced in his article in *International African Opinion*, an independent thinker with his own brand of Pan-Africanism which he would implement when he moved to Manchester.

## Chapter 2

### Pan-Africanism in Manchester.

This chapter will analyse T. Ras Makonnen's move to Manchester and the actualisation of his Pan-African ethos which he was already developing in London. Firstly, we will describe the apparent breakdown of the IASB which facilitated Makonnen's move to Manchester. We will briefly mention Makonnen's work with the Manchester Cooperative movement and how the co-op's *modus-operandi* affected Makonnen's own vision of *Osusu* and how he thought it could be used in Africa. The chapter will then explore how Makonnen worked closely with the disparate migrant communities in Manchester to establish several businesses, most notably, the Ethiopian Teashop and the Cosmopolitan; emphasis will be placed on the importance of the restaurants as black spaces within the metropole. We will also assess Makonnen's other business venture as a publisher and bookshop owner, where he sold and promoted Pan-African authors and literature. Here, the thesis will introduce St Clair. Drake into the narrative as his correspondence with Makonnen was critical in the continual nurturing of a trans-Atlantic Pan-African network. Continuing, the chapter will provide examples of Makonnen's vision of Pan-Africanism in action. This will be achieved by referencing the support he provided to African diaspora defendants in court. The chapter will use the *Princessa* mutiny and the case Donald Beard to provide wholly positive examples, and the Liverpool Riots to highlight a somewhat more mixed response from the Pan-African community outside the north west of England. We will then assess the impact that Makonnen had within the African diaspora community in Manchester and argue that whilst Makonnen was influential in the city – Makonnen worked with, and mentored Ras Fini and Alfred Gaisie - many within the African diaspora community were indifferent to his presence. The chapter will end on the Manchester Congress and its importance within the wider Pan-African world.

### Breakdown of the IASB.

Leading up to the outbreak of the Second World War in 1939, the IASB was disintegrating; it was riven with squabbles over the mismanagement of funds and tensions within the group were rising. The state of the finances was a primary cause of concern, so much so, that key figures began to leave. C.L.R James left for the United States and Wallace-Johnson left for Sierra Leone. Detailed knowledge of this episode is known as MI5 had thoroughly infiltrated the IASB and had intimate knowledge of both the personnel changes and the group's financial problems. Whilst MI5's interest was primarily with those members who were closely affiliated to communist groups, the mismanagement of funds does warrant further exploration. Closer examination reveals that Babalola Wilkey, who MI5 labelled a "rather ineffective crook", was allegedly embezzling funds from IASB coffers.<sup>1</sup> Nevertheless, this episode highlights a problem that the Pan-African movement faced: men who operated under the Pan-African banner for criminal or personal gain. Jimmy Taylor, the son of a senior member of the United Africa Company, allegedly ran wartime 'Negro Welfare Organisations' in London, that were fronts for brothels and all-night drinking dens.<sup>2</sup> The problems surrounding Wilkey, and the subsequent disintegration of the IASB does perhaps hint at an explanation as to why Makonnen was actively hiding IASB savings from the rest of the group.<sup>3</sup>

The outbreak of the Second World War not only hastened the demise of IASB, it led to the subsequent scattering of its remaining senior members throughout England. Whilst Makonnen, Padmore and Kenyatta initially stayed in London to oppose recruitment of black men as soldiers – they sent back enlistment forms daubed with anti-British graffiti - a deepening sense of anxiety began to cloud their decisions; they

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<sup>1</sup> W. Maloba, *Kenyatta and Britain: An Account of Political Transformation, 1929-1963*, (Springer, 2017), p. 77

<sup>2</sup> R. Makonnen, *Pan-Africanism from Within*, (Oxford University Press, 1973), p. 131.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid*, p. 119. Tensions within groups such as the IASB were further amplified by the growing prospect of war on the European continent. African diaspora organisations in Europe such as the LzVN (League for the Defence of the Negro race) were actively dissolved by the German state. R. Aitken & E. Rosenhaft, *Black Germany: The Making and Unmaking of a Diaspora Community, 1884-1960*, (Cambridge University Press, 2013), p. 231; Boittin highlights the varied reasons for colonial migration to France. Some African diaspora migrants became involved in anti-imperialist organisations simply for monetary gain. J. Boittin, 'The Language and Politics of Race in the Late Third Republic', *French Politics, Culture and Society*, (2009), 27:2, p. 26.

began to feel like wanted men. Makonnen states that the remaining members, steeped in the revolutionary tradition and perhaps somewhat magnifying their own self-importance, began to see threats where there were none. Kenyatta left London and headed east, to Storrington, Surrey. Padmore developed a serious throat infection and decided to lay low in London, seeking medical help only from black doctors. Such was the heightened anxiety in London, and the rapid breakdown of the IASB, that he and Makonnen reverted to a revolutionary mindset whereby they began to see conspiracies against them everywhere.<sup>4</sup>

### Manchester.

Makonnen decided to head north, to Manchester, and seek out Dr Peter Milliard, who had established himself in Manchester, running a successful doctor's surgery. Milliard was a West Indian, who upon completing his medical training in Edinburgh, went to work as a labourer on the Panama Canal where he became politically active as a trade unionist. After the Italian invasion of Ethiopia, Milliard established the International Brotherhood of Ethiopia and later the Negro Association in Manchester. Milliard would regularly address public meetings in the city's squares on colonial issues and racial discrimination.<sup>5</sup> Considering what we know of the heightened anxiety that Makonnen and Padmore felt after the outbreak of war, Holmes argues that Makonnen could not have picked a better city to settle in. Milliard was a respected figure through his medical practice and community work in Manchester, was already well-established when Makonnen arrived in the city.<sup>6</sup> Moreover, Milliard shared Makonnen's aversion to Communist Party involvement within any African or Pan-African organisations stating that the [Communist] party "was made up of and acting on behalf of Anglo-Saxon whites."<sup>7</sup>

Finding work in Manchester proved to be easy for Makonnen. Through contacts he made in London, specifically Lord Rusholme, who was secretary of the cooperative

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<sup>4</sup> Makonnen, p, 133.

<sup>5</sup> M. Sherwood, 'The All Colonial Peoples Conferences in Britain, 1945', *African Studies Bulletin*, (2018), 79, pp. 113-124.

<sup>6</sup> C. Holmes, *John Bull's Island: Immigration and British Society, 1871-1971*, (Routledge, 1988), p. 182.

<sup>7</sup> J. Goodman, *Paul Robeson: A Watched Man*, (Verso, 2003), p. 73.

movement, Makonnen was offered a job as a lecturer at cooperative events in Manchester. The Manchester cooperative provided him with a steady income through giving lectures on colonial affairs at cooperative events – speaking earned him £2 and fares, three to four times a week. He also decided to enrol at Manchester University to study towards a higher degree in history. Makonnen’s choice of subject was to apparently fill the gaps in his knowledge of the Anglo-Saxon period, particularly the Barbarian resistance to Roman invasion. This was a conscious choice, designed to broaden his understanding of past examples of resistance to imperialism and colonialism.<sup>8</sup> Makonnen’s association with the Manchester cooperative gave him access to two important resources: firstly, activists like Lamina Sankoh, from Sierra Leone, with whom he formed the African Cooperative League shortly after arriving in the city. Sankoh, who was already associated with the WASU, would go on to form the People’s Party which would later become a major political force in present day Sierra Leone. Secondly, the cooperative ideals of mutual assistance closely mirrored Makonnen’s own interpretation of *Osusu*.

In his initial lectures, under the African Cooperative League banner, he spoke of the importance of highlighting contradictions within the cooperative movement: chiefly, the wholesale business side of the cooperative movement being involved in dealings in tea from Ceylon. To Makonnen, this was unacceptable, and he sought to highlight this issue and address the exploitative nature of the tea plantations and install cooperatives there instead. Yet, crucially, this practice also gave Makonnen an insight into how such a movement could prosper in Africa. He believed that a fusion of British – “high morality” – cooperative values with *Osusu* could create a valid alternative that he could offer to Africa, whereby Africans would have the means to counter exploitative behaviour by Europeans and some African businessmen. There was something valuable, he believed, in the cooperative’s ability to conduct business within the British Empire which separated the engendered relationship between the metropole and the colonies. Also, he envisaged this hybrid *Osusu* providing a social and political basis which a post-independence African nation could adopt. Makonnen was clearly developing a Pan-African vision that was unique from others within the

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<sup>8</sup> Makonnen, p. 133.

remnants of the IASB. Furthermore, he was not averse to criticising his friend and comrade, Padmore, whom he argued offered little in the way of political or social solutions to what a post-independence African nation might look like.<sup>9</sup>

### **Restaurants & Businesses.**

Concurrent to Makonnen's stint as a part-time lecturer and student, we find him embarking on a journey that results in the establishment of a string of businesses on Oxford Road, close to Manchester University, which had an African diaspora student cohort. During Makonnen's stint as a restaurateur we find hints of the lessons that he learned in Guyana – the utilising of international contacts, and the use of *Osusu* which informed his decision to channel profits directly into the Pan-African movement and the African diaspora community. Manchester in the early 1940s provided little opportunity for socialising for those of West Indian or African heritage. West Indian and African students at the university had little access to any facilities other than the campus bar. A group of black students, who had seen Makonnen give a lecture at the Manchester Union, approached him and explained that they had nowhere to go in the city to relax: "The Indians and Chinese have restaurants, so what about us?"<sup>10</sup>

Makonnen, perhaps sensing an opportunity offered up his immediate support. Using his savings – possibly the money that he had hidden from the IASB – he rented a three-story building on Oxford road for £4 per week and he opened the Ethiopian Teashop. Makonnen enlisted the help of a man called Dr Jones, his brother Adelemo, and a group of Nigerian students from Manchester University who all helped to renovate the property. To help decorate, Makonnen turned to 'friends' from the Art College, "English boys and girls" to paint murals on the walls. For the "heavier investments" of cutlery, crockery and other items Makonnen turned to "close Jewish friends." A Quaker called Marsh, and two Jewish brothers became involved in the business, the brothers providing Makonnen with a letter of credit.<sup>11</sup> A Jewish Hungarian woman called Mrs Adler was employed to oversee management whilst he

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<sup>9</sup> Makonnen, pp. 133-135.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid, pp. 136 -137.

studied during the day. The restaurant, once established, was a runaway success; Makonnen thought the restaurant would turnover £10 a day through the week and £20 on the weekends but takings increased dramatically over the first three months and the restaurant started making over £50 per day.<sup>12</sup> To assist in the running of the Teashop, Makonnen employed a number of black students, who supported themselves whilst studying at Manchester University.<sup>13</sup>

Whilst Makonnen relied heavily on the support and labour from the disparate migrant communities in Manchester, he also gave a young Ghanaian man called Alfred Gaisie, a prominent role within the business. Gaisie arrived in Manchester aged 19 after travelling from Ghana at the behest of his father, who worked for Unilever. He enrolled at Pitman's College on a three-year course to enable him to gain the qualifications to enter Manchester University. During this period Gaisie and Makonnen met through mutual acquaintances within the African community in Manchester, and it was during these initial meetings that Makonnen guided him towards enrolling at the Manchester School of Commerce, as Gaisie had ambitions to become a businessman. Nevertheless, Makonnen enlisted Gaisie to help run the financial side of the Ethiopian Teashop and carry out errands for him. It seems that parallel to his involvement with the restaurant – which involved acting as an accountant, travelling to Liverpool to receive £65 from the African community, and sourcing furniture from the Manchester based Hungarian community – Gaisie was also acting as a courier for Makonnen in Manchester and Padmore in London. Here, Makonnen would regularly send Gaisie to London with envelopes containing what he believed was large amounts of money – Gaisie presumed it was money, but he never actually saw the contents. His constant reference to both Makonnen and Padmore as “my father, my uncle” and “Dr Makonnen” indicates that Gaisie clearly held the two men in high regard and he felt extremely privileged to have the confidence of both men.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> Makonnen, p. 136.

<sup>13</sup> C. Wondji & A. Mazuri, *General History of Africa: Africa since 1935*, (United Nations Educational, 1993), p. 708.

<sup>14</sup> Alfred Gaisie, Interview with Robin Grinter, no date.

Once the Ethiopian Teashop was established, Makonnen, together with Gaisie, turned their hands towards opening a second restaurant which would become the Cosmopolitan. The opening of the new restaurant drew on all Makonnen's assets, both financial and personal. He personally invested £3000 into purchasing the building, on Oxford Road, and enlisted the help of a Jewish Austrian woman, named Jean, to paint 'murals of humanity' across its walls. The murals were depictions of the contributions of all races "whether African, Scots, Welsh or Austrian" to the fund of common humanity.<sup>15</sup> Makonnen's choice of imagery needs to be mentioned. One mural depicted Polish refugees fleeing to America, only for the image to segue into racists 'leading the charge against the blacks of North America'. Another depicted a 'big Texan, pistol drawn, in a threat against the darkies.'<sup>16</sup> It became the central hub in Manchester for the African diaspora community living in the city and in the north west. Afro-American GI's who were stationed in Warrington would frequent the restaurant and celebrities such as Joe Louis and Nat King Cole would perform there. Moreover, the Cosmopolitan hosted several Pan-Africanist visitors who either socialised there or held meetings upstairs. The frequency of the visits from Nkrumah, Kenyatta, Milliard, Wallace-Johnson and a West Indian delegate from the TUC called Sarah James, increased after Makonnen returned from a short trip to Paris.<sup>17</sup> Presumably Makonnen had attended the World Federation of Trades' Union meeting in Paris from 25<sup>th</sup> September to 9<sup>th</sup> October, where Caribbean left-wing delegates and others met to discuss the planned Pan-African Congress that took place between the 15<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> October following the re-launch of the IASB as the Pan-African Federation in 1944.

Whilst it is impossible to assess the impact that the murals had on the customers - West Indian 'Bevan Boys', Afro-American GI's or African students based in the city - we do know that restaurants such as the Cosmopolitan or Amy Garvey's restaurant on Oxford Street, London, were significant hubs for anti-colonialists. Whilst key players in post-colonial regimes, such as Nkrumah, Kenyatta and Azikwe, visited these hubs - Kenyatta managed the Cosmopolitan for a short period in 1940 - it is

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<sup>15</sup> Makonnen, p. 137.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid.

<sup>17</sup> Alfred Gaisie, Interview with Robin Grinter, no date.

worth noting an irony that Gikandi highlights in his 2000 essay on cosmopolitanism and Pan-Africanism: those involved in the Pan-African movement in England, were not only the loudest advocates for anti-colonialism in Africa, they were also the most westernised colonial subjects.<sup>18</sup> Makonnen saw this as a virtue, proudly claiming that his Cosmopolitan restaurant truly was cosmopolitan in nature, due to the ethnic diversity amongst its staff: the suppliers were Cypriots; the waiters were Indian; the chefs were Chinese.<sup>19</sup>

Makonnen's reliance on those outside the African and West Indian communities certainly highlights the business acumen that he had learned when working with his father - international cooperation was central to his father's business ethos. It is also here where we see clear evidence of Makonnen's versatility and work-ethic which enabled him to promote Pan-Africanist ideals and become a successful businessman. This was accomplished by him shifting his priorities depending on the situation he was presented with. This last point needs to be analysed. In London, Makonnen was a dedicated Pan-Africanist, however, upon arrival in Manchester he deftly turned his hand to becoming an activist-entrepreneur and relied heavily on alliances with other ethnic groups to establish himself. Granted, Africans and West Indians helped to set up the business and they formed a large percentage of his customer base, but Makonnen increasingly turned towards other nationalist groups for support, especially so with the Ethiopian and the Cosmopolitan. This character shift can perhaps be attributed to the fact that Britain was at war, which invariably would have brought communities closer together. "Manchester was rather like a large African community; people were warm, and you never were made to feel like a stranger."<sup>20</sup> Nevertheless, one would assume that someone with Makonnen's personal investment and belief in Pan-Africanism – especially black self-reliance - he would have tried to include Africans in every aspect of the business, where possible.

This paradox lays at the heart of both McLeod's 2002 essay on transnationalism within the Pan-African movement and in Edwards' book on Pan-Africanism. Both

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<sup>18</sup> S. Gikandi, 'Pan-Africanism and Cosmopolitanism: The Case of Jomo Kenyatta', *English Studies in Africa*, (2000), 43:1, p. 3.

<sup>19</sup> Makonnen, p. 138.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid, p. 137.

scholars present the argument whereby the shift we see in alliances and who Pan-Africanists turned to for support – which would have been unthinkable in the colonies – was forged by geography, historical context and necessity. As mentioned previously, the onset of war invariably brought different nationalist and internationalist factions together, which included Pan-Africanists. This proximity to other groups meant that Pan-Africanists began to look beyond the boundaries of race and nation for support and inspiration, and vice-versa.<sup>21</sup> Yet, these ‘alliances’ would not have been possible were they not all centred in the heart of the colonial metropole. This illustrates a point that Edwards raises in his book, whereby exposure to the metropole not only galvanised the anti-colonialist activists who migrated there, it also created a “delusion” and a “near-reckless admiration” for England and all things English.<sup>22</sup> Makonnen succinctly states that “Africans were not only compelled to think about the position of their own people, but were forced...into making alliances across boundaries.”<sup>23</sup> It is in Gikandi’s essay where the above arguments synthesised into a coherent narrative. The Pan-Africanist narrative and its culture were born out of the belief that black people everywhere share a common heritage and destiny. Yet, at the core of this belief was the mastery of its key players - Padmore, Kenyatta and James – in the ways of colonialism and their total immersion in the “culture of Englishness.”<sup>24</sup>

Makonnen’s restaurants were of course financially successful, yet, the true value of these venues is in their capacity as places of exchange and encounter between West Indians, Americans, Africans, Indians, and locals. The significance of the Teashop and the Cosmopolitan in Manchester, and Amy Garvey’s Florence Mills café in Oxford Street, London, was in their existence within the metropole before large scale migration to England from the West Indies occurred in the 1950s. They were, as Donnell argues, places where travellers within the empire converged and also

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<sup>21</sup> J. McLeod, ‘A Night at the Cosmopolitan: Axes of Transnational Encounter in the 1930s and 1940s’, *International Journal of Post-Colonial Studies*, (2002), 4:1, p. 55.

<sup>22</sup> B. Edwards, *The Practice of Diaspora: Literature, Translation and the Rise of the Black International*, (Harvard University Press, 2003), p. 241.

<sup>23</sup> Makonnen, p. 155.

<sup>24</sup> S. Gikandi, ‘Pan-Africanism and Cosmopolitanism: The Case of Jomo Kenyatta’, *English Studies in Africa*, (2000), 43:1, p. 3.

represented areas of proto-creolisation within the metropole.<sup>25</sup> Such a space in Manchester, where ideas, cultures and languages could flourish was crucial to the nurturing and growth of an international community there, and one which was further fuelled by the close proximity of Manchester University, with its African diaspora cohort. There is a paradox at the heart of these internationalised spaces, whereby those who were drawn to them were typically travellers – radicals, students, loners – forced through ‘the pressure of the times’ to leave their respective homes and converge upon the metropole. This movement of people across boundaries created, Edwards posits, the next level of anti-colonialism, where a new black radicalism emerged through migration within the empire – African diaspora radicalism became internationalist in nature.<sup>26</sup> These ‘hubs’ essentially came to encapsulate an evolved Pan-African radicalism which was explicitly moving away from the anti-capitalist variant espoused by Padmore and James. Moreover, as actors within these spaces each had their own agendas, they attempted to find common ground through dialogue.<sup>27</sup> This dialogue led to new ideas being formed in Manchester, which was the “very symbol of industrial capitalism” and hastened the city’s transformation into a centre for Pan-African activity.<sup>28</sup> Such a focus on Manchester, Makonnen adds, was based not only on his activities and networks there, rather, it was the city’s historical connections to cotton, slavery, and the building up of England’s cities; “you could say that the coloured proletariat...had a right there.”<sup>29</sup>

### **Publishing Venture.**

When considering Makonnen’s tenure as a restaurateur, we find his foray into publishing to be much more centred on promoting Pan-Africanism and nurturing the development of a trans-Atlantic network of Pan-African contacts. Once firmly established in Manchester, around 1947, Makonnen, together with the help of

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<sup>25</sup> A. Donnell, in B. Schwarz (ed), *West Indian Intellectuals in Britain*, (Manchester University Press, 2003), p. 116.

<sup>26</sup> Edwards, p. 243.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid, p. 254.

<sup>28</sup> Holmes, p. 183.

<sup>29</sup> J. Stanley, ‘Mangoes to Moss Side: Caribbean Migration to Manchester in the 1950s & 1960s’, p. 41-42. (Unpublished Article)

Milliard, Padmore and Kenyatta, set up a publishing house which played a dual role in both independently promoting black writers and publishing works by Padmore and Kenyatta – Kenyatta's *Kenya: Land of Conflict*, and Padmore's *White Man's Duty*, were published by Makonnen.<sup>30</sup> Furthermore, a monthly periodical, *Pan-Africa*, established after the Pan-African Congress was held in 1945, was written, published and distributed from the premises. The aims of *Pan-Africa* were 'to act as a link between all peoples and between peoples of African origin in particular'. Moreover, initial subscribers were entitled to a free copy of Padmore's recent work *How Russia Transformed Her Colonial Empire – A Challenge to Britain*, or a choice of other books in the 'Panaf Educational Series.<sup>31</sup> Such an undertaking was only made possible by the contacts Makonnen had made in Manchester: printers would often eat at his restaurants. A separate avenue of support came from unexpected quarters. White women, such as Miss Nichol – an LSE graduate who would become Makonnen's personal assistant - and Dinah Stock, from Newnham College, Cambridge, would seek out Makonnen and Padmore, usually after hearing one of them speak and offer them their assistance. Their contribution was greatly appreciated by Makonnen, yet he and Padmore had to admonish some within the Pan-African movement who wanted to take advantage of the girls: "they felt it was a revolutionary act...seducing white women." Nevertheless, Makonnen became a *bona-fide* member of the publishers' association and began to try his hand as a publisher.<sup>32</sup> With the publishing business producing works by Padmore and Kenyatta, and *Pan-Africa*, the next logical step for Makonnen was to open a bookshop to sell and promote these items in. Again, using the profits from the restaurants, Makonnen opened a bookshop, called the Economist, in late 1947. The shop was situated on Oxford Road, near the university. The university played an integral role in sustaining his latest venture as African and West Indian students could request texts that were unavailable in the university library.<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>30</sup> A. Mazrui, *General History of Africa, VIII*, (Heinemann Educational, Oxford, 1993), p. 708.

<sup>31</sup> H. Adi, *Pan-Africanism: A History*, (Bloomsbury, 2018), p. 134.

<sup>32</sup> Makonnen, pp. 145-147.

<sup>33</sup> Makonnen, p. 146.

Padmore teased Makonnen about the number of businesses that he owned on Oxford Road, jesting that he had “become an octopus and we’ll have to restrain you.” Yet, behind these jests were mild concerns that Makonnen would become embroiled in capitalism and perhaps lose his zeal for Pan-Africanism and become a committed capitalist; Padmore knew a man called Zik who had established a printing company in Nigeria and relied heavily on ‘sweated labour’.<sup>34</sup> Nevertheless, Padmore’s worries were unfounded: Makonnen invested heavily in *Pan-Africa* and personally lost £400 in 1948, due to external booksellers being reluctant to display the journal in their shops. Moreover, it was from the bookshop that Makonnen began to nurture a network of Pan-African contacts which spanned the Atlantic. At the core of this network lay the friendship between Makonnen and the US sociologist, St Clair Drake. The pair were acquainted through Padmore who met when Drake was resident in Cardiff in 1947-48 whilst researching towards his PhD – he studied a community of African seamen and their Welsh families in Cardiff.<sup>35</sup>

Drake is a crucial actor within the Pan-African movement in Manchester as he provided Makonnen with a window into the internal politics of the North American Pan-African movement and with invaluable trans-Atlantic contacts. Regarding the bookshop, Drake introduced the US trade-unionist and Pan-Africanist George McCray to Makonnen. Keen to source academic texts for the *Economist*, and equally forthright in his wish not to officially register with any American publishers, he asked McCray if he would be willing to become a liaison and oversee the arrangements for payment and transportation of books from America to Manchester. McCray was tasked with not only sourcing valuable university texts, but also with bypassing the normal channels through which the books would be sent. Makonnen, during his time in Manchester, refused to pay any income tax, stating: “in this colonial struggle, paying income tax would be a crime...what was one paying income tax for after 400

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<sup>34</sup> Makonnen, p. 146. According to Makonnen, Zik was a Pan-Africanist who, after spending time in North America, settled on the Gold Coast in the 1930s-40s. He had a “missionary zeal” – a blend of Pan-Africanism and radicalism – which resulted in him being deported and settling in Lagos, Nigeria. After Ghana gained independence, Zik returned and became increasingly outspoken about Nkrumah’s involvement with communism, *Ibid*, pp. 260-263.

<sup>35</sup> J. Gershenhorn, ‘St. Clair Drake, Pan-Africanism, African Studies, and the Politics of Knowledge, 1945-1965’, *The Journal of African American History*, (2013), 98:3, p. 425.

years or more of slavery ended with no compensation to the blacks.”<sup>36</sup> In Makonnen’s correspondence with McCray, he proposed that he could become a middle-man and representative for the bookshop in America. Whilst Makonnen’s letter is somewhat light on details regarding how McCray would fulfil his wishes, it does highlight a propensity for grandstanding, especially with names. Whilst the letter is essentially a formal approach for assistance to help him avoid paying taxes and avoid the attention of Inland Revenue, Makonnen was keen to impart on McCray the fact that any credit needed would be readily available from either Padmore, who would “place at my disposal the dollar payments he receives from American newspapers” or Joe Louis, who Makonnen planned on asking for \$500 after his boxing fight.<sup>37</sup>

#### **Providing legal support.**

Whilst it is important to assess the impact of Makonnen’s business ventures within Manchester, there are other avenues where his Pan-African ethos came to the fore: providing support and legal defence to the African diaspora. Here, we find Makonnen acting in the spirit of Marcus Garvey, whereby he sought to break a reliance on white philanthropists and institutions and act independently.<sup>38</sup> In 1940, the Houlder Line ship, the *Princesa*, was part of a convoy that ran goods from Montevideo via Freetown, Sierra Leone, throughout the Second World War. Designated SL42, the *Princesa* was active in the River Plate during the naval battle where the Royal Navy forced the *Graf Spee* to scuttle. In an incident that was unrelated to the naval action that took place, but certainly something that heightened the level of anxiety onboard, the *Princesa* began to take on water. The seamen, mostly comprised of Nigerians and Somalis, were forced to work for sixteen hours to fix the leak, bail out the water and keep the engines stoked. Perhaps due to the very real threat of them sinking, the fear of being sunk or captured, or through sheer exhaustion, 108 African seamen went on strike and ultimately mutinied after the senior engineer threatened them with his gun. Nevertheless, the ship was made seaworthy and was involved in

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<sup>36</sup> Makonnen, p. 141.

<sup>37</sup> R. Makonnen, Letter to George F. McCray, 23<sup>rd</sup> June 1948.

<sup>38</sup> Makonnen, p. xvi.

the salvaging of the *Graf Spee's* anti-aircraft gun. Afterwards the *Princesa* was ordered to leave the convoy and head straight to Devonport, Plymouth, to unload the gun and the mutinous seamen.<sup>39</sup>

Makonnen claims to have read about the mutiny and subsequent imprisonment of the crew and immediately rang his lawyer to see if there was anything that he could do to help “our boys” who were due to go on trial in Plymouth. Makonnen, alongside his “henchman” Ras Fini travelled to Plymouth the following day to arrange the legal defence of the seamen. Upon arriving in Plymouth, Makonnen gained access to the seamen, through the aid of his solicitor, a man called Page, and found that relations amongst the group had deteriorated and the group was split along national and ethnic lines. The breakdown was used by Makonnen and Fini to their advantage. They urged the seamen to only speak in their native tongues and therefore argued the need for multiple interpreters and a need to delay the court date. This helped to restore some semblance of order and unity amongst the seamen who were provided with the services of a multi-lingual interpreter and barristers. After employing a Jewish QC, Mrs Helbraun, Makonnen fronted the bail money for the seamen, which amounted to £62,000. When the case ended, it resulted in everyone being acquitted, except for “eight or nine fellows who had to serve six months.” Makonnen’s involvement brought some media attention and a headline proclaiming that an “Ethiopian Restaurateur Stands Bail for £62,000.” This brought him to the attention of Inland Revenue and the Colonial Office, who became aware that he had not paid any income tax whatsoever during his time in Manchester.<sup>40</sup>

A second incident occurred on 26<sup>th</sup> September 1946, which would again involve Makonnen’s patronage and financial support. A group of around 40 Jamaican RAF servicemen were eating at Makonnen’s restaurant, the Cosmopolitan, with friends,

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<sup>39</sup> Details surrounding this episode are patchy. Drake, in his PhD thesis, outlines key events such as the mutiny aboard the *Princesa* and the mutinous crew’s subsequent imprisonment in Plymouth. Online searches revealed the owners of the ship and its involvement in salvaging the *Graf Spee's* armament. The dates of the mutiny do coincide with those of the mutiny but there is no mention of the mutiny mentioned in the media, nor Hansard; presumably due to restrictions on reporting such events in wartime. D. Smith, ‘Suicide, Subterfuge and Salvage’, *Britain at War*, p. 88. Details on the *Princesa's* designation and route are found at: BT 389/24/124, *Princesa*, TNA.

<sup>40</sup> Makonnen, p. 139-141.

some of who were white women. After they finished eating, around 11pm, they left and some in the group accompanied the women home. When they reached the area near Piccadilly, they were attacked by a group of white men. In the ensuing melee, Donald Beard, a 23-year old Jamaican, was alleged to have stabbed a white man, called John Smith, in the neck, which resulted in his death. Beard was subsequently detained and charged with the murder of Smith.<sup>41</sup> The incident was brought to Makonnen's attention through Horace Gill – a "European friend" – who is described as an ally of the black community in Manchester. Concerning this specific event, Makonnen stresses the importance of the black community coming together and aiding Beard. After meeting with representatives from the Jamaican community, Makonnen stated that this case required a black lawyer to defend Beard, which would project the image "that the black man is capable of carrying out his own defence."<sup>42</sup>

To aid Beard, Makonnen personally paid for the passage and services of the pre-eminent Jamaican barrister and politician, Norman Manley KC. Makonnen's choice of barrister was certainly not accidental: Manley was a leading figure in Jamaican legal and political circles who spearheaded campaigns against poverty in Jamaica and the West Indies. He was also a founding member of the People's National Party, which was crucial in winning universal suffrage and limited self-governance in 1944.<sup>43</sup> In choosing Manley, Makonnen not only provided Beard with an extremely talented barrister, he was also showcasing West Indian talent to the British press and public as there was keen interest in the case. According to Makonnen, Manley was a sensation in the courtroom, where he methodically broke apart the prosecution's case against Beard. He argued that as there was snowfall on the night, visibility would have been severely hampered; this observation led the police witness to state that because "all niggers look alike" they had easily identified Beard from 40 yards away in snowy conditions."<sup>44</sup> Moreover, the chief witness in the case, Mary Flint, who was with the group when the incident took place, stated in court that she did not see

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<sup>41</sup> JAMAICAN AIRMAN CHARGED WITH MURDER, *Manchester Guardian*, 30<sup>th</sup> September 1946.

<sup>42</sup> Makonnen, p. 142.

<sup>43</sup> NORMAN MANLEY, *The Observer*, 3<sup>rd</sup> July 1955.

<sup>44</sup> Makonnen, p. 143.

Beard attack Smith.<sup>45</sup> The case was ultimately dismissed after Manley pointed out that Beard was left-handed, yet the stab wound was delivered by someone who was right-handed. The judge agreed afterwards that there was no basis for Beard's case, and he instructed the jury to find Beard innocent.<sup>46</sup> In his closing statements the judge expressed his pleasure in having Manley in his courtroom, which according to Makonnen, sent the "darkies wild...there was prestige galore for the community."<sup>47</sup> Makonnen's statement here is important. Through providing legal support to the West Indian and African diaspora communities in Manchester and Plymouth, Makonnen was highlighting their ability to sustain themselves; they did not need to rely on white benefactors for assistance. Furthermore, as the trials were covered in both national and local newspapers, Makonnen did not need to publicise them to the wider African diaspora community in England. The subsequent media coverage meant that Makonnen's Pan-African ethos of an "African directed"<sup>48</sup> movement was disseminated widely throughout the country.

### Liverpool.

Another well-publicised incident which Makonnen was involved in concerns the 1948 Liverpool Race Riots. The riots were the culmination of bitter tensions between around 8,000 African diaspora seamen who settled in Liverpool after the war, and the right-wing National Union of Seamen (NUS) which was actively campaigning for all maritime jobs to go to white sailors. Isolated incidents of violence developed into rioting after a group of white men seized a black seaman on the steps of the hostel where he was living. His cries were heard by others in the building and a fracas ensued with both sides wielding knives, broken bottles and bricks.<sup>49</sup> Whilst the interventions Makonnen made on behalf of Beard and the crew of the *Princessa* appear to have gone relatively smoothly, the same cannot be said for Pan-African community's response to the Liverpool Riots. In a letter written to Drake, Makonnen

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<sup>45</sup> JAMAICAN AIRMAN FOR TRIAL, *Manchester Guardian*, 23<sup>rd</sup> October 1946.

<sup>46</sup> NOT GUILTY OF STABBING: No Case to Answer, *Manchester Guardian*, 28<sup>th</sup> November 1946.

<sup>47</sup> Makonnen, p. 143.

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid*, p. xiii.

<sup>49</sup> BLACK v. WHITE RIOT IN LIVERPOOL: Gang Storms a Hostel, *Manchester Guardian*, 2<sup>nd</sup> August 1948.

decries the lacklustre efforts made by “our friends in London” to fully grasp the scale of what happened in Liverpool. Makonnen refers to Padmore’s lack of interest concerning Liverpool and hints at him believing the narrative in the national press which placed the fault firmly with the black community. The *Manchester Guardian* reported that up to “50 coloured men...armed with bottles, swords, daggers, iron bars, “coshers”, and axes...attacked and stoned a number of white men”.<sup>50</sup>

Makonnen’s frustration is further evident in his accosting of Drake’s “man” in England, a barrister called ‘Mitchell’<sup>51</sup> who worked with the League of Coloured People (LCP). Mitchell had agreed to meet Makonnen in Liverpool, yet, upon arriving there, Makonnen was dismayed to find that he was still in London because he could not afford the train fare. When they finally met in Liverpool, after Makonnen had sent him his fare, Mitchell was tasked with representing those involved and their appeals. According to Makonnen, Mitchell was woefully underprepared and inexperienced and whilst some appeals were successful, Makonnen was left facing a bill amounting to £1,000 and legal threats from solicitors who were suing him for £500. Makonnen’s contacts in the north of England also had little impact in Liverpool, with Duplan – who worked with the Negro Welfare Centre in Liverpool - opting to not get involved. However, Makonnen was keen to praise George Wilkie, Mr Prescod, and Mr Noel, “who stood out in the affair”.<sup>52</sup> Considering the muted and confused Pan-African response to the Liverpool Riots, it may be worth considering the internal struggles that were afflicting the Pan-African movement. In 1944, Du Bois, after a decade long divorce, had re-joined the ranks of the NAACP.<sup>53</sup> Whilst seemingly unrelated to the events in Liverpool, the clash between Du Bois and Walter White, the repositioning of middle-class Negro organisations regarding the Marshall Plan, and the militant activity of African Nationalists, was absorbing the full attention of

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<sup>50</sup> RACIAL FIGHTS IN LIVERPOOL: Remands in Custody, *Manchester Guardian*, 4<sup>th</sup> August 1948.

<sup>51</sup> The Mitchell that Makonnen refers to may be Dr Malcolm Joseph-Mitchell, who worked with the LCP and co-wrote a report on the problems regarding welfare of ‘brown babies.’ C. Cabellero & P. Aspinall, *Mixed Race Britain in the Twentieth Century*, (Palgrave, 2018), p. 223.

<sup>52</sup> R. Makonnen, Letter to St Clair. Drake, 4<sup>th</sup> November 1948. The name George Wilkie appears to be a pseudonym.

<sup>53</sup> L. James, *George Padmore and Decolonialisation from Below: Pan-Africanism, The Cold War, and the End of Empire*, (Palgrave, 2015), p. 62.

those within the Pan-African movement outside the north-West of England.<sup>54</sup> Makonnen's position on the matter was to fully support Du Bois, arguing that men such as White, with their "liberal" affiliations are as dangerous as any other: "there is no doubt at all as to whom all right-minded men should support."<sup>55</sup> By siding with Du Bois, Makonnen was effectively endorsing his proposal of Afro-American voluntary separation in the US. Whereas White vociferously opposed this idea and was increasingly critical about the growth of what he called 'black nationalism'.<sup>56</sup> This stance reinforces Makonnen's belief that any Pan-African movement should be self-sustaining and highlights his willingness to oppose those – even within organisations such as the NAACP – who disagreed.

### **Involvement with the African diaspora community.**

When considering Makonnen's efforts in Manchester in aiding the African diaspora community, it is crucial to assess the support and attitudes of local black activists and community members towards him and his ventures. Manchester already had a small but well-established West Indian community when Makonnen arrived in 1939 who were more than willing to offer their support him. Nevertheless, whilst Makonnen did receive help and support from some within that community, it is worth noting that a large majority of Manchester's African diaspora community were largely indifferent to Makonnen and the Pan-African presence in the city.

Archie Downie, a Jamaican who served in the RAF and settled in Manchester after the war, only became racially aware after his superior called him a "black so-and-so". Having little notion of race being an issue until he joined the RAF, Downie claimed that the terrible weather, not racism, was the greatest adversary in England. Furthermore, Downie and his peers, both black and white, were fighting in a war – "it was survival of the fittest" – if there was violence or racism towards him or his peers in the RAF then it was quickly resolved through confrontation with the person or persons as they were all serving during wartime. It was only after settling in post-war England that racism began to become more prevalent to men like Downie, who

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<sup>54</sup> St Clair Drake, Letter to Ras Makonnen, 29<sup>th</sup> October 1948.

<sup>55</sup> R. Makonnen, Letter to St Clair. Drake, 4<sup>th</sup> November 1948.

<sup>56</sup> K. Janken, *Walter White: Mr NAACP*, (University of North Carolina Press, 2003), p. xiv.

began to feel that his contribution in the war was somehow lessened because of his skin colour. Downie's recollection of this period is one of both regret and appreciation: regret at not having known Makonnen personally but also appreciative for what he did for the black community in Manchester. Downie states that Makonnen was, with the benefit of hindsight, a man in the same vein as Churchill or Garvey, "a man of vision...of substance", but was someone who ultimately ran in different circles to him.<sup>57</sup>

Downie's experience is not unique; Euton Christian, a Jamaican who enrolled in the RAF in 1944, had little time for politicking or getting involved in matters concerning race. For Christian, the biggest issue was getting used to the cold weather in England and not having ready access to sugar. He explicitly states that his main interest during the war years was socialising. Issues surrounding race were not a cause for concern for Christian and his peers. Yet, whilst he heard first-hand stories of racism towards Afro-American soldiers stationed in Manchester, he argues that black servicemen in the RAF would not have tolerated it and would respond to racism with violence. Whilst seemingly unrelated to Makonnen or Pan-Africanism in Manchester, Christian's time in 1940s Manchester hints at a black community that was removed from that which revolved around Makonnen's bars and restaurants on Oxford Road. Christian and his peers never visited any of Makonnen's establishments, preferring to frequent the bars across the city centre on Oldham Road, where they were made to feel especially welcome. This was a black community that was separated from Makonnen's, a community that Makonnen perhaps could not reach. This is further compounded by Christian's elevation in the following decades to become Manchester's first black Justice of the Peace and him attaining a social level comparable to Makonnen but was far removed from the politics of Pan-Africanism.<sup>58</sup>

Whilst Downie and Christian provide examples of West Indian's living in Manchester who were outside of Makonnen's scope, we will now discuss an individual who worked alongside him and loosely within the Pan-African movement. Ras Fini migrated to Manchester from Nigeria in 1939 citing a desire to help in the war effort

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<sup>57</sup> Archie Downie, Interview with Robin Grinter & Susan Harrop, 24<sup>th</sup> July 1995.

<sup>58</sup> Euton Christian, Interview with Susan Harrop & Patricia Flood, 26<sup>th</sup> July 1995.

and, it could be argued, looking for adventure. After lodging with friends for a few months and working at the Carborundum munitions factory in Trafford Park, he decided to follow in his friend's footsteps and join the merchant navy. This sudden change in career path is attributed to Fini simply wanting to experience life at sea after hearing tales from black seamen he met in Liverpool and Manchester who were travelling the world. After becoming a seaman, working on convoys to North Africa and delivering ammunition to Normandy during D-Day, Fini describes the immense camaraderie amongst the crew, regardless of colour or class; Nigerians onboard would always look out for each other either at sea or on land. It is through the Nigerian community both in Manchester and Liverpool that Fini most likely became acquainted with Makonnen. When on land, Fini and his peers often spent their time drinking in the bars and restaurants of Liverpool and Manchester. Also, if there was an issue that needed resolving, Fini would turn to Makonnen for help. It was this relationship with Fini that led to Makonnen becoming the Nigerian community's primary contact.<sup>59</sup>

This willingness to help the black communities in Liverpool and Manchester led to an eager reciprocation of that help. Whenever Makonnen needed assistance men such as Fini would eagerly respond. A key example of this was during the *Princesa* mutiny and the subsequent trial in Plymouth. Firstly, before we explore the details of Fini's involvement in the *Princesa* case, it must be noted that in Makonnen's memoirs, when he recalls Fini, he calls him a "noted debaucher" who ran an illegal gambling house in Manchester. Whilst it can be expected of men involved in war to live excessively, what is illuminating is Makonnen's proximity to men whom he alleges were involved in crime; his own willingness to avoid paying taxes further highlights this point. Bookmaking was illegal during the 1940s, moreover, Makonnen describes Fini as "a notorious character with the police" who often frequented clubs such as the Merchant Seaman in Liverpool, and the Negro Welfare centre in Manchester.<sup>60</sup>

Nevertheless, Fini's account of the *Princesa* mutiny does shed further light on the episode and somewhat contradicts Makonnen's recollection of events. Firstly, Fini

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<sup>59</sup> Ras Fini, Interview with Robin Grinter and Anne Ward, no date.

<sup>60</sup> Makonnen, pp. 139-140.

was involved because he was Nigerian and most of the crew were also Nigerian. Fini makes no reference of the crew being comprised of mixed nationalities nor speaking multiple languages. This casts doubt on the chaos that Makonnen describes in his memoirs; Fini also makes no mention whatsoever of having to translate multiple languages. Secondly, Fini concurs with Makonnen's statement that they approached a female Jewish QC, Mrs Helbraun, however, Fini contends that she did not take the case because Makonnen could not afford to hire her. The task of defending the mutinous crew fell to a "Mr Cox" who Mrs Helbraun introduced to Makonnen and Fini.<sup>61</sup> Fini's involvement in the *Princesa* mutiny highlights a point about Makonnen that has previously been raised in the thesis: he is not averse to embellishing the truth to unnecessarily make events seem more dramatic than they were. Moreover, the point needs raising whereby to what extent Makonnen worked alongside men who lived outside the law and why he makes this point at all; we already know Makonnen actively avoided paying taxes and his use of "henchmen" such as Fini hints at a willingness at the very least, for Makonnen to sometimes operate on the fringes of the law.<sup>62</sup> Yet, why does Makonnen feel the need to emphasise this? It could be argued – and this is a point that reoccurs in his memoir – that Makonnen is attempting to glamorise his activism in Manchester; he is perhaps playing the role of the showman to boost his legitimacy within the Pan-African world. The apparent contradictions that Fini highlights in Makonnen's recollection of the *Princesa* case highlight this point. Moreover, we also know that Makonnen's reach in Manchester was somewhat limited as many within the African diaspora community were indifferent to his activities. Yet, Downie, who admitted to being indifferent to Makonnen's presence in the city at the time, declared years later that Makonnen was a man of "substance".<sup>63</sup> Therefore, negating Makonnen's need to validate himself in his later years.

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<sup>61</sup> Ras Fini, Interview with Robin Grinter and Anne Ward, no date.

<sup>62</sup> Makonnen, p. 139.

<sup>63</sup> The desire in Makonnen, to be relevant within the Pan-African world, is a point that will be explored towards the end of Chapter 3

### Manchester Congress.

The importance of the 1945 Pan-African Congress, held in Chorlton Town Hall, Manchester, cannot be overstated. The Congress's resolutions: the use of non-violence and the need to "organise the masses" marked a pivotal shift away from the pre-Second World War reliance on a revolutionary process to achieve a united Africa. Africa, Padmore argued, must be united under one nationalist flag and should avoid the rise of tribalism.<sup>64</sup> It seems that the Pan-African shift towards non-violence can be largely attributed to the success of Gandhi's non-violent anti-colonialist movement in India. However, it could be argued that the true success of the Congress lays with Kwame Nkrumah, who took these valuable lessons and sought to implement them on the Gold Coast, where he utilised these resolutions and turned them into successful weapons in the struggle for independence. For Padmore, the resultant victory of Nkrumah and Ghana's independence marked the culmination of a Pan-African journey initiated by Sylvester Williams and realised by the Manchester Congress; it was, he argued, "Pan-Africanism in Action."<sup>65</sup> James states that "it took the revolution in the Gold Coast itself to make possible a true evaluation of this policy [elaborated at the Manchester Congress]."<sup>66</sup> There was, as Drake claimed in 1948, when recalling the activity surrounding the Congress an "air of great excitement...we felt that the African revolution was about to begin."<sup>67</sup>

Historians agree with the sentiments shared above. Hogsbjerg describes the Second World War as an event which gave rise to a growing urgency amongst colonial Africans, Indians, and West Indians. This precipitated a shift whereby decolonisation was advocated 'from-below', by the colonial subjects themselves.<sup>68</sup> Sherwood argues that "the Congress was the first major step in the post-war struggle by people of African descent and of Africa to join together in the struggle to free themselves from the yoke of British imperialism."<sup>69</sup> The 1945 Congress also marks a crucial point in the

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<sup>64</sup> G. Padmore, *History of the Pan-African Congress*, (Hammersmith Bookshop, 1963), p. 7.

<sup>65</sup> G. Padmore, *Pan-Africanism or Communism?* (Dobson, 1956), p. 171-185.

<sup>66</sup> C. L. R. James, *Nkrumah and the Ghana Revolution*, (Allison & Busby, London), p. 74.

<sup>67</sup> J. Gershenhorn, 'St. Clair Drake, Pan-Africanism, African Studies, and the Politics of Knowledge, 1945-1965', *The Journal of African American History*, (2013), 98:3, p. 425.

<sup>68</sup> C. Hogsbjerg, 'Remembering the Fifth Pan-African Congress', *African Studies Bulletin*, (2015/16), 77.

<sup>69</sup> M. Sherwood, *The 1945 Manchester Pan-African Congress Revisited*, (London, 1995), p. 9.

evolution of Pan-Africanism in the 1940s. Du Bois, who was 73 at the time, was seen by many as the 'grandfather' of Pan-Africanism and it was widely understood that his leadership of the movement was passing into younger, non-Afro-American hands. The Congress's success, Drake and Shepperson claim, lay with the administrative efforts of both Makonnen and Milliard. Whilst Du Bois laid the groundwork for the fifth Pan-African conference through contact with Harold Moody and the LCP (League of Coloured People) in London, and other black activists such as Max Yergan, Amy Garvey and Solanke - who founded the WASU - the decision to hold it in Manchester is largely down to the foundations that Makonnen had laid during his time in Northern England. C.L.R James recalls that Makonnen's efforts in Manchester provided them with not only the financial means to hold the Congress, but also a base for those who would attend.<sup>70</sup>

Whilst academic analysis of the Congress and the comments of key actors are highly pertinent to the Pan-African narrative here. It is important to give a voice to those who were also involved in the Congress but in a 'lesser' capacity. Gaisie and Fini both played leading roles in the organising and actual running of the Congress. Gaisie spent the weeks leading up to the Congress driving back and forth from Padmore's London home both meeting and driving delegates up to Manchester. It was in London that Gaisie first met Kenyatta who would work with him in the Cosmopolitan peeling potatoes in the basement before they invested in a machine to free up their time to organise the Congress. Gaisie, interestingly, recalls Kenyatta and Padmore talking in London about how they were going to liberate their homelands but admits to not understanding the "words these big men were using."<sup>71</sup> This point is crucial and belies the attitude of the African diaspora community who lived in Manchester when the Congress was held. Whilst Gaisie speaks primarily of his role being to ensure that the attendees arrived on time and that the Congress ran smoothly, his comments about the magnitude of what happened in Manchester are made in hindsight, 50 years later.<sup>72</sup> The same can be said of others in Manchester. Sam Nelson, another

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<sup>70</sup> G. Shepperson & St Clair. Drake, 'The Fifth Pan-African Conference, 1945 and the All-African Peoples Congress, 1958, *A Journal of African and Afro-American Studies*, (2008) 8, p. 39.

<sup>71</sup> Alfred Gaisie, Interview with Robin Grinter, no date.

<sup>72</sup> Alfred Gaisie, Interview with Robin Grinter, no date.

West Indian who served in the RAF and settled in Manchester, recalls that the Congress helped to shake things up politically, but it had very little impact on the West Indian community in Manchester; he argues that Manchester was already welcoming towards migrants and the Congress did not affect life there at all. Moreover, some within Nelson's social circle, such as a man called Koko Makatimbo [sic] were not appreciative of the presence of radicals like Kwame Nkrumah in the city.<sup>73</sup> Ras Fini, who officially attended the Congress as a delegate of the African Progressive League, admits that what they discussed was of no interest to him whatsoever; he was there purely in the capacity as Makonnen's 'helper'. Fini would regularly attend political meetings in Manchester before and after the Congress but admits to often falling asleep as he did not understand the nature of what was being discussed; it seems that his primary motivation was making contacts in the city. Again, as with Gaisie, Fini only came to appreciate the scale of what was discussed at the Congress after the event. Fini's time during the Congress appears to have been taken up ensuring the 'big names' were well looked after and adequately accommodated.<sup>74</sup> Others within the black community such as Downie or Christian were disinterested in the Congress or preferred to spend their time socialising and not getting caught up in politicking.<sup>75</sup>

In conclusion, this chapter has placed T. Ras Makonnen in Manchester and highlighted not only his importance as an independent actor there, but also, provided examples of where and how he successfully implemented his Pan-African vision of black self-reliance. Firstly, we briefly explored the reasons behind Makonnen's move away from London and subsequent move to Manchester. We then examined Makonnen's somewhat short tenure with the cooperative movement in Manchester and the impact that it had on his existing Pan-African philosophy. This involved him incorporating elements of co-op values – conducting business ethically within the British Empire – and fusing them with his notion of *Osusu*. This 'hybrid' *Osusu*, be believed, could be a template for a future independent African nation. Yet, as outlined in the analysis of Makonnen's contribution to *International African Opinion*

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<sup>73</sup> Sam Nelson, Interview with Anna Ward & Susan Harrop, 24<sup>th</sup> July 1995.

<sup>74</sup> Ras Fini, Interview with Robin Grinter and Anne Ward, no date.

<sup>75</sup> Euton Christian, Interview with Susan Harrop & Patricia Flood, 26<sup>th</sup> July 1995.

in Chapter 1, Makonnen is again overlooking whether such an approach would be practical or even welcomed in Africa. His restaurants, however, within the wider context of African diaspora migration to England, were crucial spaces for migrants within the metropole. Not only were they established with Makonnen's own funds – tying into Makonnen's ethos of black self-reliance - they were set-up with the support and help of the wider, international, community – this links in with his father's business ethos. This paradoxical approach of utilising support from outside the African diaspora community is perfectly encapsulated in the arguments presented by Edwards, McCleod and Gikandi, whereby external pressures and migration into the metropole forced individuals and groups into making alliances with others. Makonnen was certainly aware that this was happening; his statement about the *Cosmopolitan* being truly 'cosmopolitan' underscores this, yet, it could be argued that his Pan-African focus never wavered. This argument is reinforced when we consider his support of African diaspora defendants in court. We know that Makonnen lost a great deal of money through these actions and he was clearly using the profits from his business ventures to support the wider African diaspora community. This is evidenced through him establishing a publishing outlet and bookstore, which stocked and promoted exclusively Pan-African literature and authors. Furthermore, the episodes concerning Donald Beard and the crew of the *Princessa* highlight Makonnen's Pan-African ethos in action, but also, him using these instances as opportunities to showcase African diaspora talent through the national press. There appears to be a certain level of showmanship at play here; Makonnen seems to revel in the media interest. Moreover, his frequent mention of not paying taxes hints at Makonnen seeing himself as a figure operating outside the law, something which is at odds with his public position as a businessman in Manchester. Continuing, we analysed Makonnen's relationship with those within the African diaspora community and beyond. His correspondence with Drake highlights Makonnen's intention to remain abreast of Pan-African events in North America and, perhaps unsurprisingly, his support of Du Bois over White. More telling is the lacklustre Pan-African response to the Liverpool Riots, due to their focus being elsewhere. What is surprising, however, is the limited immediate impact that Makonnen had within the West Indian community in Manchester. The Archie Downie

and Christian Euton interviews tell us that many in the community were indifferent to his presence in the city; the immediate post-war era, for them, was about settling down, not getting involved in Pan-African politics. Yet, counter to these examples, there is Ras Fini and Alfred Gaisie, whose interviews provide us with clarity concerning Makonnen's time in Manchester. Of course, Makonnen acted as a paternal figure to the two men – again, this is in line with his Pan-African ethos – but the revelatory aspects of the interviews is in what they tell us about Makonnen as a man. Fini's recollection of the *Princessa* case compared to Makonnen's further highlights a desire in the latter to unnecessarily make events seem grander than they were. Furthermore, we need to consider the nature of their relationship with Makonnen, especially when considering that they expressed limited interest in the Manchester Congress, nor what was discussed there. Perhaps their relationship was mutually beneficial: Makonnen provided them with steady work and stability while they settled in Manchester, and they were keen to serve someone who provided them with security. Nevertheless, it is through these actions – and supporting the wider African diaspora community – that we see Makonnen's Pan-African ethos at its most effective.

### **Chapter 3.**

#### **Pan-Africanism in Practice: Ghana.**

This final chapter will introduce Makonnen into Ghana and evaluate his role in attempting to implement Pan-Africanism there. Firstly, we will explore Nkrumah's activities since the Manchester Congress in 1945, in relation to him assuming political power on the Gold Coast and then leading Ghana to independence. We will briefly outline the political philosophy of 'Nkrumahism' and the adoption of Pan-Africanism as government policy. We will then introduce George Padmore and T. Ras Makonnen into the narrative. The experiences of both men in Ghana will be discussed throughout the chapter as their narratives are intrinsically linked through past and present experiences. The chapter will then argue that Makonnen's move to Ghana was not wholly based on ideology, rather, it was necessitated by a growing restlessness in Manchester, as well as mounting financial concerns and apathy towards the lack of progress in the Pan-African sphere outside of Africa. We will look at the agencies that Padmore and Makonnen worked within, what roles they played in implementing Pan-Africanism, and the difficulties they faced. We will then assess the conflicts and challenges that both men faced in Ghana, with regards to a hostile civil service and how both men reacted to the ethnic tensions that existed in Ghana and Africa, and the incompatibility of their 'diaspora' Pan-Africanism when faced with Pan-African nationalism and tribalism. The chapter will end by arguing that both Padmore and Makonnen were fatigued after decades of activism and consequently that both men began to question their relevance in Africa.

#### **Nkrumah**

Before we can assess T. Ras Makonnen and George Padmore's roles in attempting to implement Pan-Africanism on the African continent, we need to briefly recap on the post-1945 activities of Francis Kwame Nkrumah. After leaving Britain for the Gold Coast in 1947, Nkrumah became the general secretary of the United Gold Coast Convention (UGCC) and swiftly became a high-profile political figure on the Gold Coast. A series of riots and demonstrations in 1948 by workers and ex-servicemen throughout the Gold Coast led to a state of emergency and the subsequent arrest

and detainment of Nkrumah and others within the UGCC. Whilst the UGCC played no role in the riots they did seek to gain political capital from them. Moreover, the riots and subsequent arrests of those involved highlighted the differences between the more conservative members of the UGCC who opposed radical action and Nkrumah, who supported it. This led to a split whereby Nkrumah left the UGCC and helped to create the Convention Peoples Party (CPP), which was formed in 1949. The CPP demanded 'Self-Government Now' and advocated the mobilisation of trade unions, agricultural workers, youth and ex-servicemen's association to achieve this goal. In 1950, Nkrumah announced a campaign of 'positive action', which Adi argues, was along the lines of what the 1945 Pan-African Manchester Congress advocated, although Nkrumah certainly also drew upon his experiences of the unrest in 1948.<sup>1</sup> When 'positive action' led to a series of strikes and demonstrations, Nkrumah was arrested once again by the colonial authorities and rather than diminish his popularity, his time in jail enhanced it. Following his release in 1951, Nkrumah became Leader of Government Business, and Prime Minister in 1952. Nkrumah led Ghana to independence in March 1957. Moreover, Nkrumah declared that "the independence of Ghana is meaningless unless it is linked up with the total liberation of the African continent."<sup>2</sup>

This declaration of intent would be formalised throughout Nkrumah's years in power and can be summarised into three goals: national unity, economic transformation (socialism) and Africa's total liberation and unity. These goals, and the methods by which they would be achieved, became known, by 1960, as "Nkrumahism". African liberation and unity meant wholly adopting Pan-Africanism as government policy. It was Nkrumah's aim, as outlined in the Manchester Congress, to inextricably link Ghana's national destiny with Africa's, whereby Pan-Africanism would be used as a tool for nation building within Ghana, and as foreign policy.<sup>3</sup> Nkrumah set about implementing Pan-Africanism in various ways. In 1958, he laid the groundwork which

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<sup>1</sup> H. Adi & M. Sherwood, *Pan-African History: Political Figures from Africa and the Diaspora since 1787*, (Routledge, 2003), p. 144.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> K. Armah, *Peace Without Power, Ghana's Foreign Policy 1957-1966*, (Ghana University Press, 2004), pp. 9-10.

led to the formation of the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) in 1963. Whilst having limited power over national issues, such as being unable to intervene in the civil wars of Nigeria and Angola, the OAU did establish the African Development Bank and acted as a caucus within the UN for African nations.<sup>4</sup> Secondly, it was Nkrumah's belief that Ghana should become a microcosm of his vision for the entire African continent, and as such, he would provide resources to "create...the bridgehead for organised assaults upon colonialism in Africa". This meant, argues Biney, "providing material and financial assistance to numerous African liberation movements" and providing a haven for African freedom fighters in Ghana. To help achieve this goal, in the early days of Guinea's independence, Ghana sent a loan for £10 million.<sup>5</sup> Thirdly, Nkrumah carefully laid the intellectual foundations for Pan-Africanism. Nkrumah believed that there was a need to decolonise the minds of Africans that had been polluted with the "colonial historiography" of the European nations. To achieve this, he endeavoured to establish the Institute of African Studies (IAS) and the Encyclopaedia Africana. These institutions sought to deconstruct the socially constructed, Eurocentric interferences that blurred the intellectual appreciation of Africa and Africans.<sup>6</sup>

In the immediate aftermath of independence in 1957, Nkrumah sought to place Ghana at the forefront of African liberation and unity on the African continent. Such a course of action was possible due to decisions taken at the 1945 Manchester Congress. Adamafo states that Ghana's independence and subsequent implementation of a Pan-Africanism as government policy highlights the success of the Manchester model of Pan-Africanism. Furthermore, such an undertaking would not have been possible if there was no relationship between Padmore and Nkrumah.<sup>7</sup> The relationship between the two men developed in the build-up to the Congress. As Padmore was Nkrumah's sole point of contact in the UK, the pair worked closely together, with Padmore involving Nkrumah in the activities of Pan-African Federation

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<sup>4</sup> M. Bolaji, 'The African Union's Call for Global Pan-Africanism and the Ghana-Diaspora Relations in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century', *Journal of Black Studies*, 46:1, (2014), p, 79.

<sup>5</sup> A. Biney, 'The Legacy of Kwame Nkrumah', *The Journal of Pan-African Studies*, 2:3 (2008), p, 135.

<sup>6</sup> Bolaji, p. 80.

<sup>7</sup> T. Adamafo, *By Nkrumah's Side*, (Westcoast & Collings, 1982), p.103.

and appointing Nkrumah as secretary of the Manchester Congress. The meeting and subsequent collaboration of the two men marks a symbolic turning point in the Pan-African narrative that began with the West Indian diaspora and would enter a second phase with African nationalists on the continent. In Nkrumah, Padmore found a man to whom he could “hand over the Pan-African torch from the diaspora to the Africans.”<sup>8</sup> Championing Nkrumah’s achievements in consolidating power throughout the early 1950s, Padmore wrote *Pan-Africanism or Communism*, which was intended to be a synthesis of his experiences and work within the Pan-African movement and a first attempt to outline the history of Pan-Africanism as a political philosophy. In it, Padmore outlined a programme to spread Pan-Africanism throughout the Gold Coast and across the African continent. Moreover, the book can be considered, as Grilli states, the text Ghana’s Pan-African policy was based on.<sup>9</sup>

### **Makonnen’s move to Ghana.**

Before we can continue the narrative of Pan-Africanism in Ghana, we need to ascertain how Makonnen enters the African arena. Whilst Padmore was working with Nkrumah in Ghana, Makonnen remained in Manchester. He spent the interval between the 1945 Congress and his move to Ghana in 1957, honing his organisational skills and ensuring that coverage of events happening on the African continent were widely spread throughout England. “Our method was to swell incidents [in Africa] out of proportion...we would publicise the fact that the whole country was in flames”. This included the lobbying of sympathetic MPs in the Parliamentary Labour Party and keeping those within the Pan-African movement abreast of events as they occurred.<sup>10</sup> The role of the Pan-African Federation in the years after the war and independence in Africa was to facilitate any need that African leaders had in England. This role saw Makonnen acting as a conduit, whereby he attempted to facilitate links with the disparate Pan-African camps in North America and Africa. Yet, the internal power struggles within the NAACP concerning Du Bois and White, and a general lack

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<sup>8</sup> L. James, *What we put in Black and White: George Padmore and the Practice of Anti-Imperialist Politics*, PhD Thesis, The London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE), 2012, p. 194.

<sup>9</sup> M. Grilli, *African Liberation and Unity in Nkrumah’s Ghana: A Study of the role of “Pan-African Institutions” in the making of Ghana’s Foreign Policy*, PhD Thesis, Leiden University, 2015, p. 13.

<sup>10</sup> R. Makonnen, *Pan-Africanism from Within*, (Oxford University, 1973), p. 178.

of direction and unity amongst supporters of Pan-Africanism, meant the movement in North America was splintering and highly disorganised.<sup>11</sup> Nevertheless, on the 9<sup>th</sup> July 1948, Makonnen reached out to the NAACP. He believed that present and future African leaders would benefit from being better informed about the struggles that were being fought on their behalf. To this end, Makonnen requested materials on Du Bois, which outlined his activities and methods of work, together with background information on the historical context within which Du Bois worked. Makonnen's aim here was to formally establish links between Afro-American and African learning institutes through student scholarships and essay competitions bearing the name of Du Bois.<sup>12</sup> Whilst Makonnen's idea was viewed favourably by the NAACP – with Smythe going so far as to propose the exchange be called the “W.E.B. Du Bois Exchange Fellowship” - issues were raised about how such an undertaking would be financed with Smythe arguing that the federal government would be unlikely to finance such an initiative.<sup>13</sup>

Other than his work trying to establish and maintain trans-Atlantic links, the post-war years for Makonnen in Manchester appear to highlight a growing restlessness in him which was otherwise dormant during wartime. As the Pan-African centre of focus moved towards West Africa and away from Manchester and England after the conclusion of the 1945 Congress, we find hints that Makonnen was taking stock of his life as a Pan-Africanist up to this point. In a polemic letter written to Drake, Makonnen railed against what he regarded as the social and economic deterioration of the West Indies despite the influence of Western material standards.<sup>14</sup> Moreover, the apathy displayed by West Indians in relation to their place in the history of slavery, compared with their kinsmen in Africa seems to be of concern. “[West Indians] have become so permeated with the influence of European opportunism

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<sup>11</sup> St Clair. Drake, Letter to Ras Makonnen, 28<sup>th</sup> October 1948.

<sup>12</sup> R. Makonnen, Letter to Hugh Smythe, 9<sup>th</sup> July 1948; Hugh Smythe was an Afro-American academic specialising in anthropology and sociology, who, alongside his friend St. Clair Drake, progressed through the Afro-American university system. He wrote extensively on the migration of “Black Caribs” from the British West Indies into North America, and the socio-economic impact on their lives. M. Anderson, ‘The Complicated Career of Hugh Smythe...Anthropologist and Ambassador: The Early Years, 1940-50’, *Transforming Anthropology*, 16:2, (2008), pp. 1-7.

<sup>13</sup> H. Smythe, Letter to Ras Makonnen, 16<sup>th</sup> July 1948.

<sup>14</sup> R. Makonnen, Letter to St Clair. Drake, 30<sup>th</sup> July 1948.

that they do not even know what is their own, and certainly make no efforts to claim it.” Makonnen was clearly perturbed by what he saw as a lack of enthusiasm in opposing colonialism throughout the West Indies, especially when compared with Africa. Citing an alleged post-emancipation promise in America of “40 acres and a mule” to Afro-Americans, Makonnen claimed that West Indians were guilty of accepting poverty and were morally obliged to seek the means to better themselves. In allowing themselves to live in poverty without seeking solutions to their problems they were guilty of foregoing their responsibilities to their kinsmen in other parts of the world. This, he argued, acted as a “retarding influence on the people of Africa”, and moreover, “[the] backwardness of West Indians” was beginning to contrast with the efforts of Africans who were asserting their claims to independence.<sup>15</sup> Such rhetoric was not consigned to his correspondence with Drake; in the years after the war, Makonnen criticised those of African diaspora who chose to settle in England, which was typical of many from the West Indies in the post-war era. What the West Indian migrants thought of Makonnen, who pleaded with them to “arm yourself to return to your own country” is open to interpretation. There was, he argued, a “double loyalty” that resided amongst the African diaspora in England, meaning those of Ghanaian origin who were quick to toast Nkrumah’s achievements yet never had any intention of ever returning to Ghana.<sup>16</sup>

It is important to consider why Makonnen started to openly feel this way; his letter to Drake exhibits more than a simple critique of West Indian apathy, rather, it highlights Makonnen as someone expressing frustration. Clearly, he felt that events within the Pan-African world were passing him by. It could be argued that post-Congress, Manchester outlived its usefulness as an effective base of operations. Certainly, Nkrumah and Padmore had little use for Manchester or England as a base anymore, other than its usefulness as a symbolic launching pad for Ghanaian independence. Arguably, Makonnen felt left behind in Manchester; his attacks in the general direction of the West Indies and his continual attempts to forge a somewhat futile trans-Atlantic Pan-African network seem to be wasted when compared to his

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<sup>15</sup> R. Makonnen, Letter to St Clair. Drake, 30<sup>th</sup> July 1948.

<sup>16</sup> R. Makonnen, p. 172-173.

previous efforts in war-time Manchester. Moreover, his friend and ally Padmore was working on the African continent, putting into practice the theory which they had both advocated in the interwar period. This certainly would have played on Makonnen's mind; and yet, ironically, it was during this period that Padmore sang Makonnen's praises as both an organiser and shrewd financial officer.<sup>17</sup> Nevertheless, post-Congress, Makonnen began to vocally question his place and length of tenure in Manchester. "My being in Manchester was just an accident of history...I have no ties to...Manchester."<sup>18</sup>

Yet, there are much more practical, pragmatic reasons behind Makonnen's frustration. We know that Makonnen was a central figure within the black community in Manchester; he was the go-to man if there was an issue that needed resolving. To facilitate these needs, whether organising legal defences, maintaining a network of contacts, or funding the Congress, Makonnen relied on the income from his entrepreneurial ventures. His bookshop had a sizeable university clientele, and his "large, clean, airy restaurant near the centre of the city had trade that was brisk". Yet, for all Makonnen's apparent success as a businessman, he was heavily in debt.<sup>19</sup> As early as 1942, the Inland Revenue was already seeking to recover unpaid income-taxes from him and his businesses, but it appears that after the war ended, their efforts somewhat increased.<sup>20</sup> Subsequent letters to Drake, following up on his request to use McCray as a middle-man to sources books, reiterate the urgency that no packages should be sent care of the bookshop; rather, they should be sent directly to Makonnen's private address. "We would have some trouble explaining their arrival to the Customs Officials."<sup>21</sup>

With Makonnen's rationale for leaving England and the move to Africa not explicitly outlined in his memoirs, we must assume that his financial problems and the Pan-African shift in focus played a major part in this decision. Yet, putting aside pragmatic

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<sup>17</sup> G. Padmore, *Pan-Africanism or Communism*, (Dobson, 1956), p. 146-147.

<sup>18</sup> R. Makonnen, p. 173.

<sup>19</sup> Untitled correspondence, *A Report on Prominent Negroes in Manchester*. St Clair. Drake Letters. (No Date). The letter also mentions Arthur Lewis, a prominent West Indian economist who had been appointed a professorship at Manchester University in 1947.

<sup>20</sup> R. Makonnen, p. 141.

<sup>21</sup> R. Makonnen, Letter to St Clair. Drake, 21<sup>st</sup> July 1948.

reasoning for a moment, perhaps Makonnen's financial issues and his subsequent migration to Africa were much more coincidental than previously outlined. Nkrumah, by this point, was making great strides towards creating what Ahlman calls a 'Pan-African Accra'. The 1955 Bandung Conference, which was attended by representatives of Nkrumah's pre-independence Ghana, was a platform for emerging nation states to demand equality on the international stage. "Bandung allowed leaders to meet together, celebrate the demise of formal colonialism, and pledge themselves to some measure of joint struggle against the forces of imperialism." Moreover, the conference galvanised Nkrumah's belief that the history of decolonisation and self-determination was on his and Ghana's side. This belief, and particularly Nkrumah's worldview that decolonisation should be a cooperative effort which should be applied to Africa's diverse colonies, led to, after Ghana's formal independence, Accra's creation into a natural safe-haven for the continent's anti-colonialist nationalists and radicals.<sup>22</sup> That such a haven was being created, and with Pan-Africanism taking precedence on the international stage, with Nkrumah at its centre, then Makonnen's migration to Ghana makes more sense. Arguably, his financial problems were viewed by him as inconsequential when compared to the momentum that was gathering apace in the movement that he had dedicated his life to.

### **Padmore and Makonnen in Ghana.**

Whatever the specifics behind Makonnen's decision to move to Ghana in 1957, it was certainly made easier by the advancement of his friend and comrade, Padmore, into Nkrumah's inner circle. In the same year, Nkrumah tasked Padmore with leading the Office of the Adviser on African Affairs, a role which focused on the actualisation of Nkrumah's Pan-African policy through 'unorthodox' means. The term 'unorthodox', here, meant Padmore reporting directly to Nkrumah and totally circumventing the traditional international diplomatic protocols that were used by Ghana's British trained civil service. This role was specifically created with Padmore's past anti-colonialist experiences in mind. The 'Office's' remit was to act as a "centre for

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<sup>22</sup> J. Ahlman, 'Road to Ghana: Nkrumah, Southern Africa and the Eclipse of a Decolonising Africa', *Kronos: Southern African Histories*, 37:1, (2011), p. 25.

exchanging views with other African leaders” and as a “propaganda forum”.<sup>23</sup> Padmore was also tasked with the recovery of information and in giving support to liberation movements in Africa.<sup>24</sup>

The creation of such a role invariably created tension between the traditional branches of government and the small ‘unofficial’ branch that was headed by Padmore, who they certainly viewed as being a radical figure. So, to shore up support and to ensure that he had allies on side, Padmore, with Nkrumah’s blessing, enlisted Makonnen to work alongside him.<sup>25</sup> Makonnen’s inclusion in the ‘Office’, alongside a Ewe Ghanaian, called James Markham, marked the creation of a triumvirate of seasoned campaigners who were also strong advocates of Pan-Africanism.<sup>26</sup> The period, 1957-1958, in which Padmore, Makonnen and Markham worked in the ‘Office’ was the start, Grilli states, of an internal war between the “radicals” and “moderates” within the Ghanaian state and the CPP.<sup>27</sup> This ‘war’ marks a souring in relations between Padmore and the civil service in Ghana. The animosity stemmed from the criticism of a senior civil servant A.L. Adu, who was Principal Secretary of the Ministry of Defence and External Affairs, and *de-facto* head of the Foreign Office, towards Padmore, whom he deemed to be incompetent based on the grounds that Padmore was not African. Hooker posits that the Ghanaian bureaucrats would have been horrified by this “ex-Comintern figure” having the ear of Nkrumah and being directly involved in advancing government policy.<sup>28</sup> Yet, the animosity cut both ways as Padmore was particularly scathing about the “colonial mentality” that existed within the Foreign Office, which he claimed was “overly bureaucratic” and acted as a brake on the work that he and Nkrumah were doing.<sup>29</sup>

Makonnen’s role within the ‘Office’ was to establish facilities where African “revolutionaries or freedom fighters could be accommodated and made useful to

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<sup>23</sup> M. Grilli, *African Liberation and Unity in Nkrumah’s Ghana: A Study of the role of “Pan-African Institutions” in the making of Ghana’s Foreign Policy*, PhD Thesis, Leiden University, 2015, p. 22.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid*, p. 19.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid*, p. 2.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid*, p. 26.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid*, p. 29.

<sup>28</sup> G. Hooker, *Black Revolutionary. George Padmore’s Path from Communism to Pan-Africanism*, (Pall Mall Press, 1967), p. 135.

<sup>29</sup> Hooker, p. 25.

themselves and the development of a [pan]-African ideology.” Such a role was given to Makonnen, specifically by Padmore and Nkrumah, due to his organisational skills and the success of the Manchester Congress in 1945.<sup>30</sup> Certainly, Makonnen’s strong rhetoric, which was highlighted in his letter to Drake, was not lessened when he joined the ‘Office’. “[Africans] have a duty to perform...they were not any longer to wait meekly for independence to be handed to them on a silver platter, but to work for it with an awakened conscience.”<sup>31</sup> Due to the hostility of the Foreign Office towards Padmore, Makonnen chose to largely use his own initiative to establish a base for the ‘visitors’ they expected. To his credit, Makonnen avoided antagonising the civil service where he could. He made the astute choice to not directly ask for government assistance where possible and opted to open lines of credit with a bank and only enlisted government support where needed, with building and renovation work for example. “To be an outsider like I was, and to be handling money like an insider would have been...rather delicate.”<sup>32</sup>

In their chapter on Padmore, both Sherwood and Adi argue that Makonnen’s centre would host Padmore’s greatest achievement: The All-African Peoples Conference (AAPC).<sup>33</sup> It was the culmination of Padmore’s dreams, plans and struggles. Around 300 delegates representing 28 countries attended, with attendees including activists belonging to freedom struggles in Africa and trade unionists in both free states and colonies. Tom Mboya of Kenya was chairperson, with Padmore acting as secretary-general. The motto of the AAPC was ‘Independence and Unity’ and its aims included the ‘acceleration of liberation; development of a feeling of community among the peoples of Africa; to work for the emergence of a United States of Africa’. To achieve this goal, the AAPC endorsed ‘regional groupings’ to pool resources and demanded an immediate end to the ‘political and economic exploitation of Africans by Imperialist Europeans’. They also pledged support to all ‘fighters of freedom in Africa’ including those ‘who resort to peaceful means’ as well as ‘those who are compelled

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<sup>30</sup> Makonnen, p. 212

<sup>31</sup> Ibid, p. 211.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid, p. 213.

<sup>33</sup> H. Adi & M. Sherwood, *Pan-African History: Political Figures from Africa and the Diaspora since 1787*, (Routledge, 2003), p. 156.

to retaliate against violence to attain national independence'; the condemnation of the 'pernicious system of racialism and discriminatory laws; and the imposition of economic sanctions on South Africa. Finally, Padmore, through the AAPC, sought to highlight the imperialist attempt to perpetuate their power in Africa through the fostering of tribalism.<sup>34</sup>

Coincidentally, the onset of the AAPC in 1958, accelerated the development of Makonnen's facilities as there was a lack of hotel space in the city for guests to stop. This oversight, and the centre's subsequent use as a stop-off and meeting point for 'unofficial' guests in Ghana, allowed Makonnen to stay abreast of the current political climate in Ghana, and Africa. Makonnen expressed alarm and dismay at the centre playing host to a delegation of Egyptians who attended the AAPC, whom he believed were trying to foster links with other liberation groups in Kenya and Uganda. Judging by Makonnen's offhand remarks concerning the "damn Egyptians...with their...Muslim Brotherhoods and God knows what else" it appears that he believed the centre should be used exclusively by Africans and "not by interested parties with one foot in African and the other in the Middle East." Makonnen's remarks here hint at the fierce competition between the Egyptians and Ghanaians over who was going to take the ideological lead in the liberation struggle.<sup>35</sup> Moreover, Makonnen's proximity to sensitive meetings gave him an insight into political gossip which would ultimately harm his standing with Nkrumah. Holden Roberto, leader of the Union of Peoples of Angola, stayed on in Ghana after the conference and would frequent Makonnen's centre to meet with Barden, a figure within Nkrumah's circle whom Makonnen found to be manipulative; Makonnen argues that Barden "worked on Nkrumah with *ju-ju*".<sup>36</sup> Makonnen went to Nkrumah with suspicions about Holden's character and intent, but he was dismissed out of hand by Nkrumah.<sup>37</sup>

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<sup>34</sup> Adi & Sherwood, *Pan-African History*, p. 156.

<sup>35</sup> M. Grillo, *Nkrumahism and African Nationalism: Ghana's Pan-African Policy in the Age of Decolonisation*, (Palgrave, 2018), p. 106.

<sup>36</sup> Makonnen, p. 260.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid*, p. 213-218.

### **Ethnic rivalries in Ghana and Padmore & Makonnen's legitimacy in Africa.**

For all the success of the AAPC, Padmore and Makonnen faced fundamental challenges in Ghana which ran much deeper than bureaucratic battles with civil servants. Gilroy argues that tensions always existed within the worldwide Pan-African camp, especially between those in the African diaspora, such as Du Bois, who argued for the theoretical fulfilment of Pan-Africanism, and those 'on the ground' who were actively involved in the implementation of Pan-Africanism. Furthermore, Pan-Africanism, particularly when applied on the post-war African continent effectively synthesised into two distinct variants: the transnational, and the national, or, Pan-Africanism in the international, diasporic sense, versus Pan-African nationalism.<sup>38</sup> Bearing this point in mind, we find it highlighted perfectly in Padmore's relationship with his old friend and Pan-African comrade, Joe Appiah. Appiah came from Ashanti aristocracy and decided to break ranks with Padmore to form the National Liberation Movement (NLM) in 1954. Such a move is profound because of two reasons. Firstly, Appiah was breaking with the diaspora Pan-African movement to focus on the advancement of the Ashanti. And secondly, the NLM was formed to directly challenge the CPP, the party of Padmore's close ally, Nkrumah.

Nationalist Ashanti resistance to Nkrumah and the CPP was commonplace in the northern parts of Ghana, with some incidents between Ashanti nationalists and CPP supporters resulting in some on both sides being excommunicated and forced to live elsewhere. There is a paradox in the breakdown of the relationship between the Ashanti and Nkrumah's CPP, and by extension, between Appiah and Padmore: they both believed they were still advancing Pan-Africanism, albeit, now from their own international and national viewpoints. The subsequent breakdown of Appiah and Padmore's friendship resulted in an ongoing feud between Padmore and the Ashanti which would spill over into a fierce war of words played out in the Ghanaian press and in letters to friends. To Padmore, Appiah was a "disgruntled intellectual...financed by mining and trading companies to...abolish government trade monopoly." To the Ashanti, and other opposition groups, Padmore was the

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<sup>38</sup> P. Gilroy, *The Black Atlantic: Modernity and the Double Consciousness*, (Verso, 1993), p. 112.

'outsider', an identity that was carefully constructed, harnessed and reinforced throughout Padmore's tenure in Ghana.<sup>39</sup> They utilised Padmore's past affiliations with the Communist Party to discredit him in several Gold Coast newspapers. He was referred to as an "impecunious and stateless ignoramus...who escaped the West Indies in a tramp ship."<sup>40</sup>

Once the narrative was formed that Padmore was 'stateless' and a 'non-citizen', his legitimacy as an advisor to Nkrumah, and identity within Ghana was increasingly questioned.<sup>41</sup> Padmore believed that Ghanaian economic and social transformation should be the priority and that tribalism was a product of the divide and rule tactics used by the European powers to keep Africa and Africans subdued. James argues that the clash between the two men symbolised more than a war of words, it was a clash of Pan-African visions at a fundamental level: the idea of a 'nation' and the idea of the 'modern'. Both camps espoused their vision of an imagined Ghana, and Africa. Moreover, the genus of the diasporic Pan-Africanism of Padmore, and indeed, Makonnen, starts with the characterisation of the homeland as being sacred, but to those living in the homeland, this characterisation is irrelevant, as those wishing to return possessed a different vision of Africa, therefore, endangering the identity of the Gold Coast nation.<sup>42</sup>

When considering the above argument, we can make the assertion that both Padmore and Makonnen were wrongfooted by the fluidity at which Pan-Africanism was evolving when applied in a nationalist and tribal context. Indeed, we find evidence of Makonnen being as equally caught out with regards to ethnic politics as Padmore. Makonnen's naivety towards the dominance of ethnic politics in Ghana can be found in his reaction towards the issues raised by the Ewe concerning their right to exist as a nation. The Ewe were dominant in the eastern areas of Ghana and lived on land that straddled both sides of the Ghana-Togo border. Some wished to retain Ghanaian citizenship whilst living in Togo, and *vice-versa*, whilst a large majority felt

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<sup>39</sup> L. James, *George Padmore and Decolonisation from Below: Pan-Africanism, The Cold War, and the End of Empire*, (Palgrave, 2015), pp. 152.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid, pp. 150-154.

no loyalty to either nation and live independently. Many Ewe believed that their nation was far more important to pledge allegiance to either nation.<sup>43</sup> Makonnen's assessment of this issue was simple and naïve in the extreme. "We simply looked at the traditional links amongst the peoples[sic]...and felt that there would be no problem."<sup>44</sup> Of course, this statement belies the complex nature of ethnicity that was prevalent throughout Ghana and its borders. Ghana and its surrounding environs consist of four main ethnicities: the Ashanti, Fanti, Ga, and the Ewe; Ghana's cultural, societal and political structures were intrinsically linked together through centuries of interactions between these ethnic groups.<sup>45</sup> Makonnen admits to "greatly underestimating the 'human factor'" in Ghana. "It was typical...to pin everything on the white man and assume that once the whites had disappeared, then Africans could return to being Africans; after all they had been exploited by the same slave trade. It was ridiculous of us to expect that...things would end automatically."<sup>46</sup>

Such an attitude, argues Nantambu, was common amongst Pan-Africanists who belonged to the diaspora. Indeed, the argument can be presented that neither Padmore or Makonnen's Pan-Africanism was compatible with the emergence of Pan-African nationalism that was developing across the African continent throughout the 1950s. Nantambu states that the Pan-Africanist vision created by the African diaspora in the West Indies and America was first and foremost 'Euro-centric' in its outlook, meaning that the diaspora's primary focus was on anti-colonialism and imperialism, rather than wholly on the intricacies of culture in Africa. This invariably meant that their focus was never fully on Africa's development as their attention and energy was always elsewhere. And secondly, diaspora Pan-Africanism was couched in emotional and politico-cultural platitudes based on an imagined and romanticised Africa. Diaspora Pan-Africanism, or 'globalist' Pan-Africanism, glossed over the revolutionary and historical struggles that Africans had faced over centuries. Nantambu posits that the problems Padmore and Makonnen faced in Ghana

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<sup>43</sup> B. Davidson, *Black Star: A View of the Life and Times of Kwame Nkrumah*, (Penguin, 1973), p. 119.

<sup>44</sup> Makonnen, p. 229.

<sup>45</sup> Y. Saaka, 'Recurrent Themes in Ghanaian Politics: Kwame Nkrumah's Legacy', *Journal of Black Studies*, 24:3 (1994), p. 265.

<sup>46</sup> Makonnen, pp. 229-230.

stemmed from their anti-colonialist mindset which they then projected onto Africa, thus, they tended to oversimplify complex regional issues that were inherently African in nature. Also, by viewing Africa through the lens of anti-colonialism they were ultimately blindsided by the groundswell of nationalistic feeling amongst the disparate nations and ethnicities throughout Africa, let alone that all Africans would unite under the vision of Pan-Africanism that they presented.<sup>47</sup> This assertion is also shared by the Nkrumah biographer, Basil Davidson, who states that those within the African diaspora who pledged their lives to international Pan-Africanism tended to have their judgement clouded as to the divisions that already existed within Africa.<sup>48</sup>

When considering the above point, we must note Makonnen's reaction to tensions amongst the African diaspora in South Shields, in northern England. An issue that arose between Somali and African Arab migrants – the mayor, a Jewish man called Gompertz, was allegedly using his position to discriminate against the Arab community in favour of the Somalis – attracted Makonnen's attention. He sought to intervene as a mediator, and whilst his intervention was seemingly successful, his recollection afterwards is littered with tropes about Somali "traitors" being involved in the Italo-Abyssinian conflict and him having "to educate you people on this question of imperialism."<sup>49</sup> Quite what the migrant community of South Shields made of these comments is unknown, but considering that the aftermath of the Italo-Abyssinian resulted in the birth of a previously unknown Eritrean nationalist movement, one would assume that Makonnen, would have formulated a much more nuanced response to the region of Africa that he adopted as his spiritual home.<sup>50</sup> The problem for Makonnen was that his vision of Pan-Africanism had altered little since he left England. Makonnen's Pan-Africanism envisaged a 'black led and financed movement, free from outside agencies, holding a watchful brief over the African world and being ready to move whenever some colonial or police brutality came to

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<sup>47</sup> K. Nantambu, 'Pan-Africanism versus Pan-African Nationalism: An Afro-Centric Analysis', *Journal of Black Studies*, 28:5, (1998), pp. 561-570.

<sup>48</sup> Davidson, p. 42.

<sup>49</sup> Makonnen, p. 183.

<sup>50</sup> P. Gilkes, 'National Identity and Historical Mythology in Eritrea and Somaliland', *Northeast African Studies*, 10:3, (2003), p. 164.

light'.<sup>51</sup> Yet, this Pan-African statement of intent belongs to a world where Africans and Africa were still beholden to colonial powers, and, arguably, held little weight in an independent African nation. Moreover, as a philosophy, it casts Africa, Africans and the African diaspora as being a homogenous mass of people, cultures and identities; something, which, ironically, Makonnen accused Padmore of doing when they were both in England.<sup>52</sup>

Still, when we consider the above arguments on how and why Padmore and Makonnen underestimated the evolution of Pan-African nationalism and the dominance of tribalism in Ghana, there are, it seems, two cogent arguments to be made. Firstly, the theoretical case, which scholars of nationalism, such as Anthony Smith, posit. Smith argues that the creation of post-war independent nations, especially in Africa, were built on the premise of identification with a state or nation, or general acceptance of a 'national myth' or dominant *ethnie*. Ghana's early years as an independent nation was based on the conflicting interests of the various population groups that lived there. It could be argued, therefore, that the diaspora Pan-Africanism of Padmore and Makonnen would have little effect in dislodging the dominant *ethnie* that existed in Ghana before their arrival. Moreover, an artificial national myth, in our case, diaspora Pan-Africanism, built by elites to bolster a state's legitimacy tends to alienate and leave large sections of the population untouched. Furthermore, and ironically, it would be Nkrumah's Pan-Africanism, which became Nkrumahism, that would eventually subsume the tribal *ethnies* and go onto create the national myth of Ghana as a nation.<sup>53</sup> Nkrumah certainly saw the bigger picture in terms of using Pan-Africanism as an ideology whereby a coherent narrative could be created and eventually, a country, and continent, could be united around Pan-Africanist principles.<sup>54</sup>

This is a point that both Makonnen and Padmore considered whilst in Ghana. The question being: what obstacles need to be overcome to achieve African unity; the answer both men came up with, unsurprisingly, was tribalism. Padmore argued that

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<sup>51</sup> Makonnen, p. xiii-xv.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid, p. 135.

<sup>53</sup> A. Smith, *Nations and Nationalism in a Global Era*, (Blackwell, 1995), p. 38.

<sup>54</sup> Davidson, p. 42.

“the greatest menace facing Africa” was tribalism. Imperialism, he argued, was on the defensive at this point, and tribalism was on the offensive.<sup>55</sup> Makonnen’s thoughts were much more audacious and critical than Padmore’s, who was fiercely loyal to Nkrumah. He argued that the tribalism aspect, whilst being highly relevant during this period, was, in fact, tempered by Nkrumah, who strategically placed men from various tribes in positions of power, to keep a lid on the issue. Furthermore, Makonnen accused Nkrumah of fostering a “Machiavellian feel to government” in which Nkrumah would play different groups off against each other which led to distrust and led to accusations that ‘Makonnen was distorting the whole thing.’<sup>56</sup>

The second argument is that both men had long since reached the apex of their careers as activists and campaigners. James argues that the quarrels between Padmore and the Ashanti, and the rise of a new generation of Pan-African nationalists marks the start of him questioning his relevance within the Pan-African world.<sup>57</sup> Moreover, we know that Makonnen, who had previously railed against the ‘backwardness’ of West Indians in failing to challenge colonialism in the Ghanaian mould, now had the same arguments used against him. Some in Ghana stated that he “should put his own house in order in the New World before coming over and preaching to Africans.”<sup>58</sup> Both men, it could be argued, after decades of campaigning were beginning to fatigue, both mentally and physically – Padmore died in 1959 - and moreover, both were seriously starting to question their relevance within the Pan-African world. James, who has written extensively on Padmore, highlights a letter that Padmore wrote in 1956, whereby he confessed a feeling that Africans – “not ‘hybrids’ like me” – should play a leading role in the future of Africa. “Personally, I have a feeling that I am out of date in my thinking. I might be too far ahead or too far behind. I want to find out...what young Africans and Negroes...are thinking. We, too, need to re-evaluate our lives. Otherwise we become sterile and doctrinaire, just repeating old, worn out phrases.”<sup>59</sup> Whilst the general tone of the letter highlights a

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<sup>55</sup> L. James, p. 143.

<sup>56</sup> Makonnen, p. 234.

<sup>57</sup> L. James, p. 144.

<sup>58</sup> Makonnen, p. 277.

<sup>59</sup> L. James, pp. 144-145.

level of uncertainty, and perhaps, anxiety, about his place as a Pan-Africanist in Africa, the use of the term 'hybrid' – meaning he was not fully African – is much more striking. This letter, James continues, exhibits clear signs that Padmore increasingly felt like an outsider in Africa, and moreover, he felt that he was losing legitimacy as an authoritative voice within the Pan-African movement. Perhaps this letter and Makonnen's polemic to Drake are evidence of fatigue and highlight that both were having doubts about their overall place within the Pan-African sphere. Makonnen's vocal criticism and anger towards the apathy of African migrants in England and the lack of radicalism in the West Indies could easily be construed as him having a moment of reflection in the same vein as Padmore; a realisation that as the philosophy of Pan-Africanism evolved, their standing and relevance within the movement was diminishing.

In conclusion, this final chapter has highlighted the shortcomings of T. Ras Makonnen's Pan-African ethos and approach when applied in an African setting. The chapter argues that Makonnen was becoming increasingly isolated in Manchester and arguably this was compounded by the Pan-African shift of focus to Africa. Moreover, we now understand that after years of tax avoidance and mounting debts, Makonnen was keen to leave England. This feeling is demonstrated through his letters to Makonnen where he rails against the lack of progress being made in the West Indies. We explored Makonnen's work alongside Padmore in the Office of Advisor on African Affairs: a role which brought the two men into direct conflict with an overtly hostile civil service. Whilst their work did have some success: notably the All African Peoples Conference, they were, as the chapter argues increasingly blindsided by both the evolution of Pan-Africanism when applied in a nationalistic context and the prominence of ethnically driven politics. This is highlighted in Padmore through his feud with the Ashanti and in Makonnen's naïve appraisal of African and Ghanaian socio-political structures. The chapter reinforces this point by using arguments from African scholars of Pan-Africanism and arguments based on nationalism in a global context. Furthermore, the chapter ends by arguing that both men's careers as Pan-African activists were in a nadir. Both men were expressing

doubts and frustration about their legitimacy as 'outsiders' in Africa, and arguably, their relevance as Pan-Africanists.

## Conclusion

This thesis has provided us with a window into the life of the Pan-African activist, T. Ras Makonnen; how a Pan-African mindset is developed, implemented, and its ultimate shortcomings. This was achieved through analysis of his early life in Guyana, North America, and Europe, where his ethos was developed. The thesis has evidenced how he practically applied Pan-Africanism in Manchester, and provided insight into its shortcomings, particularly when applied in Ghana.

The assessment of Makonnen's formative years in British Guyana has been crucial in outlining the decisions he made throughout his life. First and foremost, British Guyana's slave heritage cannot be understated. Makonnen's grandmother – who held a position of influence in Buxton – still upheld certain slave traditions and customs. It seems that Makonnen, who was appreciative of this legacy, keenly understood the changes that were sweeping the West Indies. His father's business was central to Makonnen's development into a Pan-Africanist in the internationalist mould. It was through the mining interests of his father that he learnt of his African heritage – his grandfather was Eritrean and worked with a Scottish man – and more importantly, he developed an awareness of the need for international cooperation to succeed in business. The cooperative mindset is evident also through his frequent mention of *Osusu*, which was central to Guyanese life when he was younger. These are lessons which Makonnen carried with him throughout his adult life.

Nevertheless, there are glaring contradictions which are at odds with his development into a Pan-Africanist. Firstly, Makonnen's understanding of the debates on race were extremely naïve: his appreciation for the NPC is revelatory. Moreover, his distaste towards Garveyism, especially when we consider that he drew heavily on Garvey's ideas in later life, perhaps hints at a lack of understanding of what they espoused. His naïve interpretation – in the author's opinion – is largely attributed to his young age. It appears, though, that events in Guyana had a much larger impact on Makonnen than he claims in his memoir. His choice to shun a career in mining – which given his father's experience would have clearly been profitable – and immerse himself in the culture of African diaspora advancement with the YMCA highlight this.

His work with the YMCA and the influence of Max Yergan accelerated Makonnen's understanding and reappraisal of the debates on race between Du Bois, Washington and Garvey.

Padmore's inclusion in the first chapter is important as it places distance between him and Makonnen in terms of their attitude and mindset. It cannot be stated enough that whilst Makonnen and Padmore worked together throughout their lives, they both approached the question of how to promote and advance Pan-Africanist ideals from different positions – Makonnen's frequent criticism of Padmore's involvement with the communist party evidences this. Historians tend to mention Makonnen as a collaborator with Padmore, whereas Makonnen's Pan-African ethos – centred around black self-reliance, very much in the vein of Garvey – was much more developed than Padmore's, who was still working within the rigid framework of the Moscow-led communist movement. Only recently have academics - Adi, Matera, Sherwood et al - begun to reference Makonnen as an individual player within the Pan-African world, rather than inferring that he worked under Padmore's tutelage. Of course, such an approach by academics is understandable; Makonnen was not a theorist like Padmore, nor was he front and centre; Makonnen can be interpreted as a 'mid-level' activist who sought to implement changes based on his early experiences. Nevertheless, Makonnen's continued development and maturation into a fully-fledged Pan-Africanist is evidenced by charting his involvement within the IAFE and IASB. Through Makonnen's article, penned in *International African Opinion*, we have a window into how his Pan-African mindset had developed since leaving Guyana. Yet, critically, we start to see glimpses of Makonnen viewing Africa and Africans as a homogenous mass; something which he did throughout his time in England and Ghana.

The second chapter highlights where Makonnen's Pan-Africanism comes to the fore. His tenure in Manchester provides us with concrete examples of Pan-Africanism in action. Manchester is the setting where he successfully implements the lessons that were crucial in Makonnen's early life: *Osusu* and international cooperation. A quick point, however, does need to be made: that Makonnen leaned heavily on experiences from his early life, whilst his Pan-African outlook was increasingly

anchored in the Garveyite notion of black self-reliance. This is a paradox that was explored within the chapter at length through the arguments of Gikandi, McCleod and Edwards. Pan-Africanism was easier to achieve in England than elsewhere in the world due to the alliances between Pan-African actors who shared the same goal. Makonnen's restaurants are examples of this paradox in action: financed with Makonnen's savings – most likely using the IASB funds he accrued – which went directly into funding Pan-Africanist projects, yet, they were almost exclusively international efforts. The staff were comprised of Chinese, Cypriots and Indians. He had Jewish backers and he employed African diaspora students from Manchester University. This approach, whilst couched in necessity, underscores how operating in an international setting affected Makonnen's Pan-Africanism. The 'alliances' that were formed in Makonnen's restaurants between the visitors from within and without the colonies reinforces Edwards' claim that black radicalism was becoming internationalist in nature. A further point about the restaurants which is crucial is them acting as proto-creolised spaces within the metropole. Donnell makes this point when she references Amy Garvey's bar in London alongside Makonnen's in Manchester. These spaces were critical as they were central within their respective communities. The Ethiopian and Cosmopolitan - as African diaspora hubs - were effectively symbols of black self-reliance within the metropole. Moreover, Makonnen's efforts as a publisher were crucial in disseminating Pan-African literature and ideas to the wider public. Continuing, his efforts, in attempting to foster a trans-Atlantic Pan-African network through correspondence with St. Clair Drake indicate Makonnen's ambition and intent.

Further examples of Makonnen's Pan-Africanism in action are the instances where he provided legal support to African diaspora defendants in court. The two positive examples the thesis analyses: Donald Beard and the crew of the *Princessa*, demonstrate Makonnen's drive and commitment to supporting African diaspora communities, even when this put him in financial difficulties. In his insistence to offer support – from the profits made from his businesses – he is exhibiting further Garveyite traits. Moreover, his actions caught the attention of the press which was the perfect vehicle to advertise black self-reliance. Yet, the instance in Liverpool,

regarding the riots, highlights a somewhat negative trait within the wider Pan-African movement, which was evidently prone to bouts of introspection and infighting. Makonnen's efforts in Liverpool were commendable, yet, the attention of notable figures with the Pan-African community – Padmore and Moody - was elsewhere. Makonnen's efforts, regardless of the lack of support he received, further highlights his commitment to the advancement of the African diaspora and providing support to those who needed it. Furthermore, this support highlights that Makonnen's Pan-Africanism had adopted traits of Garveyism, together with the *Osusu* method, which was made possible through him adopting his father's work ethic.

Nevertheless, when we explore Makonnen's relationship with individuals in Manchester, we find a much more ambiguous picture. Of course, Makonnen's mentoring and guidance of Gaisie was benevolent in nature; the respect that Gaisie had for Makonnen is evident in the language he uses when he mentions him. Yet, there seems to be – in the author's opinion – an undertone whereby Makonnen is using Gaisie, and especially Fini, as vehicles to achieve his own goals. Fini's example, where Makonnen calls him his 'henchman' is evidence for this. Also, Fini stated that he did not particularly care for Pan-Africanism or politics in Manchester, nor, in that regard, did Gaisie. It could be argued that their relationship with Makonnen was beneficial to both parties; Gaisie and Fini were supported by Makonnen, whilst the latter had men he could rely on. Arguably, this perhaps highlights the limits of Pan-Africanism in Manchester. The examples of Downie and Christian indicate that there were large swathes of the West Indian community that were totally indifferent to Makonnen and wholly disinterested in Pan-Africanism or the efforts of its proponents. Moreover, the indifference of many in the African diaspora community towards the Manchester Congress adds further weight to the argument. Of course, those who were interviewed and included in the thesis professed support afterwards, with the benefit of hindsight they recognised both Makonnen and the Congress as important, but, generally, they wanted to settle down after their service in the RAF.

The final chapter explored the compatibility of Makonnen's Pan-African ethos when applied in Ghana, and Africa. First and foremost, the chapter argues that Makonnen,

alongside Padmore, found the transition from small 'p' Pan-Africanist's to Pan-Africanist's at the national level, difficult. They were, as the chapter argues, Pan-Africanists in the international mould, whereas, Pan-Africanism in Africa was becoming much more nationalist in nature, something which seems to have caught both men off-guard. The reader will notice that Makonnen's earlier experiences – *Osusu*, black self-reliance and international cooperation – are not mentioned within the final chapter whatsoever. After the Pan-African focus moved towards Africa in the 1950s, Makonnen's activities somewhat lessened. We know through his regular correspondence with Drake, that Makonnen was becoming disillusioned with the lack of progress in the West Indies and his frustration in the letters is apparent. Moreover, Makonnen's exhortations about being 'restless' and always in transit belie the reality that his efforts in Manchester more than likely left him facing bankruptcy. The thesis is not arguing that he moved to Ghana purely to avoid prosecution in Britain, but it is certainly a point that needs considering.

Perhaps Makonnen's move to Ghana alongside Padmore represented a final push for the two men. We know that Padmore was increasingly fatigued in Ghana and was beginning to question his relevance within the nationalist Pan-African world. Yet, their naivety towards ethnic tensions, hostility towards them from the civil service and the politicking by Nkrumah, meant that both men were out of their depth. Pan-African Nationalism, as with any political dogma with nationalism at its heart, tends to mutate and focus attention on the 'other', and as West Indians in Africa, both men were increasingly regarded as outsiders. Moreover, Makonnen's impression of Africa – being a homogenous place – indicates his initial thoughts, penned in *International African Opinion*, had never really changed. He was guilty of caricaturing Africa and Africans in the same way as those he argued were exploiting Africa. That point is fundamental: Makonnen's ethos, developed in Guyana, and put into practice in Manchester worked perfectly because it was based around an imagined ideal of what Africa was. But he never actively questioned what it was that Africans wanted for themselves - Nkrumah tapped into this sentiment perfectly and he understood how Pan-Africanism could be used as a political tool. The only people Makonnen

encountered were like him, they were transitory figures each with their own agendas and ideals.

Makonnen was certainly a man who was driven by his experiences in Guyana, America and Europe, that much is clear. The groundswell of the radical ideas and politics throughout the West Indies, his heritage and his father's example clearly left an indelible mark on him. The fact that he changed his name and effectively renounced his Guyanese heritage in favour of his African lineage proves this. Moreover, his ability to successfully turn his hand to any task – the restaurants, the publishing venture – is indicative of someone who was incredibly astute, pragmatic and business minded. The same argument can be applied to his Pan-Africanism: he absorbed lessons from all theorists – especially Garvey, but always mindful of Du Bois' and Washington's successes and failures – and formulated his own vision of a 'black led and financed movement, free from outside agencies'. This approach worked in Manchester; it can easily be argued that he implemented *Osusu* through his channelling of funds into causes that were beneficial to the African diaspora. Of course, he also was not averse to issuing criticism to those he felt betrayed these ideals: Padmore and Nkrumah's involvement with communism was of concern to Makonnen. This establishes his position as a critical – if not entirely original – thinker within the Pan-African world. His Pan-African vision was idealistic yet only practical on a small scale.

Makonnen's legacy is something that this study has attempted to establish, and hopefully future works can continue. After Nkrumah was overthrown in 1966, Makonnen was imprisoned for 9 months before Jomo Kenyatta personally intervened and negotiated his release. After moving to Kenya, where he was given citizenship, Makonnen assumed the role of advisor on tourism.<sup>1</sup> Of course, Makonnen wished to continue his work in Kenya, where he sought to establish a centre which instructed and educated visiting Africans and 'blacks of the new world' but how successful he was in this venture is not known.<sup>2</sup> His individual impact on

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<sup>1</sup> J. Khamisi, *Dash before Dusk: A Slave Descendant's Journey in Freedom*, (Kenway Publications, 2014), p. 127.

<sup>2</sup> H. Adi & M. Sherwood, *Pan-African History: Political Figures from Africa and the Diaspora since 1787*, (Routledge, 2003), p. 122.

future Pan-African activists is not known either, but we do know that after visiting Ghana in 1964, Malcolm X argued that “philosophically and culturally we Afro-Americans need to “return” to Africa – and develop a working unity within the framework of Pan-Africanism.”<sup>3</sup>

In the author’s opinion, any further study of Makonnen needs to be focussed on his efforts in Manchester. There are untapped historical veins which allude to Pan-African networks between the port cities of Northern England, and numerous African diaspora self-help organisations which were prevalent throughout wartime Manchester.

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<sup>3</sup> J. D. Fage et al, *The Cambridge History of Africa, Volume 8*, (Cambridge University Press, 1984), p. 108.

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