

REINFORCING THE AFROCENTRIC PARADIGM: A THEORETICAL PROJECT

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ABSTRACT

Reinforcing the Afrocentric Paradigm: a theoretical project

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Thomas Kuhn's 1962 groundbreaking work, *The Scientific Revolution*, established the process for creating, and the components of, a disciplinary paradigm. This "scientific revolution" has evolved to become the standard for determining a field's claim to disciplinary status. In 2001 and 2003, Ama Mazama, used Kuhn's model to establish the disciplinary status of Africology, through the categorical structuring of the Afrocentric Paradigm. Though her work conclusively made the claim that Africology is a legitimate academic discipline, still more work remained in effort to meet other criterion set forth by Kuhn. Through the use of content analysis, this work extends Mazama's work by addressing four additional areas of paradigm development that was established by Kuhn: (1) the scientific revolutionary moment for the discipline; (2) the nature of consensus among the scholars of the discipline; (3) the intellectual identity of the discipline's scholars; and (4) the distinct intellectual behavior of the discipline's scholars as seen through their evolved epistemic and methodological tradition. This work also reconfirms Africology's fidelity to the roots of the original Black Studies Movement, identifies independent intellectual tools for Black Studies scholars, identifies Afrocentric excellence and rigor, and provides an instructive tool for burgeoning Afrocentric Scholars.

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DEDICATION

Two of the most special women in my life made me promise, during their last days on earth, that I would get my doctorate; my grandmother, Bernice Lawson, and my first mentor, Dr. Vivian Gordon. This dissertation is dedicated to both of you. Thank you for inspiring me.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The odyssey leading to African American Studies' disciplinary status has been arduous and this grueling process has come to characterize much of the history of the field and the intellectual terrain of its scholars. Over the past 40 years, Black Studies has spent a great deal of its intellectual energy seeking to establish itself as a legitimate intellectual enterprise, (Pentony, 2007; Hare, 1970; Kilson, 1973; Daniel 2007; Brossard, 2007; Colon, 1984; Russell, 2007; Turner, 1984; Huggins, 1985; Stewart, 1987; Karenga, 1988, 2003; Hine, 1991; Kershaw, 2007; Woodyard, 1991; Asante, 1992, 2003; Myers, 1992; Gordon, 1993; Nelson, 2007b; Small, 1999; and Mazama, 2001 & 2003). During these “formative years”, scholars laid the discipline's foundation. Their work can be classified into the following areas: (a) defining the discipline (Gordon, 1993; Asante, 1987 & 1990; Adams, 1984; Colon, 1984), (b) defense and advocacy of the field and discipline (Pentony, 2007; Hare, 1970; Karenga 2003; Asante, 2007), (c) curriculum and pedagogical development (Ford, 1973; Okafor, 1996; Neville and Cha-Jua, 1998); (d) historical development and analysis of the discipline/field (Carson, 1995; Rojas, 2006; Woodyard, 1991), (e) structural and framework development (Kilson, 1973; Nelson, 2007a; Small, 1999; Rojas, 2007), (f) theory building (Asante, 1987; Karenga 1981; Graham, 1999; Modupe, 2003; Hudson-Weems 1998; Harris 2003), and, (g) content analysis, assessment and evaluation (Frye, 1976; Colon, 1984; Cunningham, 1991; Stewart, 1992) and other work [that] examines the impact of Black Studies upon other departments (Rojas, 2006).

These distinct, yet related efforts, have been integral to the establishment of what is arguably one of the more significant socio-intellectual projects of the latter half of the 20th Century. Van Horne (2007) reveals:

If, at the outset of the twenty-first century, one were to ask what was particularly distinctive of the twentieth century and set it apart from bygone ones, I should dare say: It was a century of untold technoscientific achievements that overspread socioideological extremes and endless cultural confrontations. It is this context that Africology-the normative and empirical inquiry into the life histories and prospects of people of primary African origin and their descent transgenerationally, transmilleennially and universally-began to acquire formal, structural recognition as an academic discipline in the American academy through the naming of academic departments. (p. 411)

Rojas (2007) provides insight into the key episodic developments of the field when he summarizes the research on the creation of Black Studies thusly:

The research on Black Studies programs and the political movement spawning them can be summarized in the following ways. First, a crisis within the civil rights movement made it possible for cultural nationalist to plausibly demand black oriented institutions, such as Black Studies departments. These departments were part of a larger wave of black controlled institutions that included arts groups (e.g., African Commune of Bad Relevant Artist-a.k.a. AfriCobra, Association for the Advancement of Creative Musicians), black controlled schools (e.g., the Black Panther School, and nationalist political organizations ([sic] e.g., the US Organization & the Black Panther Party). Second, Black Studies programs were established in a small fraction of institutions of higher education and they are concentrated within research universities. Third, these programs are connected to other programs and chairs stabilize programs through a combination of manipulating institutional rules and appeals to influential intellectual constituencies. (p. 6)

Although the last 40 years have been impressive in terms of the field's rate of growth, the accomplishments of its scholars and its ability to "legitimate" itself, much work remains in order to firmly establish itself and ultimately meeting its original goals. This work seeks to aid the field's work in this regard.

Rationale

Rationale #1

From its formal inception in the latter 1960s with the establishment of the first Black Studies Program at San Francisco State University in 1968, the field steadily marched toward its goal of full validation by the broader intellectual community, and achieving disciplinary status. This goal may have led the field to stray away from the original intent of student organizers, who ardently and catalytically struggled for its advent on the grounds of cultural and intellectual relevance, and social transformation. In 2003 Karenga reveals, “In the context of the Black Power Movement’s stress on self-determination, cultural grounding, relevant education, cultural pluralism and student activism, Black Studies emerges as a movement and discipline” (p. 13). These imperatives shaped the evolving mission of the field, which Karenga (2003) advances as the following:

Black Studies advocates, scholars and students, were obviously diverse in both their primary interests and emphases. But out of the diverse discourse that sought to define and develop Black Studies, a broad sense of mission evolved in the midst of intense social struggle and was, of necessity, informed and shaped by this struggle. As both activities in the community and professors and students on campus, Black Studies advocates sought to create a project, which would link these two areas of concern and struggle in mutually beneficial ways. To achieve this, the founders of the discipline sought to extend the struggle for academic freedom and justice in the university. They moved also to bring forth and teach the best of African culture and social practice and pose it as a model of human excellence and human achievement. And finally, they linked knowledge and power, education and the obligation to serve, and student learning with student activism directed toward achieving the good in and for the community, society and the worlds. Thus, they developed a mission for Black Studies with three basic areas of focus: *cultural grounding, academic excellence and social responsibility*. (p. 36)

Hence, the mission of Black Studies developed the following goals: (1) to function as the primary intellectual enterprise of Africana people; (2) to use “cultural grounding” as its intellectual instrument and mark of excellence (cultural nationalism); (3) to connect the work of the field/discipline to the experience of Black students; (4) to engage the field in the life of the broader Black community and world; and, (5) to play an integral role in the liberation of Africana people.ⁱ Hare (2007) punctuates some of the Field’s earliest intellectual and academic concerns, especially the issue of fidelity to the existing work and goals advanced by student activists, when he notes: “Should the aim of every Black Studies Program be to serve and transform the black community, and what is the responsibility of the program to Black Students, whose struggle brought the field into existence?” (p. 16)

Although scholar-architects of the field have not fully abandoned the original spirit of the discipline, one can effectively argue that a disproportionate amount of their work has dealt with the process of establishing Black Studies legitimacy, primarily through the pursuit of achieving disciplinary statusⁱⁱ. Taken within the context of the broader field, this almost singular focus, may have led to the underdevelopment of the other four goals of Black Studies, that of: (1) maintaining a cultural nationalist perspective; (2) connecting the Black Studies project to the reality of Black students; (3) connecting the Field to the broader Black community and the wider-world; and, (4) achieving African liberation. It seems that Black Studies scholars became singularly focused in their race to establish the Field’s academic legitimacy.

The first rationale for this work asserts that the five founding goals of Black Studies ought to be the functional foundation of the discipline.

Rationale #2

Russell Adams writes in 1984, “The primary purpose of Afro-American/Black Studies consists of the research and instruction...” (p. 377). He is not alone in holding this singular view of the field, as many scholars share this sole purpose for Black Studies. James Turner (1984) reports the following, “There was a broad consensus that the field of Africana Studies is a teaching and research enterprise that is committed to the interpretation and explication of the total phenomenon called the Black Experience” (p. 75).ⁱⁱⁱ There are however, scholars who employ a more expansive definition of Black Studies. Alan K. Colon (1984) expounds:

Black Studies is the most recent mass expression of a venerable tradition of Afro-centric scholarship among African-Americans. This tradition has sought to incorporate scholarly pursuits with (1) the transmission of knowledge relevant to the individual and group achievements of African Americans, (2) the vindication of Black people from scholastic and ideological onslaughts against them, and (3) the creation and application of means for African-American group problem-solving... Black Studies, then, refers to the attempt to create a systematic body of knowledge and experience based in the history of Black people. Black Studies theory and practice examines and enhances the survival, well-being, development, and perpetuation for people of African origin, particularly those in the United States. As such, Black Studies serves three major functions: (1) corrective-the distortion and fallacies surrounding and projected against Blacks for elitist and racial and cultural supremacist purposes are countered with factual knowledge and critical historical interpretation; (2) descriptive-the past and present events that constitute the Black experience are accurately documented; and, (3) prescriptive-concepts, theories, programs, and movements toward the alleviation or resolution of group problems faced by Blacks are generated and promoted. (p. 268)

Yet Colon’s view fails to embrace the spirit that Hare (2007) and Karenga (2003) reference, that of developing Black students, connecting the Field’s work to the life of the Black community and ultimately leading African people to liberation. Even Vivian Gordon (1981) who states, “Thus, an important part of the promise of Black Studies is

the on-going resilience and resourcefulness of the Black student who has not yet experienced the full impact and the validity of the study of the African American experience” (p. 277), fails to include Black students, the community, and the goal of liberation, as part of her definition of Black Studies. Young (1984), Harris Jr. (2007), Hines (1991) and others cling to this narrow view of Black Studies, while James Stewart (1992) searches for a more expanded and inclusive view. He states in reference to Allen’s (1974) article:

Allen’s scheme is a useful reminder that discussion of the relationship between Black/Africana Studies and traditional disciplines cannot ignore the historical symbiotic relationship between academic and political conceptions of Black Studies. However, throughout the formative period and subsequently there have been efforts to de-emphasize the linkage between scholarship and social activism. (p. 2)

Stewart’s position affronts the suggestion that the failure to collectively and symbiotically treat the four goals of the Black Studies’ mission is an oversight and/or is unintentional. In the following passage, he reinforces this notion:

Although the historical precedents of the field were clearly forged outside of the academe, the locus of development during the modern era has been and remains solidly inside the academy...Disentangling Academic Conception. The extreme versions of Allen’s academic conception is exemplified by the comments of Blassingame (1969), who argued that Black Studies programs were inappropriate vehicles for promoting development in black communities. Ford (1974, p.224) defines the field almost exclusively as a academic venture: “The term Black Studies refers to educational courses concerned with the study of research in various aspects of the experience, attitudes, and cultural artifacts of peoples of African origin...Black Studies is concerned primarily with the history, literature, art, music, religion, cultural patterns and lifestyles developed in America by a race of people cut off completely from all contact with the land of their origin.” Russell (1975, p. 185) takes a similar approach arguing that Black Studies “...has a respectable body of knowledge and researchable content with the Black humanities and social sciences compromising its core curriculum...”. (1992, p. 422)

Darlene Hine (1991), responds to Selase W. Williams' accusation that she is distant from the field of Black Studies with, "Williams was correct on one score, I had assumed that as an academic endeavor the purpose or mission of Black Studies was to create and disseminate new knowledge about the social, political, cultural, and historical experiences of Black people of African descent throughout the Diaspora" (p. 311).

Alkalimat (2007) explains "Afro-American Studies has two main objectives: (1) to rewrite American history and re-conceptualize the essential features of American society; and, (2) to establish the intellectual and academic space for Black people to tell their own story" (p. 480).

Mario Small's (1999) cogent essay, "Departmental Conditions and the Emergence of New Disciplines: Two Cases in the Legitimation of African American Studies", aid attempts to understand this infidelity to the original Black Studies' goals by some of the Field's prominent scholars. Small's comparative analysis of Harvard University's and Temple University's African American Studies departments "outlines a set of interrelated concepts or ideal types to examine how the school, method, and subject matter of departments in emerging intellectual enterprises may be affected by institutional, academic, and larger political factors" (1999, p. 661). Small concludes that, "each department's definition of Afro-American Studies can be traced directly to the efforts of its leading practitioners to attain organizational stability and legitimacy" (p. 697). He elucidates (1999) regarding Harvard's program:

Thus, Henry Gates helped legitimate the department by tying it closely to the Dubois Institute, while at the same time erecting boundaries between the work at Harvard and what is considered, among that constituency of established scholars, more dubious, Afrocentric work in Afro-American Studies. Finally, in the public arena, though Gates erected strict boundaries between black scholar's activism, he allowed for and

encouraged public intellectualism, in response to the expectations of highly educated mainstream journalists, policy-makers, philanthropists, and the like, who wished for informed solutions to America's race problem. (p. 697)

Therefore, it was for political expediency that Harvard (Gates), like many others, were infidel to the original intent of the Field.

By contrast, Temple University's efforts to erect an independent department, took a different route that effectively utilized the original Black Studies' goals to make its case for departmental legitimacy. Small (1999) points to the core of Molefi Asante's successful effort to establish Temple's African American Studies department and the nation's first African American Studies Ph.D. program, when he writes, "the key to the uniqueness of the program lay in its Afrocentric focus, and its emphasis on the cultural continuity between Africans and black persons in the diaspora..."(p. 671). By definition, this points directly to the cultural nationalist and liberationist grounding of Temple's program, representing two of Black Studies original goals. The subsequent activities of the department point to its commitment to the remaining goals set forth in the 1960s by student activists.

According to Small (1999), it is for two reasons that Temple's department cultivated a strong relationship with the surrounding black community and local leaders, which led to the department's legitimacy in the eye's of the community. First, they were held to the expectations that black academicians "would use their knowledge or newly acquired skills for the improvement of the rest of [sic] community" (Small, 1999, p. 680), as black students "explicitly asked for "relevant" departments." Second, Asante enjoyed widespread community and leadership support, which was used to affect public attitude toward the creation of a Ph.D. program. Thus, what Small's work indirectly points out is

that four of the original five Black Studies' goals (academic enterprise, cultural nationalism, community connection and liberation) led to the establishment of Temple's African American Studies Department.

Whether the confusion around the defined mission of the field is intentional or not, it is less important than the definition's relationship to the Field's viability. Robert Allen (2007) writes a poignant, retrospective and prognosticating article, entitled "Politics of the Attack on Black Studies", which discusses the social and political underpinnings of the advent of Black Studies. His article points to the seminal role of Black students whose demands raised the expectation of "relevant" education. More importantly, his look at the politics around the immediate fall of Black Studies, from its initial high at the end of the 1960s and early 70s, underscores the importance of clear definitions to disciplinary legitimacy. He points to three different schools of thought in terms of the mission and definition of Black Studies: (1) Black Studies as a purely academic field; (2) the Harold "Cruzian" belief-based model with its cultural nationalist underpinning "concerned with critiquing the "integrationist ethic" and providing a counterbalance to the dominant Anglo-Saxon culture; and, (3) Nathan Hare's advance of Black Studies as a vehicle for social change and that it be rooted in the "going-ons" of the Black community^{iv}.

Therefore, rationale #2 stems from the fact that there is no clear definition for the field of Black Studies and its only discipline.

Toulmin (1972) punctuates the above concern when he asserts that, an area of inquiry develops into a scientific discipline when it has "one and only one set of well-defined goals at a time (that is explanation of phenomena falling within the scope of the

disciplinary inquiry), and one set of selection-criterion” (p. 133).^v For this reason we recognize the importance of clear, consistent and operational goals for the discipline of African American Studies or Africology.

Although the field has been “all over the place” regarding its goals and definition, when one examines its roots (cultural nationalism, student relevance (and development), academic excellence, civic (community) engagement and African liberation), the grounds upon which any serious, holistic and legitimate approach to further development of the field is clear. The interconnected nature of these five founding principles is undeniable and is the basis of fidelity to the original goals of those who struggled for its creation. Therefore, it is suggested that going forward, any development within the discipline of African American Studies or Africology must continue to stay true to the original tenets of the field’s agitators and that the Discipline’s definition must place central these core goals. This position favors Karenga’s definition of Black Studies over all other.

Rationale #3

The third rationale is linked to the first two, yet focuses more on the steps and requirements for disciplinary status for a burgeoning school of thought. Thomas Kuhn’s (1962) classic work, “The Structure of Scientific Revolution”, discusses the process and the elements required to move an intellectual pursuit into paradigmatic and ultimately disciplinary status. Among this list are: (1) a scientific revolution, (2) the identity/identification of the community of scholars, and, (3) consensus among the cohort’s scholars. These key elements firmly establish an intellectual discipline.

Therefore, Rationale #3 asserts that there is a need to continue to categorically establish the discipline of African American Studies through paradigm development. By

necessity, such an effort must connect the Field's original goals to the core practices and behavior of the discipline.

Rationale #4

The next rationale is linked to the first three and is a major effort of this work. One of the goals of this work is to explore if the five original goals of Black Studies presently function as the elements leading to Africology's disciplinary status through the act of achieving "disciplinary distinction?" Kuhn (1962) asserts that a discipline requires that: (a) "the fundamental or core elements of a paradigm or discipline must set it apart from all other intellectual ventures-referred to here as 'disciplinary uniqueness or distinction'^{vi}, and, (b) paradigms gain their status because they are more successful than their competitors in solving a few problems that the group of practitioners has come to recognize as acute" (p. 23). Mario Small (1999) says, "one goal of an emerging profession, then, is to demarcate itself from existing ones by attributing certain characteristics to itself and others, and thus to carve a legitimate space for itself" (p. 665). This, coupled with Kuhn's first point, highlights the unique nature of the five original goals that [would] make Black Studies distinct from all academic pursuits, if functionally employed by the field. Secondly, the set of problems posed to Black Studies, that are in need of "solving" are unlike that of any other field, and thus set Black Studies apart from absolutely every other intellectual pursuit. Therefore, this work argues that Afrocentricity and Africology, not only place the five goals at their conceptual and functional core, it also demonstrates that these five goals are what make Africology the only discipline within the broader field of Black Studies.

The need to achieve Africology's "disciplinary distinction" by establishing the centrality of the original Black Studies' goals to the discipline is the fourth rational for this dissertation.

Rationales #5, #6 and #7

Black Studies paradoxes, tragic consequences and Sankofa rising (Afrocentricity)

Three paradoxes have possibly led to tragic consequences for the field of Black Studies. Ironically, the very elements that would have led Black Studies to paradigmatic and disciplinary distinction were abandoned by most of its scholars, which may have played a role in complicating (or slowing) the goal of reaching disciplinary status through paradigmatic development-this is the tragedy. The relative abandonment of the four other tenets, to the wholesale selection of the single goal of academic legitimacy, may have kept the field from discovering its unique form of intellectual viability and excellence. No other discipline or field prior to Black Studies, had praxis and community-centered engagement as a core requirement. No other discipline had cultural nationalism and liberation as their calling card and expected outcomes. These are all key, yet highly distinct features, which if woven into the fabric of the Black Studies project, could have come to redefine the meaning of rigor, excellence and distinction, for the field. Rather, as clearly illustrated earlier, most scholars ran to work on the "Black Studies as an academic enterprise" notion, almost to the exclusion of the other four goals.

This tragedy may have been the result of a series of paradoxes. It is not surprising to see scholars rush to establish the intellectual terrain of the field. When considering Rojas' work (2003 and 2006), one understands the peculiarity of this singular focus, as a possible function of: (1) the scholar's commitment to establish Black Studies as a

legitimate intellectual enterprise, (2) their desire to establish his/her own intellectual/professional legitimacy, and, (3) their intellectual duality. Rojas (2003) declares, “if the field was deemed legitimate, then administrators and faculty might be more likely to approve a program and to allocate resources for program development” (p. 33). This realization undoubtedly became a prevailing concern for most scholars during the nascent period of the discipline. Pentony (2007) states earlier and sarcastically reinforces Rojas’ conjecture:

It is in this context that a basic challenge is made to many of the traditional values of the college or university. Important critical questions arise: Will black studies be merely an exchange of old lies for new myths? Is it the work of the college to provide an ideological underpinning for social movement? Will the traditional search for the truth be subordinated to the goal of building a particular group identity? Is the ideal of the brotherhood of all men to be sacrificed to the brotherhood of some men and the hatred of others? Can the college teach group solidarity for some groups and not for others? Will the results of separatist studies be a heightening of group tensions and a reactive enlarging of the forces of racism? Will standards of excellence for students and faculty alike be cast aside in the interest of meeting student and community needs? Will anti-intellectualism run rampant?...Will accepted standards and scholarship be maintained in the black studies program? When any new program is proposed a question of this sort is appropriate for members of the academic community...All that can be safely said is that the pressures for respectable scholarly performance and for recognized achievements will be at least as great for black studies as for any other new program. (pp. 10 & 12)

Obviously, during the forging of the first Black Studies program at San Francisco State University, even Black Studies sympathizers raised questions of academic legitimacy. Notably, Pentony’s writings highlights how cultural nationalist ideas, which inspired the Black Studies Movement, were considered “myths,” ideological and not intellectually astute, immature and racist. We see that the goal of community relevance is snubbed for academic standards, and student relevance accused of rampant

intellectualism. Pentony (2007) never suggests the possibility of a productive interplay between the four areas that he sarcastically snubs as being antithetical to the Black Studies' intellectual project. They are seen as a hindrance, inconsequential and not considered central to the Black Studies paradigm and what actually makes the discipline distinct. Also, these other four goals are not understood as the elements representing the Field's integrity and fidelity to its highest humanitarian ideals and ultimately to Black people.

This concern for academic legitimacy, which persists today, may have led Black Studies scholars to mimic the behavior and to model White-mainstream academics and their method of department formation. Rojas (2003) writes about "Legitimacy and Organizational Mimicry Theories" applicability to Black Studies. He says:

Theories of organizational legitimacy are best expressed by Meyer and Rowan's statement that organizational behavior must not contradict what is widely thought to be appropriate behavior. Work must follow the rules and patterns of models sponsored by the state or other elites, even at the expense of efficiency... By designing a formal structure that adheres to the prescriptions of myths in the institutional environment, an organization demonstrates that it is acting on collectively valid purposes in a proper and adequate manner. The incorporation of institutionalized elements provides an account of activities that protects the organization from being questioned. The organization becomes, in a word legitimate, and it uses its legitimacy to strengthen its support and ensure its survival (Meyer and Rowan 1991 [1977]: 50). (p. 32)

Rojas (2003) extends DiMaggio and Powell's work on Meyer and Rowan's arguments, by further hypothesizing that organizations can acquire legitimacy through three actions: satisfying government regulations, copying successful organizations, or influencing occupational groups. He writes of the idea of mimicry, "Organizations tend to

model themselves after similar organizations in their field that they perceive to be more legitimate or successful (DiMaggio and Powell 1991 [1983]: 70)” (Rojas 2003, p. 38).

This first paradox is three-fold. Black Studies quest for academic legitimacy led to the abandonment of its own founding principles, mimicry of the White mainstream academia, and an ironic request for legitimacy from its former socio-intellectual oppressor.

Therefore Rationale #5 derives from the fact that many Black Studies professionals lack an intellectual bearing and framework necessary to prevent them from betraying the original Black Studies ideals, to avoid mimicry of the White mainstream intellectualism and to avoid seeking European approval.

Rationale #6

Another rational for these tragic paradoxes might be found in Black Studies scholars’ efforts to establish individual legitimacy. It is suggested that the requirements for security and advancement, through faculty tenure, are alluring enough to encourage scholars away from the more nationalist inclinations of the movement and the Field. Among outsiders and even some insiders, these nationalist tendencies would not be perceived of as appropriate behavior. In both social and professional settings, among Black Studies scholars, it is said that one’s work with students and the community (Black) does not count for tenure. Blassingame (2007) writes similarly, “Faculty desegregation must expand into these areas if the black scholar is not to end up in an intellectual straitjacket where he is restricted to black-oriented subjects” (p. 28).

Besides issues of stigma, Black Studies' faculty must also contend with being overworked and burdened with tasks that are not considered for tenure. Blassingame (2007) explains:

Often, when the Negro scholar escapes the ideological snare of the black students, he faces the almost equally dangerous trap of being overworked by his white colleagues. Frequently, because he is one of few blacks on the faculty, presidents and deans use him as a flying troubleshooter to defang militant students. Inevitably, he is appointed to every committee that is related in any way to Negroes (and the list of them seems limitedless). Then, too, the Negro scholar is expected to serve as father-confessor, counselor, success model, substitute parent, general dispenser of pabulum to overwrought black students, and all-around authority on the "Negro problem". (p. 28)

Of notable irony here is Blassingame's suggestion that Black Studies' faculty are expected to "defang militant students." This calls into question issues of fidelity to the Black Nationalist element of Black Studies, the goal of student relevance, as well as the issues of disciplinary and personal legitimacy, and overall integrity.

Only one piece of research, Rojas (2006) approaches the question of whether the pursuit of tenure/academic legitimacy and security affects the Black Studies scholar's attitudes toward Black Studies nationalist work. While this dearth in research highlights the need to explore this notion more directly, it seems fair to speculate that the European demands, which define the tenure process (which is linked to the vitality of one's livelihood), do not take into an account the unique requirements and behaviors of Black Studies scholars. Hence, in the pursuit of tenure, one feels required to mimic the behavior of their European Studies peers and to appease the desires of European academic stakeholders. This represents the second major factor that may have shaped the paradoxical behavior and identity of the Field's professionals.

Therefore, rationale #6 derives from the Field's need to establish its own standards for its professionals and to operationalize them throughout a disciplinary structure.

Rationale #7

Rojas offers insight into a third Black Studies paradox. In his study on Black Studies' professors' attitude toward Black Studies, he hypothesizes that cohort—affiliation, gender, race, disciplinary training and institutional affiliation may affect professional attitudes toward Black Studies. He (Rojas 2006) says of this hypothesis:

Professional attitudes might be affected by a number of individual factors such as cohort, gender, race, institutional affiliation, and disciplinary training. Scholars entering the academic profession in a particular era might share similar views. Scholars from earlier years might be more inclined to view African American Studies as distinct from other fields because that was a period when the field needed to distinguish itself from other academic disciplines. There might be gender effects. Social scientists might be less likely to see the study of the African American community as a distinct enterprise. Scholars are more likely to positively assess texts in their own discipline. (p. 10)

While his research does not directly ask about attitudes toward the founding principles of the discipline, it does lend great insight into related concerns. Rojas' findings point to the following; being a social scientist and working in research universities negatively correlates and indicates that members of these cohorts tend to believe that African American Studies is a distinct academic field. He also finds that blackness increases the belief in a distinct Black Studies methodology, while gender showed less predictability for this concern. He continues that, "there is no single characteristic predicting how African American Studies professors view their field or key books in the field" (Rojas 2006, p. 18). A poignant finding is that "Professors' attitudes

are shaped by the training they receive before they begin a career as a Black Studies professor as well as by their host university” (p. 19).

The third major paradox asserts that some Black Studies’ professors are afflicted with a kind of “double intellectual consciousness”, which works against the necessity to achieve cohort cohesion among the scholars of the discipline (Kuhn 1962). This double intellectual consciousness is characterized by scholars’ vacillation between the epistemological, methodological, and sociological elements (or their intellectual character) and their fidelity to the field’s founding principles, versus their loyalty to their root/traditional disciplines. Because the intellectual profile of Black Studies scholars is diverse, as most hail from all sectors of the Academy (mainly western/non-Black Studies), it is difficult to expect fidelity to the unique principles that under-gird African American Studies, as well as the discipline’s unique approach to studying Black phenomenon. This concern is not lost on Perry Hall (1996) who comments that this intellectual quagmire is similar to what W.E.B. Dubois called “warring souls”, in *The Souls of Black Folks*. The scholar is warring between their formal western training and that which is demanded by Black Studies, which is nationalist in nature, anti-Western hegemony, in its treatment of African people.^{vii}

This intellectual duality seems to afflict many in the field who remain, at least tacitly, committed to the ways of the western academy, especially the act of employing western intellectual techniques to their study of African people. Martin Kilson said in 1973, what many continue to believe today.

...the type of training received by two generations of scholars involved in Black Studies is that the best approach to a field of such interdisciplinary complexity as Black Studies is through one of the established academic and technical disciplines like economics, anthropology, sociology,

psychology, and so on. I would suggest that no interdisciplinary subject like Asian Studies, African Studies, Middle Eastern Studies, American Studies, and Black Studies (each of which intersects all major academic and technical disciplines) can evolve into a scholarly and intellectually viable field without the curricular control of an established discipline. (p. 300)

Even more disturbing than the above, is that many of these professors are purposefully unaware of the emerged tradition that inculcates the five founding principles of the field, effectively decouples the field from the epistemological and methodological trappings of the western academy, and has met the criteria for establishing a distinct Black Studies discipline-Africology. Africology symbolizes a kind of “Sankofa-Rising” in that its epistemological and methodological approach requires a “looking back” to the origins of the field and an un-assailed notion of African culture, and its revolutionary nature enables it to rise above all other attempts at examining African phenomenon.

Rationale #7 derives from the fact that many Black Studies scholars remain committed to European intellectual applications upon African people, and are oblivious of a new tradition that is full of integrity, rigor and is committed to Black Studies original goals, whereby providing a more useful intellectual framework and tool(s) through which to conduct their work.

Ama Mazama’s 2009 work on this issue of the individual scholar’s fidelity to the original goals of Black Studies effectively distills Rojas’ concerns into a single thesis. She holds that whether it is: (1) the effort to establish the field’s legitimacy; (2) the quest for personal legitimacy; (3) professional mimicry; (4) intellectual duality; (5) the lack of intellectual bearings or a Black studies framework; (6) the lack of professional standards within Black Studies; or, (7) ignorance of the Afrocentric alternative, the true source of

the problem lay in the persistence of European intellectual hegemony within the academy. In fact, she advances that the above reasons might be functional responses to this power dynamic. Her position moves away from the “blaming the victim” nature of the others and places greater focus upon the racist context and academic environment within which Black Studies scholars must act. She emphasizes that Black Studies has never been allowed to chart its own destiny and today the restraints are as prevalent as ever, as professionals and the broader field continues to struggle because of White Supremacy’s incessant desire to destroy both. This less document, yet highly plausible perspective, will be considered throughout the progress of this work.

William E. Nelson (2007b) summarizes the complexities highlighted in the past sixteen pages, and the challenge ahead in this way:

The discipline of Africology must support the work of its members and forge the kind of broad linkages throughout the academic community required to achieve respectability and influence. Can Africology achieve the practical objectives outlined above while fulfilling its challenge to radically transform traditional approaches to education? There is a great danger that as Africology seeks to become institutionalized, it will abandon its commitment to radical social change and community uplift. This danger is reflected in the tendency of second generation Black Studies scholars to change the focus of the discipline by acceding to university demands for joint appointments, and cutting their ties to student groups and community organizations. The new orthodoxy is that Black Studies can best do its work by cementing formal relations with parallel academic units across the university campus, while simultaneously relinquishing its claims to institutional autonomy and academic independence. Structural decentralization, under this formulation, becomes the functional twin of ideological disintegration. The emphasis on Afrocentric analysis is muted by a concern of “objective” scholarship, which places issues germane to the black experience within the broader context of Western developments and contributions of dominant white interest.

Clearly, the task of building the discipline of Africology is fraught with pressure, complexity and contradictions. The American academy has not been a receptive host to those who have attempted to adhere religiously to

the original goals of the Black Studies movement. Still, the challenges faced by the advocates of Africology are not insuperable. A strong, dynamic, functional discipline of Africology can be built without unduly sacrificing its commitment to educational reform and social change. (p. 70)

Rationale #8

The final rationale for this study derives from every discipline's need to propagate their legacy and to advance their field through the development of its students and burgeoning scholars. Eckberg and Hill (1980) explain, that students to a discipline are, "painstakingly," taught the basics and later application of the paradigm (p. 930).

Conclusion

This study is important because of the field of Black Studies infidelity to its founding principles and the subsequent need to synergistically incorporate those principles into the core beliefs and practices of the discipline by further reinforcing and expanding the paradigm and disciplinary profile. This study is important because it seeks to point Black Studies scholars in the direction of disciplinary specific behaviors, thus diminishing their proclivity toward the use of western tools in their treatment of African people. This study is important because it seeks to bring greater integrity to the work of the field, through fidelity to its core principles, through removal of the field's rampant paradoxes, and through even greater elucidation of the tools used and behaviors expected of its scholars. Finally, this study is important because at its core is the pursuit of the unique way in which the field of Africology asserts and maintains its intellectual excellence and rigor.

Statement of Problem

As Black Studies turns toward the second half of its first century, it remains saddled with many of the same challenges that hampered its inception. The eight rationales for this study represent a profile of those challenges that continue to hinder the Field's growth. As shown in Table 1, the field has struggled with definitions and goals, which affect its ability to achieve disciplinary status. The field's obsession with academic legitimacy may have led it to abandon its commitment to students, the Black community, its nationalist roots and its commitment to African liberation. The field, and many of its members, has engaged in tragic paradoxical behavior, i.e. vulgar careerism (Karenga (2003)^{viii}, the use of Eurocentric intellectual tools on African subject matter and professional mimicry. Moreover, even more work on the Black Studies paradigm remains. This project will address these core concerns.

In terms of achieving disciplinary status and distinction (a discipline that is separate and distinct from all others, and fully operational on its own terms), many of the above issues have stunted the field's development and may continue to do so unless clear goals are established. As suggested by Toulmin in 1972, an under-girding paradigm operationalizes the discipline, and the discipline's structural apparatus is reinforced. In this regard, it is clear that the only discourse within the panoply of Black Studies that is able to function as a discipline, because it has begun to effectively address every nuance of the disciplinary building project, most notably in the form of paradigm development, is African American Studies/Africology. Following Kilson's (1973) and Nelson's (2007a) discussions, one realizes that without the type of work represented here, the future of Black Studies could very well be the redistribution of its scholars within traditional

Table 1:

Recap of this Dissertation's Rationales

Rationale	Summary
#1	The five core and founding elements of Black Studies should to be the discipline's foundation.
#2	A clear definition for Black Studies and its disciplines is needed.
#3	Further paradigm development is needed to categorically establish the discipline.
#4	There is a need to achieve Africology's "disciplinary distinction
#5	Many Black Studies' professors lack the intellectual bearings and framework designed to prevent them from betraying the original Black Studies ideals, to avoid mimicry of the White mainstream intellectualism, and to avoid seeking European intellectual approval.
#6	For its professionals, Black Studies must establish and operationalize its own standards through a disciplinary structure.
#7	Many Black Studies scholars are committed to European intellectual applications upon African people, and are oblivious of Africological tools
#8	The need to propagate Black Studies legacy and to advance the field through the development of its students and burgeoning scholars.

European Studies disciplines, with lose ties to an abstract construction called "Black Studies". This option represents death to all five goals of the discipline, and most especially, death to African excellence.

What makes Africology the perfect candidate for distinction as the first and only definitive discipline within the broader Black Studies camp is discovered in the details. Primarily, what is required to be a discipline is paradigmatic distinction. Kuhn (1962)

writes, “a paradigm transforms a group into a profession or, at least, a discipline” (p. 19). He furthers that, “a paradigm guides the whole group’s research, and it is the criterion that most clearly proclaims a field a science” (p. 19). Kershaw (2007) clarifies, “a paradigm is a set of assumptions in a discipline that determines a range of phenomena, concepts, theories and methodology” (p. 1). It is from the paradigm that all activities of the discipline flow, and most importantly, an understanding of the Field’s unique approach to academic excellence. In other words, a paradigm is the guide, compass, and apparatus of the discipline that separates it from all others and legitimates its professionals’ work. Without a paradigm, there is no discipline. Therefore, because of the importance of a paradigm to almost every area of a discipline’s work, this dissertation is crucial because it seeks to reinforce the only paradigm that exists within Black Studies—the Afrocentric Paradigm.

The Afrocentric Paradigm, which is the paradigm of Africology, is the only developed Black Studies paradigm that has achieved true distinction. The other schools within Black Studies are inextricably linked to the work of other disciplines and to European-centered intellectual camps, i.e., Marxist and Civil Rights Integrationists, Progressive Socialist (Alkalimat, 1990) and Black Feminism. The grounding perspective of the paradigm, Afrocentricity, by its very nature, is decoupled from “traditional” western disciplines. According to Kuhn (1962), this fact alone is enough for, at least, paradigmatic consideration, as it marks the paradigm’s scientific revolutionary moment.

Purpose of Study

In an effort to address the above concerns, the purpose of this dissertation is to establish the “scientific revolutionary moment” or what Thomas Kuhn calls, “Anomaly

and the Emergence of Scientific Discoveries” for the discipline of Africology. As well, it is to reinforce the Afrocentric paradigm by establishing the intellectual community’s identity; by building consensus around the discipline’s core (epistemology and methodology); by hallmarking Afrocentric excellence; and, by reaffirming the discipline’s commitment to the Field’s original goals.

The implications of this work are vast. First, it establishes the discipline’s requisite break from other intellectual projects. Secondly, it adds two additional blocks to the proverbial wall of criteria for paradigmatic/disciplinary distinction (scientific revolution and the identity of the community of scholars), and begins the work of a third building block (consensus). Thirdly, it reinforces the most crucial areas of the Afrocentric paradigm, through consensus building among the discipline’s scholars. Fourthly, it reinforces Afrocentricity’s unique commitment to the original goals of the field. Fifthly, it further outlines the nature of “excellence and rigor” within the Afrocentric context (See Table 2). Finally, this work may function as a document used to train future Africologists.

In a manner that will address the above goals, this study sets out in two theoretical research directions, reflecting four research goals. The first direction explores the nature of the scientific revolutionary moment for the Afrocentric paradigm and Africology. The second direction explores the degree of consensus among Afrocentric scholars around the definition of Afrocentricity and Afrocentric epistemologies and methodologies. This second research line will establish the disciplinary identity of Africologists as seen through their consensus built position on the definition of, and the function and goals of,

Table 2

Africology Work Goals Derived from Rationales Listed in Table 1

Rationale	Summary	Goals
#1	The five core and founding elements of Black Studies should be the discipline's foundation.	To develop student leadership, cultural nationalism, community engagement and African liberation.
#2	A clear definition for Black Studies and its disciplines is needed.	To establish a clear definition of Africology
#3	Further paradigm development is needed to categorically establish the discipline.	To develop paradigms categorically
#4	There is a need to achieve Africology's "disciplinary distinction"	To establish disciplinary distinction
#5	Many Black Studies' professors lack the intellectual bearings and framework designed to prevent them from betraying the original Black Studies ideals, to avoid mimicry of the White mainstream intellectualism, and to avoid seeking European intellectual approval.	To enable Black Studies scholars to avoid intellectual mimicry and the seeking of European approval
#6	For its professionals, Black Studies must establish and operationalize its own standards through a disciplinary structure.	To establish Afrocentric standards of excellence and conduct
#7	Many Black Studies scholars are committed to European intellectual applications upon African people, and are oblivious of Africological tools	To remove Black Studies professional's reliance upon European tools and applications
#8	The need to propagate Black Studies legacy and to advance the field through the development of its students and burgeoning scholars.	To provide a document that will be useful for the training of future Africologists

the discipline; and it will elicit their brand of excellence and rigor as seen through their epistemologies and methodologies. Thomas Kuhn (1962) pronounces:

Nevertheless, if the coherence of the research tradition is to be understood in terms of rules, some specification of common ground in the corresponding area is needed. As a result, the search for a body of rules competent to constitute a given normal research tradition becomes a source of continual and deep frustration... They (scientists) can, that is, agree in their *identification* of a paradigm without agreeing on, or even attempting to produce, a full *interpretation or rationalization* of it. Lack of a standard interpretation or of an agreed reduction to rules will not prevent a paradigm from guiding research. (p. 44)

These three areas (definition, epistemologies, and methodologies) identify the community of scholars and broadcast their brand of excellence and rigor, and represent (along with the philosophical base and perspective) the most important elements of the Afrocentric paradigm. Consensus among these areas will signify that a body of reputable scholarship exists, whose intellectual identity is shaped by a set of principles and beliefs that constitute the Afrocentric Paradigm, representing the only unique paradigm and discipline within the broader field of Black Studies. Such a distinction will enable the discipline to continue to advance, which means that the formal training of its students and professionals can proceed with greater clarity; the basis of academic rigor and excellence can be established and the methods for achieving both well-understood; and, the work of student development and community engagement can proceed in earnest. As a result, the movement for African Liberation gains a keener tool.

Definition of Terms

The concepts in this dissertation are defined in the following ways:

Africology and African American Studies are used interchangeably.

Africology refers to the Afrocentric-scientific study of Africana people. Asante (2003) writes, “As used by Van Horne, Africology is the trans-generational and transcontinental Afrocentric study of African phenomena” (p. 49). Conyers (2004) says, “Thus, Africology framed as a discipline is not an aggregation of courses about African people cross-listed throughout the social sciences and humanities. In fact, Africology is a holistic discipline with an Afrocentric philosophy, ideology, and paradigm for critical study” (p. 646). African American Studies is the name of the discipline. Africology is a holistic discipline with an afrocentric philosophy, ideology, and paradigm for critical study” (Conyers 2004, p. 646).

Afrocentric/Afrocentricity

Mazama (2003) “suggest[s] that Afrocentricity functions, or ought to function, as a meta-paradigm to African American Studies” (p. 23). She explains, “Indeed, it is critical that Afrocentricity be correctly understood as a perspective, not as a worldview...As we seek to bring further clarification to what Afrocentricity entails from an academic standpoint, we would like to suggest, as a first step, that Afrocentricity, within the academic context, will best be understood as a paradigm” (Mazama, 2003, p. 7).

Black Studies is understood in two ways.

First, it is used as an umbrella term, for the “Field”, as in “the Field of Black Studies”. This usage references the various attempts to codify a particular way of engaging in the rigorous study of Africana (Diaspora) people and phenomenon. As suggested earlier, there are many ways of investigating Black phenomenon

and teaching such material, i.e. Afrocentric, Marxist, Progressive, Integrationist, etc. Black Studies is being used as the term that envelops all of these efforts. This understanding harkens back to Nick Ford (1973) who acknowledges, “the phrase Black studies [had] become an acceptable designation for all studies concerned with the experience of people of African origin residing in any part of the world” (p. 3).

The second use of the term applies to the broader historical, social, political, and intellectual movement.

Consensus

In this study, consensus will refer to general agreement, without strong disagreement on the same-specific position/idea, expressed in the literature. Therefore, it will not mean that all scholars agreed, but rather that most felt representation in an idea(s).

Discipline

Discipline is defined similar to how Karenga (1988) uses the term, “a self-conscious, organized system of research and communication in a defined area of inquiry and knowledge” (p. 5). Some relevant features of a discipline are that they are bound, limited and restrictive, yet they outline an intellectual community’s membership, perspective, rigor, and their codes and expectations.

Paradigm

Kuhn (1962) explains, “a paradigm transforms a group into a profession or, at least, a discipline...a paradigm guides the whole group’s research, and it is the

criterion that most clearly proclaims a field a science” (p. 19). He writes about the value of a paradigm, “no natural history can be interpreted in the absence of at least some implicit body of intertwined theoretical and methodological belief that permits selection, evaluation and criticism” (pp. 16-17). Kershaw (1992) explains, “a paradigm is a set of assumptions in a discipline that determines a range of phenomena, concepts, theories and methodology” (p. 1). “A paradigm locks its practitioners together within a fairly rigid, highly elaborated framework of beliefs (Eckberg & Hill, 1980:122)” (as cited in Mazama 2003, p. 8). To this, add that a paradigm locks its practitioners in to an ever-expanding set of methods and pedagogies.

Scientific Revolution and Scientific Discovery

Kuhn (1962) asserts that normal science, also understood as established paradigms, are altered and abandoned when *scientific revolutions* occur. This scientific revolution, anomalous in nature, marks the point of departure from the traditional paradigm to the creation of a new one. “Successive transition from one paradigm to another via revolution is the usual developmental pattern of mature science” (Kuhn, 1962, p. 12). Scientific Revolution is new thinking, and is not to be confused with off-shooting the evolution or the branching of an idea, as it represents an absolute break from anything previously established.

Kuhn’s work uses the concepts Scientific Revolution and Scientific Discovery interchangeably. For this work, the Scientific Revolution will refer to the broader work of transitioning from one paradigm to a new one. While Scientific Discovery will refer to the very moment or cumulative activity

compelling the conception of the new paradigm's perspective, or henceforth referred to the "aha moment." This moment represents the spawning of a new paradigm and is the launch pad for subsequent activities ultimately leading to the advent of a new discipline. It is the moment of epiphany for the discipline.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

Broadly speaking, when reviewing Black Studies literature, one notices a dearth of information specifically exploring the issue of paradigms as it relates to discipline building. The area with the greatest material, in this direction, is the work done by Afrocentrists. Others have approached the subject, yet the required depth and sustained effort is not present and arguably, their writing tends to stop at the “perspective” stage, rarely moving to develop the “disciplinary matrix”. Abdul Alkalimat (1990) edited “Paradigms in Black Studies” that focuses exclusively on the Marxist Perspective within Black Studies and fails to discuss or to include contributions regarding Afrocentricity, Black Feminism, and others. This book does little in the way of building a discipline through paradigmatic development. It does however, discuss “perspective”, yet ironically, this discussion makes clear that the Marxist tradition within Black Studies is not a paradigmatic shift rather it is European Studies extended to the Black Studies project. Conyers (1996) remarks about Alkalimat’s work, “It is apparent that this paradigm is an extension or supplement to sociological theories, namely symbolic interaction and conflict theory” (p. 370). Thus making the concepts paradigm, Marxist and Black Studies an oxymoron, because a paradigm results from a radical shift, not an extension and/or adaptation of a traditional area of thought.

The same can be said about Patricia Hill Collins’ 1990 work, “Black Feminist Thought: Knowledge, Consciousness and the Politics of Empowerment” as it extends and adapts the Western feminist tradition perspective, and fails to create a new perspective.

The Integrationist Perspective, hallmarked by the efforts of Harvard University's African and African American Studies Program and Henry Louis Gates, does not offer a revolutionary perspective and is interdisciplinary in structure, thus, immediately fails in the pursuit of paradigmatic distinctiveness as the initial phase of building a paradigm and discipline. "Gates gained their [Harvard's] support by eliminating the boundaries between Black Studies and other disciplines that had been explicit and, later implicit, in the history of the department..." (Small, 1999, pp. 687-688). In all three cases, "scientific revolution" in the "Kuhnian" sense is overlooked, which, as will be discussed, marks the paradigmatic breaking point and beginning of a new paradigm and discipline.

Asante (2003), correctly states of Afrocentricity:

I am not sure whether it is necessary any longer to debate the question of perspective in terms of the Africological discipline, as has been the case during the past twenty years; but at least, in the circle of scholars with whom I am associated it is fairly well agreed that the fundamental basis for Africology as a separate discipline is a unique perspective. (p. 51)

Asante's assumption harnesses much of what is being explored in this project. He identifies a cohort of scholars who share an intellectual perspective that is distinct from all others of the academy and a perspective that makes the prerequisite break from all other disciplines. Further, his statement suggests that this cohort of Afrocentric scholars has achieved a degree of consensus around Afrocentricity and Africology. This consensus among the cohort is yet another requirement for disciplinary distinction. In essence, this work puts Asante's statement to a test.

Robert Allen (2007) reviews the intellectual arguments against Black Studies. The contention is that Black Studies Departments are political, encourage militancy, and are not academic in nature. Secondly, "Black Studies *is* intellectually bankrupt. Black Studies

has often been accused of having no proper subject matter and of being merely an attempt to boost the collective black psyche by glorifying black history” (Allen, 2007, p. 495). Thirdly, Black Studies *is* reverse racism. While these reasons no longer predominate as they did in the 1970s, they continue to permeate the political opposition’s view and the Afrocentric Paradigm in particular. The nature of the frontal attacks on African-Americans in the Academy and on Afrocentric scholarship, by scholastic “colleagues”, is varied and multi-faceted. In both cases, the aim is to undermine the African American faculty’s confidence, sense of collegiality, and intellectual integrity. “We are targets of anti-African behavior at almost all levels of the university” (Asante, 1999, p. 9). Allen suggests that part of the solution to these political attacks is to define the field in relationship to other disciplines, as well as to develop curriculum and standards—all of which are the direct outcomes of a developed paradigm. This work seems exclusive to Africology.

This chapter first will focus on the literature on the Paradigm, followed by definitions, functions and goals; and finally epistemology and methodologies. This first review will demonstrate the evolution of the body of information that stems from Thomas Kuhn’s original work, to its application to social sciences and sociology, to Black Studies call for and subsequent work on structuring a discipline through paradigm development, and finally to the erection of the Afrocentric paradigm.

The literature review seeks to be exhaustive and to function as a data source. The goal is to demonstrate the depth, thoughtfulness, level of consensus, the nature of the debate, the evolution of concepts, the conceptual range of utility, and the level of ownership and commitment by the discipline’s scholars.

Literature on Paradigm

What are paradigm shifts, paradigm development, their relationship to Black Studies and ultimately the building of a Black Studies discipline? Thomas Kuhn^{ix} is credited with the contemporary understanding of paradigm shift and the scientific revolution. His book published in 1962, “The Structure of Scientific Revolutions” outlines the process of moving from one paradigmatic tradition to a new one, and its function for the establishment of new disciplines and schools of thoughts. Kuhn (1962) asserts that “normal science,” also understood as established paradigms, are altered and abandoned when *scientific revolutions* occur. This scientific revolution, anomalous in nature, marks the point of departure from the “traditional paradigm” to the creation of a new one. “Successive transition from one paradigm to another via revolution is the usual developmental pattern of mature science” (Kuhn, 1962, p. 12).

According to Pajares’ (n.d.) read of Kuhn’s work, the following steps represent the transformation process: “1) inquiry begins with a random collection of ‘mere facts’; 2) a preparadigmatic school (movement) appears; 3) one paradigm emerges from a competition among a range of competing ideas/perspectives; 4) as [the] new paradigm grows in strength and practitioners, the old one fades; and 5) the paradigm transforms... into a profession or, at least, a discipline” (p.1). This new paradigm “help[s] scientific communities to *bound* their discipline by enabling them to 1) create avenues of inquiry, 2) formulate questions, 3) select methods, 4) define areas of relevance, 5) establish/create meaning, and 6) to formulate the structure of the discipline (journals, professional society...)” (Pajares, n.d., p. 1). According to Kuhn (1962) a paradigm is “a) a revolutionary departure from the previous tradition/paradigm (including perspective), b)

the foundational structure of a discipline, c) transforms a group of professionals into a discipline, d) bounds a community of scholars and their discipline, e) replaces antiquated paradigms and defeats weaker preparadigmatic ideas, f) and it guide[s] the whole group's research" (p. 22). Karl Popper (1970), a prolific scientific philosopher and critic/friend of Kuhn, discusses two deliberative points relating to Kuhn's work. These points are raised here to flush out the subtleties of Kuhn's work and to deepen our understanding of the meaning of a paradigm to the Black Studies discipline-building project. Popper (1970) agreed with Kuhn's general thesis, yet disagreed on some of the finer points, and coincidentally Black Studies might benefit from incorporating two of Popper's counter considerations. Popper argues against Kuhn's notion of "normal science", in particular his characterization of it is:

'Normal' science, in Kuhn's sense, exists. It is the activity of non-revolutionary, or more precisely, the not-too-critical professional: of the science student who accepts the ruling dogma of the day; who does not wish to challenge it; and who accepts a new revolutionary theory only if almost everybody else is ready to accept it-if it becomes fashionable by a kind of bandwagon effect. (Popper, 1970, p. 52)

Popper goes on to say that while Kuhn believes that the "normal scientist" has been "badly taught," he maintains that normal scientists have been "taught badly". Kuhn believes that the "normal scientist" has been taught in a "dogmatic spirit" and is a victim of indoctrination, while Popper believes that the "normal scientist" lacks critical thinking hence he or she is unscientific. Both believe that science ought to be continuously revolutionary in nature, although Kuhn calls it "normal science". Popper calls it a "danger in science". Nevertheless, both see this as problematic. He reconciles this tautology:

Let me first mention some points of agreement. I believe that science is essentially critical; that it consists of bold conjectures, controlled by criticism, and that it may, therefore, be described as revolutionary. But I have always stressed the need for some dogmatism: the dogmatic scientist has an important role to play. If we give in to criticism too easily, we shall never find out where the real power of our theories lie. (Popper, 1970, p. 55)

Popper adds to our growing understanding of a paradigm and its role in shaping the movement of science and ideas. He helps us to understand that, “normal science” or the traditional paradigm is dangerous and tends not to teach critical thinking, and that some measure of dogma is important as long as it does not stunt critical behavior. Popper’s final contribution is seen in his critique of Kuhn’s belief that only *one* dominant theory—a “paradigm”—in each scientific domain can exist at any given time, and that “science consists in sequence of dominant theories, with intervening revolutionary periods of ‘extraordinary’ science” (Popper, 1970, p. 55). Popper refutes this notion stating that, “ever since antiquity, constant and fruitful discussion between scientists had broken down, owing to the absence of a dominant theory” (p. 55). Thus according to Popper, it is possible to have competing theories, for paradigmatic supremacy, within the same scientific domain.

Asante (2007a) reads the Kuhn and Popper dialectic as a failure by both theorists to examine “the ground upon which he (they) stands and the justification of the scientific endeavor itself- failing to question the scientific perspective itself” (pp. 14-15). Asante’s position does not challenge Kuhn’s model for paradigm development, rather he cautions Afrocentrists’ use of Kuhn’s and Popper’s work.

In the same volume as Popper's article, Margaret Masterman (1970), textually and linguistically deconstructs and reconstructs Kuhn's classic work and points to at least 21 different definitions of a paradigm, then re-categorizes them into three linguistic groupings. The groups that she elucidates from Kuhn's work are: (1) metaphysical paradigm or metaparadigms, (2) sociological paradigms, and (3) artifact paradigms or construct paradigms. Masterman points to Kuhn's belief that a paradigm can function pre-theory as well as post-theory, which is partly why the Kuhnian approach, rather than the Popperian or Feyerabend methods, has appeal and utility among social scientists. She suggests that "a paradigm is an artifact which can be used as a puzzle-solving device; not a metaphysical world-view" (p. 68). Finally, Masterman points out that Kuhn is correct that a paradigm if over-extended can "go bad", meaning that it ceases to function as a scientific or problem-solving tool.

In 1980, Eckberg and Hill wrote on the use of the paradigm concept within Sociology. They contend that Sociology as an intellectual domain has two to eight paradigms. Obviously, they view a paradigm more as a school of thought, rather than as a disciplinary structure. They caution all professions against the continuous misuse of Kuhn's original ideas, stating that while Kuhn attempted to restrict the meaning of a paradigm, most have chosen to expand it. Kuhn himself lays cautions:

I claim no therapy to assist the transformation of a proto-science to a science, nor do I suppose that anything of the sort is to be had...If...some social scientists take from me the view that they can improve the status of their field by first legislating agreement on fundamentals and then turning to puzzle solving, they are badly misconstruing my point (Kuhn, 1970b: 245). (Eckberg and Hill, 1980, p. 928)

Eckberg and Hill assert that regardless of the multiple and hap-hazard use of Kuhn's model, two elements remain; the cognitive nature of the paradigm and the community structure in which they appear, (p. 926) and they emphasize Masterman's reconstruction of a paradigm into the metaparadigms, sociological and construct-paradigms. They suggest that Kuhn's disciplinary matrix (corresponding roughly to Masterman's sociological paradigm)... is more restrictive than the metaparadigm and "*may be seen as the special subculture of a community*" (p. 926). Finally, according to Eckberg and Hill, exemplars, or what Masterman calls artifacts/constructs, are the most restrictive and of the greatest importance to Kuhn. "The function of an exemplar is to permit a way of seeing one's subject matter on a concrete level, thereby allowing puzzle-solving to take place" (Eckberg and Hill, 1980, p. 927). The three components work in concert within a particular community or discipline. That is, "the greater structure (the metaphysical paradigm) acts as an encapsulating unit, or framework, within which the more restricted, or higher-order, structures develop" (Eckberg and Hill 1980, p. 927).

Eckberg and Hill enumerate the properties of a paradigm. They point out that new students to a discipline are, "painstakingly", taught the basics and later application of the paradigm. A paradigm binds its practitioners within a fairly rigid, highly elaborated framework of beliefs. A paradigm is a concrete picture of something, which corresponds to an "exemplar;" an exemplar demonstrates puzzle-solving properties. A paradigm is more than a perspective and definitely isn't malleable. Eckberg and Hill (1980) write, "From discussion on Kuhnian paradigmatic treatment within Sociology, we can contend that much of what is perspective is often offered up as a paradigm (and maybe "discipline-wide paradigms")" (p. 930). They continue that a paradigm requires "widely

recognized achievements which define the course of future research and its exemplars must be imposing authorities” (Eckberg and Hill, 1980, p. 930). Through the use of Ritzer’s work, they advance that a “paradigm need not apply to a discipline as a whole” (p. 932) and that unified beliefs within a cohesive community, and not broad consensus, leads to paradigmatic status. Finally, they suggest that paradigms are not discipline-wide but sub-disciplinary. In sum, what Eckberg and Hill demonstrate is the appropriateness of a paradigm for social science purposes.

Within Africology/African American Studies, the discussion of “a paradigm” has been robust. Karenga (1988) acknowledges the clear link between disciplinary status and paradigmatic establishment, and reinforces the notion that a major impetus for disciplinary status is the cultural nationalist maxims of self-determination and self-definition. He links the two when he states, “...it becomes even clearer that one of the critical challenges facing Black Studies today is the need to rescue and exercise its right to self-definition and self-determination with scholarship and vision and to reassess with rigor its original paradigm in both theory and practice” (Karenga, 1988, p. 396). This statement links paradigmatic development to the five original goals of the field.

Karenga agrees with Stewart who suggests that paradigm development, within Black Studies, is difficult for three main reasons: (1) “the interdisciplinary nature of Black Studies” (Hall, 1996, p. 714); (2) its dual character and thrust of scholarship and praxis; and (3) the tendency to assume its origins as a discipline in the 1960s and deny its longer history as an intellectual enterprise, thus restricting “the data base from which exemplars can be drawn (Stewart, 1984: pp. 296-297)” (as cited in Karenga 1988, p. 397). Karenga then suggests that the resolution is to develop an interdisciplinary

paradigm. He calls for a Black Studies synthesis that links thought and practice into a paradigm of active self-knowledge or functional. He and Stewart (1984) agree that, from its very beginning Black Studies has had both an academic and social thrust and mission. “Rooted in the social theory and struggles of the 1960s, it sheltered the assumption that the Black experience clearly represented a truth worth knowing, but also one worth living and offering as a paradigm of human liberation and a higher level of human life” (Karenga, 1988, p. 398). Stemming from a dialogue with Stewart’s work, Karenga suggests that Black Studies be separated into two eras, pre-discipline and actual discipline history, roughly demarcated by the formalizing of Black Studies in the mid 1960s.^x

Karenga (1988) advances the notion of disciplinary versus non-disciplinary work within the broader field, when he clarifies:

By discipline-specific intellectual production, I essentially mean work done within and for the discipline by Black Studies scholars who identify themselves primarily as such. Such discipline-specific work is indispensable, for in the final analysis, it is the community of scholars within the discipline that are primarily and ultimately responsible for its definition, defense and development. And their failure to realize and respond creatively to this can only ensure the discipline’s deformation and underdevelopment and, eventually, its dissolution. (p. 400)

Simply put, those who are not part of the Afrocentric community of scholars, meaning that they do not contribute to the building of the discipline and do not ground their work within the Afrocentric framework, are not to be considered when addressing the fundamental concerns of the project. The act of building the paradigm for the discipline clearly falls into this criterion, and its import is obvious.

Karenga's 1988 article calls Afrocentricity a "sound philosophy of operation" and suggests that the "Afrocentric Conceptualization" is the foundation of a Black Studies philosophy and the discipline's paradigm. He calls it the "*priority focus* of the discipline". However, his failure to establish Afrocentricity, as the actual paradigm for Black Studies, is what Mazama (2003) attributes to his use of a "loose definition of a paradigm" in 1988. Karenga, appropriately, yet limitedly, suggests that Afrocentricity is a "perspective" or even a "category".

Kuhn's (1962) work suggests that (new) "perspectives" demarcate the *scientific-revolution* and the disciplinary boundaries. Perspective is "ground zero," in the context of establishing a paradigm and ultimately building a discipline. Without a unique perspective, making the claim for paradigmatic distinctiveness, establishing the resulting attendants is impossible. Both Karenga and Mazama are correct in their use of "Afrocentricity;" which is understood as a perspective/philosophical orientation/quality of thought as well as the actual paradigm for the discipline of African American Studies. Mazama (2003), herself, recognizes the multiple yet correct usage of the term; a quality of thought (Karenga), a paradigm (Mazama), a perspective (Asante), or a meta-theory (Modupe). Asante (2007) writes, "it is in some senses a paradigm, a framework and a dynamic" (p. 30).

Karenga suggests that "a paradigmatic Black Studies philosophy" provides rationale and mission for the discipline. His laundry list^{xi} also speaks to the philosophy's "functionality" for the discipline and as an articulation of what Oyebade (1990) suggests, "Afrocentricity expresses the need to change hegemonic cultural aggression through research and writing from an African perspective" (p. 237). Karenga continues that the

philosophy must be understood as ethical discourse consistent with the African's heritage moving from Egyptian antiquity to the present.

Oyebade (1990) shares this view that the philosophy must be a

...holistic enterprise of critique and corrective...and a restoration of the philosophical paradigm of classical African civilization. This would give grounding to the claims of Afrocentricity by producing a paradigm for a truly African social thought and practice. It would also then give a cultural basis on which to build a new body of human science and humanities, and enable Black Studies to stand on the firmest of grounds in the cultural, historical and epistemological claims. (pp. 409, 411)

Terry Kershaw (1992), whose article holds more methodological implications than paradigmatic, suggests:

A paradigm has been defined in various ways. Frederick's (1970) has defined it as a fundamental image of the sciences subject matter. Ritzer (1950) and Masterman (1970) says that paradigms identify what should be studied, how it should be studied, why it should be studied as well as the rules of method. It distinguishes one discipline from another (Ritzer, 1915) with disciplines focusing on a unique subject matter/a methodology (Gordon, 1981). Thomas Kuhn talks about the community of scholars who accept some basic assumptions about a field of study which then set the parameters for the field (Kuhn, 1970). (p. 496)

In 1996, Perry Hall wrote about the systematic and thematic principles in African American Studies. His work, indirectly addresses issue of paradigm development within Black Studies. His premise is that, "It is the interaction of external objective (systematic) forces (or conditions) on social structure with internal subjective (thematic) forces (or conditions) on cultural sensibility that shapes the lives of Black individuals and Black communities at any given historical moment" (Hall, 1996, p. 716). His notion functions as paradigmatic considerations under which epistemological and methodological contours are shaped.

The Afrocentric Paradigm

In 2003, Ama Mazama builds upon her March of 2001 work, “The Afrocentric Paradigm: Contours and Definitions”, by using much of the work discussed to this point to form the broad structure of the Afrocentric paradigm. Her effort culminates into the definitive piece designed to establish Afrocentricity as a paradigm and Africology/African American Studies as a legitimate discipline. Mazama moves from Kuhn’s model of a paradigm, through Masterman’s, and Eckberg and Hill’s work to establish the components and structure of a scientific paradigm. She then places the various pieces of the Afrocentric project within the paradigm structure, thereby, revealing the Afrocentric Paradigm. For the first time in its half-century of existence, Black Studies, categorically, had a paradigm and a legitimate discipline.

Kuhn establishes the role, function and the major aspects of a scientific paradigm; the cognitive and the structural aspects (linguistically established by Eckberg & Hill, 1980). He illustrates the process through which a paradigm shift occurs leading to the advent of a new school of thought or discipline, marked by a revolution of ideas-which he labels the “scientific revolution”. Popper seeks to make Kuhn’s ideas more mature by suggesting that some elements of “dogma” within a field is constructive, that critical thinking is required of all academic/scientific behavior, and that there can be multiple paradigms within a given field, i.e. Black Studies. Masterman, codifies (groups) Kuhn’s cognitive considerations into the following areas; “a) metaphysical, i.e., an organizing principle, a set of beliefs; b) sociological, i.e., a set of scientific habits, “a disciplinary matrix” (Kuhn, 1970, p. 182), the shared commitments of any disciplinary community,” techniques, etc.; and c) exemplars, “the concrete problem-solutions that students

encounter from the start of their scientific education...” (Mazama, 2003, p. 7).

Masterman also points to the social science’s preference of Kuhn’s model of a paradigm over others, thereby suggesting its appropriateness for Black Studies. Eckberg and Hill reinforce the use of Kuhn’s model of a paradigm within sociology and social sciences. They fortify our understanding of the sociological and exemplar aspects of a paradigm, they highlight the rigid nature of a paradigm and the nature of consensus among its practitioners. Karenga (1988) and others (Turner, 1984, Asante, 1987, Stewart, 1987), call for a paradigm within Black Studies, and establishes its parameters, considerations and under girding philosophy (Afrocentricity).^{xii}

Finally, Mazama brings all of the above together, expands upon the cognitive (knowing) aspect, by adding Afrocentricity’s conative (behavioral) and affective (feeling) approach to African phenomenon, and she establishes a fourth aspect, which she calls “the functional aspect”, representing community engagement, student development and the African liberation requirements and behaviors of the broader field, and discipline of Africology.

What Mazama does, as she proceeds to categorically place the activities of the discipline, within the paradigmatic rubric, is to recapture the original goals and work of the field, explicitly recognizing them within the present activities of the Afrocentric Project, and cementing them within the overarching paradigm. Her expansion of Kuhn’s and Masterman’s cognitive aspects and the addition of a third aspect (functional), reflects the flexible use of a paradigm called for by Popper (1970), the adaptability of Kuhn’s model for social scientific use (Eckberg and Hill, 1980), and most importantly, she established the uniqueness required for an effective paradigmatic break and justification

for a distinct discipline of Africology. Mazama's work proves that the foundational elements (cultural nationalism, community engagement, student relevance and African liberation) that the broader field had tacitly abandoned for academic legitimacy and expediency are the very elements capable of firmly establishing a Black Study's paradigmatic uniqueness and disciplinary legitimacy. Mazama made clear that, within the broader field of Black Studies, The Afrocentric Project is the only intellectual effort to incorporate all aspects of a paradigm in pursuit of disciplinary status for African American Studies.

Mazama (2003) combines the ideas, outlined above, with the previous work done in the field of Afrocentricity, primarily by Molefi Kete Asante (1987, 1990 and 2003a), in what has been heralded as the Afrocentric Trilogy. These three works constitute the intellectual foundation of the Afrocentric Paradigm. Mazama states of Asante's contribution:

It is simply untrue that any thinker, prior to Molefi Asante, had elaborated and systematized an intellectual approach based on the centrality of the African experience, i.e., Afrocentricity...it is to Molefi Asante that we owe the making of African epistemological relevance into an operational scientific principle, much like we owe Cheikh Anta Diop the making of the blackness of the Ancient Egyptians into an operational scientific principle (Diop, 1991)" (Mazama, 2003, p. 9).

Asante launches the movement and provides the outline of "The Perspective" in *Afrocentricity: Theory of Social Change*. Therefore, it is appropriate that he is considered the originator of the "Afrocentric Scientific Revolutionary Moment".

Resulting from Asante's trilogy, Mazama proceeds to erect the Metaphysical aspect of the paradigm by adding to Kuhn's "cognition" requirement; the conative and affective elements, which outlines the epistemological geography of the Afrocentric

Paradigm. For this area, which establishes the belief structure of the paradigm, she identifies the four philosophical principles that influences Asante's perspective (1980: vi: 104): "Garveyism philosophy, the Negritude movement, Kawaida [cultural matrix] (Karenga 1981)^{xiii} and Diop's historiography" (Mazama, 2003, p. 10), to which she adds Fanonian (psychic liberation) to establish the foundation of the paradigm. Stemming from Asante's writings regarding Harold Cruse's and Kwame Nkrumah's intellectual influence upon his thinking and development, in "An African Manifesto" (2007), it seems now appropriate to add both Crusian Nationalism—representing a nationalist orientation to knowledge and intellectual rigor, and Nkrumah's "Consciencism"—Pan-African political orientation to the philosophical influences of his perspective. He writes, "My aim with the publication of *Afrocentricity* was to strike a blow at the lack of consciousness, not simply the lack of consciousness of our oppression but the lack of consciousness of what victories were possible on the basis of Nkrumah and Cruse's formulations" (Asante, 2007, p. 32).

Mazama (2003) adds to these philosophical principles the central organizing principle of the paradigm—the Afrocentric Perspective—which is simply *epistemological centeredness* (p. 5). "What ought to bind African American Studies together, what can only make it what it claims to be, and not something else, despite different areas of interests, is our focus on the African experience from an African perspective, i.e., Afrocentricity. Anything else, like, Asante tells us, is not African American Studies" (Mazama, 2003, p. 24).

Asante (1992) contributes the "principle calling cards" and concepts that shape much of the work of Afrocentrists: they are location, dislocation, relocation and

centeredness. To these concepts Mazama (2003) adds Modupe's (2003) similar constructions of, grounding, orientation and perspective. According to Mazama (2003), the Africologist believes in the centrality of culture and subscribes to the cultural characteristics enumerated by Maulana Karenga: harmony of nature, selfhood, veneration of ancestors, community, spirituality, tradition and unity of being. And finally, they believe in the seven components of the Afrocentric meta-theory or philosophy advanced by Modupe (2003), which are; Afrocentric objective, consciousness matrix, theoretical constructs, victorious consciousness, academic framework, condition complex and structural gluon. The theoretical constructs harness a great deal of the Afrocentrists belief system, they are: agency, centeredness, situatedness, psychic integrity, discursive acumen, and cultural fidelity and ownership. Though Modupe's listing of Afrocentric objectives are not part of Mazama's metaphysical apparatus, they aptly encapsulate the values of the discipline's practitioners: community cognitive will, African development, consciousness matrix, psychic liberation, cultural reclamation, African personalism and Afrocentric praxis. The above beliefs function as:

the greater structure (the metaphysical paradigm) and acts an (sic) encapsulating unit, or framework, within which the more restricted, or higher order, structures develop..."a paradigm locks its practitioners together within a fairly rigid, highly elaborated framework of beliefs. This is not a serendipitous overlapping of elements from various perspectives. It is made of the consensual beliefs of a self-contained community. No analysis which neglects the *communal nature* of a paradigm can capture the essence of the concept (Ekberg & Hill, 1980: 122)" (cited in Mazama, 2003, p. 8).

The metaphysical elements of the Afrocentric paradigm shape the following sociological aspects, which Mazama separates into the conceptual apparatus, the Afrocentric epistemological, methodological and methods, and the Afrocentric theories.

Asante's "principle calling cards"-center, location, and place, function as the primary conceptual apparatus. Mazama agrees with Asante, who writes, "therefore the Afrocentric-enterprise is framed by cosmological, epistemological, axiological, and aesthetic issues" (Asante, 2003, p. 101).

Afrocentric epistemology, methodology and methods represent the rigorous terrain of the paradigm. Here Mazama (2003) relies upon the consensus of some of the field's significant scholars, who agree that, the Afrocentric epistemology is shaped by ontological, cosmological, axiological, and aesthetic consideration of African people: [it] must be centered in our experiences, (p. 26) and spirituality, interconnectedness, self-knowledge and rhythm are integral to the above concepts. This way of knowing influences the methodological scope of the Africologist, of which Mazama (2003) writes:

The African experience must determine all inquiry; the spiritual is important and must be given its due place; immersion in the subject is necessary; holism is a must; intuition must be relied on; nothing else is immeasurable because not everything that is significant is material; the knowledge generated by the Afrocentric methodology must be liberating. (p. 26)

These methodological implications must be added to Norman Harris' (2003) philosophical considerations of historical understanding and intuition, or what he calls "rational and supra-rational". And finally, Mazama (2003) suggests that Afrocentric methods, vary, yet are informed by the above principles, and that the agency of the Afrocentric-researcher must be maintained.

Mazama (2003) completes the sociological aspect of the paradigm by highlighting a few of the many Afrocentric- theories that exists: Asante's (2003) Location Theory,

Clenora Hudson-Weems' (1998) *Africana Womanism* and Welsh-Asante's (2003) *Nzuri* model.

Mazama (2003) cites the dissertations of Temple University's African American Studies Department and the many Afrocentric textbooks as the exemplars of the paradigm. If by exemplars we mean, "concrete problem solutions that students encounter from the start of their scientific education, whether in laboratories, or examinations, or at the ends of chapters in science texts (Kuhn, 1962: 102)" (cited in Mazama, 2003, p. 7), Afrocentricity's goal of psychic and human transformation^{xiv} (Asante 1980, Akbar 2003, Modupe 2003) and student relevance, suggests that those students who are transformed and compelled to work for African liberation, are in fact exemplars. They ought to function as examples of the paradigm and should be studied within the discipline.

Mazama outlines the components of the Structural aspects of the paradigm. These elements function to maintain the integrated community of practitioners. Mazama lists the Ph.D. Program at Temple University, the Annual Diop Conference, *Journal of Black Studies* and *Imhotep Graduate (Temple) Journal*, and Temple's Graduate Student Conference as structural components of the paradigm.

Finally, Mazama completes her construction of the paradigm by establishing an aspect that is truly unique to Black Studies and Africology in particular: the functional aspect. According to Mazama (2003) "in order to be considered a paradigm, Afrocentricity, it is stipulated above, must prove able to activate our consciousness, to open our hearts in such a way that membership in the Eurocentric plantation is no longer an option" (p. 31). She continues that, "many can attest to the fact that Afrocentricity is indeed a true paradigm for African liberation" (Mazama, 2003, p. 31). She finally lists

three areas in which the impact of the paradigm can be witnessed: cultural phenomenon, political discourse and praxis in Africa, and in the building of African institutions.

Mazama's work is significant because it firmly establishes that the Afrocentric Project is the only intellectual effort to incorporate all aspects of paradigmatic development in pursuit of disciplinary status for African American Studies. Asante (2007a) is even more descriptive when he explains:

In fact, Mazama makes two general scientific advances in the development of theory: 1) she launches the paradigmatic shift in the discourse on Afrocentricity and shows how it is a revolutionary concept for the African world, and 2) she infuses the older ideal of Afrocentricity with the functional, actionable, practical component that energizes the concept... By taking this course of action, Mazama is proposing not an evolution but a revolution in our thinking. (p. 14)

In spite of this tremendous advance in the discipline, there is still need to further reinforce some areas of the paradigm, by providing greater detail and nuance, particularly around the areas that speak to the scientific and rigorous behavior of the Africologist, including the sociological aspects, thus providing greater rigidity to the paradigm's structure. Therefore, this dissertation will explore the epistemological and methodological traditions of Africology, as well as its definition, function and goals with this purpose in mind.

Literature on definition, function and goals of Afrocentricity

Many have written on the definition, function and goals of Afrocentricity. In effort to achieve a full sense of these terms conceptual power and application, the literature regarding the definition, function and goals of Afrocentricity will be done together. Definition, refers to, what do scholars say Afrocentricity is? Function means,

what do they say the concept seeks to do? And goal refers to, what does the Afrocentric Project seek to achieve? In spite of the mutual nature of these notions, for organizational purposes, this dissertation will attempt to achieve some degree of separation between the concepts.

While many have commented on the concept extensively, in both flattering and un-flattering ways, in a manner consistent with the tenets and use of a paradigm, only those who have established themselves as Afrocentric scholars will be referenced.

Literature on the definition of Afrocentricity

Asante's book (1980) that launched the idea outlines Afrocentricity as an a) intellectual project, b) a theory of social change/movement, and c) a way of life. Asante's conception is defined in meta-terms that appear to capture the spirit and demands of the Black Student Movement, as well as to enable the notion to have broad intellectual utility. As hopefully supported by this research, Asante's definition and purpose for launching the movement was reflective of his personal and intellectual biography. For purposes of this study, we will focus on his work related to the intellectual project.

Over the past 30 years, Asante has defined Afrocentricity in a number of ways. His varied use of the term reflects the flexible nature of the idea, which should not be confused with the mis-use of the idea, as well as his developing sense of the idea's power. This usage and flexibility is consistent with Popper's (1970), and Van Horne's (2007) understanding of paradigms. After Asante's original and broadest use of the term in 1980, his subsequent work reflects his obvious choice to focus more on the intellectual aspect of the definition, as he moved to develop the notion of Afrocentricity as a

perspective. This notion of the concept as a powerful intellectual perspective took form in his two subsequent books, *The Afrocentric Idea (1987 & 1999)* and *Kemet, Afrocentricity and Knowledge (1990)*. Conyers (2004) writes of the first book “This advanced book blends social behavioral sciences and cultural aesthetics from an Afrocentric perspective... Asante (1987) presents the Afrocentric perspective as an alternative cosmology that critiques a Eurocentric hegemonic ideology in the social sciences, professions, and humanities” (p. 648). Of his second book, Conyers (2004) writes, “In *Kemet, Afrocentricity, and Knowledge*, Asante (1990) again has worked at an advanced stage in offering a systematic Africological examination in using Afrocentric theory with alternate methods of examining African phenomena” (p. 648). Conyers underscores Asante’s use of Afrocentricity as a “perspective” and as a “utilitarian” concept.

In 1987 Asante calls Afrocentricity a “philosophy” (p. 125). In 1987 and 1990 (p. 171), he calls it “a frame of reference wherein phenomena are viewed from the perspective of the African person”. In 1992 & 1999 he refers to it as “the metatheory for the field of Africology” (pp. 45 & 506) and Semmes (1981) agreed with him. In 2003 Asante, labels Afrocentricity a critical perspective, highlighting its commitment to “provide radical assessment of a given reality is to create, but among other things, another, more liberating reality” (p. 38). In 2007(a) he describes it “as a paradigmatic intellectual perspective that privileges African agency within the context of African history and culture trans-continentially and trans-generationally, and a paradigm” (p. 45). “[Meaning] it is essential to any analysis that involves African culture and behavior...” (Asante 1999, p. 2). In 1992 he calls it a “metatheoretical framework a philosophical

position” (Asante, 1992, p. 506). In 2003b, he labels it a philosophical idea, an intellectual idea and a theory of human liberation (p. 21).

Maulana Karenga tends to use the concept in ways useful to constructing the field of Black Studies. In (1988) he describes Afrocentricity as, “essentially a quality of perspective or approach rooted in the cultural image and human interest of African people” (p. 404). In the same article, he calls Afrocentricity a “fundamental building block to the conceptual edifice of the Black Studies Paradigm” (Mazama, 2003, p. 8). This use of the term also refers to the concept’s utilitarian nature. In 1988, Karenga stops short of calling it a philosophy, and describes it as “an expression of *historical and cultural anchor*, a critical reconstruction that dares to restore missing and hidden parts of our historical self-formation and pose the African experience as a significant paradigm for human liberation and a higher level of human life” (p. 404). Karenga (1988) calls Afrocentricity “a major conceptual framework within the [Black Studies] discipline” (p. 403), and “a methodology, orientation or quality of thought and practice rooted in the cultural image and human interest of African people” (Karenga, 1995, p. 45).

As demonstrated earlier, Ama Mazama defines Afrocentricity as a paradigm. She writes, “From an academic standpoint, we would like to suggest, as a first step, that Afrocentricity, within the academic context, will best be understood as a paradigm” (Mazama, 2003, p. 23). She also, demonstrates her flexible use of the term when in the same article she refers to it as a perspective. She writes (2003), “Indeed, it is critical that Afrocentricity be correctly understood as a perspective, not a world view, as some mistakenly do” (p. 7).

James Conyers (2004), who has consistently focused on the structure of the discipline within the academy, refers to Afrocentricity as a philosophy and method (p. 646), in the Asantian sense, where Asante (1987) says:

the most complete philosophical totalization of the African being-at-the-center of his or her existence. It is not merely an artistic or literary movement. It is an individual or collective quest for authenticity, but it is above all the total use of method to affect psychological, political, social, cultural, and economic change. The Afrocentric idea is beyond decolonizing the mind (Asante, 1987, p. 125). (as cited. in Conyers, 2004, p. 641).

Danjuma Modupe (2003) sees the idea as a philosophical perspective that establishes an academic framework and Afrocentric theory. While Norman Harris (2003) advances his notion of the concept as an orientation, that functions similarly.

Literature on the function of Afrocentricity

The function of Afrocentricity can be understood in terms of what the idea seeks to accomplish. It also can be understood to be a modifier, qualifier and/or adjective to attending ideas and intellectual efforts and constructs. According to Asante, what the concept seeks to do is to function as a meta-theoretical framework, or paradigm that encapsulates the totality of Afrocentric scientific work done by the discipline's scholars. He writes, it "becomes an architectonic organizing scheme by which all else is explained" (Asante, 1999, p. 46).^{xv} As such, it functions as the essence of the paradigm's rigid structure. "In this vein, the functions of Afrocentricity can be seen, as an approach (that) seeks in every situation the appropriate centrality of the African person or African agency" (Asante, 2007, p. 105). It also functions as a theory of human liberation and intellectual critique (Asante, 2007, p.105). Asante writes in 1992 that Afrocentricity must

function as a “liberating methodology” (p. 41). His statement in (1999) encapsulates most of the above, when he says, “Afrocentricity is first suggested as a critical corrective to a displaced agency among Africans caused by the physical and psychological removal of Africans by the European slave trade” (p. 1)...”Afrocentricity stance has both a corrective and a critique” (Asante, 1999, p. 7).

Asante’s 1990 essay provides a laundry list of functions to the concept within the educational context. He notes six functional aspects (1) centricity (elsewhere considered agency), (2) a lens through which to study African phenomenon, (3) revolutionary in nature, (4) affront Eurocentric ideology, (5) a corrective to distorted information about African people and even a broader corrective to the American divide, (6) and to liberate African people from “white hegemony” (Asante 1990, p. 179).

Okafor (1996) says that Afrocentricity is to function as a “corrective for the educational anomalies of the day (the 1960s)” (p. 693), “to produce a conscious, committed and capable intelligentsia (Karenga, 1988)” (as cited. on p. 694), and “to foster collective consciousness in the Africa world” (p. 700). He continues by citing Ohaegbulam’s (1990) list of functions for African American Studies-which he (Okafor) aligns with the goals of Afrocentric curriculum:

- 1) To educate and re-educate students about the nature and dynamics of the black experience in America throughout the world;
- 2) to include, in current curriculum, formerly omitted information on the black experience;
- 3) to correct distorted and erroneous perceptions of the black experience;
- 4) to provide knowledge that can be used to develop the black community worldwide;
- 5) to bring about reform in a society-at-large and to foster universal racial justice;
- 6) to provide white students an understanding of black culture experience that will help them to combat there’s socially acquired cultural ethnocentrism and to promote greater human understanding in the white community; and
- 7) to assist students in acquiring the information and attitudes necessary for their full

development as human beings and for living and working effectively in a multicultural environment. (p. 703)

For Karenga (1988) Afrocentricity functions as a building block for Black Studies, and a springboard for a “paradigmatic philosophy” (p. 404). Nelson (2007a, 2007b), Mazama (2003), Asante (2007), VanHorne (1994) all view Afrocentricity’s function as the Africological paradigm, whereas Nelson (2007b) says, “ an appropriate paradigm for Africology must also be an alternative and corrective to traditional scholarship, such a paradigm must, of necessity, be Afrocentric in its basic orientation” (p. 137). Conyers (2004) suggests that the concept functions to achieve, psychological, political, social, cultural, and economic change, while Harris (2003) considers it a functional orientation.

Africologists have used the term, Afrocentricity, as an adjective, thereby extending its functional range and utilitarian power. In this way the functionality of the concept is found in its use as a *perspective*, represented by grounding and Africological rigor, hence altering traditional (European) ideas, and their attending constructs, and making them useful liberating tools for African people. Africologists also use functional terms like Afrocentric theory, Afrocentric framework, Afrocentric methodology and Afrocentric Philosophy, and as a result alter meaning and functionality.

Literature on Afrocentric goals

There is however, Toulmin’s (1972) concern that “an area of inquiry develops into a scientific discipline when it has one and only one set of well-defined goals at a time (that is explanation of phenomena falling within the scope of the disciplinary inquiry), and one set of selection-criterion”. What this discussion on definition and

function suggests is that there may be too many goals swirling around the Afrocentric concept, and that these goals may be varied and loosely bound, thereby challenging Africology's disciplinary claims. The following literature refers to the stated goals of the concept.

Asante's goals for Afrocentricity demonstrate his broad application of the term and in turn underscores his goal of making it the linguistic gluon for building a discipline. In 2007a Asante provides a succinct listing of the minimum characteristics of the Afrocentric project, which obviously represents the crystallizing of his thoughts around the goals of the concept over a 25-plus year period. These characteristics are: "(1) an interest in psychological location; (2) a commitment to finding the African subject place; (3) the defense of African cultural elements; (4) a commitment to lexical refinement; and (5) a commitment to correct the dislocations in the history of Africa" (p. 41). In 2003b, he asserts that the Afrocentric method "must be concerned with the liberation of oppressed people..." (p. 145). In (2003) he writes, "Afrocentricity seeks agency and action...self-conscious action" (p. 49). Additionally, "Afrocentricity liberates the African by establishing agency as the key concept for freedom" (p. 50).

Okafor (1996) list the following ideals/goals of the African American Studies curriculum: "a) to advance the African culture; b) to bring harmony to the world; c) to project a higher level of morality; d) to eschew bitterness; and e) to promote an African collective consciousness" (p. 703). Oyebade (1990) states, "The Afrocentric perspective seeks to liberate African Studies from the Eurocentric monopoly on scholarship and thus assert a valid worldview..." (p. 234). Mazama (2003) writes,

The challenge is monumental: our **liberation** (Akbar 2003), Afrocentricity contends, rests upon our ability to systematically displace European ways

of thinking, being, feeling, etc., and consciously replace them with ways that are germane to our own African cultural experience... Its aim is to give us our African, **victorious, consciousness** back. (p. 5)

Clearly, Afrocentrists define Afrocentricity in numerous ways, and its corresponding functions and goals have been described in a variety of ways. What the review of the literature on definition, function and goals point out is that the term has broad understanding and implications, and that the discipline's practitioners take advantage of its functionality and wield-it with respect to their given intellectual effort. When this literature is coupled with that on the paradigm, what one witnesses is that the term functions effectively as a perspective, as it extends itself nicely to various scholarly efforts to build theory within the discipline; and it effectively functions as the "architectonic organizing scheme" or as the paradigm for Africology. In both cases Afrocentricity demonstrates its conceptual power in its ability to (1) bound and discipline its practitioners, (2) to function as a formidable and highly utilitarian intellectual tool, and (3) to provide enough intellectual heft and range to build the required elements of a paradigmatic structure.

When recapping the various ways in which the concept holds meaning for its practitioners, there seem no less than ten interrelated definitions. Afrocentricity has been defined as (1) an intellectual project/idea, (2) a theory of social change/movement, (3) a way of life, (4) a perspective, (5) an intellectual tool, (6) a philosophy, (7) a frame of reference, (8) a meta-theory, (9) a critical perspective, (10) a paradigmatic intellectual perspective, (11) a paradigm, (12) a meta-theoretical framework, (13) a philosophical position/idea/perspective, (14) and a theory of human liberation, by Asante alone. Others define the term as (15) a quality of perspective/thought, (16) an approach, (17) a

disciplinary building block, (18) a major conceptual framework, (19) a methodological framework, (20) a methodological orientation, (21) a quality of practice, and (22) a method.

The literature on the concept's functions and goals suggest an equally broad understanding of the term. By scanning Asante's work, Afrocentricity functions as (1) a meta-theoretical framework, (2) a paradigm, (3) an architectonic organizing scheme, (4) as the essence of the Africological paradigm, (5) a theory of human liberation, (6) a tool for critique, (7) a liberating methodology, (8) a lens (9) revolutionary (10) an affront to Eurocentricism and (11) a critical corrective. Other Africologists see its function as (12) an educational corrective, (13) a catalyst for consciousness, (14) to build collective consciousness, (15) a tool for social and intellectual reform, (16) an educational tool for White people, (17) a humanizing tool, (18) a disciplinary building block, (19) a point of departure for a paradigmatic philosophy, (20) the paradigm for Africology, (21) a tool for psychological, political, social, cultural, and economic change, (22) an alternative view, and (23) the concept functions as an intellectual tool designed to transform "traditional" ideas and constructs, say theories, into Afrocentric concepts (conscious and liberating).

According to Asante, the goals of Afrocentricity are (1) to build a discipline, (2) to inspire self-conscious action among African people, (3) to provide psychological location for African people, (4) to establish subject place for African people, (5) to achieve lexical refinement, (6) to correct dislocated African history, (7) to eschew bitterness and (8) to liberate African people. Others add the following goals, (8) to advance African culture (9) to bring harmony to the world, (10) to promote African collective consciousness, and, (11) to restore African victorious consciousness.

The above demonstrates that the Afrocentric concept has achieved the meta-level of influence and application originally sought by Asante. It also demonstrates the flexibility and comprehensive nature of the idea, as it functions as the primary intellectual touchstone (tool) for the discipline, enabling its practitioners to grant it wide intellectual utility, while keeping those same practitioners within “rigid” boundaries. Finally, its flexible use seems to be a function of the intellectual work, at the given moment, by the Afrocentric scholar, which seems appropriate, considering the amount of disciplinary building they have been engage in over the last 30 years. As Kuhn (1962) clarifies, paradigms (1) bound their discipline, (2) grows in strength (application), (3) guides the research of the group, and (4) functions as a map for problem solving and establishing theories, methods and standards. The use of the Afrocentric Paradigmatic Concept, functions well in this capacity.

Literature on the Afrocentric epistemology

Epistemology refers to what is known and how one knows. The area of “knowledge” in a discipline usually applies to issues of belief, truth and verification. Russell Adams provides a clairvoyant description on the meaning and import of “epistemology”.^{xvi} This literature review will explore the areas of belief, truth and the ways in which Afrocentric scholars establish knowledge within the discipline.

In 1988 Asante writes, “The epistemological implications of Afrocentricity are far-reaching” (p. 45). In 1999, he outlined the three qualities to the epistemological structure of afrocentricity/paradigm, which have come to symbolize a holistic way in which to study African people,

There are three existential postures that one can take with respect to the human condition: feeling, knowing, and acting, which are sometimes known as the affective, cognitive and conative position. Africology recognizes these three stances as being interrelated, not separate.

The affective component deals with the person's feelings of like or dislike about an object or idea. The cognitive refers to how an object is perceived, or its conceptual connotation. The conative stance is the person's behavioral tendencies regarding an object. In Africology, an object or idea is best studied when all three components are interrelated. (p. 20)

Asante offers other considerations in order to achieve a deeper and centered, understanding of Africans. In *Kemet, Afrocentricity and Knowledge* (1990) he offers four principles of afrocentric inquiry: (1) cosmological- which consists of the composite African and considers race, culture, gender and class; (2) epistemological- consisting of language, myth, ancestral memory, dance and science as sources of knowledge; (3) axiological, what constitutes good; and (4) aesthetic, derived from Welsch-Asantes' seven senses, polyrhythm, polycentrism, dimensional, repetition, curvilinear, epic memory and holism. Conyers (2004) work agrees with Asante. Asante writes in 2003b, "The Afrocentric thinker understands the interrelationship of knowledge where cosmology, society, religion, medicine, and traditions stand alongside the interactive metaphors of discourse as principle means of achieving the measure of knowledge about experience" (p. 149).

Mazama's (2003) work on the Afrocentric Paradigm provides a useful structure through which to further understand the literature on Afrocentric epistemology, also known as the application of the existential postures. Much of what was written in the earlier discussion on paradigm is repeated here. After adding Asante's existential postures to the Afrocentric paradigm, she outlines the four philosophical principles that influenced Asante: "Garveyism philosophy, the Negritude movement, Kawaida [cultural

matrix] and Diop's historiography" (2003, p. 10), and to this she adds Fanonian (psychic liberation) to establish the foundation of the paradigm. We now add Crusian nationalism and Nkrumah's Consciencism-Pan-Africanism to the philosophical belief structure. This philosophical way of knowing represents the Afrocentrist's notion of functional knowledge.

Mazama adds to these philosophical principles, the central organizing principle of the paradigm-the Afrocentric Perspective-which is simply *epistemological centeredness* (Mazama, 2003, p. 5), linguistically represented by the conceptual "calling cards": dislocation, relocation and centeredness, grounding, orientation and perspective. Modupe's (2003) elaborates upon these notions, by advancing that the Africologist believes in the centrality of culture and subscribes to the cultural characteristics enumerated by Maulana Karenga: harmony of nature, selfhood, veneration of ancestors, community, spirituality, tradition and unity of being. Finally, Afrocentrists believe in the seven components of the Afrocentric meta-theory or philosophy advanced by Modupe (2003), which are; Afrocentric objective, consciousness matrix, theoretical constructs, victorious consciousness, academic framework, condition complex, structural gluon. The "theoretical constructs" harness a great deal of the Afrocentrists belief system, they are: agency, centeredness, situatedness, psychic integrity, discursive acumen, cultural fidelity and ownership. Although Modupe's list of Afrocentric objectives are not part of Mazama's Metaphysical apparatus, they aptly encapsulate the values and beliefs of the discipline's practitioners: community cognitive will, African development, consciousness matrix, psychic liberation, cultural reclamation, African personalism and Afrocentric

praxis. The above material provides the epistemological belief and framework of the Afrocentric paradigm.

Norm Harris (2003) says that “consciousness determines being” (p. 113), and that “the Afrocentric epistemology validates knowledge through a combination of historical understanding and intuition” (p. 114). He holds that the cyclical nature of African orientation, and the rational and supra-rational notions of knowing are components of the Afrocentric epistemology. He continues (Harris, 2003) with a communal Afrocentric ontology,

therefore, individuals find their work, and their most sublime expression of existence in relationship to a community, to nature, and in relationship to some supreme idea or being. The Afrocentric ontology seeks to use rhythm to harmonize with those forces which appear external to the individual, but are in point of fact, simply expressions of the individual’s potential... An Afrocentric epistemology validates reality (or what it claims to know) throughout a combination of historical knowledge and intuition. In this epistemology, history is key... To sum up here the Afrocentric epistemology assumes transcendent order in the world. It seeks to verify its claims to knowing through a combination of historical understanding and intuition. Its methods are both empirical and supra-empirical. (p. 115-116)

Jerome Schiele (1994) writes,

Epistemologically, the Afrocentric perspective places considerable emphasis on an affective way of obtaining (Akbar, 1984; Asante, 1988; Dixon, 1976; Nichols, 1987; Schiele, 1990, 1991a, 1991b). That is knowing (i.e., understanding events and reality) through emotion or feeling is considered valid and critical from an Afrocentric standpoint. Indeed, a major premise of Afrocentricity is that “the most direct experience of self is through emotion or affect” (Akbar, 1984, p. 410). The focus on affect in Afrocentricity does not prevent recognition and use of rationality. Rather, affect, as a means of knowing, is viewed as offsetting the use of rationality (Akbar, 1984). (p. 153)

He continues that axiologically, Afrocentricity values interpersonal relationships and emphasis harmony and collectivity. Finally, he (Schiele, 1994) supports Akbar's observation that spirituality and morality are inseparable from an Afrocentric framework.

Others have contributed to the discipline's growing epistemological considerations. Nobles (1980) advances a similar set of epistemological concerns as those suggested by Asante (1990). He offers ontological, epistemological, axiological and cosmological considerations (as outlined in Myers 2003, p. 124). And he (Nobles) offers a notion of "experiential communality or the sharing of a particular experience by a group of people" (cited in Akbar, 2003, p. 139), as a way of knowing. Linda Myers (2003) offers the "Afrocentric Conceptual System, [which suggests] life is meant to be carefree (free of worry, anxiety, fear, guilt, frustration, anger, hostility, and so on). The way the system is structured we are one with the source of all things good, and as such, infinite beings" (p. 125). Conyers (1995) writes, "holistic can be explained as the ones of disciplines in the social and behavioral sciences and a cultural aesthetics" (p. 23). Others, (Conyers, 1995, Harris, 2003, Semmes, 1981, Akbar, 2003, Nobles, 1980, Riviere, 2006) focus on holism as a key epistemological maxim. Naim Akbar (2003) offers the following, "The norm of the Africentric [sic] model is nature" (p. 137). Richards (1980) characterizes the African worldview as distinguished by "unity, harmony, spirituality and organic relations" (cited in Okafor 1996, p. 701), while Conyers (2004) discusses centeredness and groundedness as epistemological considerations.

Literature on Afrocentric Methodology

"Methodology can be: the analysis of the principles of methods, rules, and postulates employed by a discipline" (Wikipedia 2010). The methodological question for

the Africologist is how do we study African phenomena from our particular perspective and disciplinary orientation, or what Karenga (2006) describes as the, “the philosophical foundation and framework that informs this (mission) engagement” (p. 406)?

In 1990, Asante clarifies that while Afrocentric methodology shares some similarities with ethno-methodology, like social contextualization of phenomena, it differs in terms of its philosophical (etymology) and conceptual base. Afrocentric methodology holds the researcher accountable, as well as to account for the research, meaning that researchers must examine themselves prior to examining African phenomenon, and in the case of non-African researchers, they must have two evaluators, at least one who is centered, to assess the data. This examination occurs in two ways: 1) introspection (looking within) and retrospection (looking back).

Asante (1990) writes that the methodology must be holistic and integrative:

Afrocentric method suggests cultural and social immersion as opposed to ‘scientific distance’^{xvii} as the best approach to understand African phenomenon... The researcher must have some familiarity with the history, language, philosophy and myths of the people... without cultural immersion the researcher loses all sense of ethical values and becomes a researcher ‘for the sake of research’. (p. 27).^{xviii}

The researcher must be able to distinguish between Afrocentric statements and non-Afrocentric statements. They must use history and its attending Afrocentric devices (myths, folk songs, traditions and classical beliefs) to integrate data.

Asante (2003b) states, that “an Afrocentric method, therefore, must be concerned with the liberation of oppressed people and is consequently engaged in discovering a frame of reference that will explain the speaking and writing of oppressed people” (p. 145). For him (2006) “subject place” is crucial to any Afrocentric methodology and is the goal for discovering “in every place in all circumstances the subject position of the

African person” (p. 155). He adds that the struggle for the Afrocentric researcher is to avoid “the worst pitfalls of western theories and methods” (Asante, 2006, p. 322). The researcher does this by using the historical and lived experiences of African people in their methodology, as well as to utilize both its humanities and social science considerations as part of its “philosophical project”. Finally, it seems that taking altogether, Asante’s 1988 work which establishes afrocentric qualities: affective, cognitive and conative, and his 1990 work, which establishes areas of inquiry: categorical, etymological and functional, and the issues of inquiry: cosmological, epistemological, axiological and aesthetics, represent the Afrocentric methodological framing devises. Conyers (1995) work agrees with this position.

Kershaw (1992), after debating the merits of the positivist verses critical methodology within a Black Studies context, lists Pan-Africanism, Colonialism, Historical Materialism and Critical theory, as either Afrocentric, or historical and critical analytical perspectives. He uses these theories as a platform from which to delve into his discourse on Black Studies methodology. He first advances that “praxis” is central to Black Studies and that the discipline of Sociology has contributed the greatest number of intellectual tools to Black Studies. After outlining the steps to, and difference between, the two main methodological approaches within Sociology (Positivist and Critical methodology), through a critical lens of the Daniel Patrick Moynihan’s fiasco, he suggests (Kershaw, 1992) the following in a developing Black Studies methodology:

- 1) As a first phase, the role of the researcher is to be defined.
- 2) As a second phase, the researcher must become involved in the phenomenon. From a positive approach, the researcher claims and defends his/her objectivity. From a critical methodology approach, “the researcher is also expected to participate in the dialogical experience with the subjects.”

- 3) And the Black Studies scholar/researcher must be active in the community and, hence, cannot afford the luxury of objectivity. (p. 503)

With these assumptions he suggests the following as implications for Black Studies methods:

- 1) To identify the problematic relationships by studying the results of past empirical and theoretical work and through historical analysis of the relations between the groups involved.
- 2) To develop measures and methods of collecting data based on historical and empirical interpretations of reality.
- 3) To compare conditions with understandings, critically evaluate these relationships and find fundamental contradictions.
- 4) To participate in a program of education which develops tools that help identify contradictions between conditions and understandings.
And
- 5) To alter theory in light of findings and restate the next potential researchable phase in the problem of unifying theory and praxis. (p. 503)

For Kershaw, along with the five earlier assumptions, these parameters comprise “the” Black Studies paradigm, which he says can only be advanced by Black Studies itself.

Ruth Reviere’s (2006) article, “The Canons of Afrocentric Research” offers a clear, concise and Afrilogical devise for engaging in Afrocentric research. Her approach is intentionally effective for investigating areas where issues of race and culture are deeply imbedded, as she hopes that, “these new Afrocentric orientations to data, or Afrocentric research methodology, will push the inquiry into a higher realm where the methodology in the process of knowledge construction cease to take precedence over the well-being of the people being researched” (Reviere, 2006, p. 261). She directly assaults Eurocentricity’s methodological claims of objectivity, reliability and validity in the inquiry process. She writes, in reference to the expectations of the Afrocentric researcher:

In his four major works on Afrocentrism, Asante (1980, 1987, 1988, 1990) described a set of basic beliefs that researchers must hold to be considered Afro-centric, and these are acknowledged by Collins (1990), W.C. Banks (1992), and Milam (1992). The basic Afrocentric beliefs are that researchers must (a) hold themselves responsible for uncovering hidden, subtle, racist theories that may be embedded in current methodology; (b) work to legitimize the centrality of their own values but as a valid frame of reference for acquiring and examining data; and (c) maintain inquiry rooted in a strict interpretation of place (Asante 1990). These three requirements, according to Asante (1990), make up the fundamental characteristics that define the Afrocentric researcher and also distinguishes the Afrocentric methodology from the Eurocentric. Among these three characteristics, the insistence on a clear definition of place is the central distinguishing characteristic. That is, an Afrocentric inquiry must be executed from a clearly defined Afro-centric place and must include a clear description of this location. (p. 263)

Reviere (2006) clearly outlines the expectations of the Afrocentric researcher who should (1) include the researcher in the foreground of the phenomenon, (2) open oneself up to reflection through Asante's introspection and retrospect model, and (3) seek consensus of opinions. She offers the following as ways of achieving communal validation, (1) utilization of a group of Afrocentric research scholars to provide feedback to data, conclusions and idea development, (2) use internet and email to engage other scholars who might be experts on your topic and (3) initiate direct correspondence with well-established scholars who can dialogue on your work. Her five cannons consist of Asante's Afrocentric principles of Maat and Nommo, and are tempered by W.C. Banks' concept of communality, that when employed works in opposition of the Eurocentric notion of objectivity and seeks to allow the researcher to "harmonize diverse values and experiences into a coherent and comprehensive definition of place (p. 263).

Reviere's (2006) five cannons of research are: (1) Ukweli, defined as the groundedness of research in the experiences of the community being researched, and (2) Kujitoo, where the researcher emphasize consideration of how knowledge is structured

and used over the need for dispassion and objectivity. In other words, Afrocentric research rejects the assumption of the need to avoid commitment to the objectives and outcomes of the research activity. Utulivu, is the third cannon, and “is intrinsic to the true Afrocentric researcher...it requires that the researcher actively avoid creating, exaggerating, or sustaining divisions between or within communities but rather strives to create harmonious relationships between and within these groups. Ujamaa, the fourth cannon, is the need for the recognition and maintenance of community. This means rejecting the researcher-participant separation, and to not presume to be the “well from which spring theory and method, whole and well-formed” but rather that theory and practice should be informed by the actual and aspired interest of the community. Finally, Uhaki, the fifth cannon, requires a research procedure that is fair to all participants, especially to those being researched, and one whose applications are mindful of the welfare of all the participants. These five areas are used to guide data analysis.

James Stewart’s (2006), in his article “Social Science and Systematic Inquiry in Africana Studies: challenges for the 21st century”, writes of the reasons why Africana Studies cannot imitate the traditional Social Sciences: “(1) small scale impact of the work they produce; (2) the Africana Studies interest in cross-dialogue between artistic/humanistic and social scientific molds of investigation; and, (3) Africana scholars prioritize liberator and instrumental knowledge over less utilitarian exploration” (p. 379). He writes of the need, by some, to have more “coherence” in the Afrocentric discussion on the ontological, epistemological and theoretical challenges to traditional scholarship, in order to advance the field’s methodological guidelines and to reduce confusion. Therefore, he suggests a linkage of Afrocentric methodologies to an “Africana Studies

research agenda.” Linking Afrocentric research more closely to an Africana Studies social science research agenda can be guided by Champagne’s (1993) suggestion that it is necessary to study “group process of institutional change within their transsocietal and historical contexts” so that empirical knowledge can be accumulated “about specific processes of social change” (Stewart, 2006, pp. 252-253). Based on this evidence, Champagne (1993) argues, “Theory can be generated by inducted means, through comparisons of results from accumulated historical and comparative studies” (Stewart, 2006, p. 253). And he, Stewart, offers his 2004 “Jazz model of African Studies” as an example of this attempt.

Malaunga Karenga (2006)^{xix} employs the Dogon concept of knowledge acquisition (*becoming-in-thought-and-practice* at ever higher levels), to engage in self-critical questioning of Africana Studies practice, mission, meaning and methodology. He does this by utilizing four Dogon fundamental stages of knowledge: “(1) *giri-so* or forward-consisting of facts and is descriptive; (2) *benne-so* or “side-word” represents a deeper engagement with the phenomenon and search for meaning; (3) *bolo-so*, is the comparative knowledge; and (4) *so-dayi* is active knowledge” (p. 406). Karenga offers this construction as a methodological option for the Afrocentric scholar and as the tool he utilizes to explore current challenges and possibilities of Africana Studies in terms of its mission and methodology. He uses Kwaide perspective to engage this work, thus making culture a second methodological tool, by asserting *culture as being grounded in self-understanding and self-realization*.

In the course of his analysis he offers a third methodological tool, *historical recovery*, in the form of a Sankofa concept. He refers to Keto's (1989) work that elucidates three methodological elements to the Sankofa Concept^{xx};

(a) an ongoing quest for knowledge or the search for truth and meaning in history in the world, (b) a return to the source (history, culture) for grounding and models in one's unique cultural way of being human in the world and (c) a critical retrieval and reclaiming the past, especially the hidden, denied and undiscovered truths....(Karenga, 2006, p. 413)

Karenga (2006) continues:

By "critical retrieval," I mean an analytical approach to things encountered, a below-the-surface grasping for deeper and larger meaning that routine competence cannot provide. And I use critical reclaiming in its meaning of extracting the valuable from the midst of the waste which surrounds it-that is, the racist falsifications and intellectually deficient interpretations of African history and culture.

This refers to a critical process that self-consciously distinguishes itself from the deconstructionist janitorial model of history. In such a model, writers or researchers become little more than janitor's of history, constantly searching for stench, stain, and peeling paint in the lives of great or noble men and women and revealing it as a central meaning of these persons lives and work... Thus, any African contribution to such a project only adds to the racist deformation in denial of African history and culture...

Here we must avoid the conceptual imprisonment of categories and frameworks developed in other disciplines and develop the language and logic rooted in and reflective of the ancient, rich, and varied character of our own culture and the dignity-firming and life-enhancing thought in practice within it. (p. 413)

Most agree with Oyebade's (1990) insistence that any analysis (including African American) of African history and culture, must begin with Africa (p. 233). And most agree with his suggested use of Diopian methodology, which means using classical African civilization as a point of intellectual departure for Afrocentric work. Lastly, Oyebade cautions Afrocentric researchers about the "undue glorification" of Africa, and

the use of methodologies that liberate “African studies” from Eurocentric monopoly on scholarship. Okafor (1996) reminds the researcher that Africological methods of proof depends on the principles of fairness and openness, that is, “the idea of doing something that can be shown to be fair in its procedure and open in its application (Asante, 1990, p. 5)” (cited in Okafor, 1996, p. 709). Additionally, he (Okafor, 1996) reiterates Asante’s request that research be “verifiable in the experiences of human beings” (p. 703).

Perry A. Hall (1996) offers a complimentary methodology, designed to explore the socio-demographic changes affecting African Americans, punctuated by a focus on the external-systematic and internal-thematic factors, which he says should be seen *wholly interactive and mutually transforming*. In other words, “whereas the external forces determining social structure [sic] often construct limits in the barriers to self-definition, self-determination, and self-actualization, internally generated forces on cultural sensibility often enable individuals and communities to push limits and overcome barriers” (p. 718). His methodology (which is not Afrocentric, because it is materialistic in orientation, is nevertheless instructive) focuses on his Duboisian “duality” concept, which provides a broad methodological framework. He uses the notion of transformation as the “fundamental systematic principle[s] for studying, the perpetual rearrangement of material and social structures that shape the way people live, think, work, relate, and associate” (p. 718). He provides five categorizations of inquiry: Western European Expansion, Technologization, Colonization, Industrialization and Anti-colonial Resistance and Struggle. He then offers “Historical Periodism” as a second systematic principle for the study of African people, where he offers five periods representing historical research rubrics; African period: before the slave (enslaved) trade; Enslavement

period: 1500-1865; Rural or Agricultural period: 1865-1914; Urban or Industrial period: 1914-1973; and Urban Crisis period: since about 1973.

Hall's (1996) "Form versus Essence" concept, which is Afrocentric, provides tools for methodological considerations that could be used to explore themes, and to engage research, most especially in reference to the African character. The themes are African-based sensibilities (essence) in adaptation of White or Euro-American cultural artifacts (forms), "Folk/Popular" versus "High/Elite" (cultural traditions) and Class versus Cultural Reference Frame. He insists that the researcher must listen to the "voice of culture", and African people in particular, because they are predominantly (historically) an oral culture.

Finally, he offers a third thematic framework through which to research African phenomenon; The Quest for Freedom and Literacy framework.

As stated at the outset, the interaction of external, objective, or systematic forces on social structure with internal, subjective, or thematic forces on cultural sensibility shapes the lives of black individuals in black communities at any given historical moment. It was further stated that although external forces determining social structure often construct limits and barriers to self-definition, self-determination, and self-actualization, in turn only generated forces on cultural sensibility often enable individuals and communities to push limits and overcome barriers. So consistent has been the relationship between the aspirations of African Americans and the limiting conditions of social structure, and so powerful has been the internally generated drive to overcome those conditions, that the idea of struggling for freedom and of overcoming barriers has become firmly rooted in the African American cultural reference frame ("We Shall Overcome")...

Indeed, it is axiomatic that the deepest, most widely shared wish of any oppressed people is for freedom. (Hall 1996, p. 729)

There are a growing number of methodological maxims, theoretical frameworks, and methods within Africology. The fact that they are seamlessly tied to Afrocentric

epistemologies reinforces the notion of congruency and community among scholars. Afrocentric scholars have no fewer than five frameworks and a number of methods, with which to engage in Afrocentric research. Likewise, they have a number of methodological implications and considerations, or “maxims”, that are designed to guide and help shape the development of future methodologies. What is clear is that with these tools and guidelines no Black Studies scholar should ever have to rely upon Western intellectual instruments.

Conclusion

The literature demonstrates that from the standpoint of a paradigm, there are a number of elements associated with the process of moving from a scientific revolutionary moment-in Afrocentricity’s case-the perspective, to the establishment of a discipline. And disciplinary status involves a number of components, not least of which, is the revolutionary moment, the identity of the community’s scholars and consensus around key areas of the paradigm; and it definitely involves the erecting of the discipline’s paradigm as the meta-theoretical structure. The literature also makes clear that the Afrocentric paradigm establishes itself as the only legitimate paradigm for the study of African people, by virtue of its fidelity to the original goals of the field and its achievement of “disciplinary distinction”. The broader discussion of the literature highlights the oneness of mission and variety of mind amongst Africologist, which underscores the presence of a community of scholars who diligently work under Afrocentric excellence.

What the literature also demonstrates is that much work remains in Africology’s ongoing work of discipline building. This work must seek to continue the tradition by

addressing some of the gaps highlighted by the literature. First, no literature on the scientific revolutionary moment for the paradigm, as symbolized by the advent of the Afrocentric Perspective, can be found. Literature that establishes the contours of the Africologist's identity, which is key to establishing the uniqueness and communal nature of the discipline's scholars, is nonexistent. Lastly, the process of building and establishing consensus around the key components of the paradigm (including goals) must begin in earnest. The following are the research goals of this dissertation.

Research Goals

1. To establish the Afrocentric Scientific Revolutionary moment.
2. To establish the intellectual identity of Africology's body of scholars.
3. To begin the process of uncovering consensus amongst Africologists.
4. To identify Afrocentric excellence and rigor.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

How do new paradigms finally emerge? Some emerge all at once, sometimes in the middle of the night, in the mind of a man [woman] deeply immersed in crisis. Those who achieve fundamental inventions of a new paradigm have generally been either very young or very new to the field whose paradigm they changed. Much of this process is inscrutable and may be permanently so. (Pajares, n.d., p. 10)

Specifically, a paradigm presupposes an integrated community of practitioners. Ongoing puzzle solving, in fact, occurs only when a group exists which shares a consistent body of belief such that a consensus emerges with regard to the phenomena one investigates, the methods one uses, and so forth. (Eckberg and Hill, 1980, p. 928)

The Researcher

This researcher is driven by some fundamental concerns and influences. First, as a student affairs professional committed to merging “traditional” and co-educational opportunities to achieve holistic learning objectives, including the “centering” of African students, he is interested in how the goals of Africology can move outside of the traditional classroom experience to other educational venues to engage and transform even more students. Moreover, as an Africologist, his intellectual interests are in the structure and development of the discipline, the training of the discipline’s professionals, and the discipline’s transformation of students and the broader African community.

This study, in addition to meeting doctoral requirements, represents the first step in a broader set of activities associated with the ongoing work of bringing greater structural rigidity to the discipline, advancing an Afrocentric model of academic excellence and rigor, training students as liberationists, and educating the next generation of Africologists. These factors shape this author’s commitment to this project and are

steeped in a sincere interest in seeing the discipline function as the intellectual engine to worldwide African liberation efforts.

Finally, this investigator is buttressed by five major influences. The first is Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and specifically his commitment to fashioning social action tools used for the advancement of African people. Dr. Vivian V. Gordon, who introduced and grounded him in Afrocentricity, steeped him in expectations of excellence and rigor. Haki Madhabuti demonstrates the virtue of intersecting complex African thought with common practical language and praxis. Another is Dr. Molefi Kete Asante, whose work functions as his intellectual core. Lastly, Dr. Ama Mazama, whose work on the Afrocentric Paradigm provides the structural solution to his concern about the discipline's ongoing development, has unwavering commitment to African Liberation that makes her a role model for the scholar activist/liberationist. These influences not only shape the topic of study, but also the researcher's motivation, biases, and intellectual lens.

Theoretical Framework

This investigation preceded under the influence of two, interrelated, theoretical frameworks: the "Kuhnian" notion of paradigm development and the Afrocentric Paradigm as crafted by Ama Mazama.

For the first task, that of pinpointing the Afrocentric scientific revolutionary moment or what Kuhn's calls "the emergence of scientific discoveries", the study employed a Kuhnian notion of the paradigm development process. Specifically, it focused upon the effort involved and the steps associated with this moment of "discoveries", with particular interest in the meaning and rationale behind each associated step.

Methodology

Table #3 demonstrates the final movement from the original goals to the methodological approach of this project.

Method (1)

The investigative approach used Kuhn's notion of the scientific revolution process and Diane D. Turner's 2002 interview of Molefi K. Asante, and explored the process by which he arrived at his Afrocentric perspective that represents the "Afrocentric Scientific Revolutionary Moment". An Afrocentric research orientation was employed and characterized by privileging Asante's perspective as an African, with specific attention paid to his "location" by subscribing to the Maatian principle of truth and justice and employing several of Reviere's Cannons. The motivation for using Turner's interview of Asante was three-fold. First, it is one of a possible handful of records that speaks directly to Asante's background in relation to his creation of the perspective. Turner (2002) says herself, "Oral history is empowering because it initiates African agency while creating primary documents for future research and historical interpretation" (p. 711). Finally, Kuhn's method for exploring scientific revolution in his 1962 work is through the intellectual biographical terrain of early scientists who made discoveries and inventions leading to paradigm shifts.

For Asante (2006), "'subject place' is crucial to any Afrocentric methodology and is the goal for discovering in every place in all circumstances the subject position of the African person" (p. 155). The researcher must avoid the use of Western methods by using the historical and lived experiences of African people in their methodology. Finally, their inquiry must emanate from an Afrocentrically defined place and must include a clear

Table 3

Dissertation Logic Model

Rationale	Goals	Methods/Approach
#1	To develop student leadership, cultural nationalism, community engagement and African liberation.	Establish literary consensus among Africologist on the goals of Afrocentricity/Africology
#2	To establish a clear definition of Africology	Establish literary consensus among Africologist on the definition of Afrocentricity/Africology a) Establish the scientific revolutionary moment for Afrocentricity/Africology through content analysis.
#3	To develop paradigms categorically	b) Establish the Africologists'/scholars' identity through literary consensus on Africology's definition, function and goals. c) Establish literary consensus on the Afrocentric epistemology and methodology.
#4	To establish disciplinary distinction	Establish the centrality of the discipline's distinct set of goals by establishing literary consensus. Provide a framework that underscores
#5	To enable Black Studies scholars to avoid intellectual mimicry and the seeking of European approval	Afrocentric disciplinary distinction, excellence and standards (leading to Afrocentric policies and practices) by establishing literary consensus on the epistemology and methodology Use existing literary consensus on afrocentric
#6	To establish Afrocentric standards of excellence and conduct	epistemology and methodology to establish Africological codes of scholarly conduct and excellence.
#7	To remove Black Studies professional's reliance upon European tools and applications	Establish literary consensus on Afrocentric epistemologies and methodologies
#8	To provide a document that will be useful for the training of future Africologists	Provide a dissertation that is instructional and useful for the training of Africology students

description of this location. The use of Asante's biography, as the data source, guaranteed the use of all three methodological considerations.

During the analysis the Maatian principle characterized and maintained the rigorous nature of the work, and it extended accuracy and authenticity of meaning to Kuhn's, Turner's and Asante's contributions. "Maat, the key idea in the traditional African approach to life. Maat recurs in most African societies as the influence of right and righteousness, justice and harmony, balance, respect, and human dignity" (Asante & Abarry, 1996, p. 59). Reviere's Utulivu and Uhaki cannons further shaped the ethical and rigorous nature of the analysis. She writes, "The justness of the research is measured in terms of the fairness of its procedure and the openness of its application" (Reviere, 2006, p. 268). Her Ujamma cannon reflects the nature of the study, "recognition and maintenance of the community" (Reviere, 2006, p. 268).

The procedural technique or method for data analysis was content analysis. According to Weber (1985), "content analysis is a research methodology that utilizes a set of procedures to make valid inferences from text. These inferences are about the sender(s) of message, the message itself, or the audience of the message. The rules of the inferential process vary with the theoretical and substantive interests of the investigator" (p. 9). This method was used to analyze Kuhn's and Pajares' outline of the scientific revolution and to examine Turner's interview. It allowed the researcher latitude for aggressive and centered analytical work, designed to insure that the Afrocentric methodological goals were achieved. Weber (1985) writes, "There is no simple *right way* to do content analysis. Instead, each investigator must judge what methods are appropriate for her or his substantive problem" (p. 13).

Pragmatically, this means that the researcher explored Kuhn's and Pajares' work for the meaning of their ideas, terms and steps to "the scientific revolution", and placed Asante's intellectual biographical points within the scientific revolutionary context, thereby plotting out the Afrocentric Scientific Revolution. The researcher accounted for differences in culture and experience and orientation to knowledge and intellectual agendas. Weber states of content analysis, "one important use of content analysis is the generation of culture indicators that point to the state of beliefs, values, ideologies, or other culture systems" (p. 10). In this research, the investigator assumed the position of a "filter", in order to determine differences in cultural and intellectual traditions, between Kuhn's work and Asante's experience. By using Maatian principles and the Utulivu Cannon, the researcher was able to effectively conduct his research.

Research Steps and Analysis

1. The investigator elucidated the steps and outline of Kuhn's "Emergence of Scientific Discoveries".
2. The investigator prescribed meaning to each step.
3. The investigator conducted a content analysis of Turner's interview of Molefi Asante and established an experiential and intellectual map, outlining those elements leading to his epiphany and the evolution of Afrocentricity.
4. The investigator then connected Kuhn's description of the events surrounding the aha moment, with Asante's intellectual geography. Special attention was paid to the above Afrocentric methodological considerations.
5. The researcher concluded with an analysis and conclusion.

Method (2)

A content analysis of the literature on the definition, function and goals of Africology was conducted in order to establish the intellectual identity of Afrocentric scholars. A content analysis was also conducted on the literature on Afrocentric epistemologies and methodologies, which functionally identifies the elements of Afrocentric excellence and rigor. Combined, these analyses established the level of consensus among this body of scholars around core disciplinary concerns.

The steps for identifying the group of Afrocentric scholars and their articles referenced in the literature review, were as follows:

- (1) Scholars were initially identified through a literature search involving a combination of the following terms— Afrocentricity, Africology, African American Studies, definition, function, goals, epistemology, and methodology.
- (2) Articles were examined and selected based upon a combination of the following:
 - a. the scholar's statement of being Afrocentric and or an Africologist,
 - b. the author's reference to the writings of the discipline's earliest scholars,
 - c. the scholar's use of the discipline's initial work to "ground" and "orient" their work,
 - d. the commonly cross-referenced scholars, and
 - e. the additional readings that were generated from the above process.

The steps for establishing the Africologist's identity:

- a. sectioned off the literature review on definition, function and goals,
- b. conducted a content analysis of these groupings, especially looking for repetition and similarities signifying consensus, and finally,
- c. crafted a description of how Africologists define the field as seen through these three areas.

For these scholars, in addition to their scholarly “perspective”, these three considerations represent the professional identity and disciplinary distinctiveness, as a function of their unique self-definition and intellectual goals.

The investigator followed the procedures above to conduct a content analysis of the areas of the literature review that explored Afrocentric epistemology and methodology. These groupings and the subsequent analysis produced epistemic and methodological maxims that provided standards of scholarly conduct, further distinguished the Africologist from other scholars, and provided a description of Africological rigor and excellence.

CHAPTER 4

THE AFROCENTRIC SCIENTIFIC REVOLUTION

Thomas Kuhn's (1962) "The Structure of Scientific Revolutions" outlines two methods for moving from an established scientific paradigm to a successive one. Both methods Kuhn labels under the broader rubric, he calls "scientific revolution". These two pathways to paradigm shifts are the *discovery* method and the *invention* method. Though it is not readily apparent which of the two methods most aptly provides a framework for exploring the vicissitudes of Asante's aha moment, upon close inspection it is clear that the invention process provides the greatest utility for this effort. First, let us discuss the limitations of the discovery method and the inappropriateness of its application to this pending endeavor.

In the fourth chapter of his book entitled, "Anomaly and the Emergence of Scientific Discoveries", Kuhn describes a three-step process to the discovery method of paradigm shift. It is a process he considers a movement from novelties of facts to novelties of theory. Discovery, or novelty of fact, commences with the awareness of anomaly, i.e., with the recognition that nature has somehow violated the paradigm-induced expectations that govern normal science. Step two in the discovery process is the extended exploration of the area of anomaly. The final step to this discovery period is when the paradigm has been adjusted so that the anomaly has become the expected.

For two major reasons, this three part discovery process is not applicable to Black Studies, or specifically Asante's aha moment that lead to the creation of the Afrocentric Perspective. First, prior to the creation of Afrocentricity, the Black Studies paradigm was actually a hegemonic extension of the European Studies paradigm operating within the

Black Studies' intellectual sphere. As demonstrated through the discussion on the advent and evolution of Black Studies in general and Rojas' work in particular, it is clear that Black Studies professionals did not create new epistemic and methodological tools with which to study African people. Rather, they wrongly sought to adapt the tools from their formal training in the western "traditional" disciplines, to the new, five-point, mission of Black Studies.

Thus, it is evident that, as it relates to Black Studies, both Kuhn and Popper were correct in their description of the training of the scholar. Kuhn's position that "normal scientist" have been taught badly, meaning that they have been taught in a dogmatic and indoctrinating spirit, is evidenced by scholars infidelity to the nationalist, or "unacceptable", elements of the Black Studies' mission, their mimicry of their White counterparts, and their continued use of western intellectual tools upon African people. Unlike what may have been suggested earlier, this seems to be a clear indication of the tenacious nature of European intellectual hegemony and its ability to control the African world's best-intended scholars.

As it relates to the initial Black Studies paradigm and the training of its scholars, Popper's dialectical position was also proven correct. His position was that the normal scientist lacks critical thinking (1970). In the case of Black Studies professionals prior to the Afrocentric Scientific Revolution, it was more a case that the normal scientists thought critically and behaved in the way of his or her western counterpart, who demonstrated a lack of cultural and liberating specificity in their study of African people. Thus, the insidious nature of White Supremacy is revealed in its ability to employ African Scholars in service of its hegemonic agenda, even within the Black Studies ranks.

Furthermore, as shown earlier, progressive western thought (i.e., Marxist and Black Feminism) is part of the Eurocentric paradigm, and does not represent a paradigmatic shift.

Therefore, the pre-existing Black Studies paradigm from which to make the theoretical shift was actually a Eurocentric paradigm within Black Studies, which, because of its nature, continued to neglect the intellectual, cultural, structural, and liberating needs that actually spawned the Black Studies movement. Nevertheless, because of Afrocentricity's commitment to undo White Supremacy's control over African people, a revolutionary shift from this form of a Black Studies paradigm was appropriate. Moreover, as made clear in the first three chapters, the era from which Asante's Afrocentric Perspective emerges, represents a time when, among other activities of the broader field, scholars were scrambling for theoretical foundation upon which to build Black Studies work.

Secondly, in reference to the second step of the discovery method, there was no "anomaly" to explore. This is because Black Studies is more closely tied to the social sciences rather than the natural sciences, and therefore, would not be exploring an anomaly per se, rather, given its youth, would be more interested in refining its ability to explore and interpret African phenomenon. For these reasons the discovery method is relatively futile as a way of explaining the process of creating the Afrocentric Paradigm.

The second method of paradigm transformation is the *invention of new theories* method. This method is not necessarily distinct from the discoveries methods as they both share an "awareness of anomaly" quality. Some of the characteristics of the invention method, and how they apply to Black Studies in particular, are as follows: (1) The

invention of new paradigm theory is sometimes preceded by pronounced professional insecurity. The first chapter of this work highlights the insecure nature of early and present Black Studies professionals, and their corresponding behavior (mimicry, intellectual dualism, etc.). This insecurity can be traced back to the initial moments the field's; and, (2) There is a "persistent failure of the puzzles of normal science to come out as they should. Failure of existing rules is the prelude to a search for new ones" (Kuhn, 1962, p. 68). Earlier discussion on Black student's demands for Black Studies, revealed the "persistent failure" of traditional-western education to provide a liberating education. This was witnessed in the student unrest that resulted from student's sense of intellectual irrelevance, a disconnect between the academy and the community, and lack of a transformative (liberating) academic agenda.

According to Kuhn (1962), this failure is derived from: (a) changes in social/cultural climates, (b) scholarly criticism of existing theory, and (c) discrepancies between theory and fact. The latter, (discrepancies) represents what Kuhn calls the "core of the crisis". For Kuhn crisis is the spark to invention, as it represents the creative and inventive energy leading to new thought, theory, and perspective. Therefore, to understand fully one's *invention* (in Asante's case the Afrocentric Perspective) which functions as the point of departure for paradigm development we must recognize the crisis that functions as its impetus and influences its intellectual contours.

All three examples listed above, directly apply to the Black Studies movement and Asante's advent of the Afrocentric Perspective. Regarding "social and cultural change" we revisit Karenga (2003), "But out of the diverse discourse that sought to define and develop Black Studies, a broad sense of mission evolved in the midst of

intense social struggle and was, of necessity, informed and shaped by this struggle. As both activities in the community and professors and students on campus, Black Studies advocates sought to create a project, which would link these two areas of concern and struggle in mutually beneficial ways. To achieve this, the founders of the discipline sought to extend the struggle for academic freedom and justice in the university” (p. 36). Colon (1984) writes of scholarly critique and the discrepancies between theory and fact, “the transmission of knowledge relevant to the individual and group achievements of African Americans, (2) the vindication of Black people from scholastic and ideological onslaughts against them, and (3) the creation and application of means for African-American group “problem-solving...” (p. 268). Black Studies, then, refers to the attempt to create a systematic body of knowledge and experience based in the history of Black people.” Asante states, “I think that we should never forget our revolutionary origin. The intent of those who created the discipline was to make a difference in the lives of African people. It was more about societal transformation than it was about careerism or public intellectualism. We were on our way to creating a new platform for rescuing our communities from the oppressive situations we knew firsthand” (Zulu 2008, p. 82). Because of these Black Studies corollaries, Kuhn’s invention method for paradigm transformation is most appropriate for this project.

Kuhn (1962) asserts that the response to the crisis determines the course of paradigm development, or not. He asserts that most scholars, who are immersed in an intellectual quandary, evoked by discrepancy and crisis, do not renounce the traditional paradigm, though a very select do. According to Pajares, this minority, achieved their aha moment, “all at once, sometimes in the middle of the night, in the mind of a man

(woman) deeply immersed in crisis...have generally been either very young or very new to the field whose paradigm they changed” (p. 10). To Kuhn, the epiphanies of these exceptional scholars produce new perspectives that reconstruct the field from new fundamentals, a process that a) “changes some of the field’s most elementary theoretical generalizations as well as b) many of its paradigm’s methods and applications” (p. 85). They “alter the rules” (Pajares, p. 10). The above describes the usual way in which Africology, through the prism of the Afrocentric Paradigm, is described: as a discipline whose paradigm changes Black Studies (and in some ways the broader academy) theoretical and fundamental assumptions, its methods and its rules. Asante states:

The most significant contribution of Africology is that it has impacted all of the social sciences in a way that have changed them forever. It is because of us that sociologists do not speak the language of the deprivation, disadvantaged, and minority in their best to literature. It is because of US that historians are willing to see black lives as critically important to the full understanding of the American society. They do not use the terms Bushman, Hottentots, pygmies, tribes, and primitives, as much as they used to before 1980. In effect, we have changed the language of the social sciences and reinvented the discourse around African people. We have become agents in our own history. (Zulu, 2008, p. 81)

While Kuhn clearly establishes the nature of the initial moment of paradigm transformation as highlighted above, he does not go into detail about the way in which this aha moment proceeds. Therefore, we will use Pajares’ description as the broad descriptive outline to this process. With the case now firmly made for the invention method of paradigm transformation, how did Molefi Kete Asante’s aha moment proceed? How does he describe his “middle of the night” experience? For the answer we look to Diane Turner’s, 2002, interview of Asante.

Turner's interview functions as the beginnings of an intellectual biography, that would ideally serve to provide the same level of insight as the memoirs and biographies referenced by Kuhn in his discernment of the developing thoughts of Copernicus, Newton, Lavoisier and Einstein. What Kuhn does is to make biography descriptive data, a point that is not lost by Turner, who writes, "Oral history is empowering because it initiates African agency while creating primary documents for future research and historical interpretation" (p. 711). Turner (2002) writes about her actual interview,

The interview moves from personal accounts of his childhood to his academic career and his transformation from Arthur L. Smith to Molefi Kete Asante. Asante addresses questions around a variety of topics, including key issues in Black Studies. Asante discusses the intellectual and developmental process that brought him to construct the theory of Afrocentricity and how our nation's first doctor of philosophy program in African American studies was established at Temple University under his leadership. (p. 711)

Turner's interview represents only one of two such interviews that seek to grasp Asante's initial thoughts around the creation of the Afrocentric Perspective. The other interview, conducted by Itibari M. Zulu (2008), does not provide material specifically related to his creation of the Afrocentric Perspective.^{xxi}

Turner's interview allows Asante to explore his childhood and the more salient points related to his personal transformation into manhood, as well as the antecedents to his intellectual formulations. Though Kuhn does not speak about the importance of background to the thought process of the scientist that he explored, which may be due in part to the belief that the natural sciences are not shaped by social factors, it is evident that Asante's "upbringing" played a role in his intellectual and political orientation. And because cosmology is an Afrocentric epistemological maxim, one must assume that

Asante's childhood, which seems to have been shaped by race, class, and culture, played a role in his transformation.

What his interview highlights is that his cultural upbringing was shaped by agrarian influences, and involved a close and extended African American community. Asante spoke of their African and Christian values, "The African Values were in cooperation, communal activities, kinship patterns and beliefs, and medicine. Many of the Christian values were actually based on individualism, hard work, discipline, the fear of hell and the devil, and a desire to gain material well-being" (Turner & Asante, p. 714). This experience was forged under a segregated society, leading many of his era to hold "strong hatreds" for White Oppression (Turner & Asante, p. 715). Asante experienced deep poverty, which led to his conviction to never revisit such conditions. It seems that his self-analysis led him to conclude his experience of rampant discrimination was due to his race. He spoke of an incident where a white man spat on him for folly as an example of discrimination. This incident led to his childhood resolve to resist all forms of discrimination. And finally, Asante's conversation about his father's acumen speaks to how he was reared in an environment where intelligence and rigor were valued.

While these points do not speak specifically to Asante's aha moment, they do not represent a crisis that led to theory formation. Additionally, from an Afrocentric perspective, they speak to a long-term transformation of the person who ultimately goes on to invent the Afrocentric Perspective. It is argued that this childhood experience cannot be decoupled from his latter intellectual work. This approach seems just when considering Asante's own words in reference to his processing of Maulana Karenga's transformative words on culture, he writes, "It rang true to me from my own experience; I

was in crisis myself” (Turner & Asante, 2002, p. 717). On the face of it, the view that Asante’s crisis, which led to the spawning of the Afrocentric Perspective, was long-term in nature seems to go against Kuhn’s suggestion that the conditions are in direct response to an immediate crisis. What Asante’s biography highlights is the long-term and crisis-filled conditions of Africans in America. These are conditions that he grew up in and crisis that he ultimately experienced as an undergraduate student leader and Black Studies professional. Therefore, Asante’s biography provides a reinterpretation of Kuhn’s invention model of paradigm development. Rather than an immediate and anomalous crisis creating the environment for scientific invention, we see that within a social science and the Africological context, long term and multifaceted crises. Furthermore, as we will discuss below—multiple crises, can also lead to theory invention. Moreover, this Asantean example renders this point indisputable, simply because Asante’s invention, the Afrocentric Perspective, did indeed initiate the Afrocentric Scientific Revolution in response to crises.

Therefore, it is suggested that three points of crises in Asante’s intellectual biography, of which his childhood transformation is one, culminated in the invention of the Afrocentric Perspective.

Turner’s interview enables the reader to identify the final two crises that led to Asante’s aha moment, as his experience as a Black student leader of the 1960s, and as president of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) in particular, and his initial contact with Maulana Karenga. What is immediately apparent from Asante’s account of his intellectual trek to Afrocentricity is that a transformation of consciousness was required in order to clear the way for new thought and possibilities. This openness to

new thought and information is both an Africological and Kuhnian requirement. What is also evident is that Asante's transformation, which was catalyzed by the crisis of the Black student revolution and a cultural crisis placed before him by Maulana Karenga, represents a social-intellectual crisis and an identity crisis, respectively.

Although Asante does not discuss his undergraduate and SNCC leadership experience in detail, based upon earlier discussions on the ferocity of the Black Student movement coupled with the 1960's tumult and how the former sought to address the dilemmas of the latter, it is fair to say that the combination of the two undoubtedly created a social, political, cultural and intellectual crisis for Asante, as it did for most other engaged students. Consequently, Asante's second crisis corresponds with the social unrest of the 1960s and the advent of Black Studies at the end of the 1960s. Unfortunately, Turner's interview does not detail much around this moment in Asante's life, thus, pointing to the need for further research in this regard.

Asante's third crisis is witnessed in his response to the philosophy of Maulana Karenga, whom he credits as the instigator of his cultural consciousness transformation. When asked to describe the "intellectual and developmental process that brought you to construct the theory of Afrocentricity" (Turner & Asante, p. 717), he immediately responds:

Well, that's a very good question, and there's a very simple answer. I am deeply influenced by Maulana Karenga. I say deeply influenced by Maulana Karenga because, even though later on I was influenced by Cheikh Anta Diop, it was while I was a student in my Ph.D. program at UCLA that I first heard Maulana Karenga talk about culture and the fact that the African American people suffered from a cultural crisis. It rang true to me from my own experiences; I was in crisis myself. It was not even economics or anything else. It was a cultural problem, and until we are able to resolve our cultural issues of who we were, we would not be able to deal with economics or technology or anything else. This made

sense to me. Karenga's notion of Kawaida was so significant that I began, even as a student of communication, to try to turn my discussions and of my analysis of communication theory toward the cultural issue. Out of that, I was able to arrive at the belief that our problem was that we had been dislocated by the European imagination. Europe had, in essence, taken us out of our own position and away from our own subject place, which is our own center; we were no longer agents. We were only on the periphery of Europe. We could only become sane if we understood that we were agents in the world-not spectators, but participants in history, and actors in history. It's out of that development. I give credit to Karenga because he first opened my eyes. None of us is born from an immaculate intellectual birth. It was after that initial influence that I came into the study, for example, people like Cheikh Anta Diop, whom I met in 1980. Certainly in the meantime, I have profited from the works and studies of many colleagues and students: this is the way of the intellectual life. (Turner & Asante, 2002, p. 717)

Kuhn (1962) suggests that the theory invention process, or the aha moment, is born out of crisis due to the awareness of anomaly. He further proposes that this crisis is drawn from a single anomaly and is catalytic in nature vis-à-vis the actual moment of invention. What Asante's intellectual biography points to is three anomalies that lead to his inventive moment. The first anomaly was that of racial discrimination and social injustice that he, his family, and the broader African American community faced during his childhood. As discussed earlier, this anomaly, characterized by White American Supremacy and Black American Oppression, created a pungent and lasting anomalous feature in the lives of African Americans, a fact not lost on Asante as a child.

What makes this awareness of oppression an anomaly is witnessed in the Kuhn's understanding and Asante's account of his childhood experience. Kuhn (1962) considers an anomaly as "the recognition that nature has somehow violated the paradigm-induced expectations that govern normal science" (p. 52). Accordingly, anomaly is revealed when against the backdrop of the social paradigm; it can very well be experienced as blatant hypocrisy. For Asante, like so many African Americans, the American social paradigm of

equality functioned as the contrasting element to his segregated and discriminatory experience. Asante states, “I was poor, we were poor, but we were unaware that other Black people were any different. Of course, we knew that Whites had money. We were segregated, discriminated against, and we held strong hatreds for White oppression” (Turner & Asante 2002, p. 714). He later says, “Oh yes! I experienced a lot of discrimination” (p. 714). Discrimination, by its very nature is a contrasted notion, a notion that calls into the question the inconsistent application of the existing paradigm, in other words, a socially functioning anomaly. This was Asante’s first anomalous era leading to his first crisis. However, in spite of how caustic this experience must have been, it was not the immediate catalyst for his aha moment.

The second anomalous era for Asante occurred during his undergraduate college experience as a student activist and leader. As suggested above, this time of student activism centered around two interrelated social irregularities. The first irregularity for Asante, must have centered around the broader economic, social and political injustices and disparities experienced by African Americans. Whereas his childhood experience in this regard was personal in nature, this latter moment was more “meta”, as Asante who was President of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee at UCLA, was now working within the broader context of the Civil Rights and Black Power movements. Through the Black students’ five original demands to the academy (intellectual enterprise, cultural relevance, connection to the Black community, student relevance and African liberation); one witnesses Asante’s and other student’s engagement with, and commitment to, the broad social conditions of the African American community. Such engagement undoubtedly ushered forth an existential crisis in Asante, influenced by

principles of justice and equality, the projection of these notions onto other countries, yet the persistent denial of these fundamental rights to Africans in America. This social hypocrisy represents the first of two existential irregularities that come to characterize his second anomalous era.

The next irregularity of this second era of crisis, relates to the first, yet it is more intellectual in nature. As a burgeoning scholar, Asante most certainly faced the question of the academy's role in perpetuating a system of oppression over Black people. This intellectual quandary, which leads to scholarly or professional insecurity, is understood through Kuhn's notion of the quest for new rules results from the failure of existing ones. Kuhn asserts that one manifestation of this failure phenomenon is the "observed discrepancies between theory and fact-which he considers the "core of the crisis" (Pajares, 2009, p. 8). This discrepancy must have shaped Asante's intellectual anxiety, as his heightening awareness of the Academy's role in laying the intellectual foundation to America's social morass, increased. This second irregularity is linked to the first of this era (broader disparities faced by Black people), through Kuhn's notion that *changes in social/cultural climates* function as anomalies which leads to crisis. The tumult of 1960s was, for the Black college student leader, a time of strong dissonance and questioning of the academy's, the intellectual's and the student's role in ameliorating African oppression. The anomaly of social and cultural change brought about a crisis within Asante and other students, and effectively raised more questions than they solved. Finally, Kuhn provides insight into yet a third characteristic to this era of crisis for Asante, the simple act of *scholarly criticism*. Asante's undergraduate experience must have been not unlike that of many college students, where critique is encouraged, and

acquiescence to dogma eschewed. This call to criticism in advance of social progress undoubtedly underscored, for Asante, the decadent collective behavior of White American social and the intellectual oppression of Black people, and it invariably must have raised even more questions around solutions to Black people's problems, for Asante.

Thus, to this point, what a Kuhnian analysis provides is insight into Asante's personal, social and intellectual anomalies leading up to his aha moment. According to his biography, Asante would have experienced two eras of anomalies. His first anomalous era is understood as his *personal oppression anomaly*. His second anomalous era, understood as his *communal and intellectual anomalous era*, consists of two phenomenological irregularities. The first irregularity represents the collective social and political injustices and oppression experienced by African Americans (*communal anomaly*). The second irregularity, which we will call his *intellectual anomaly* is understood in Kuhnian term, and are (1) *the failure of existing rules*, (2) *changes in social/cultural climates* and (3) *scholarly criticism*. The first two anomalies are represented in Table 4.

What the above highlights is that Kuhn's analysis, which he admittedly explored in reference to the natural sciences, never imagined personal and communal anomalies. Moreover, what may be at issue are the qualitative differences between natural science anomalies and those within the social sciences and Africology. And finally, the above may also reflect the idea that part of what makes Black Studies a distinct discipline is found in the scholar's connection to African phenomenon.

Table 4

Asante's First Two Anomalous Eras

Era 1	Era 2
Personal Oppression Anomaly	Communal and Intellectual Anomaly
a) childhood experience	a) social and political irregularities
b) transformation	b) intellectual irregularities (Kuhnian)
	i) failure of existing rules
	ii) changes in social/cultural climates
	iii) scholarly criticism

The two above anomalous eras are revealing, in that they illustrated for Asante the complexities of Black oppression and provided a lens through which to state the obvious. It may be for these reasons that these compelling anomalous eras do not actually move Asante to *invent theory* and to “shift the paradigm”. Simply put, these first two anomalous eras effectively raised more questions and elicit more insecurity for Asante. However, what these first two eras also did was to open him up to new interpretations, new possibilities and unconventional resolutions. Such was the nature of Asante’s crisis when he first came to hear Maulana Karenga speak while a graduate student at UCLA. Moreover, these dual anomalous eras represented two-thirds of Asante’s crisis profile. In fact, the personal oppression anomalous era and the communal and intellectual anomalous era may have combined to help create the third and final crisis. Asante’s crisis of culture anomaly.

When Asante heard Maulana Karenga state that “African American people suffered from a cultural crisis” (Turner & Asante, 2002, p. 717), he was instantly transferred to his third era of anomaly. More importantly, this final era presented resolution to the questions, anxieties, and insecurities brought on by the first two eras. Asante’s final statement of crisis, “It rang true to me from my own experience; I was in crisis myself” (Turner & Asante, 2002, p. 717) acknowledges the personal anomaly outlined above. Furthermore, what this statement makes clear is that this personal anomaly was actually a manifestation of Asante’s personal and cultural identity crisis, thus highlighting that this crisis shaped much of his personal identity. This case adds yet another layer of complexity, not addressed in Kuhn’s (1969) earlier work on personal anomalies. Since Kuhn’s position is grounded in the natural sciences, an area that may see itself as being impervious to human idiosyncrasies, Asante’s experience falls outside of that contention as his biography points to the broader context under which such phenomenon (scientific revolution) is to be explored. Moreover, Asante’s experience explains his cautionary use of Kuhn and Popper’s work, where he points to their failure to examine “the ground upon which he [they] stand” and the “justification of the scientific endeavor itself” (Asante, 2007a, pp. 14-15).

Asante’s statement makes evident that by following Reviere’s Ukweli model, and by grounding research in the experience of the community, one will arrive at a more nuanced, complex, and centered understanding of African phenomenon. Asante’s personal biography underscores the importance of identity and consciousness for Africans and their scholars, by suggesting that consciousness is the transformative quality responsible for devising new perspectives and ushering in a new and liberating thought.

This final and definitive crisis, brought forth by Karenga's dialogue on African America's cultural crisis, and more directly facilitated by his notion of Kawaida, motivated Asante to invent a theory. This dual activity of crisis and support led him to explore a solution to the "failure of existing rules". This course slightly differed from Kuhn's description suggesting that the process is more isolated and observational, rather than communal and immersed in the phenomenon. Yet again, this may represent a functional difference between the natural sciences, the social sciences, and Africology. What is clear from Asante's journey to search for a new paradigmatic framework designed to address his specific "*essential tension*" considered to be implicit in scientific research (Kuhn, 1962), is that from an Africological orientation, communalism, centered-critique, intellectual openness and dialogue are what led to his aha moment.

Upon hearing the transformative words of Karenga, Asante immediately moved into a Kuhnian style exploration for new rules designed to solve the puzzles of African Americans deemed impotent in experience and critique of existing theories. Asante writes, "...Kawaida was so significant that I began, even as a student of communication, to turn my discussions and my analysis of communication theory toward the cultural issue" (Turner & Asante, p. 717). This transition led Asante to his *aha moment*. He continued, "Out of that, I was able to arrive at the belief that our problem was that we had been dislocated by the European imagination. Europe had, in a sense, taken us out of our own position and away from our own subject place, which is our own center; we were no longer agents. We were only on the periphery of Europe. We could only become sane if we understood that we were agents in the world-not spectators, but participants in history, and actors in history" (Turner & Asante, p. 717). This statement is the credo of the

Afrocentric Perspective (epistemological centeredness). It was at this moment of revelation and formulation that the Afrocentric Scientific Revolution took place in the mind of Molefi Kete Asante.

Subsequently, and true to Kuhn's outline, Asante explored the works of those who would eventually form the philosophical foundation of the Afrocentric Paradigm. He immediately moved to engage Cheikh Anta Diop's work and philosophy to add historiography to Karenga's Kawaida cultural analysis. As Mazama (2001, 2003) outlines, he continued by incorporating Marcus Garvey's work on African agency, the Negritude Movement's cultural matrix notion, Frantz Fanon's work on psychic liberation, Harold Cruse's radical theory, and Kwame Nkrumah's Consciencism. Combined, these works represent the philosophical foundation of the Afrocentric Perspective and Afrocentric Paradigm.

Not surprisingly, Asante's progression leading to his aha moment, does not follow Kuhn's predictive pattern, primarily for two reasons. First, Kuhn described a process, based upon his read of the biographical history of key natural science-scientific figures, not of those from other human sciences. Secondly, Asante dealt with western scientific constructions and western actors, despite his earlier caution. As made abundantly clear in the literature review, one must have an appreciation of African cosmology in order to verify African agency at work, which in Asante's case, tells both an individual and collective story. From this focus on Asante's agency, as explored in his story, one derives a number of crucial implications for the Africological project. Some of these new considerations must be added to the growing epistemological and methodological foundations of the discipline. As Turner (2002) states, "Oral history is empowering

because it initiates African agency while creating primary documents for future research and historical interpretation” (p. 711). This “interpretation”, while creating a new thesis, demonstrates the power of the Afrocentric Perspective.

Additional lessons and implications can be learned from the study of Asante’s Afrocentric Scientific Revolution. Asante’s process reinforces the notion of African communalism as a cosmological orientation to African knowledge, as well as a research process for the Africologist. Asante’s openness to new ideas and possibilities, his search for solutions and his communal orientation as witnessed through his engagement with Karenga, led to this aha moment. Likewise, his decision to immerse himself within the phenomenon of African people help to shape his complex understanding of the “puzzles” he sought to solve through the advent of the Afrocentric Perspective. Thirdly, a notion not considered by Kuhn, is the role of consciousness in the invention process. While for Africologically this seems a basic notion, what is suggested in Asante’s process, is that a level of consciousness, supported by a communal dialectic, is required for truly revolutionary thought.

Fourth, Asante’s youth (a graduate student at the time of his epiphany) supports Pajares’ idea that “those who achieve fundamental inventions of a new paradigm have generally been either very young or very new to the field whose paradigm they changed” (Pajares, n.d., p. 10). This point is crucial for the perpetuation of Africology. As highlighted in the first chapter, one of the goals of this project is to provide a document that is instrumental to the development of new professionals. Asante’s story reinforces the notion that younger, burgeoning scholars hold a revolutionary potential that must be cultivated, considering the role of young idealistic students in the Black Studies

movement, some of whom eventually became scholars themselves. Therefore, Asante's biography should inspire young scholars who are looking to continue the legacy of revolutionary change within the academy and within the African community.

Asante's statement, "none of us is born from an immaculate intellectual birth" (Turner & Asante, 2002. p. 718) reflects the cumulative nature of his transformation, and when considered vis-à-vis his communal orientation to knowledge acquisition and transformation, recognizes Reviere's methodological considerations, namely Utulivu and Ujamaa. Utulivu urges researchers to avoid division and to strive for harmony among African people. What Asante's statement and his biography suggests, is his constant search for harmony with and among Africans as he allows all relevant parties in the African world to influence him and his thinking. Consequently, the Afrocentric researcher must allow the harmonious teachings of the community to shape his/her research terrain and thought development. Likewise, Reviere's Ujamaa research canon is reflected in Asante's commitment to *invent* a resolution to African people's puzzles that will recognize their agency and restore their greatness.

A final, and possibly the most important lesson from Asante's biography, is how powerful the motive forces of African crisis ought to be for the Afrocentric researcher. As his biography demonstrates, the conditions of African people must be central to the scholarly endeavors of the Africologist, moreover its level of import must represent a crisis for the researcher. Through this version of methodological centeredness and the Utulivu (harmony) Canon, particularly within the context of exploratory research like that of Asante's, the African crisis must be the motive force behind the Afrocentric researcher. Asante's biography instructs Africologist on the epistemological and

methodological power and importance of the “African Crisis” at the personal, social, and intellectual level. In his life, it was the culmination and confluence of all three that brought about the Afrocentric Revolution. Asante’s story removes all doubts about the power of “centeredness” as the primary tool of the Africologist, and his invention of the Afrocentric Perspective reifies the pragmatic core of the discipline.

Conclusion

Fortuitously, what Diane Turner’s interview of Molefi Kete Asante does is to not only document the moment of the Afrocentric Scientific Revolution, it also presents Asante’s transformation process as a model for Afrocentric Scholars. When coupled with his prodigious scholarly work, Asante becomes understood as both the creator of Africology and its quintessential scholar. The lessons derived from Asante’s transformative experience are numerous for burgeoning scholars.

Unlike prior scholars, Asante’s biography and identity crisis became methodologically significant to his crafting of a “puzzle-solving” paradigm, in the form of the Afrocentric Perspective. Likewise, he made the biographies and crisis of millions of Africans worldwide, integral to this process. As a child he recognized the crisis of his community, as an undergraduate college student he recognized his personal cultural identity crisis, and as a scholar he recognized the crisis of the African Diaspora. These crises combined to fuel his intellectual creativity and the invention of the Afrocentric Perspective.

The above process underscores the pragmatic nature of the discipline, as Asante’s experience and the directive of the Perspective to ground the work of the Africologist around the goal of African “puzzle-solving.” Asante’s invention of the Afrocentric

Perspective provides significant research implications for promising Africologists and reinforces the importance of having an African communal orientation, and an immersion in the phenomenon under study. Next, it calls for being open to the wisdom of the people, especially in exploratory research and consciousness as a compass and centeredness as a guide to one's research. It suggests that a personal and cumulative transformation is crucial for the Africologist as well as to the knowledge acquisition process. Moreover, Asante's aha moment would not have been possible without his pursuit of harmony within the African community and his commitment to its wellbeing. Finally, Asante's intellectual biography confirms Kuhn's and Pajere's suggestion that revolutions have a greater potential to occur among new and or young scholars to a field. This point cannot be lost on Africology and its potential scholars. The future of the discipline depends, in part, upon the recruitment and enlistment of new (young) revolutionary scholars.

In conclusion, this chapter employed a content analysis of Diane Turner's, 2002 interview of Molefi Kete Asante to establish the Afrocentric Scientific Revolutionary moment. It explores Thomas Kuhn's notion of the scientific revolution and his view of the development of the revolutionary scientist as a theoretical framework for: (1) exploring and establishing Asante's transformational process leading to his aha moment; (2) firmly establishing the Afrocentric Scientific Revolution; (3) highlighting differences between the natural sciences and Africology; and, (4) elucidating those methodological elements truly germane to the Africologist, as exemplified by its leading scholar. Finally, this chapter employed Reviere's Afrocentric Canons as a tool for exploring Asante's biography, and as a result, evolved an image of Asante that establishes him not only as the creator of the Afrocentric Project, but as its quintessential exemplar. It is in this

capacity that one recognizes Asante's importance to the transformation of future Africologist.

CHAPTER 5

DISCIPLINARY CONSENSUS

The achievement of consensus among African American Studies (Africology) scholars around core concepts is key to the establishment of disciplinary distinction is supported by Kuhh's (1962) and subsequent scholars' belief that a consensus around core disciplinary ideas, not shared by others outside the discipline, functions as a clear indicator that a community of scholars with a distinct identity exists. Karenga (1988) notes:

By discipline-specific intellectual production, I essentially mean work done within and for the discipline by Black Studies scholars who identify themselves primarily as such. Such discipline-specific work is indispensable, for in the final analysis, it is the community of scholars within the discipline that are primarily and ultimately responsible for its definition, defense and development. (p. 400)

What the literature review suggests and what will be demonstrated here, is that Africologists have their own scholarly identity, one that is even set apart from others within the broader field of Black Studies.

Scholarly identity and intellectual rigor are paramount concerns to any discipline, and African American Studies is no different. The way a group of scholars identify themselves to other scholars of the academy is crucial to the legitimacy of their work and their discipline. In fact, there seems to be few things of more importance to a scholar than their proclamation of their identity. When one says, "I am a historian," the academic world makes a certain and safe set of assumptions about the way that scholar sees him or herself among other scholars and in relation to a body of "facts". Likewise, when one says "I am a sociologist," the academic world again makes a certain and safe set of

assumptions about the way that scholar sees him or herself among all scholars and in relation to even the same body of “facts”, as those considered by the historian. What their proclamation does is to identify them as a particular type of intellect, with a distinct set of conventions that have achieved a level of consensus among other scholars of their cohort. In fact, the mere titles, historian or sociologist, means that if both scholars were to examine the same phenomenon, there is an expectation that the assumptions made, the ways of “knowing”, and the tools used to explore the phenomenon, would in all probability lead them to different conclusions. Scholars have a distinct disciplinary identity that leads to distinct ways of viewing the world, with a correspondingly distinct set of tools for exploring phenomenon.

Consequently, this variance in scholarly identity among intellectuals in the academy will vary their notions of rigor and excellence. Simply put, a historian’s work is by definition and expectation, going to proceed and conclude differently from that of a sociologist’s or Africologist’s. Just like Wade Nobles’ treatise on culture, where traditions and behaviors stem from a particular worldview, so do the traditions, behaviors and research tools of various disciplines stem from their unique perspectives and/or scholarly identity. Therefore, not only does one expect for there to be a distinct set of traditions, behaviors and research tools among different communities of scholars, these distinguishing characteristics reinforce the act of disciplinary division, formation and maintenance within the academy. Hence, in the academic world, because a community of scholars identifies uniquely, thinks and studies differently, we conclude uniquely. This may very well be the cultural motto of all disciplines, and Africology is no different.

The above seems obvious and logical. Not unlike any other body of scholars, for the Africologist, the proclamation of identity is crucial to the broader intellectual community's understanding of the distinct manner in which these scholars see themselves, even among others within Black Studies. When one says, "I am an Africologist", the academic world must make a certain and safe set of assumptions about the way that scholar sees him or herself among all scholars and in relation to even the same body of "facts" as those considered by the historian and the sociologist. Moreover, because of the Africologist's distinct identity, other scholars must expect a critique of their field's work in relation to the said body of "facts". What the literature on the definition, function and goals of the discipline of Africology or its markers of identity demonstrates is that no other body of scholars see themselves as the Afrocentric scholar sees him or herself. This holds true for those even within the broader field of Black Studies.

Though Kuhn initially suggests that the identity and rigor of any discipline can only be achieved through the consensus of that discipline's scholars, over time, the literature on this topic, as it relates to paradigm development, seems to advance from a strict definition of "scholarly consensus", to one that allows for dissenting positions while maintaining a unified belief system. Again, Eckberg and Hill (1980) suggest, that all that is required is "unified beliefs within a cohesive community" (p. 932). However, what the literature review within this work demonstrates is that Afrocentric scholars are a cohesive community with unanimity of belief and disciplinary consensus. A close examination of the literature reveals that: 1) Africologists are unified and have consensus around their identity, as viewed through their collective definition, function, and disciplinary goals, 2)

they achieve scholarly consensus around two core elements of the discipline- epistemology and methodologies, and 3) their scholarly behaviors represent true community cohesion.

This chapter will explore and establish consensus on those elements central to a distinct scholarly identity for Africologists. It will further show how these scholars explore and establish African phenomenological facts, through their unique epistemic and methodological approaches. Combined with Mazama's (2001, 2003) Afrocentric Paradigm and chapter four's establishment of the African American Studies Aha Moment, the establishment of the Africologist's identity and the nature of their rigor, conclusively cements the character and structure of Africology/African American Studies as a distinct discipline.

Literary Consensus Among Africologists

One of the goals of this dissertation is the search for scholarly consensus on the core disciplinary concepts among Africologists. Africology functions as a cohesive scholarly community. This fact, born out in the literature review, is a crucial marker for demonstrating disciplinary distinction. The literature review shows a movement from Kuhn's (1962) strict use of the term "consensus" to Eckberg and Hill's (1980) more evolved notion of the term that considers the range of scholarly opinions within a discipline, without the loss of commitment to the discipline's perspective or community. Again, they counter, a "paradigm need not apply to a discipline as a whole, and that unified beliefs within a cohesive community, and not broad consensus, leads to paradigmatic status" (Eckberg & Hill, 1980, p. 932).

The literature review reveals more than simple consensus among Africologists, it demonstrates both scholarly cohesion and intellectual alliance among these scholars. The literature shows (1) a lack of discord among scholars around the primary tenets of the discipline, (2) that scholars actively built upon one another's work through enhancement or extrapolation, and (3) that they purposefully expanded the discipline's intellectual and methodological tools. The literature makes clear that Afrocentric scholars did not struggle for consensus rather they achieved scholarly comradeship that has allowed for the rapid and systematic growth of the discipline.

None of the scholars referenced in the literature review opposed or contradicted the fundamental tenets of the Afrocentric project initially posed by Molefi Asante. The body of scholars moved from Asante's initial formulation and sought to expand the disciplinary boundaries and its body of work. Rather than discovering counteractive behavior one finds many examples of scholars building upon the previous work of their colleagues, which seems to have evolved as an Afrocentric scholarly character trait. Examples of this behavior are witnessed when Asante expanded the work of Diop, Fanon, Cruise and others; when Karenga built upon Keto's work on culture; and Mazama furthered Asante's foundational work in her effort to craft *The Paradigm*. At the time Reviere formulated her "The Canons of Afrocentric Research", she explicitly began with the Asante's works (1990), Collins (1990), Banks (1992) and Milan (1992), as a means for achieving depth and sophistication to her model. It seems clear that not only do the body of scholars see themselves as having achieved consensus, they see themselves as intellectually interconnected and mutually reliant— which is an appropriate trait for Afrocentric scholars.

The Africologist's Identity

As mentioned in the literature review, like all scholars, the identity of the African American Studies scholar, or the Africologist, is shaped by three elements: 1) their operational definitions for their discipline, 2) the functional nature of their discipline and 3) the goals of the discipline. These are the very elements that effectively speak to the ways in which they see themselves as members of a body of scholars who share fundamentally defining characteristics. Thus, how we define ourselves, what is our function to our community, to the broader academy and to the world, and what do we seek to achieve through our work, tells the academy and the world who we are.

How do Africologists define their discipline?

Definition of Africology

Drawing from the literature, Africologists define their discipline within two distinct categories, as an intellectual project and as socially transformational. As an intellectual project they resourced their roots within the broader field of Black Studies, which sought to carve a particular niche within the intellectual world on the study of African people. Africologists, however, define themselves and their discipline as one that moves beyond simply studying African people, to their major contention of what has been called “perspective-study” (Karenga, 1988, p. 404).

This notion of “Perspective-Study” is a central element to the discipline and is one of two fundamental ideas that separate Africologists from all scholars. According to the literature, this idea of perspective-study seems to have four elements, the first, an alternative intellectual cosmology, which provides a unique intellectual framework and an African orientation to knowledge. The second element is seen in their critical approach

to data. By definition, these scholars view the act of critiquing “traditional” scholarship on African people, from their alternative intellectual cosmology, as part of their scholarly behavior. Likewise, they see critique as part of a process that delivers a humanistic, progressive and liberating understandings of, and possibilities for African people.

The third element is witnessed in how Africologists define their discipline and their work as being of a particular quality of thought, or deriving from a particular philosophical position. This notion is an obvious interplays between their notion of “perspective-study” and alternative cosmology, which may be reciprocal in nature. It is easy to see how these three notions (quality of thought, perspective-study and alternative cosmology) inform and buttress one another, as it is logical that an alternative cosmology would produce a particular quality of thought. The fourth element is seen in their view of the discipline itself, as both an intellectual paradigm and as a meta-theory. Here, the Africologist defines the discipline as having a unique intellectual structure with a unique meta-theoretical foundation-which is Afrocentricity; and a distinct disciplinary structure-which is the Afrocentric Paradigm. For the Afrocentric scholar, these four elements comprise a collective notion of “perspectived-study”.

A second manner in which Afrocentric scholars define their discipline provides for another fundamental difference between Africology and other disciplines. Africology is an intellectual pursuit, which seeks social change for African people. It is a critical perspective and quality of practice, which is utilitarian in nature, and endeavors to effectively remove African people, through the act of critical reconstruction, from western and non-western intellectual and situational control. This disciplinary definition is unlike any other and is central to the way the Afrocentric scholars defines his or her

discipline. These two combined notions have come to define the field of Africology; as an intellectual project and as a social change vehicle. This is the first component to the Africologist's identity.

The Function of Africology

The second component to the Afrocentric scholar's identity is found in how they collectively define the function of their discipline. Again, function refers to the effect that these scholars expect the discipline to have upon the academy, their community and the broader society. The literature suggests that Afrocentric scholars have two major functional expectations. The first function of Africology is what should be called, "disciplinary function" and captures those ideas associated with the goal of creating and sustaining an intellectual paradigm.

The Afrocentric scholar believes that the function of Africology is to provide a meta-theoretical framework that establishes and organizes a discipline that provides intellectual authority, guidance and sanctuary. They expect Africology to function as an all-encompassing framework that is able to meet the stated intellectual mission of its scholars and to fulfill all corresponding, and categorical requirements for intellectual legitimacy and acceptance within the broader academy. However, it's worth noting that the Afrocentric scholar is only interested in acceptance by other scholars on humanitarian terms.

The second expectation of Afrocentric scholars is for Africology to provide a methodological function to their discipline. Broadly speaking, they expect that the work of the discipline will be utilitarian and functional for African people. Under this rubric they place the functional notions of "the centrality of African personality and agency"

and “mental liberation or liberating methodology” as the functional by-product of the discipline’s work. Secondly, they expect the discipline to function as a critical corrective to Eurocentric ideology and scholarship. By definition, this methodological function proposes Africology as a “game changer” within the academy and the lives of African people. It makes explicit its intent to have the work of the field be methodologically transformative such that previous work on African people is critiqued and subsequent work is liberating. This underscores the unique intellectual and academic niche of the Afrocentric scholar, as scholars of other disciplines do not hold an explicitly functional notion of their field that demands intellectual subjectivity and insists upon their affecting the oppressive conditions under which their subjects exist. They are at least first in this right.

The Goals of Africology

The third and final area that shapes the intellectual identity of the Afrocentric Scholar is found in the goals of Africology. As mentioned earlier, goals relate to what the discipline hopes to achieve through its work. The literature on the goals of the discipline, by Afrocentrists, points in two interrelated areas. The first set of goals, the “disciplinary goals”, pertain to those elements that seek to make Africology a distinct and viable academic enterprise. Under this rubric, the ultimate goal is that of an independent and viable discipline. The lesser goals, designed to bring the larger goal into fruition, are the establishment of African subject place and the defense of African cultural elements. And these scholars use “lexical refinement” and “location corrective” as intellectual tools that are designed to meet the broader vision of a distinct and legitimate discipline. These lesser goals depict the unique aspirations of Africologists, while the intellectual tools

depict the manner in which they expect to meet these goals. These tools further refer to the way in which they view their work vis-a-vis that of others scholars, as something holding the potential for critique of their counterpart's work on African terms.

The second or "affective goal" derives from scholars' desire for Afrocentric scholarship to be transformational. They expect the Afrocentric project to inspire African people to "self-conscious action", through "Africanization" or the raising of African consciousness. Their discussion in this regard seems to stop short of their leading the range of activities associated with securing African liberation, it rather has them functioning catalytically in the revolutionary process through what they view as the first step of this process-or mental revolution. For them, Afrocentricity and Africology are both revolutionary and inspire revolutionary behavior.

The expectation of reshaping the identity of African people through their work speaks to the manner in which they craft their scholarship, with high regard to its impact upon its intended audience. In other words, the Afrocentric scholar's goal of having a deep and mental revolutionary impact upon his or her audience; of being a scholar who intentionally politicizes the intellectual landscape; of requiring a subjective and positioned analysis; and, of having the ability to craft conclusions, messages, and even the delivery of his or work for the expediency of the audience, makes for a rare intellectual within the "traditional" academy. Thus, this scholar makes explicit his or her radical departure from their counterparts within the academy.

This goal indirectly challenges its scholars to produce relevant, people-centered and digestible material for both scholarly and layperson consumption, an expectation rarely placed upon other members of the academy. Further, for the Afrocentric scholar,

this goal implies a type of self-anointed leadership role among his or her people, as s/he understands the need to be both a conscious scholar and intellectual, as well as a leader of ideas and inspiration for psychic and even social transformation for African people. Finally, the Africologist expects that the outgrowth of their scholarly pursuits will be African liberation and human harmony. This idea is a fundamental belief among all of these scholars and functions as primary a reason for their work as their love of being an intellectual itself. The Afrocentric scholar believes that the power of humanistic and transformational ideas will lead the world to greater human harmony.

The three areas above form the Afrocentric scholar's intellectual identity. As seen through their disciplinary lens, these areas converge to create a unique and special scholar who seeks congruency between their personal, communal and social ideals, and their life as a scholar. They have set out in every direction to not only express the components of their identity upon the academy and the world, but also to make commonplace these principles and practices, in pursuit the human harmony. Their scholar/activist breed, coupled with their deep understanding of the historical connection between their work and that of preceding African freedom fighters, undoubtedly functions to sustain their effort and to sharpen their vision.

Finally, what this discussion on the components of the Afrocentric scholar's identity has highlighted, is that among this body of scholars there exists a well-understood set of assumptions upon which to determine who is and who is not an Afrocentric scholar. Their literature clearly points in this direction. As has been demonstrated, while scholarly identity can be determined by the way in which members

of a cohort define their discipline, identity can also be determined by the way in which they engage in their scholarship.

The following is an analysis of the literary consensus among these scholars as it relates to the epistemological and methodological maxims that guide their work. This discussion will be consistent with the findings around scholarly identity and will deepen our understanding of the intellectual thinking and life of the Afrocentric scholar. Finally, exploration of the rational movement between scholarly identity and scholarly practice, coupled with a clear indication of the “excellent and rigorous” nature of the discipline, which is arrived at by examining their scholarly practices (i.e., epistemology and methodology), will convince, even the casual reader, of the legitimacy of Africology.

Afrocentric Epistemology

In 1984, Russel Adams provides a highly instructive understanding of epistemology:

Having suggested the scope of the sociology of knowledge problem, let us define the concept of epistemology. *Webster's Third New International Dictionary* defines the word “epistemology” as the “theory of the science of the methods and grounds of knowledge, especially with reference to its limits and validity.” The same source defines the word “epistemic.” as “knowledge or knowing as a type of experience, purely intellectual or cognitive.” Over 50 years ago, one of the founders of the sub-field of the sociology of knowledge, Max Scheler, stated that “a society’s ethos, condensed in its epistemology, determines what constitutes knowledge for a group, what a group considers worth knowing, as well as what it considers trivial...” (Scheler, *Problems of a Sociology of Knowledge*, p. 26) Thomas S. Kuhn, in his highly influential work, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, stresses the social foundations of epistemologies. He argues that formal systematized knowledge arises from the existence of a community of like-minded persons who come to share the basic beliefs about the metaphysical and empirical foundations of cognitive ideas. Epistemologies, then, serve as a source of standards of discernment, reference, an evaluation of phenomena. An epistemology is a social code for mapping a group’s definition of various levels of reality. It helps to

decide what it is that we “see” cognitively. It functions reflexively to connect new data with new ideas and information. An epistemology serves as a guide for ranking the significance of certain areas of human activity in the context of systemic knowledge. Epistemologies themselves are distillates of ideas, values and beliefs that arise from the experiences and desires of the prevailing elites in a social system. It was in recognition of this fact that Scheler considered a society’s epistemology to be closely akin with its ethos and system of moral judgment. (p. 208)

Adams gives features to the definition of ‘epistemology’ that prove useful for this work. With his use of Scheler’s work, he establishes an epistemological orientation that is not necessarily individual or elite, but rather can be collective in nature. This act, in essence moves away from “Webster’s” root definition that stipulates that epistemology be only intellectual and cognitive, because it allows for communal ways of knowing and does not relegate this privilege to the elites. Next, what Adams’ use of Kuhn’s definition does is to apply rigid barriers to the broad use of the idea, or even the over-application of epistemological assumptions. He writes that, “an epistemology serves as a guide for ranking the significance of certain areas of human activity in the context of systemic knowledge” (Adams, 1984, p. 208). Though in the end he reverts back to the notion of epistemology being referential only to the elite segment of a community, his overall discussion and final sentence connects the work of the scholar to the collective (ethos and system of moral judgment) ways of knowing within the broader community.

The above argument effectively bifurcates African-Centered work in general from that of European-Centered work. That is, if it is fundamentally true that the cultural ethos of African people is “I am because we are, and because we are, therefore I am” (Mbiti, 1969, pp. 108-109), versus a possible European cultural model, “I am because I can, because I can, therefore I am” p, then all African scholars begin their most fundamental intellectual understanding of themselves and their work through an interplay between

themselves and other African peoples. Whereas, European-Centered scholars may view themselves as intellectual entities that are detached from Europeans and their phenomena, as well as the phenomena of other groups under study. This position is clearly reinforced by the literature review.

Consensus on Afrocentric Epistemology

Position A

From an analysis of the literature on Afrocentric epistemology we uncover two distinct, yet related, epistemological tracks. Position A, which might be called the “people’s epistemic position”, results from the ethos and moral judgment of African people. The nature of this position is that it is not influenced by the political and social agenda of the academy, it is the raw and descriptive way in which the people “know”. These descriptions of “knowing” may establish many epistemic maxims for the Africologists.

The people’s epistemological position can be understood under terms like African philosophy, religion, myths, “folk” ways and the likes. These areas simply describe the way in which African people understand, view and order the universe, and the moral judgments they place upon life’s vicissitudes. Karenga (2004) believes, “Moral theology, like all theology, evolves from questions, assumptions, and critical reflection about God, the Transcendent, and ultimately turns to the meaning this has for humans and the world” (p. 135). These forms function as a powerful source of epistemic material, for both the Africologist and African-Centered scholar alike. These forms do not function as actual epistemologies, as they do not establish a predictable or “scientific” process for establishing knowledge. Unbridled by the full application of the western notion of the

term “epistemology”, they are functional examples of the natural pathways of African people that lead to their unique form of knowledge production. This is where Harris’ term “supra-rational” applies.

An example of this “people’s knowledge” is found in Maat and its corresponding principles, which exists as a functional understanding of ancient African’s cosmological and moral orientation. Maat (truth, balance and order) lays out a plethora of epistemic material that is instructive to the Afrocentric scholar as they determine people-based forms of knowledge.

Do Maat that you endure upon the earth
Quiet the weeper and do not oppress the widow
Do not drive a man from the property of his father
Do not reduce the possession of the nobles
Guard against punishing wrongly.
Do not kill; it does not serve you.
Thus will this land be set in order (46-49). (Karenga, 2004, p. 62)

The above example illustrates how Ancient Africans “knew”, yet it does not establish, in the traditional western sense, a well-understood and or predictable way in which that knowledge was firmly understood. These forms of knowledge came more in the form of edicts, beliefs and myths, rather than the western form of a “proof”. However, these collective proofs resulted from the lived experiences of the people whose lives and rituals demonstrated the factual basis of their widely held beliefs. These edicts were true because their righteousness was revealed in the people’s collective practices and in their daily lives, and was emotive in nature. It is up to the Afrocentric Scholar to move these forms of epistemic maxims to Africological epistemologies. Schiele (1994) believes:

That is knowing (i.e., understanding events and reality) through emotion or feeling is considered valid and critical from an Afrocentric standpoint.

Indeed, a major premise of Afrocentricity is that “the most direct experience of self is through emotion or affect” (Akbar, 1984, p. 410). The focus on affect in Afrocentricity does not prevent recognition and use of rationality. Rather, affect, as a means of knowing, is viewed as offsetting the use of rationality (Akbar, 1984). (p. 153)

Again, this first finding derives from an analysis of the work done by Afrocentric scholars on Afrocentric epistemology. One may ask, “then why two positions rather than one elaborate track?” The answer is simple. What emerged was a scholarly discussion on the actual way in which “African people knew what they knew” that departed from the primary discussion on the manner in which the field, itself, might establish its particular approach to fact or knowledge establishment. This first position is obviously fertile territory for Afrocentric scholars and holds potential for even greater epistemic implications and models.

The second reason for the first position, which sits apart from the more traditional Afrocentric epistemological approach, is that the former is not rigid nor is it rule bound in the way of the latter. The former results from the collective observations of African people, their phenomenon and their emotive response, and establishes a position on the way in which they derive meaning from their collective experiences-“knowing”. The second position is intentional, scientific, and necessarily rigid. However, the second tack cannot exist without the first, as the first functions as the source of “centeredness and groundedness” that is chief to the Africological project. Thereby, underscoring for the Africologist the inseparable nature of the two positions.

Africology requires that its researchers have a keen understanding to the cultural values and behaviors of African people as the principal way of determining meaning and “knowing” in their research. In other words, the research must resonate with the way that

the people, either specifically or in Asante's composite African sense, understand such things. The conclusion must be a recognizable fact, not just for the body of scholars but also for the people from whom the phenomenon derives. Thus, the way the scholar "knows" and/or even proves, is not solely based upon his/her lofted scholarly position, it is also based within the ways in which African people have historically demonstrated their knowledge-based positions. In this regard, one is reminded by Norman Harris, of the importance of both the "rational (historical) and supra-rational (intuition)", when they move from epistemology to research.

Position B

The second and dominant epistemological position (Position B) to arise from the literature review might be called the "afrocentric scholar's epistemic position". This stance follows the way in which the Africologist defines him/herself, and is a direct reflection of a major goal of Afrocentric scholarship. Part of the make-up an Afrocentric scholar is his or her unwavering commitment to the production of liberating scholarship. This commitment understandably finds manifestation in the way they understand knowledge and ultimately conduct their research. Therefore, knowledge can only be used in liberating ways, which is a functional opposite of the western liberal intellectual tradition of knowledge for the sake of itself.

As noted earlier, this position is different from the former in part because it is scientific in nature. Afrocentricity is an intellectual project, a point emphatically made in this work. From its inception, it set out to systematically study African people from a perspective that effectively removes them from the margins of other people's work and places them within their proper human framework and in human harmony with all

world's people, intellectually, socially, politically and otherwise. The project, today called Africology, has grown into a legitimate discipline with all of the meta-physical disciplinary accoutrements, within its paradigm— another fact that this work establishes. Africology fully functions as the premier discipline within the Black Studies panoply, with its corresponding rigid boundaries that are designed to discipline its scholars, to project its excellence and to accomplish its goals within the academy and the world.

The Afrocentric scholars' epistemic position was launched in the initial works of Asante's "three qualities" of Afrocentric research—the affective, referencing Harris' more people-oriented view of "suprarational"; the cognitive (knowing)—representing the more western-traditional approach to epistemology as it has evolved within the Afrocentric camp; and, the conative (acting)—representing the afrocentric "scholarly track"—or the commitment to using knowledge for liberating purposes. These three qualities establish the foundation for the Afrocentric scholar's approach to "knowing" within an African phenomenological world. The Afrocentrist "knows" through his/her feelings and their subjects' feelings, (suprarational), which are derived from their connection to the phenomenon. The Afrocentrist scholar "knows" through the discipline's unique approach to rigor, whose lineage departs from the foundational works of the discipline— Diop, Garvey, Cruise, Fanon, Karenga, Negritude etc., the disciplinary matrix work done by Asante, Karenga and Mazama, and the subsequent research methodologies provided by a number of Africologists. Finally, the Afrocentric scholar "knows" through their commitment to producing liberating scholarship. This means that Afrocentric scholarship finds meaning when it becomes "functional knowledge". For the Africologist, these "ways of knowing", represent the two-prong nature of their scholarly

identity, their commitment to centered-scholarship and to African liberation. This central fact cannot be lost, if one is to fully understand the unique nature of the Afrocentric epistemology.

Drawn from Asante's "three qualities" are the following epistemic bases, or the areas from which Africologist seek to establish "knowing". *Cosmological* knowledge is based upon the composite African concept and reflects an inter-play between people based and scholarly-based knowledge. This notion reflects the idea that African people are culturally (in a broad sense) connected across the globe, while recognizing their diverse realities. It further employs a notion of Africans that is representative of their collective cultural sense (I am because we are). The next area is the *epistemological base*, which represents the inquiry vectors from which knowledge is derived; language dance, ancestral memory, myth etc. These areas represent traditional mediums for African people that functionally reveal people's/African based ways of knowing. The third area is the *axiological* question that undergirds the Afrocentric epistemic tradition, "what is good"? The Africologist believes that it is only through a commitment to the highest and virtuous ideals of African people and culture that liberation will come. Further, this position helps to shape the Afrocentric intellectual landscape by being explicitly against negative and unduly critical work on African people and phenomenon. The final area is that of *aesthetics*, which like the second area represents the more traditional manners in which African people demonstrate their collective knowledge.

These four areas not only represent an understanding of the epistemic terrain of Africology, but based upon consensus, they have come to function as the monikers for the rigorous nature of Afrocentric scholarship. When Afrocentric scholars speak of rigor

and excellence they are talking about whether the scholarship has met the above understandings. Afrocentrists find excellence in the scholarship's ability to represent African people's understanding of their phenomenon and its functional ability to aid the African liberation process.

Mazama's Afrocentric Paradigm (2003), which propels the process of building a scientific discipline, pragmatically moves the above epistemic postures to the level of a *paradigmatic perspective*. In the process, she reinforces the notion of *epistemological centeredness and functional epistemology* as the major disciplinary distinguishing factors from all other intellectual pursuits. As mentioned previously, the intellectual perspective is a distinguishing element when it demarcates, through its unique properties, the defining and possibly irrefutable differences between it and other disciplinary perspectives. Mazama's functional epistemology, is not only inherently distinct, in that no other discipline seeks knowledge for the express purpose of liberation a group of people, it also creates an added layer of rigor for the Africologist. What the functional criteria of the discipline does, is to also require that all scholarly work search for solutions to the challenges faced by African people, most especially those resulting from White Supremacy. Undoubtedly, this is a distinguishing trait. Thus, when Mazama employs the paradigmatic framework and crafts the Afrocentric Paradigm, she moves "The Perspective" to a level of supreme epistemic influence by furthering the notion that all scholarship done on African people must come from their centered-interpretation and be liberating, and circumscribing it with all of the paradigmatic-disciplinary matrix requirements. This she compliments with a formidable philosophical foundation, which is comprised of the Field's luminaries.

This scientific process of erecting a paradigm enables her to make the above epistemic principles that were established earlier by Asante, the touchstone for cementing previous Afrocentric work and for accepting future works. Thus, the Afrocentric Paradigm transforms the Afrocentric Epistemology into the touchstone for Afrocentric excellence, as it establishes *functional epistemology* as a new and accepted basis of knowledge. Furthermore, it bounds a new and formidable body of scholars who lend legitimacy to the discipline. Mazama's work exemplifies the Afrocentric scholarly behavior of reinforcing and building upon the efforts of fellow scholars in pursuit of the Afrocentric scientific study of African people. Her work structures the epistemological terrain and establishes the Afrocentric bases of knowledge as the touchstone for the discipline and its brand of excellence.

What the literature on Afrocentric Epistemology presents is a two-prong understanding of the way in which Afrocentric Scholars have come to know what they know. The distinguishing factor between the two positions are that the first position is centered around a deductive approach to understanding what African people use to establish "people facts or knowledge" and the use of that knowledge to drive scholarly work. Unlike the first position, the latter position is scientific and exists under rigid disciplinary boundaries. And the second position is shaped by two major epistemic maxims, people-centered-study and functionalism.

Afrocentric Methodology

Correspondingly, the Afrocentric Methodology extends from the Afrocentric Epistemology. It is worth reiterating that there was no debate among the scholars over methodological approaches to studying African people. In fact, one discovers that

scholars reinforced one another's ideas and worked in concert to expand the number of available methodological tools.

Because these methodologies derive from the epistemologies of the discipline, they therefore represent the rigorous element of Africology, thus completely answering the question, "how does Afrocentric excellence and rigor look?" The excellence is found in the epistemologies and the rigor in the methodologies. This notion of excellence and rigor also explains what is meant by the "rigid boundaries" of the discipline-or the conditions under which the Afrocentric scholars operate.

The following methodological maxims reflect consensus among Afrocentric scholars. The Afrocentrist believes that researchers must be held accountable for their work, which includes defining their role within the context of their research. They are not allowed to claim intellectual objectivity, nor are they allowed to claim a lack of responsibility for their findings and conclusions. Their connection to the phenomenon and their commitment to African liberation trumps all urges to disassociate themselves from their study and subjects. The Afrocentrists believe in holistic and integrative study. This approach to study includes an immersion with the phenomenon to achieve a depth of understanding not accomplished through distant and detached examination. This approach also includes a degree of intuition and spiritual connection that is derived from a deep connection to the "people" under study. This holistic approach expects that the researcher will glean deeper knowledge and more liberatory possibilities through their research. The Afrocentric scholar is expected to be of the phenomenon, not simply an observer of it.

For the third maxim, the Afrocentric scholar is grounded in, and expected to employ in their research, a complex understanding of African people and culture. This is fundamental to the discipline. This rigid boundary, for the scholar, means that the cosmological, epistemological, axiological and aesthetic maxims must provide intellectual grounding to their work. This grounding, or centeredness, dictates the manner in which the Afrocentrist proceeds in his or her study, and more importantly, it retains fidelity to the goal of allowing African people to interpret phenomenon. These scholars must distinguish between afrocentric and non-afrocentric epistemic influences as they engage their research. The way in which these scholars know the context of their phenomena must meet the criterion established in the previous section on epistemology. The flow from excellence to rigor must be congruent, true to the voice of African people, and honor the rigid boundaries of the discipline as part of the process of integral scholarship. Further, the scholar must functionally vanguard against the “seepage” of non-afrocentric, generally Western, epistemic influences. To allow any form of such would de-facto make the work epistemologically and methodologically flawed within the africanological context. Again, the rigid boundaries of the discipline prevail as the instrument used to maintain the centered brand of rigor for the Afrocentric scholar.

The Afrocentric scholar, in accordance with the fifth maxim, must integrate history, myth, “folk” devises, lived experiences, traditions and classical beliefs into their data. This criterion insures fidelity to the epistemic maxims established earlier and to the mission of the discipline. This methodological maxim insures that the scholar is placing the culture and supranatural elements central to their research. The scholars then must explicate and explain, within the context of the studied phenomenon, the impact of

oppression upon African people. Further, their work must include liberating alternatives and solutions to the conditions under study, directly reflecting the functional epistemic maxim, as the discipline clearly defines itself through its commitment to functional knowledge that is linked to African liberation. The Africologist believes that praxis is central to their research and to the work of the discipline.

The final maxim is linked to the third, and states that Africologists must be functionally “centered” as scholars. Their “location”, as discussed by Asante (1990), is crucial to their ability to locate their study in a “centered” context. Therefore, the Afrocentrist must possess the scholarly identity, established earlier in this chapter, and that without such an identity one cannot conduct africological research with congruency and integrity. Moreover, absent this congruency and integrity, one cannot achieve any degree of excellence and rigor. Unlike other forms of study, because Africology requires a hermetic link between the researcher and the study, the scholar is determined to be a crucial point of data to the study/research and its viability. Thus, from an africological standpoint, excellence and rigor moves through the researcher’s sense of their Afrocentric scholarly identity.

What derives from the above methodological maxims is a host of methods to be used by the Africologist to create new methodologies, the likes of those highlighted earlier. The importance of these tools is not only found in their role in creating a self-reliant discipline, but also in their insurance of maintaining a Afrocentric definition of scholarly excellence and rigor.

This study has discovered that there is a unique brand of excellence and rigor for the Africologist and that this excellence is arrived at through both a personal and

intellectual process that is inextricably connected. The work of Afrocentric scholars over the past 30 years has not only been based upon consensus, in true scholarly fashion, their work has proceeded logically—moving from disciplinary identity and mission, to the establishment of a corresponding epistemological and methodological tradition. In the process, scholars have demonstrated disciplinary fidelity, and intellectual fluidity and creativity as they have “grown” the discipline. This has made for a clearly distinct group of scholars who are focused on the creation of an African-centered and liberating scholarly tradition—that is Africology.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This dissertation set out to accomplish four research tasks that are key to reinforcing the Afrocentric paradigm, which functions as the metaphysical apparatus of Africology. These research goals were: (1) to establish the Afrocentric Scientific Revolution, (2) to demonstrate scholarly consensus among Africologists, (3) to discover the identity of the Africologist and (4) to identify Afrocentric excellence and rigor. The project has been vast yet conclusive in its effort to meet these research goals and invariably has met the eight project goals outlined in the third chapter. This final chapter will capstone the overall efforts of this work, that of reinforcing the Afrocentric paradigm. Secondly, it will discuss how this reinforcement process also addressed the project goals. Finally, this chapter will present some recommendations for further work.

In terms of reinforcing the Afrocentric paradigm, this project sought to achieve four research measures. First among them was the establishment of the Afrocentric Scientific Revolution. Chapter four effectively met this task and marked the point at which Afrocentricity departed from other disciplinary projects and began its journey to becoming a distinct pillar of knowledge. Chapter four does this by first establishing Kuhn's "invention" model as the more appropriate of the two models, to study the Afrocentric Scientific Revolution. The chapter then moves to describe, with nuance, the conditions that created the "crisis nature" required for the invention method of change. This section also outlines the characteristics of the persons who would ultimately go on to launch a scientific revolution, including their intellectual and personal traits. Following is

a discussion on the social conditions circumscribing the Black Studies movement and how they correspond with the criterion set forth by Kuhn. Next is a discussion, led by Pajares' work on the steps associated with the "aha" moment for Molefi Asante, the author of the Afrocentric Scientific Revolution. This is followed by a content analysis of Diane Turner's autobiography of Asante, and its use to effectively chronicle the steps to Asante's epiphany and invention, that is now known as the Afrocentric Scientific Revolution.

Turner's interview provided enough detail and nuances to categorically meet every requirement for the invention process of a scientific revolution. The process of matching up Asante's biography with the steps outlined by Kuhn and Pajares, demonstrated both the appropriate use of the invention model and more importantly, the appropriateness of establishing Asante as the author of the revolution. Moreover, the richness of the interview, coupled with the effort to match up the requirements of the invention model with Asante's biography, unearthed an Afrocentric understanding to this process and Asante's life. Further, it highlights how more factors may go into the invention process than what Kuhn initially considered, thus possibly making for a new set of criterion and an Afrocentric notion to the idea of scientific revolution. Chapter four firmly establishes the moment at which Asante's inventive spirit conjured a revolutionary notion that departed from other disciplinary efforts and launched the Afrocentric movement and paradigm.

The second research effort of this work was to establish the nature of consensus among Afrocentric Scholars. Kuhn asserts that the measure of a cohort of scholars germane to any discipline is found in their consensus around core disciplinary concepts.

Therefore, this study examined three core concepts that are legitimate to any discipline and tested for scholarly consensus among Africologists. These areas are, the definition, function and goals of the discipline, the epistemological tradition and the methodologies of Africology.

In the analysis of the literature review, it was revealed that Afrocentric scholars demonstrated tremendous scholarly consensus, and that their Afrocentric scholarly behavior led them to move beyond simple consensus to comradery. First, it was shown that the scholars moved in concert to erect various and required elements of the Afrocentric paradigm, and in the process reinforced and built upon one another's ideas. This study found no contradictory behavior, or begging to differ, among the scholars, which did not suggest complicit behavior but rather a larger sense of their collective mission to build a pillar of knowledge. Scholars chose to expand the number of positions held, while staying within the rigid boundaries set by the discipline's theoretical structure. Finally, scholars seem to work as comrades who share a mission and identity that is linked to their commitment to the broader African community.

The third research goal of this work was to establish the Afrocentric scholarly identity through an analysis of the literature review on the definition, function and goals of the discipline. An argument was made that these three elements constitute the scholar's view of their discipline and reflects their intellectual identity. Once again, the literature reflected broad consensus on these three ideas. This chapter codified the data of the three areas and what emerged is an image of the Afrocentric scholar as one who claims full ownership of their field, and one who seeks congruency with the principles of their life as

activists with their intellectual work as scholars. This identity as scholar/activist guides their orientation to knowledge and their approach to research.

The last research effort of this project explored the link between the Afrocentric scholar's identity and their brand of scholarship, namely their developed epistemological and methodological traditions. Both the evolved epistemic and methodological traditions function to establish the discipline's brand of Afrocentric excellence. The analysis codified the epistemic and methodological tradition that has evolved over the last 30 years within the discipline. Again, what becomes clear is the congruency between the identity of the body of scholars and their tradition of knowledge establishment and their approach to researching African phenomenon. Their epistemic maxims and their methodological approaches are a direct reflection of their commitment to centered-study and liberating outcomes.

Another discovery of this analysis is that there exists a number of methodological tools at the Afrocentric scholar's disposal. This revelation was empowering as it demonstrated the vast nature of efforts and the quality of work scholars have been engaged in. The various methodological approaches also demonstrate the interconnected nature of these various works, as scholars reference one another in the development of new and more advanced models. These methodologies also highlight the creative power of these scholars and their independent nature, which derived from being a distinct discipline. And finally, taken together, the Afrocentric epistemic and methodological tradition represent the discipline's unique approach to excellence and rigor. When fully considered, one must be impressed by this select few scholars who have managed to stay true to their core values and scholarly identity, and how they have brilliantly and

categorically built a meta-structure that moves from their scholarly identity to the establishment of a legitimate discipline.

Thus, the fourth research goal was accomplished. In the process of meeting the demands of these goals, the eight project goals were also addressed. So how do these research goals address the eight concerns outlined in chapter three? The first project goal was to insure the link between the original Black Studies' goals of student leadership development, cultural nationalism, community engagement and African liberation, to Africology. It seems that there are no less than three ways in which the research has addressed this concern.

One way in which the research has addressed this concern is found in Ama Mazama's work on the Afrocentric Paradigm. In structuring the paradigm, she recaptures all of the above elements of the original Black Studies' goals and cements them when she adds to Khun's model the area of functional epistemology. This Afrocentric criterion effectively captures all of the above goals of Black Studies, including that of creating an intellectual enterprise. A second way in which the research has addressed this project goal is found in the research on Molefi Asante's aha moment, or scientific revolution. As outlined in his biography, all of the above Black Studies criteria were major elements of his intellectual transformation. As shown in the analysis, these elements were the factors leading to his aha moment and undoubtedly the subsequent structuring of his Afrocentric philosophy, which also harnesses all of the above elements.

A third manner in which the research addresses this first project goal is witnessed in the analysis on the Afrocentric scholar's identity, their epistemic tradition and methodologies. The scholar/activist nature of Africologists reinforces this fact, as well as

the details of the discipline's definitions, functions and goals. Their identity, as scholars, is circumscribed by the above Black Studies criteria. They are Black Studies personified. Likewise, their way of "knowing" is cultural nationalist in nature and reflective of their commitment to engage the community, and their notion of "functional epistemology" harnesses the idea of liberating scholarship. Their methodological requirements are rooted in Black Studies. The ideas of immersion with the phenomenon and praxis methodology are among a number of examples of where these Black Studies' goals shape the intellectual work of Africologists.

The second goal of a clear definition of Africology was also addressed directly through the research by examining the consensus building process of the definition, function and goals of Africology. This led to our understanding of the Afrocentric scholar's identity. What is discovered is that the Africologist defines the discipline as being distinct from all other intellectual enterprises. The definition is shaped by its scholar's core values of centered study and liberating outcomes as well by his or her commitment to the best of scholarly pursuits. Africology is defined as an intellectual enterprise with a special mission.

The third goal of categorical paradigm development was also met. In fact, all four areas of research effectively address this issue. Each research goal represented a category of paradigm development based upon Kuhn's model. Kuhn asserted that there had to be a scientific revolution, a distinct scholarly identity, consensus among the body of scholars and distinct intellectual tools (epistemology and methodologies), in order to proclaim disciplinary distinction. All of these requirements were shown to be present in the Afrocentric project and thus effectively address the third project goal.

The above also addresses the fourth project goal, that of establishing disciplinary distinction. What the research demonstrates, as witnessed through the Afrocentric Scientific Revolution, is the moment at which Black Studies work was decoupled from other disciplines. The research also demonstrates consensus among Africologist around a body of distinct intellectual conventions and tools. And what the research further shows is that the scholar's identity is specific to the Afrocentric enterprise and should not be confused with any other discipline. The logic of this last point functions conversely as well. Because of the distinctive features of Africology, others within the broader field of Black Studies, cannot claim to be Africologist or to be doing Afrocentric work, without meeting the disciplines requirements and existing within its rigid disciplinary structure.

The fifth project goal seeks to avoid intellectual mimicry and the seeking of European approval by Black Studies professionals. This goal was met in three ways. First, the project further establishes that Africology is a legitimate academic discipline. This fact should provide comfort to Black Studies scholars who might be interested in wrapping their work with a disciplinary structure, rather than to have it "suspend in the air" of the interdisciplinary model or as a subset of a European academic tradition. A decision to move to Africology automatically removes the scholar from any expectations of European approval. Secondly, the research outlines the contours of the discipline, in terms of defining what it means to be an Africologist and the corresponding behavioral expectations of its scholars, which are shaped by the discipline's rigid boundaries. Finally, the codification of the epistemological and methodological criteria provide the scholar with a coherent compilation of intellectual tools, which allows him or her to abandon those given in the traditional European disciplines. This research presents a

legitimate choice for Black Studies professionals that could liberate them from European intellectual control.

The sixth project goal, of establishing Afrocentric standards of excellence and rigor, is partly linked to the fifth project goal. Often, burgeoning scholars are deterred from Afrocentric work because they are made dubious about the rigorous nature of the discipline. What this work does is to first establish the unique nature of the discipline, which is a crucial step to understanding the distinctive ways in which Afrocentric excellence is achieved. Next, the work highlights the perspective and the work of the discipline's scholars, which underscores that the discipline is led by legitimate, conscious and committed, intellectuals. Finally, through research on epistemology and methodology, this work outlines exactly what it means to be excellent and rigorous within an Afrocentric context. These two tools for Afrocentric excellence and conduct not only functionally distinguish the discipline, but they also describe the measuring stick for legitimate scholarship within the discipline.

The seventh project goal, of removing Black Studies professional's reliance upon European intellectual tools and application, is addressed in the discussion of the two previous goals. Both the clarification of Afrocentric scholarly conduct and the discipline's intellectual tools effectively address this goal. Now there is no reason for conscious scholars to rely upon the intellectual tools crafted by those outside of the discipline. Additionally, it is made clear that there is room for growth and expansion within the discipline. This fact should be encouraging to those who are looking to make their mark within the academy and the African world.

The eighth and final project goal, of providing a document that will be useful for the training of future Africologists, is an outcome that is left to the scholars of the discipline. It is hoped that this work will be found to be significant enough to find its way into the discipline's mainstream and education of future Africologists, especially on the graduate level.

Concluding Remarks and Recommendations

The work on this project has taught this researcher two important lessons. The content analysis, which ultimately generated a scholarly profile of Africologists, made it clear that the criterion used to decide which Afrocentric scholars to consider in the literature review, was flawed. Because scholars say that they are Afrocentric or that they used an Afrocentric approach to their work does not insure that they are Africologists, nor does it insure that they are committed to the Africological project. We now have better criteria with which to make such judgments. Therefore, it is possible that had this researcher had the scholarly profile that has resulted from this work, ruling out scholars could have been a more efficient process, even though it might have ultimately yielded the same number of Africologists.

The second and more important lesson to emerge from this work is the lack of discussion on the impact that White Supremacy has had upon the growth of Black Studies broadly and African American Studies in particular. Though the work did not set out to examine this question, because of its pervasive and omnipresent nature, White Supremacy continued to interject itself into the various discussions of scholars and the analysis of the material. This reinforces one dissertation committee member's position

that White Supremacy lies at the core of Black Studies and Africology's struggles. This researcher is convinced that the committee member is correct.

This point was evident in Mario Small's analysis of the African American Studies departments at Temple and Harvard Universities, where both Asante and Gates worked tirelessly to navigate the senseless roadblocks erected by a White power structure. It was evident in Rojas' work on Black faculty's attitudes toward Black Studies, where it was shown that the pressures of the academy leads one to mimic their White counterpart in order to have a degree of viability, and a chance at survival and success. It was evidenced in Blassingame's (1970) statement, "Often, when the Negro scholar escapes the ideological snare of the black students, he faces the almost equally dangerous trap of being overworked by his white colleagues" (p. 28). And it was evident in Asante's (1999) statement, "We are targets of anti-African behavior at almost all levels of the university" (p. 9).

The prevalence of this issue throughout the work makes clear the importance of further research in this direction. White Supremacy has been an undergirding and consistent factor in Black Studies' struggle for success. Research on this matter is not only logical, it is also consistent with the mission of Afrocentric Scholarship.

The next recommendation derives from the discussion on the use of this document as a teaching tool for graduate students. One of the challenges faced within the discipline is that of distinguishing Africologic from other Black Studies' efforts. Associated with this challenge are issues of definitions, meaning of a discipline, intellectual tools, and heritage as a member of the Black Studies pantheon. It seems that the advent of the Afrocentric Paradigm went a long way toward addressing some of these issues. However,

other concerns remain. Hopefully, this work will go even further in helping to make clear the ground upon which this discipline stands as well as the work and possibilities that exist within its structure. Therefore, it is recommended that those teaching within the discipline use this document to teach future Africologists.

The third recommendation goes back to the discussion on Afrocentric epistemology. The first position (Position A) presented as an underdeveloped area within our epistemic tradition. Further research is needed on African culture to create even greater ways of knowing, and to move those new understandings into new methodological models. As mentioned before, we are a new and exciting field, with room for growth. Through our active mining of our culture and the advent of new intellectual models, we will continue to amplify the African voice upon the human landscape.

The final recommendation comes from a discussion during the dissertation proposal defense. One committee member mentioned a belief that yet another criterion for disciplinary status exists. That is that in order for us to consider ourselves a discipline, there must be at least five viable Afrocentric departments at colleges and universities across the country. Therefore, in agreement with this belief, a new area of study should be included within the discipline's structure that focuses on the methodical way in which to proceed to strengthen our discipline. This work might include continuously reinforcing the paradigm, developing the Afrocentric cannon, and supporting the creation of new departments of Africology on campuses across the country.

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ENDNOTES

ⁱ Karenga (2003) provides a similar list; 1) to teach the Black experience in its historical and current unfolding, 2) to create a body of knowledge which was contributive to intellectual and political emancipation, 3) to create intellectuals who were dedicated to community service and development rather than vulgar careerism, 4) *an early objective* the cultivation, maintenance and continuous expansion of a mutually beneficial relationship between the campus and the community, and 5) to establish and reaffirm its position in the academy as a discipline essential to the educational project and the conception of quality education (p. 19).

ⁱⁱ This goal of disciplinary status could be understood as an outgrowth of the nationalist underpinnings of the Black Studies Movement and ongoing questioning of the legitimacy of such an enterprise. Conyers (1970) pronounces, “Because Black Studies began as a self-defined and organized discipline or area of study among African Americans...” (qtd. in Karenga 2002, p. 3). Later Karenga (2003) writes, there are two basic arguments traditionally put forth against Black Studies. The first is that Black Studies is not a serious discipline. The second is that it is concerned with the social at the expense of the academic (p. 20).

ⁱⁱⁱ Turner reported the proceedings of 1969 Institute of the Black World organizing meeting, which consisted of faculty and students who were charged to “organize a curriculum prototype that would define the conceptual parameters and explain the scholarly method and purpose for what was generally being referred to as Black Studies.”

^{iv} While Allen does not highlight Hare’s desire to have Black Studies respond to Black Student’s “relevant” request, Hare does so in his 1970 article, “Questions and Answers About Black Studies”. He states, ...Thus, the student gets a more “relevant” education, testing out theories learned (in the laboratory of life against experiences and observations and experimentation).

^v Toulmin and Kuhn (both are used heavily in this document) disagreed on the fundamental premise of paradigms”. From Wikipedia (2009), on this debate,

In 1972, Toulmin published *Human Understanding*, which asserts that conceptual change is an evolutionary process. This book attacks Thomas Kuhn’s account for conceptual change in his seminal work, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*. Kuhn believed conceptual change to be a revolutionary process (as opposed to an evolutionary process), during which mutually exclusive paradigms compete to replace one another. Toulmin criticizes the relativist elements in Kuhn’s thesis, as he points out that the mutually exclusive paradigms provide no ground for comparison; in other words, Kuhn’s thesis has made the relativists’ error of overemphasizing the “field variant” while ignoring the “field invariant,” or commonality shared by all argumentation or scientific paradigms.

In contrast to Kuhn’s revolutionary model, Toulmin proposed an evolutionary model of conceptual change comparable to Darwin’s model of biological evolution. Toulmin states

that conceptual change involves the process of innovation and selection. Innovation accounts for the appearance of conceptual variations, while selection accounts for the survival and perpetuation of the soundest conceptions. Innovation occurs when the professionals of a particular discipline come to view things differently from their predecessors; selection subjects the innovative concepts to a process of debate and inquiry in what Toulmin considers as a “forum of competitions.” The soundest concepts will survive the forum of competition as replacements or revisions of the traditional conceptions.

From the absolutists’ point of view, concepts are either valid or invalid regardless of contexts; from a relativists’ perspective, one concept is neither better nor worse than a rival concept from a different cultural context. From Toulmin’s perspective, the evaluation depends on a process of comparison, which determines, whether or not one concept will provide improvement to our explanatory power more so than its rival concepts.

^{vi} Small (1999) alludes to it as “boundary- work as coined by Gieryn (1983)

^{vii} This idea of providing an intellectual space for the Black Nationalist activist scholar, engaging in anti-Western intellectual hegemony, is a major focus of Molefi Asante’s work.

^{viii} Many professionals have chosen to pursue tenure at the risk of abandoning their commitment to the requirements of the discipline, which do not count for tenure. It was, and continues to be, not expedient attempt to advance nationalist ideas in the academy.

^{ix} Thomas Kuhn work on paradigm and revolutions was done with specific reference to material science. He did not intend for it to be used by social science. Nevertheless numerous fields of the social sciences have used his model. Eckberg and Hill’s work highlights the numerous ways in which Sociology has chosen to use Kuhn’s model.

^x This demarcation may actually highlight the two paradigmatic eras of Black Studies, a point worthy of future study.

^{xi} Karenga writes the seven point mission and rationale of Black Studies as, 1) to contribute to humanity’s understanding of itself, using the African experience as a paradigmatic human struggle and achievement; (2) to the university’s realizing its claim of universality, comprehensiveness, and objectivity by demanding and facilitating a holistic approach to the study of truth and the class, race, and sexual contradictions that constrain and distort it; (3) to U.S. society’s understanding itself by critically measuring its claims against its performance and its variance with a paradigmatic just society; (4) to the rescue and reconstruction of Black history and humanity from alien hands, and the restoration of African classical culture on and through which we can build a new body of human sciences-and humanities; (5) to the creation of a new social science, more critical, holistic, and ethical; and (6) to the creation of a body of conscious, capable, and committed Black intellectuals who self-consciously choose to use their knowledge and

skills in the service of the Black community and, by consequence and extension, in the interest of a new and better society and world. He adds a seventh... (7) that Black Studies can and must make to reinforce its relevance and expand the scope and content of this mission is the contribution to the critique, resistance, and reversal of the progressive Westernization of human consciousness..." (p. 407)

^{xii} Karenga does not recognize Afrocentricity as the paradigm, but he enumerates the impact that the philosophical/perspective component of the paradigm would have upon the field, with respect to the discipline's goals. He fails to recognize the centrality of the Afrocentric perspective to the paradigm and development process, whereby it functions as the philosophical core, giving birth to all aspects of the discipline. According to Conyers (1995), what Asante (1987) does is to connect the Afrocentric paradigm to African American Studies. Asante writes,

There are several functions that make an Afrocentric paradigm necessary for the advancement of the field of African studies. The first is the grammar or notational function, which gives a concise base to principal concepts and ideas. Secondly, paradigms make it possible to trace the logical development of arguments because they derive from clear components of the paradigm. Thirdly, paradigms allow us to build upon previous foundations. For example, Afrocentricity becomes a school of thought, a paradigm, based upon work since the 1960s. Fourthly, an Afrocentric paradigm promotes analysis and synthesis rather than mere description. Attention to these functions makes it possible to have a powerful theoretical perspective for examining any branch of human science. (Conyers 1995, 89)

^{xiii} Asante writes in a summary form of the import of culture to the Afrocentric project in both *The Painful Demise of Eurocentrism* and *Afrocentricity and Transformation: understanding a movement*. He writes, "As a cultural configuration, the Afrocentric Idea was distinguished by five characteristics: (1) an intense interest In psychological location is determined by symbols, motifs, rituals, in signs; (2) and a commitment to finding the subject place of Africans in any social, political, economic, or religious phenomenon with implications for questions of sex, gender, in class; (3) a defense of African cultural elements as historically valid in that context of art, music, in literature and a defense of a Pan-African cultural connection based on broad responses to conditions, environments, in situations overtime; (4) a celebration of centeredness in agency in a commitment to lexical refinement that eliminates pejoratives, including sexual and gender pejoratives, about Africans or other people; and (5) a powerful imperative from historical sources to revive the collective text of African people as one in constant and consistent search for liberation and Maat. (1999, p. 4 & 2007, p. 33)

^{xiv} Also referred to by Asante (1990) as "Sudic Ideal or Personalism" and is synonymous with consciousness.

^{xv} The metatheory's constituents are a frame of mind, scope of context, structure of code, and delivery of message. (p. 47)

^{xvi} Russel Adams writes this thorough clarification of a paradigm, the Sociology of Knowledge, and their importance to the act of building a discipline's community. He writes,

Having suggested the scope of the sociology of knowledge problem, let us define the concept of epistemology. *Webster's Third New International Dictionary* defines the word "epistemology" as the "theory of the science of the methods and grounds of knowledge, especially with reference to its limits and validity." The same source defines the word "epistemic" as "knowledge or knowing as a type of experience, purely intellectual or cognitive." Over 50 years ago, one of the founders of the sub-field of the sociology of knowledge, Max Scheler, stated that "a society's ethos, condensed in its epistemology, determines what constitutes knowledge for a group, what a group considers worth knowing, as well as what it considers trivial..." (Scheler, *Problems of a Sociology of Knowledge*, p. 26). Thomas S. Kuhn, in his highly influential work, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, stresses the social foundations of epistemologies. He argues that formal systematized knowledge arises from the existence of a community of like-minded persons who come to share the basic beliefs about the metaphysical and empirical foundations of cognitive ideas. Epistemologies, then, serve as a source of standards of discernment, reference, an evaluation of phenomena. An epistemology is a social code for mapping a group's definition of various levels of reality. It helps to decide what it is that we "see" cognitively. It functions reflexively to connect new data with new ideas and information. An epistemology serves as a guide for ranking the significance of certain areas of human activity in the context of systemic knowledge. Epistemologies themselves are distillates of ideas, values and beliefs that arise from the experiences and desires of the prevailing elites in a social system. It was in recognition of this fact that Scheler considered a society's epistemology to be closely akin with its ethos and system of moral judgment. (Adams, 1984, p. 208)

^{xvii} Victor Okafor (1996) agrees with Asante by quoting him, "Unlike most social sciences, it does not examine from a distance in order to predict behavior. Unlike some other disciplines it is neither social science nor humanities, but the merger of the two fields as well as the use of several approaches to phenomenon stemming from the Afrocentric perspective" (Asante as qtd. in Okafor 1996, p 703).

^{xviii} Victor Okafor (1996) takes this stance. "Further, it is imperative to stress that Afrocentricity focuses on the quality of thought and practice, namely thought and practice anchored in the cultural vision and human interests of African people, rather than thought and practice in and of themselves" (700).

^{xix} Karenga also references these principles and their methodological implications in *Introduction to Black Studies* (1988).

^{xx} Sankofa Concept is not a term coined by Karenga or Keto.

^{xxi} Turner's and Zulu's written interviews represent, but one method for extracting the initial thoughts of Molefi Asante around his creation of the Afrocentric Perspective. As may be finally suggested, another pathway for further investigation is his audio interviews and Asante's own writings, specifically within his *An Afrocentric Manifesto* and *The Painful Demise of Eurocentrism*. Yet a third method would be to interrogate Asante's developing archive located at the Amistad Research Center at Tulane University.