

**Cite this chapter as:**

Omotoso S.A. (2020) Mediatizing and Gendering Pan-Africanism for 'Glocal' Impacts. In: Oloruntoba S. (eds) Pan Africanism, Regional Integration and Development in Africa. Palgrave Macmillan, Cham. [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-34296-8\\_8](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-34296-8_8)

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# Pan Africanism, Regional Integration and Development in Africa

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palgrave  
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ISBN 978-3-030-34295-1      ISBN 978-3-030-34296-8 (eBook)  
<https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-34296-8>

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## PREFACE

This book addresses the interrelated issues of Pan Africanism, Regional Integration and Development in Africa. Although Pan Africanism as an ideological force suffered some retreat with the end of official colonialism in Africa, there have been ebbs and flows of its currents in various forms over the past two decades. The Pan African Agenda that underpinned several initiatives, such as the New Partnership for African Development in 2001 in the late 1990s and early 2000s lost its team when the leaders of that era left the political stage in their respective countries. What emerged was the ascendance of leaders who are too pre-occupied with their domestic challenges to pursue any Pan African ideal. The exception to this was the emergence of President Paul Kagame of Rwanda, who worked assiduously towards the reform of the African Union.

Since the change in the nomenclature from the Organisation of African Unity to the African Union in 2002, the organization has worked towards the realization of the regional integration agenda of the continent as set out in the Abuja Treaty of 1991. The African Union recognized eight regional economic communities through which the integration of the continent will be realized. Despite setbacks and challenges, the process is on. The most recent manifestation of this was the coming into force of the African Continental Free Trade Area in May 2019. How these processes link with the realization of the development aspirations of the continent remains to be seen. The waves of xenophobia that continue to blow in different parts of the continent tend to undermine the wheel of Pan Africanism on which some countries on the continent rode to become liberated from the shackles of colonialism. The resurgence of nationalism,

## Mediatizing and Gendering Pan-Africanism for 'Glocal' Impacts

*Sharon Adetutu Omotoso*

### INTRODUCTION

Pan-Africanism is laden with conceptual and ideological complexities which scholars have engaged with over decades (Shépperson and Thompson 1969; Langley 1973). Described variously as an ideology and/or movement, as presented in the works of W.E.B. Du Bois, Marcus Garvey, George Padmore, Kwame Nkrumah, Julius Nyerere and Stokely Carmichael, among others, Esebede (1994: 3–4) highlights major component ideas of Pan-Africanism as that which recognizes:

Africa as the homeland of Africans and persons of African origin, solidarity among people of African descent, belief in a distinct African personality, rehabilitation of Africa's past, pride in African culture, Africa for Africans in church and state, the hope for a united and glorious future Africa.

A combination of these components hereby excludes any thought or movement which focuses only on its local or internal issues as against continental issues (Esebede 1994: 5). The foregoing thus justifies Pan-Africanism as an "ideology and movement that encourages the solidarity

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S. O. Oloruntoba (ed.), *Pan Africanism, Regional Integration and*

*Development in Africa*, [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-34296-8\\_8](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-34296-8_8)

of Africans worldwide" (Gelb 2004: 22). Arguing that the fate of all African peoples and countries is intertwined and that Africans both on the continent and in the diaspora share not merely a common history, but a common destiny, Pan-Africanism is aimed at unifying and uplifting people of African descent, via a commitment to unity for economic, social and political progress (Omotoso and Layode 2013; Minkah 2015).

As to "unity of the African peoples in the struggle against imperialism, for abolition of the vestiges of colonialism, and for economic and social progress", Potekhin (1964) opines that "Pan-Africanism deserves every support from the forces of progress". A converse definition will only serve to strengthen imperialists' "ideological influence and make it an instrument for retaining political control ... essentially colonial, exploitation of Africa" (Potekhin 1964: 48). Although the historical emergence of Pan-Africanism had recorded some significant breakthroughs, today the hindsight of Pan-African ideals, which re-echoes the vibrancy of the movement as a philosophy of social action and African unity, is short-lived. The unifocal outlook on Pan-Africanism as a movement toward emancipation and self-government largely limits its relevance in the twenty-first century; similarly, the manner with which Pan-Africanism is described as a legacy entrenches an impression that it is a relic. This, to a large extent, leads to questioning its relevance and the necessity of a continual pursuit of its tenets. This chapter is inspired by Falola and Essien's (2013) position that twenty-first century Africa is witnessing waning Pan-Africanism. They argue that "the appropriation and performance of Pan-Africanism on continental, national, regional, local and transatlantic levels offer an alternative solution for sustaining Pan-Africanism" (Falola and Essien 2013: 1).

In an earlier work, I have noted that on regional and continental grounds, there is a high tendency for a slowdown in the pace of developing a regional or continental voice (as may be needed) to face the rest of the world, due largely "to the rate and manner with which media is gendering politics, how media and politics are reacting to new media..." (Omotoso 2018a: 563). Noting that "Pan-Africanism started as a political movement with its own ideological basis at the end of the nineteenth century and has since followed a very complicated, contradictory course" (Potekhin 1964: 37), this chapter seeks to appraise media and gender as two vital, yet hitherto underexplored, complicated and contradictory parts of Pan-Africanist movements: media, due to their roles in the cultivation and dissemination of Pan-African activities since inception; and gender, due to the murky positioning of women, thereby failing to produce a

balanced system which considers and positions men and women as equally important players in Pan-Africanism. This was succinctly examined by Mama and Abbas (2015: 2) as "present-day incarnations of pan Africanism as an elite men-only affair", which corroborate a definition of Pan-Africanism as 'African brotherhood'. This chapter hereby argues that Pan-African ideologies transcend the unifocal outlook of struggle for emancipation and self-governance, as it retains relevance in broader senses connective to the twenty-first century. Consequently, these two variables (media and gender), whose contributions to the cultivation and fostering of Pan-Africanism lack due recognition, must be critically examined and factored in if Africa is to make local as well as global impacts with its Pan-African ideologies now, and in the nearest future. The chapter is divided into five sections: first section is the "Introduction"; second section discusses "Media in Pan-Africanism"; third section discusses "Gender in Pan-Africanism"; fourth section is on "Mediatizing and Gendering Pan-Africanism"; fifth section presents Pan-Africanism and the global-local (glocal) question where media and gender will be presented as key indicators, closing with concluding remarks.

#### MEDIA IN PAN-AFRICANISM

Scholars have widely noted the roles of mass media in colonial and post-colonial African states, most of which were founded on nationalistic goals (Omu 1978; Faringer 1991; Bourgault 1995; Fatoyinbo 2000; Hyden and Leslie 2002; Omotoso 2015, 2018b). The media (also recognized as the press, in the persons of journalists and their vehicles of mass communication) in earlier periods of Pan-Africanism paid close attention to African oneness. Occiti (1999: 13) highlights the Pan-African roles of the media by noting that:

the power associated with the media, politics and the press became complementary to each other, with many journalists eventually ending up as politicians and thereby using their position as journalists to become the most vocal advocates for Africa's political independence.

Potekhin (1964) recalls that Azikiwe like other Pan-Africanists believed in the necessity of black brotherhood and fraternity as a strategy to claim their dignity and rightful place in the world. Esebede also brought to the fore how Nigerian journalist and politician Anthony Enahoro insisted that

Pan-Africanism should include economic, social and cultural development of the continent, the avoidance of conflict among African states, the promotion of African unity and influence in world affairs. Likewise, the Senegalese publicist Alioune Diop felt that Pan-Africanism was synonymous with the concept of "African personality" or "negritude". It must be noted that Ghana's Casely Hayford, a journalist and political leader whose writings (particularly columns in the *Gold Coast Leader*) helped to mobilize support from other West African States by creating racial awareness among the people of Gold Coast, helped in setting the tone for a Pan-African agenda. This effort was expanded by the likes of Kwame Nkrumah and, from Nigeria, the journalistic writings of Nnamdi Azikiwe and Obafemi Awolowo, among others who aided Pan-African ideals. Similarly, in East Africa, Kenya and Tanzania, the colonial press was found useful in putting across its demands for freedom, justice and equality and, thereafter, was utilized by many aspiring political leaders to establish and maintain agitational political organizations which aided the realization of independence goals. The post-colonial press in this region was seen to mirror the political consciousness of newly independent states by reacting to the accompanying uncertainties of political articulations on the continent (Condon 1967; Ochilo 1993).

Using Algeria and Morocco as examples in North Africa, Zaghلامي (2016: 161–162) acknowledged the key roles played by political heroes like the Moroccan King Mohamed V and the Ghanaian leader Kwame Nkrumah in the Algerian Revolution against French occupation. These journalists, among others, described as "pen" and "voice" worked assiduously for freedom and independence. They became sources of inspiration and examples to follow for many African leaders, journalists, writers and lawyers. Furthermore, Zaghلامي (2016) also recognizes substantive retention of relations by North African countries with sub-Saharan countries like Mali and Niger, in addition to their traditional and natural African identity. As for Southern Africa, the mass media played pivotal Pan-African roles, covering the conflicts and clashes, developing and circulating publications and the use of popular media such as comic strips and cartoons during colonial rule and in the wake of democracy in the region. Bosch (2015) denies a widespread perception of Southern Africa's commitment to nationalist—as against Pan-African—projects by harping on the roles of popular media, including newspapers, magazines and their digital iterations, as vital literary outlets which helped, and still do help, to envision Africanness and blackness within a variety of overlapping spatial scales, from township to the diaspora.

A core concept in Pan-African discourses which was promoted by the media in the recent past is homogeneity: a situation of shared systems, patterns and processes. Pan-African attempts by African media, in the spirit of continental integration, are overseen by "organizations such as PANA (Pan African News Agency) and URTNA (Union of African National Radio & TV Organizations) among other prominent bodies working on media homogenization in this regard" (Omotoso 2018a: 557). Media homogeneity in Africa is characterized by shared systems, patterns and processes of information gathering and dissemination. While these continental media bodies continue to work assiduously at promoting media homogeneity amidst growing media presence on the continent, most African media pursue heterogeneous goals which are largely nationalistic as against continental goals. This, for Omotoso and Layode (2013: 198), requires a concerted effort by African countries to re-awaken the spirit of Pan-Africanism by "re-ordering or changing this trend" and positioning "this important ideology in new perspectives to bring a fresh meaning to conversations and activities that relate" to it (Falola and Essien 2013: 8–9). Consequently, I argue here that raising Pan-African goals via continental media commitment requires mediatizing<sup>1</sup> Pan-Africanism, which will be discussed later in this chapter.

#### GENDER IN PAN-AFRICANISM

Falola has written significantly on women in pre-colonial, colonial and post-colonial Africa (Falola 1995; Falola and Heaton 2006; Falola and Paddock 2011; Falola and Amponsah 2013; Falola and Nasong'o 2016), most of which are not directly connected with women in Pan-African movements. The crux of the matter here is that so far, Pan-Africanism has proceeded as a 'brotherhood' rather than a kinship project.

With regards to pre-colonial gender relations in Africa, Sheldon (2013: 1) notes that:

in many parts of West Africa, women were members of associations run by and for women, and which gave women the final say in disputes over markets or agriculture. The colonial agents, nearly always men, ignored that reality.

<sup>1</sup>To mediatize is to annex an entity to another, so that the former retains its identity even though it has lost most of its power to the latter. See Omotoso S.A. (2018a) "Media and Politics in Africa" In: Oloruntimehin S., Falola T. (eds) *The Palgrave Handbook of African Politics, Governance and Development*. Palgrave Macmillan, New York. pp. 553–571.

She further asserts that “women’s pre-colonial political activity was generally disregarded by the colonial authorities, who turned exclusively to men when they established local political offices” (Sheldon 2013: 1). Likewise, women’s liberation movements in the colonial era were not duly recognized as Pan-African. The prevalent argument is that colonialism with Christianity, the spread of Islam and the processes of modernization (which promoted the shift to patrilineal societies) introduced by external forces in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries significantly reconstructed gender relations in Africa (House-Soremekun 2002; Mari Tripp et al. 2011; Stoeltje 2015). Depicted as docile, hence not worthy to participate or contribute to public and political life of their communities, colonialism relegated women and treated their concerns as less important, resulting in gender-blind policies and other forms of discrimination and abuse. As Africa moved into the post-colonial era, a large chunk of women’s movement and activism began, most of which were tagged rebellious, particularly based on speculations that African women were infected for activism by their contact with Western feminism. These movements and activism therefore also met with patriarchal hostilities and prejudices, although it marked the beginning of more constructive contributions of women to politics in Africa (Kadaga 2013). Until the post-colonial era, African women’s agitations, activism and scholarship did not gain due recognition in the Pan-African discourse; even at that, Pan-Africanism remains a ‘brotherhood’, recognizing women’s contribution as part of the pockets of commitments to African nationalism, but not necessarily an integral part of what would pass as Pan-African. Without over-generalizing and ignoring a few matriarchal communities in Africa, the political systems on the continent have remained largely male-centric, keeping women at the margin. One may also ascribe the ‘institutional masculinities’ of early post-colonial Africa to pervasive military rule, which itself was structurally built to edge out women. Since the mid to late 1990s, when most states in Africa moved into democratic rule, African leaders revitalized their pursuit of a renewed Pan-African agenda which includes reconfiguring the Organization of African Unity (OAU) to the African Union (AU) in 2002, exemplified in the African renaissance project aimed at decolonizing systems, structures and processes, thus seeking African solutions to African problems. It is considering recent Pan-Africanist agenda that a critical approach to gendering Pan-Africanism comes in view, to see if there would be a *different voice* when Pan-Africanism is de-masculinized.

### MEDIATIZING AND GENDERING PAN-AFRICANISM

Recent critiques, analyses, assessment and re-assessment of African media (Eribo et al. 1993; Hydén et al. 2002; Armah and Adu Amoah 2010; Khondker 2011; Isike and Omotoso 2017) foreground media power in Africa’s growing democracy; however, not much has been explored of media prospects in fostering continental goals. As far back as 1964 Potekhin averred that:

Because the imperialists are seriously disturbed by the Africans’ determination to choose their own way forward without consulting them on the matter they are now more than ever supplementing economic fetters with ideological persuasion. Never before have they retained such a large staff of ideological servitors as in the independent African countries today. Never before have they dumped such a tremendous amount of propaganda material onto Africa. (Potekhin 1964: 37)

The above, as stated by Potekhin, was achieved through the media and it is still being sustained through the media; specifically, by the media in Africa<sup>2</sup> and inadvertently by African media. Ogunsanwo puts it succinctly by recalling, at the commencement of the Organization of African Unity (OAU, now AU) in 1963, describing how

Western media helped in concentrating attention on the immediate organic unity of all Africa championed by the Casablanca group...as well as on the functionalist/gradualist approach of the Monrovia powers...as if nothing else was important except to score points as to whose position was more acceptable. (Ogunsanwo 2015: 276)

Given the earlier noted roles of the media in the African nationalist movement, the current Pan-African agenda necessarily requires media support, hence the proposed mediatization of Pan-Africanism. Mediatizing here involves annexing Pan-Africanism to African media. Having recognized media power and influence at different epochs in Africa, the African media has assumed the status of an annexer, such that whatever it annexes

<sup>2</sup>I have defined ‘media in Africa’ as all media organizations both local and foreign operating within Africa, while ‘African media’ are media organizations based in Africa, owned by Africans and operated to serve Africa. See Omotoso, S.A. (2018b) “Media, Society and the Post-Colonial State”. *The Palgrave Handbook of African Politics, Governance and Development*. Palgrave Macmillan, New York.

gains popularity and public acceptance. This will provide avenues for media organizations on the continent to propagate African values and Pan-African goals and objectives. The importance of mediatization has been noted as far back as 1962 when the Union of African National Television and Radio Organizations (URTNA) was established. With goals including fostering cooperation among its members (and by extension, member states), ensuring adherence to international and inter-African conventions and agreements relating to broadcasting and coordinating international coverage of national and international events, URTNA was renamed the African Union of Broadcasting (AUB) in 2006 with renewed commitment to improving the quality of life, projecting a real image of Africa, supporting the development of Africa through the dissemination of excellent programs and providing services for Africa and the African Diaspora. Likewise, the establishment of Pan African News Agency (PANA) in 1983 to decolonize information in Africa by promoting the aims and objectives of the African Union is a milestone in Africa's mediatization process, aimed at consolidation of the independence, unity and solidarity of Africa, provision of information about and assistance in the liberation struggle of peoples against exploitation and oppression, and working for the integration of African countries to strengthen cooperation. Regrettably, recourse to the domestic objectives of African media in their individual states has hampered the achievement of continental objectives as laid out in Pan-African agenda.

Once the African media prioritizes nurturing, propagating and embedding a Pan-African agenda, it becomes easier for all stakeholders to focus and pursue Pan-African goals as their primary goal. In fact, by this the masses are enlightened for constructive civic engagement, regional bodies are faced with pressure for accountability, and states would engage in the agenda with renewed commitment. In the same vein, an internally responsive media consciously cultivates the internal publics as they build resistance to external influences that could jeopardize the Pan-African agenda. Recognizing the double-edgedness of mediatization, I offer positive mediatization whereby the 'annexer' (African media) is willing to selflessly help or aid the 'annexed' (Pan-Africanism). An answer to the 'how' question here lies in selfless and continent-focused media practices, addressing "the struggles for oneness in the midst of diversities" (Omotoso 2018b), seeing that the achievement of continental goals will turn back to foster national development.

Gendering involves associating or ascribing characteristics of masculinity or femininity to a phenomenon and examining how such plays out in goal setting, power relations and the achievement of group aspirations. In this chapter, gendering is aimed at calling attention to hitherto downplayed or neglected issues and contexts which would have provided a balanced outlook by taking into account the contributions and roles of women as well as men in the Pan-African agenda. This varies in disposition to the idea of feminizing Pan-Africanism. In feminizing Pan-Africanism, Mshai<sup>3</sup> shares the familial support enjoyed in the diaspora, providing a care dimension to Pan-Africanism, which goes "beyond our different passports and histories" (2015: 88). This could be said to create a link between Pan-Africanism and feminist ethics of care by ascribing care-giving roles to women, and by extension reiterating that women owe one another the duty of care, as a Pan-African value, regardless of varying nationalities. Gendering Pan-Africanism connects with the language of "weaving" which "is a foundational claim to our cultural traditions and legacies of women working and speaking together, of collaboration and co-operation... to make something new" (*Feminist Africa* 2015: 86). This is closely connected with the proposed 'hairy-hairless'<sup>4</sup> synergy for Africa. While celebrating earlier attempts toward gendering Pan-Africanism, it is important to note the vigor dimension<sup>5</sup> as an additional dimension to care, collaboration and cooperation in the Pan-Africanist agenda; these, in the context of this chapter, encapsulate both women and men. Recent efforts of the African Union to enforce and aid gender mainstreaming are evident:

- The adoption of the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 in 2000 which made provision for increased participation of women in peace and security decision-making, the prevention of violence against women and the protection of women and girls against sexual and gender-based violence.

<sup>3</sup>See Mshai, 2015 In Conversation: *Feminist Africa* Volume 20.

<sup>4</sup>Omotoso in the work titled "Hairiness and Hairlessness: An African Feminist View of Poverty", 2019 proposed that scholarly African feminists and Indigenous survivalist African feminists must symbiotically interact for the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals in Africa.

<sup>5</sup>See Omotoso, S.A. (2017) "Communicating Feminist Ethics in the Age of New Media in Africa" in *Gendering Knowledge in Africa and the African Diaspora* (pp. 64-84), eds. Toyin Falola, Olajumoke Jacob-Halisi. Routledge: USA. (USA)

- The Maputo Protocol: The AU Protocol to the African Charter on Human and People's Rights on the Rights of Women (2003)<sup>6</sup> which guarantees the rights of women to take part in political processes, to social and political equality with men, among others.
- The AU Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa (2004)
- The African Women's Decade (2010–2020) focusing on ten thematic areas including promoting economic empowerment of women, fighting poverty, education, health, governance and legal protection, among others.

Despite these commendable gender mainstreaming efforts, gendering Pan-Africanism sets out to highlight and address structural masculinities exhibited in Pan-African movements where women were and are exploited and instrumentalized (presented as the disempowered requiring urgent assistance) under the pretense of "women empowerment" (Kamwendo and Kamwendo 2015). For decades, women who have been maimed, jailed and killed in the nationalist struggles; the recent past in Africa has also seen women transcend the so-called private sphere to venture as political aspirants, delegates to continental policy events and political office holders. The successes recorded have proven that raising the presence as well as voices of women is pertinent to gendering Pan-Africanism. Thus, the failures encountered by women in Pan-African causes are no justification for women's incompetence or irrelevance to the struggle. The fact that women in scholarship, activism and policy-making continue to hold their own is an assurance of their unflinching vision of an egalitarian continent. Consequently, the vigor dimension underscores the resilience and tenacity of women and their capacity to re-awaken, strengthen and chart more practical courses in expanding the frontiers of the Pan-African agenda in the twenty-first century.

<sup>6</sup> Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa, adopted on July 1, 2003, and entered into force on November 25, 2005. Also, African Union Agenda 2063, Aspiration 6 and also items 1, 6, 13, 31, 45, 49, 50, 51, 52, 58 and 66d.

### GLOBAL-LOCAL IMPACTS AND CONCLUDING REMARKS

The global-local is a bifocal outlook factoring internal and external variables, narrow and wider considerations, as two parts of the phenomena. Here, it rests on the notion that media as well as gender insights play vital roles in the cultivation of perception on Pan-Africanism in the domestic and international arena. Media in the form of films, musicals, documentaries and social media hold expansive communicative competence, unifying form and content, giving room for explorations as they harness traditional experiences with current trends across states.

Currently, the roles of media and gender as portrayed by African films, musicals, documentaries and social media spaces are vital to political, socio-economic and intellectual Pan-Africanist agendas. This validates the necessity for local Pan-Africanist mobilization, representing continental moves and internal workings emergent in collaborations of African filmmakers to rewrite Africa by combining narratives from various regions. Global Pan-Africanist mobilization will focus on media-gender strategies aimed to "empower African peoples to control our political destiny, overcome imperialism, impoverishment, racial based oppression and the structural violence of global white supremacy" (Bunting 2017: 1). What then will the glocal impacts include or exclude in the twenty-first-century Pan-African agenda?

It will include, though not limited to:

- Massive support of states in fighting for justice, equity and peace as found in the North Africa
- Participatory efforts in political stability and economic advancement of regions for a collective voice at transnational spheres

It will exclude:

- Xenophobic attacks which pervaded the last decade in Southern Africa
- Internal slave trades in Libya and other North African states

Without shying away from the fact that the African Union carries the weightiest responsibility of setting the Pan-African agenda, how mediatisation and genderization of Pan-Africanism will be channeled depends largely on the ideologies of the bodies involved, which include the African Union and the various regional bodies, continental media agencies and

the populace at large. This would require de-programming and re-programming of mindsets, priorities and values.

With the challenges posed to media and gender by globalization (Omotoso 2017), promoting a Pan-African agenda in twenty-first-century Africa is imperative. By this, mediatizing and gendering Pan-Africanism become viable and pragmatic sense(s) in which Pan-Africanism provides a platform to engage communication strategies and gender experiences across African states. More than ever, "Pan-Africanism must remain at the core of African institution building, and institutionalizing it can only be achieved through the localization of norms and models" (Iroulo 2017: 4). These norms and models being constituents of media and gender must therefore be harnessed for the common good as Africa relates with other continents.

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