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African Political Theory, African Renaissance and the Conciliation of the
Politics of Gender Difference.

A research report submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master
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Declaration.

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I Duduzile Mabaso (2105434) am a student registered for Master of Arts in Political Studies in the year 2021. I hereby declare the following:

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Signature: D.MABASO

Date: 14 March 2022.

Abstract.

Throughout history, we have read about how women are marginalized and disadvantaged, despite their significant contributions, women continue to face formidable social, economic and political barriers. However, it is without a doubt that there is a growing acceptance and recognition of the important role women play in the development, hence, the need for gender-inclusive developmental states [development that is structured in a manner that does not discriminate on the basis of sex, social gender & identity, and does not perpetuate gender stereotypes]. This is primarily because gender inequalities are deeply entrenched in most societies, and a multiplicity of practices and institutions exist, which contribute to the perpetuation of the status quo. Therefore, this Research Report is ` explore the relevance of the African Renaissance in the contemporary African political economy context, and with a specific focus on the gender blindness of the original conceptualisation of the African Renaissance. In arguing the case for the relevance of the African Renaissance in the modern world, the Report draws on an extension of a hypothesis by Mamdani (1995) that the African Renaissance needs to revise its role by addressing the question of gender difference posed by globalisation. This Research Report is of the belief that a new African Renaissance should play a role in transforming gender relations and eliminating sexism in all its forms, whether benign or malignant. Put differently, as long as the oppression of women continues to be tolerated within the black lifeworld (however broadly conceived), the liberation of black people will never be complete.

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Chapter 1: Introduction to the study.

Introduction.

In his keynote address, 'The African Renaissance: From vision to reality, presented at the Africa Centre in London in 1999 to raise awareness about the African Renaissance and to suggest ways in which it can be turned into reality for Africa's development, former South African vice president Jacob Zuma cautioned that:

The rebirth of Africa will not occur overnight. It has to take time. We each have to work at it whatever profession we are in. We need our intelligentsia to re-interpret the story of Africa to make Africans understand how and why they came to be where they are, to better enable them to contribute to the African Century (cited by Bunwaree, 2007: 74).

Throughout history, we have read about how women are marginalized and disadvantaged, despite their significant contributions, women continue to face formidable social, economic and political barriers (Anunobi. 2002: 41). However, it is without a doubt that there is a growing acceptance and recognition of the important role women play in the development and the actualization of the African Renaissance vision. Sheila Bunwaree asserts that gender-inclusive developmental states [development that is structured in a manner that does not discriminate on the basis of sex, social gender & identity, and does not perpetuate gender stereotypes] have to be realised (2007:75). This need is primarily because gender inequalities are deeply entrenched in most societies, and a multiplicity of practices and institutions exist, which contribute to the perpetuation of the status quo. Hence, this Report holds the belief that Africa's prosperity can only be triggered and sustained if truly gender-inclusive developmental states are developed and consolidated.

Therefore, the main objective of this Research Report is to explore the relevance of the African Renaissance in the contemporary African political economy context, and with a specific focus on the gender blindness of the original conceptualisation of the African Renaissance. In arguing the case for the relevance of the African Renaissance in the modern world, the Report draws on an extension of a hypothesis by Mamdani (1995) that the African Renaissance needs to revise its role by addressing the question of gender difference posed by globalisation. In it, I argue that a new African Renaissance should play a role in transforming gender relations and eliminating sexism in all its forms, whether benign or malignant. Put differently, as long as the oppression of women continues to be tolerated within the black lifeworld (however broadly

conceived), the liberation of black people will never be complete. Thus, a key observation arising from the literature review conducted for the Report can be summarized as follows: with particular reference to gender, African black women have been subject to multifaceted and contradictory politics concerning their interests, freedom and rights. The nationalist discursive praxes of many African communities continue to position women as the custodians of their customary practices on the one hand, and, on the other hand, use this positioning of women as custodians of customary practices in ways that mean women also serve as their own worst enemies. Such a contradictory position on women's role in society is not particular to the African context, however becomes prominent in this context due to the continued negative implications of gender-blind politics.

As radical feminist Patricia McFadden reflects: “we mirror the different faces of the same patriarchal culture, and often we see ourselves as the custodians, in fact, the gatekeepers of African patriarchy, through culture, which we derive our identity from” (2018:1). McFadden's musing brings me to this question and one that informs my research interest in the value of reviving the concept of African Renaissance for an African-informed sense of gender reconfiguration: How is it that despite the conditions of post-colonial politics that are said to be entrenched in inclusivity and equality, black women in Africa continue to struggle with issues of identity, freedom, and equality? That is, why is it that, racism, sexism, colonialism, imperialism and slavery, to which African women have been and continue to be subjected over time, have still not been eradicated in the democratic dispensation across the continent? Arguably, these forms of oppression have taken on new forms: neo-slavery, neo-imperialism, neo-colonialism and the new racism. In the words of Ama Ata Aidoo (1995:124), Africa has not fulfilled the hopes and aspirations of its people; African leaders have not put forward an agenda that includes recreating Africa so that people would find their careers, lives, dreams and visions fulfilled in it. Therefore, and drawing on the words of Thabo Mbeki, “it is precisely because of these problems that the call for an African renaissance is made” (1998:1).

In other words, the research brings together the concern for identity politics, the problems of gender difference, as well as the question of a new African political theory into conversation with one another, with the discursive goal being to explore the emancipatory potential offered by a reconfigured notion of African Renaissance. To that end, this Report explores if and how the African Renaissance can be a positive dynamic process, characterized by the global socio-economic paradigm, which can be interpreted as African people's reassessment of their institutions, the revitalization of their cultural heritage with the view of establishing African self-determination within the globe. As the Report demonstrates, such a line of argument is in

line with previous discourses of African self-reclamation such as Black Consciousness, Pan-Africanism, as well as Negritude to mention just a few. Put differently, the Report seeks to explore how the ideology promoted by the African Renaissance can be part of a strategy for reconstruction and development beyond the traditional male stream concern. A strategy aimed at ensuring participation and competitiveness of African women in the global arena; which, in turn, will serve to validate women's progress and development in the economic, cultural, technological, spiritual, communications, and socio-cultural sphere, including the reclamation and revitalization of traditional African cultural experiences and practices that are functional and viable for modern times.

1. Problem Statement.

In 2009 the United Nation warned that 'without engendered development, development itself is endangered'. This, I believe, translates to the belief that formulating and implementing development policies with gender lenses is crucial for development. Therefore, there is a need for the construction and consolidation of gender-inclusive democratic developmental states that are grounded on the concept of an African Renaissance, for an effective transformation of the human conditions, and for ensuring that this renaissance does not become romanticised and meaningless. Therefore, the Report is centred on the African Renaissance and conciliation of gender differences. The literature, explored to some degree, viewed gender differences from the standpoint of "one being superior to the other", hence, an androcentric approach is seen in institutions of politics. However, there is limited literature that examines how gender intersectionality can be explored to understand and discover how all genders can equally exist to create 'positive-sum' political systems where one gender doesn't develop at the expense of the other.

However, this does not overlook the work done by scholars of intersectionality, particularly in understanding that gender inequality overlaps or intersects with other forms of vulnerability to compound the disadvantage experienced by the most marginalized groups (Mathews & Nuun, 2003:33). With that, Yuval-Davis asserts that the concept of intersectionality is largely employed in black feminist theory (2008:198). Kimberle Crenshaw initially coined the term in her critique of the negation of feminist thought of the experiences of black women (Crenshaw, 1989 as cited in Davis, 2008:29). Therefore, the Report acknowledges the work that has been done in the efforts of understanding the power dynamics that exists within society. This Report aims to interrogate how the marginalisation of African women stifles the development of the continent of Africa under the auspices of the African renaissance. While examining the relevance of the African Renaissance in the present age of globalisation.

2. Research Question.

The primary research question of this Report is: How can the African Renaissance help conciliate the politics of gender difference on the continent? Keeping in mind that the African Renaissance is concerned with decolonization, authenticity, liberation, emancipation, empowerment, development, regeneration, freedom and unity, the literature explored in this Report demonstrates a zero-sum society where one sex succeeds only by denigrating the other. Hence, an androcentric approach is taken to be constitutive of the institutions of politics and the political on the continent. Whilst the Report acknowledges the work that has been done in terms of understanding the gendered power dynamics that exists within African society, it maintains that further interrogation is needed of how the marginalisation of African women stifles the development of the continent of Africa under the auspices of the African Renaissance.

3. Research Methodology.

Given the eclectic and exploratory nature and objectives of this study, an eclectic methodology is required. The relevant qualitative method of data collection is flexible and open-ended, therefore, the nature of the research necessitated the use of secondary data sources. The main sources of the secondary data explored include books, academic literature, journal articles, newspaper articles, government legislations, research reports, documentaries, autobiographies, speeches and policy statements.

Discourse analysis was conducted on those sources, mainly because this method allows for an effective analysis of how the values, beliefs and assumptions of the African Renaissance have been communicated and engaged with through academic literature and certain policies since its inception as a worthwhile ideology. Discourse analysis allows for the Report to engage with the long term analysis of fundamental causes and consequences of Androcentrism within institutions of politics, through providing a detailed analysis on the relationship/s between text, gender, society and culture. Discourse analysis challenges the Report to move from seeing language as abstract to viewing literature as having meaning in a particular historical, social and political condition.

Furthermore, discourse analysis assists in understanding and communicating how the use of the specific language of the African Renaissance relates to/fails to relate to gender related issues. This approach (discourse analysis) permits the Report to systematically explore the relationships of causality and determination between discursive practices, events and texts, and wider social and cultural structures, relations and processes; to investigate how those practices,

events and texts arise out of and are ideologically shaped by relations of power and struggle over recognition. Discourse analysis is meant to provide a higher awareness of the hidden motivations behind how society has positioned the women and, therefore, enables the Report to attempt to suggest solutions for the disposition of African women through the values displayed by the African Renaissance.

However, it is not aimed at providing absolute answers but rather enabling us to understand the conditions behind the displacement of the African female and make us realise the essence of this issue as well as its impact on development. Additionally, case studies in the form of policy documents will be explored to gain insight into how the African continent have attempted to address the issues surrounding the politics of gender, which enables the Report to link micro-level actions and the actions of individuals, to the macro level, or large-scale structures and processes. The case studies include the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), the Millennium Partnership for the African Recovery Programme (MAP), Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). These policies are regarded as catalysts to the African Renaissance, they share concerns for social and gender equity, and they committed to adopting social and economic measures that were aimed at combating the marginalisation of women, thus, an analysis is aimed at examining the progress of various African countries who committed to the policies mentioned above, to assess if they have lived up to their commitments.

4. Chapter Outline/ Thesis Structure.

Chapter 1: This chapter introduces the study, the problem statement, research question and methodology to lay the foundation to better understand the theme and purpose of the Report.

Chapter 2: Chapter two provides an extensive conceptualization of the African Renaissance as part of the literature review. It will narrow its focus on the broader definition of what the African Renaissance is and what it represents, it will discuss the origins of the phenomenon, the various scholars and/or leaders who have influenced the development and conceptualization of the phenomenon as well as the ideological inspirations of the African Renaissance.

Chapter 3: This chapter introduces the history of African women and oppression to provide an elaborative foundation as to why the Report focuses on gender. Furthermore, it is aimed at elaborating on the social constructs that contributed to the positioning of African women in institutions of politics and within general society to highlight the gap exposed by the literature review and one that remained unaddressed by various scholars of the African Renaissance.

Chapter 4: In light of the narrative in chapter three, this chapter focuses its attention on illustrating the link or/and the relationship [lack of] between women [African women to be exact] and the African Renaissance. It narrows its focus on why and how various feminist scholars problematize the development and conceptualization of the African Renaissance within the African context. Not only limited to that but further illustrates through the use of case studies how the project of an African Renaissance has excluded or forgotten about women.

Chapter 5: This chapter provides a summary of key arguments, findings and conclusions. It further provides recommendations on the ideal discourse of the African Renaissance that could be capable of conciliating the gender differences within formal institutions of politics in Africa.

Chapter 2: The conceptualization of the African Renaissance.

1. African Political Thought.

According to Guy Martin African political thought is a term used to refer to political theories and ideologies developed by various African scholars, as articulated in their speeches, autobiographies, writings, and policy statements (2012:1). A convenient starting point in considering the impact colonialism had on indigenous African Political Thought would be to take the position that colonialism was an “episteme” rather than an “episode” in Africa, mainly because by dismissing it as just an “episode” in African history puts forth an inadequate reflection of the impact colonialism had on Africa (Osaghae, 1991: 23). The impact colonialism had on Africa should be perceived beyond the colonial era, Ekeh’s conceptualization adequately explains this position. According to Ekeh, this conceptualization marks a significant breakthrough toward postcolonial freedom in political thought and analysis because it acknowledges that colonialism produced enduring social formations (1998:305) that diluted indigenous African Political thought. Additionally, the implication of the colonial structures have in-of themselves outlived the colonial epoch, which resulted in the integration of Africa in the global systems. This position speaks to how since colonization and the integration of Africa in the global system, the continent has struggled to return to its traditional form of living because this post-colonial African epoch has no resemblance to the indigenous past in systems used to create society.

According to Julius Nyerere (1960:149) “Africans all over the continent, without a word being spoken either from one individual to another or from one African country to another, looked at the Europeans, looked at one another and knew that, in relation to the European, they were one”. The realization became a defining moment in African history because according to Otite it was "the humiliating and provoking exposure of subject peoples to European colonialism created a common set of attitudes and a system of reactive anticolonial thought characteristic of the African (1978:11). This common attitude inspired an awakening amongst African thought leaders which steered the African ruling class to begin the movement of replacing colonial rule with the rule of its own people, it, therefore, birthed what literature knows today as modern African political thought and it is in these theories/concepts/ ideas/beliefs that fuelled the replacement syndrome in Africa. Central to the replacement syndrome in Africa was the plea for the renewal, return, and reconceptualization of Africa which called for the “emancipation of thought” (Martin, 2012:12).

According to More (2002:76),

The emancipation of thought constitutes historical situatedness in which thinking frees itself of all social and other limiting shackles and returns to itself as free-thinking. It signals how Africans perceive themselves within modernity and proclaims the emergence of a new perception and redefinition of African problems within the context of post-colonial realities. This emancipation further implies the possible transcendence of alienation and the upsurge of what Biko refers to as "the coming into consciousness.

That is, following More, modern African political thought began in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries and was developed by African (including African scholars in the diaspora) scholars such as James Africanus Horton, Edward Wilmot Blyden, and Kwame Nkrumah (2012: 2). Thomas Hodgkin (1956:54) uses the term nationalist in the context of Africa to broadly refer to individuals, organizations, or groups who called on Africans to assert their rights and fight against European colonialism. The term "African nationalism" according to Davidson is used to refer to the desire for personal emancipation and the search for liberation, it is the relentless effort to rescue Africans from perceived inferiority that was brought by colonialism (cited in Diop, 1987). Therefore, African nationalism is an overarching ideology that incorporates other ideologies such as African socialism, African populism and African Marxism. Modern African thought leaders have brought forth a variety of ideas that could be operationalized for the development of the continent.

African nationalists such as Kofi Abrefa Busia (1942-1972), Nnamdi Benjamin Azikiwe (1941-1963), and Kenneth Kaunda (1949-1998) were advocates for modernization, westernization, and capitalism. While others such as Kwame Nkrumah (1952-1972), Ahmed Sekou Touré (1948-1984), and Julius Nyerere (1943-1999) believed in a distinctly African brand of socialism that fused indigenous African values and traditions with elements of the Marxist-Leninist ideology and gave prominence to the state in the economy in their quest for political, economic, social, and cultural transformation (Martin, 2012:3). Other African nationalists who could be identified as "African populists" such as Thomas Sankara (1981-1987), Muhammad Qaddafi (1969-2011), and Steve Biko (1968-1977) even though they agreed with the basic tenets of African socialism, focus strictly on transforming their polity, economies, and societies for the benefit of their people. It is imperative to realize that while African socialism and African populism are primarily focused on the domestic political level, they are also linked to the African Renaissance thought and the goal of African Unity, which essentially are aimed at the political, economic, and cultural union of Africans in Africa and Africans in the diaspora.

As a central concept for exploring the key objective of this Report, it is imperative to extensively unpack the concept of the African Renaissance. In particular, it is essential to understand the historical background and origin of the African Renaissance. Central to this exploration is an attempt to understand the stance of the African Renaissance on issues relating to gender politics in Africa. Thus, this chapter aims to explore whether the ideals of the ideology include women.

2. What is the African Renaissance?

Nkrumah (1999) proclaimed that the African Renaissance is the emancipation of thought, which constitutes historical situatedness in which thinking frees itself of all social and other limiting shackles and returns to itself as free-thinking (cited in More, 2002). It signals how Africans perceive themselves within modernity and proclaims the emergence of a new perception and redefinition of African problems within the context of post-colonial and post-apartheid realities.

The emancipation described by Nkrumah also implies the possible transcendence of alienation and the upsurge of what Biko refers to as "the coming into consciousness" (Mamdani, 1999). According to Bongmba (2004: 292), the African Renaissance vision is an all-embracing concept that draws its inspiration from the rich and diverse history and cultures of Africa. It acknowledges Africa as the cradle of humanity, whilst providing a framework for modern Africa to re-emerge as a significant partner in the New World order. This framework touches on all areas of human endeavour, including political, economic, social, technological, environmental, and cultural (Jana, 2001:38). In support of this all-encompassing nature of the African Renaissance, Kunze (2016:41) describes the African Renaissance as a concept that represents African people and nations overcoming the current challenges confronting the continent and achieving cultural, scientific, and economic renewal.

For Thabo Mbeki, the African Renaissance is the recovery of the continent through the establishment of political democracy, a break from neo-colonialism, the mobilisation of Africans to take their destiny into their hands and a push for people-driven development aimed at meeting basic needs (Mbeki, 2001). Hegel & Michelet perceive the African Renaissance as a secular liberation movement, freeing the human spirit from the chains of oppression (cited by Vicker, 2002:72).

For Mamdani (1998) the African Renaissance is a positive dynamic process, characterized by a global socio-economic paradigm, which can be interpreted as African people's own reassessment of their institutions, the revitalization of their cultural heritage with

the view to establishing total African hegemony all over Africa. As a socio-economic strategy for reconstruction and development, the African renaissance has as an objective of ensuring Africa's participation and competitiveness in the global arena, validating Africa's progress and development in the economic, cultural, technological, spiritual, communications and sociocultural spheres and the reclamation and revitalization of traditional African cultural experiences and practices that are functional and viable in modern times. Hence, the common perspective within literature is that the African Renaissance call pertains to the renewal of Africa as an important socio-economic tool for the total emancipation and development of Africa.

The African Renaissance has been defined by various authors as a shared vision for the renewal of Africa, which entails re-establishing progressive, African values (African Renaissance Institute, 1999). It calls for a shift in consciousness to embrace an individual's responsibility to the broader community. Similarly, Okumu (cited by Hayman, 2003:482) conceptualised the African Renaissance from a developmental perspective to integrate African culture, politics, and social structure. Okumu contended that the preconditions and motivation for political and economic renewal must be derived from the same social forces that give rise to cultural renewal (cited by Hayman, 2003:482). The African Renaissance, therefore, reflects Africa's conscious need for political independence, regional integration and the improvement of living standards. It is also based on the imperative need to end economic dependence and the democratic stagnation that has reversed the short-lived prosperity of the immediate independence era (Iroulo, 2017:2).

2.1. The origins of the African Renaissance.

The African Renaissance concept was first articulated by Cheikh Anta Diop in a series of essays beginning in 1946, which are collected in his book "*Towards the African Renaissance: Essays in Culture and Development, 1946-1960*". Diop's articulation is not limited to the cultural and aesthetic view of the African renaissance concerning African development, but rather extends to the emphasised importance of African culture and language in political, economic and social development. Politically, the fathers of the independence movements of the 1960s envisioned some sense of renaissance (Mbaye, 2019:10). Rhetorically, a renaissance would entail a return to a lost glory, lived or imaged. In the 1970s, renaissance projects mostly adopted political development and state-building theories; in the 1980s, they surrendered to the realities of the economic crisis of what is known as the "lost decade" that enabled the assault of IMF and World Bank policies of privatization on Africa's public sector (Mbaye, 2019:10). In the 1990s, renaissance projects embraced imposed policies of globalized neoliberalism, as one might

glean in Fantu Cheru's *African Renaissance: Roadmaps to the Challenge of Globalization*, which formulates the renaissance as a mere question of economic development, dismissing the dimensions of culture (Mbaye, 2019:10). In the 2000s, the African renaissance project was captured by the energy and promises of the newly-liberated Republic of South Africa. Pan-Africanist leaders such as President Abdoulaye Wade of Senegal, the pan-Africanist Muammar Gaddafi of Libya, and President Thabo Mbeki of South Africa spearheaded the African project of awakening (Mbaye, 2019:10).

However, it is important to note that the African Renaissance is not the first nor the only ideology that has attempted to reform Africa, various discourses have contributed to the conceptualisation of the African Renaissance. Various African thought leaders conceptualised similar ideas that spoke to African development and renewal, these ideas include Pan-Africanism, Black Consciousness, Negritude, and Consciencism. It is important to realize that the hopes carried by the African Renaissance are not in any way new nor foreign, particularly within the African context. Therefore, the purpose of the following engagement is to have an in-depth understanding of what and how various discourses contributed to the conceptualization of the African Renaissance. Furthermore, it's aimed at clarifying how it [the African Renaissance] offers a different and more meaningful approach towards developing a renewed Africa.

2.1.1. Pan-Africanism.

It is generally accepted that Dr Du Bois was the "father" of Pan-Africanism in the sense that he was the man who led that movement until it found acceptance as the basic ideology of emergent African Nationalism (Padmore, 1956:117). According to Padmore, the idea of Pan-Africanism first arose as a manifestation of fraternal solidarity amongst Africans and peoples of African descent (1956:117). Pan-Africanism refers to a philosophy that sought to promote ideas of a united Africa. Over different historical periods, the philosophy progressed, but the focus on the unity or oneness of Africa stayed consistent (Malisa & Nhengeze, 2018:2). Partly because some of the evolution of Pan-Africanism took place in universities, we also examine Pan-Africanism's development as an intellectual movement tied to the aspirations of people of African descent in different parts of the world (Malisa & Nhengeze, 2018:2). In addition to being a philosophical and intellectual movement, Pan-Africanism is also a political movement whose goal was the liberation and unity of Africa, especially after slavery and the encounter with modernity.

For formerly enslaved Africans, Pan-Africanism was an idea that helped them see their commonalities as victims of racism (Fergus, 2010: 32). That is, they realized that they were

enslaved because they came from the same continent and shared the same racial heritage. Pan Africanism, as it were, offered a hope that Africa will be one, united, not Balkanized by colonial powers (Soyinka-Airewele & Edozie, 2010). It made it possible to give a systematic presentation of a united Africa, an attempt at self-definition. Throughout generations, Pan-Africanism promoted a consciousness of Africa as the ancestral home for Black people, and a desire to work for its liberation (Gebrekidan, 2012:75). At the core was the understanding that people of African heritage had similar experiences, regardless of their location in the world. Among such experiences included colonialism, racial oppression, and slavery (Malcolm, 1992 cited by Snail, 2008: 54).

Pan-Africanism became the most comprehensive, ambitious and enduring philosophy and praxis developed and embraced by Africans and people of African descent. The evolution of Pan Africanism can be traced back to the need for unity in the struggles against slavery, colonialism and racial discrimination, or even further back to the pre-colonial and ancient eras of great African civilizations. According to Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma during a United Nations address, this reclaiming of African history forms the foundation for the call for an African Renaissance, a rebirth and rediscovery of Africa's history and cultures (2013: 2). She further asserts that Pan-Africanism has been conceived as a viable instrument and ideology of political liberation while African Renaissance (a shared vision for the renewal of Africa, defined as the furtherance of Pan-Africanism within a global context) emerged as a modern philosophy aimed at liberating African people from hyper-spiritual and mental colonization, and a hangover influence and hypnotic control, generally called neo-colonization (United Nations, 2013: 2).

Both the African Renaissance and Pan-Africanism reflect Africa's aspirations, creative and responsive ideology towards the rebirth, revitalization and reconstruction of shared values, identity and common destiny, a proper understanding of Africa's dynamics to overcome the challenges founded in the concepts (Brune, 2014:3). Specifically, Africa Renaissance seeks to rewrite Africa's history from being followers to becoming a powerful geo-political force in world affairs while Pan-Africanism attempts to remove the derogatory footprints of colonialism on Africa's soil through economic and political unity and emancipation (Oginni & Moitui, 2015:159). Intuitively, the acceptance level of Africa's shared values and identity among African people influences the proper applicability of the African Renaissance and the ideology of Pan-Africanism (Oginni & Moitui, 2015:159).

2.1.2. Black Consciousness.

The Black Consciousness movement of South Africa instigated a social, cultural, and political awakening in the country in the 1970s. In 1969, Steve Biko and other black students frustrated

with white leadership in multi-racial student organizations formed an exclusively black association. Out of the South African Students' Organization (SASO) came what was termed Black Consciousness. This philosophy redefined "black" as an "inclusive, positive identity and taught that black South Africans" could make meaningful change in their society if "conscientised" or awakened to their self-worth and the need for activism (Mgwebi, 2007:60). The movement emboldened youth, contributed to the development of Black Theology and cultural movements, and led to the formation of new community and political organizations such as the Black Community Programs organization and the Black People's Convention (Mgwebi, 2007:62).

Black Consciousness according to Woods (1987: 174) was meant to enable blacks to fight defeatism, develop hope. It was aimed at building up their humanity by infusing them with "pride and dignity", reminding them of their "complicity in allowing [themselves] to be misused" and urging them to be their own "authorities rather than wait to be interpreted by others" by demonstrating "the lie that black is an aberration from the 'normal' which is white" (Biko, 1996: 52). Black Consciousness "no longer seek[s] to reform the system because so doing implies acceptance of the major points around which the system revolves" (Biko, 1996: 49), turning instead to "black communalism as its economic policy" (Rambally, 1975:122), whilst at the same time conceding that "racial integration requires economic integration" (Biko, 1972: 66). Black Consciousness advocates used it [the ideology] to appeal to Africans to embrace their cultures, but these advocates did not usher in the political leadership necessary to empower Africans to face challenges posed by the totalities of modernity.

Therefore, in contrast to Black Consciousness, the African Renaissance advocates for systematic reforms and hopes to usher in the political leadership that is necessary to empower Africans. It hopes to create an Africa, for Africans, with Africans. However, the Black Consciousness thought has contributed vastly to the formation of the African Renaissance, mainly through the advocacy of embracing African cultures and traditions. As mentioned in the literature above, the African Renaissance is aimed at recreating, rebirthing and revitalizing Africa and its systems & institutions, therefore, this process cannot occur without integrating African identity. Which is what Black Consciousness seeks to do. Thus, one exists because of the other.

2.1.3. Negritude.

Negritude is both a literary and political movement that was created just after the Second World War by Black francophone writers, which included Aimé Césaire from Martinique, Léopold Senghor from Senegal and Leon Gontran Damas from Guyana among others (Mabana, 2006:2).

The concept of Negritude has been defined differently by various scholars and literary figures, each emanating from their varying perspectives in understanding the assumed roles of Negritude. One of the movement's founders Aimé Césaire regards Negritude as the consciousness of being Black, a realisation that directly translates into acceptance and the siege of a Black person's destiny and culture (Campbell, 2006:80). Campbell sums up the concept as a philosophical movement to revive Black pride. He (Campbell, 2006:80) suggests that Negritude is often considered as having been conceived out of another relevant ideology, PanAfricanism. Another founding father of Negritude, Senghor, defines the concept of Negritude simply as the collection of cultural values of Africa (Mabana, 2006:4).

Olusegun Gbadegesin asserts that Negritude is the affirmation of the distinctiveness of African cultural values, the confirmation of the being of the African (2017: 47). It [Negritude] therefore celebrates the cultural, historical, religious and racial pride of the Africans (Gbadegesin, 2017:49). In essence, Negritude is the recognition of the fact of being black, and the acceptance of this fact, the destiny, the history and culture. However, it becomes imperative to recognise that Negritude contributed to the foundations that the African Renaissance is developed on. As Bongmba asserted (2004: 292), the African Renaissance vision is an all-embracing concept that draws its inspiration from the rich and diverse history and cultures of Africa, therefore, Negritude has inspired the recreation of Africa. While Negritude and other ideologies advocate for Africans to embrace their cultures, the African Renaissance advocates for ushering in the political leadership that is necessary to empower Africans to face challenges posed by globalization.

2.1.4. Consciencism.

Nkrumah (1964:185) asserts that the philosophical aim of Consciencism in its political manifestation, is to accomplish the following; firstly, to chart a course of action to defeat colonialism and imperialism; secondly, to reveal the whims and caprices of neo-colonialism so that the defeat of colonialism does not become pointless; thirdly, to marshal all the various forces and groups in a territory towards a national (or continental) unity; and lastly, to articulate an ideology suitable for national reconstruction and development (, 1964:185). According to Nkrumah, the conscience of the African society is plagued with three strands of influences which have competing and conflicting ideologies;

African society has one segment which comprises our traditional way of life; it has a second segment which is filled by the presence of the Islamic tradition in Africa; it has a final segment which represents the infiltration of the Christian tradition and culture

of Western Europe into Africa, using colonialism and neo-colonialism as its primary vehicles (Nkrumah, 1964: 68).

Consciencism includes the following three major dimensions: metaphysical, ethical, and political. By coupling metaphysics to politics through ethics, Nkrumah (1970:68) presents Consciencism as a philosophy and an ideology that stands behind the necessary social revolution that seeks the emancipation of the African continent through restitution of the ethical egalitarianism of human society (Nkrumah, 1970:77). When simplified, Consciencism seeks to recreate the African society upon the belief in human equality particularly in respect to social, political and economic affairs. It seeks to place emphasis on equality and equal treatment across religion, economic status, political beliefs and gender (which is the focus on this thesis). Nkrumah's rationale for such coupling is that philosophy has had living roots in human life and human society. Philosophical Consciencism according to Nkrumah (1970:79) is that philosophical standpoint which, taking its start from the present content of the African conscience, indicates how progress is forged out of the conflict in that conscience. Since the African Renaissance aspires for a renewal of the African continent, that renewal needs to be accompanied by a shared identity of the African people. Therefore, Consciencism provides the African Renaissance with a map in intellectual terms of the disposition of forces that will enable African society to digest the Western and the Islamic and the Euro-Christian elements in Africa and develop them in such a way that they fit into the African personality.

Therefore, the above confirms the notion that the African Renaissance is in no way a new phenomenon and that various discourses have paved the way for its development. It, therefore, becomes important to understand how those discourses contributed to the conceptualization of the African Renaissance to discern if the phenomenon is just a well-written repetition of the thoughts that already exist or if it carries a significant difference.

3. The African Renaissance in National Contexts

It is interesting to notice how the discursive idea of African renewal assumed different forms in the newly independent states. For instance, economic nationalism became one of the defining characteristics of the period, and among the emergent African ruling elites, it became fashionable to denounce imperialism and rail against multinational corporations (van Hensbroek, 2001: 39). In the immediate post-independence period, development became a major preoccupation. What is significant, however, are the conflicting and at times competing interpretations, definitions and conceptualisations of these notions of an African rebirth. For instance, African socialism in the form of populism tinged with bits of Marxist pretensions became quite popular at this stage. However, it meant different things to different political

leaders. Leopold Sedar Senghor, for instance, spoke at the Dakar Conference on the African Road to Socialism and declared that “Socialism is the merciless fight against social dishonesties and injustices; fraudulent conversion of public funds, rackets and bribes” (cited in Mboya, 1963:164). Kenya's Tom Mboya was more concerned to emphasise the Africanness of this socialism. African socialism was not just socialism, he declared, rather it was bound up with African reaction against colonialism (Mboya, 1963, 164). The African is anxious that his attitude of mind, his approach to problems, should be identified as an African approach. After independence, he wants to see that Africa is recognised in her right and on her own merits (Mboya, 1963, 164).

In the then Congo Republic (Democratic Republic of Congo), Mobutu Sese Seko Kuku wa Dabanga's *recours a l'authenticite* (recourse to authenticity) went a step further. All places were renamed, including the capital to Kinshasa and the country to Zaire (Young and Turner, 1985). Christian surnames were replaced with African names, Mobutu changing his from Joseph Desiree to Mobutu Sese Seko Kuku wa Dabanga. Western attire was replaced with a multi-coloured long cloth for women and the *abacost*, complete with a scarf, for men. Young and Turner (1985) point out that the essence of *l'authenticite* was to return to ancestral heritage in order to pursue the goal of economic modernity without the alienating materialism of the western world. African renaissance or rebirth differed in context depending on the nature of social forces driving the project, as well as on the historical traditions informing the anti-colonial struggle.

In its present incarnation, the African Renaissance has its source in Africa's identity politics (Mamdani, 2004: 294). In particular, it was on 8 May 1996, when the former President of South Africa, Thabo Mbeki, delivered a speech proclaiming, "I am an African". This proclamation recaptured the imagination of African thought leaders such as Nkrumah, Nyerere, Biko, Seme and More. It further inspired the call for an African Renaissance in countries across the continent including South Africa, Tanzania, and Ghana. According to More (2002, 62), the Renaissance perception brought forth a call from African leaders for the return to African traditions and systems in the post-colonial epoch, he (More, 2002:26) further asserts that it (the Renaissance) was given a symbolic, philosophical, political and moral articulation by various African Political Thought scholars. This focus on identity politics is necessary to recover a distorted view of Africa. In this sense, the idea of the African Renaissance is part of a long struggle to articulate and actualise an African identity and consciousness (Mudimbe, 1988: 131). Identity issues and modes of consciousness vary, but we can identify a general sense in which African countries have experienced the beginning of the modern state that calls for a

critical appraisal of that experience in the search for a new awareness of who they are and what lies ahead. We must note that despite attempts to see Mbeki's call for an African Renaissance as the recovery of black identity, Mbeki is not primarily concerned with the issue of blackness. One must add, however, that if there is going to be a Renaissance, Africans must at some point face the issue of blackness.

This Report acknowledges that Africa is not homogenous, therefore, I use the term whilst remaining mindful not to hold onto the illusion of a collective singular and cultural homogeneity perspective of African countries. Additionally, I acknowledge that African philosophies are grounded by a common ideal, which is *Ubuntu*. Moloketi (2009:243) explains that the word was derived from a Nguni [isiZulu] aphorism: *Umuntu Ngumuntu Ngabantu*, which can be translated as "a person is a person because of or through others". Ubuntu can be described as the capacity in African culture to express compassion, reciprocity, dignity, humanity and mutuality in the interests of the building and maintaining communities with justice and mutual caring (Khoza, 2006:6). Therefore, the use of the term "Africa" within the study is used to refer to specific African regions whose ideological underpinnings are grounded in one form of afro-communitarianism or the other. Particularly in the South, East and Western Africa, which include but are not limited to South Africa, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Uganda, Tanzania, Ghana, Namibia, Angola, Nigeria, and most sub-Saharan countries.

Africa's transition from a Colonial regime to independent and sovereign states is the primary justification for the search for indigenous value systems, which, itself, is fuelled by the need to redefine Africans and their value systems. Despite such "successful" independence, Africa, today, continues to be engulfed in the foreign, alien, exploitative and oppressive values which have been imposed upon African people, both physically and psychologically, by the colonizers to make them (Africans) malleable to subjugation (Marumo & Chakale, 2018: 178). That is, despite the fall in the 21st century of the ideological practices of colonialism and apartheid, South Africa, for example, remains under the devastating social and psychological legacies of these systems, which continue to negate the creativity and identity of the African personality (Sedibe & Tondi, 2018). Thus, Diop desired that the African Renaissance would harness Africa's potential while, also, being an effort to remove the sources of conflict, restore its self-esteem and turn it into a zone of economic prosperity, peace, self-determination, identity, restoration of dignity, and stability (Gumede, 2014).

4. Influential Literature of the African Renaissance.

To understand the depth of the ideology, it is imperative to understand the literature, authors and events that inspired the development and the popularization of the African Renaissance.

Thus, according to Peter Christian Kenworthy (2007:58-60) below are the three literature influences of the African Renaissance.

4.1. Diop.

Diop still remains the most vigorous African intellectual to articulate what a renaissance means and entails. His book *Towards the African Renaissance: Essays in African Culture and Development, 1946-1960* consists of several essays about African culture and development. The value of the book is in its pioneering exploration of the possibilities of an African Renaissance by charting pathways toward what could be examined and investigated in service of a renaissance. In his view, developing reference points in African tradition should not be based on some abstract historical truth, but on deep scholarship and foundational knowledge of Africa (2000:135). As he argues in the final chapter, "intellectuals should study the past, not for their pleasure but to learn useful lessons" (2000:137). From a conceptual perspective, Diop observes that the African reality reveals that there is, on the one hand, a part of a tradition that has remained intact and continues to survive despite modern influence, and on the other hand, a tradition that has been altered by contamination from Europe (Lo, 2019:12). Diop mobilizes linguistics, political, economic and cultural consciousness for the project of the Renaissance. For Diop, "culture does not consist of literary expression only; it is also made up of plastic expression" (2000:40). In this respect, he asks what we find in Africa. That, for Diop, is the beginning of the journey of producing answers that are useful for a renaissance project.

4.2. Mbeki.

The second book that has been considered to be of significance is the African Renaissance edited by Malegapuru William Mkgoba (1999) with Thabo Mbeki's contribution in the prologue. The value of the book rests in the fact that it embodies the era of President Thabo Mbeki and his vision of the African Renaissance. As noted in the book's introduction, the main objectives of the gathering were to "define who we are and where we are going in the global community, and to formulate practical strategies and solutions for future action that would benefit the African masses" (Mkgoba, 1999: i). In his address to the gathering. Deputy President Mbeki notes that "as every revolution requires revolutionaries, so must the African Renaissance have its militants and activists who will define the morrow that belongs to them in a way which will help to restore to us our dignity" (1999: xxi). Within its pages, the volume offers rich and diverse perspectives on the African Renaissance expanding from the local to the global. These insightful readings of the discourse relating to the African Renaissance are framed in six parts: the context, moral renewal and African values, culture and education,

political and economic transformation, science and technology, and media and telecommunications (Lo, 2019: 13). The strength of the volume is not in its persuasive powers rather in its comprehensive and methodological awareness of the current issues of economic development and political stability in the continent. Obviously, the diversity of challenges facing the continent play out noticeably in these essays. The book's frame of reference is clear: the roadmap for the African Renaissance is found in successful economic development (Lo, 2013:13). Cultural issues are moved to the peripheries of education.

4.3. China.

The third book in matters of significance and relevance is China's impact on the African Renaissance is *the Baobab Grows* by Kobus Jonker and Bryan Robinson (2018). The significance of this book is to highlight how the likes of Mbeki introduce economic development in relation to the African Renaissance that of which is missing in the writing of various scholars including Diop. The Renaissance is seen to be explored through the lenses of economic development in the academic discourse, therefore, this linkage adds value to the discussion about the African Renaissance because it introduces a new perspective to the conceptualization of the phenomenon. The primary reason the focus is on China is mainly because China is a leading investor and trading partner in Africa, which inevitably influences the projects implemented by Africa in the name of development. From the onset, the book accepts the interchangeability of the concept of the Renaissance and economic development, claiming that it is about "what China's trade with, and investment in, African countries means for the socio-economic well-being of the continent" (Lo, 2013: 14). Much like the dominant approaches to the Renaissance project between 1970 and 2000, this book also echoes the notion of economic development as Renaissance and vice versa. This oversimplification of the issue calls into attention the dire need for a strategic approach to righting the Renaissance project. As argued by various scholars including Lo (2013) and Makgoba (1999) the concept of the African Renaissance emerged as a critical tool in response to colonialism, the oppression of Africans of the Diaspora and neo-colonialism (Makgoba, 1999). It is within that strategic approach that the Renaissance project encompasses the intellectual movements of the black Atlantic from the 18th century to the current pan-Africanist movements (Makgoba, 1999).

5. The significance of the African Renaissance.

It becomes clear that throughout African history various African thought leaders have attempted to reclaim the African Identity. Without neglecting the value of these aforementioned

phenomena namely; Pan-Africanism, Black Consciousness, Negritude, and Consciencism. This Report argues that the African Renaissance is a better reflection of those systems of thought. Mainly because part of the limitations that are posed by these systems of thought is that they approach development and transformation through the lenses of race at the expense of other identity markers, hence, the focus of the Report pertains to gender. At the centre of other liberation thoughts, race was and still is at the core of the aspirations, to some degree one may argue that those African ideals were/are limited to "race liberation". It is, therefore, my belief that the African Renaissance is not only limited to the liberation of race but offers an opportunity for the liberation of other identity markers such as gender. It offers Africa an opportunity to introduce the gender question in the discussions relating to the recreation of the African continent. Renaissance implies rebirth, renewal or re-awakening, which explains how the African Renaissance indicates the renewal and rebirth of the African continent taking into account the political, economic, social [race, gender & class] and technological dimensions. This, in turn, fuels Africanisation, which according to Koma (2018:99) is the process or vehicle for defining, interpreting, promoting and transmitting African thought, philosophy, identity and culture.

As widely defended by Mbeki, as expressed in the speech delivered at the United Nations University in 1998 entitled *The African Renaissance, South Africa and the World*, the African Renaissance relates to a set of external and internal dynamics that carry the potential to unleash a series of favourable opportunities on the African continent (Mbeki 1998). It [the African Renaissance] symbolises a new doctrine aimed at the political and economic renewal of the continent that is inclusive of women, because, for a renaissance to be possible for Africa, women must be included. The concept of the African Renaissance has the potential to be viewed as a thought structure drawn from the indigenous wisdom for self-determination and an analytical reflection of the western rationality tradition with its very unique connotation and coinage of African significance. The contemporary concept of the African Renaissance adduces wider implications from the past, cast in the same conceptual language and share general characteristics of universality, presumptions, pre-suppositions, vision, and prospects. The pre-independence African renaissance came at the heel of colonialism for political liberation, retained uniformity, intrinsic vision, significance, and connotation. In simple terms, the African Renaissance implies positive transformation, in all spheres of African existence: which includes mentalities and patterns of thought and behaviour, socio-economic, political and cultural structures.

The concept has been viewed as the nationalistic-ideological trend concerned with the sorts of political philosophy, which arose from African resistance to, and liberation from, colonialism (Wright, 2000:489-490). African Renaissance was a response to colonialism with the aim of altering the political equation in favour of African political development vis-à-vis the world political order at the time. The concept of African renaissance came to be synonymous with African determination for development through political freedom, dignity, and identity during the late 1940s, late 1950s, and early 1960s. It practically awakened black consciousness to engage meaningfully, the fundamentals that belie the attainment of higher goals for the continent, such as the political independence and acquaintance with international actors who have vested interest in the continent.

Conclusion; Limitations of the African Renaissance.

This chapter laid the foundation for understanding the African Renaissance, the literature explored the meaning of the ideology from various scholars which offered a variety of perspectives to how the ideology is perceived and understood. It further, elaborated other African Political Thought that contributed to the development of the African Renaissance and explored [briefly] the books whose authors contributed largely to the popularization of the ideology.

Therefore, key valuables extrapolated from this chapter begins with a simplified explanation of what the African Renaissance stands for, in the words of Priscilla Jana:

“The African Renaissance vision is an all-embracing concept that draws its inspiration from the rich and diverse history and cultures of Africa. It acknowledges Africa as the cradle of humanity, whilst providing a framework for modern Africa to re-emerge as a significant partner in the New World order. This framework touches all areas of human endeavour; political, economic, social, technological, environmental, and cultural.” (2001:38).

The question now is, what are the key components of the African Renaissance? Eddy Maloka suggests that the discourses on the African Renaissance can be grouped according to the globalist, Pan-Africanist, and culturalist perspectives (cited by Vale & Maseko, 1998:272). According to Eddy Maloka, the globalist perspective is associated with Mbeki and the African National Congress (cited by Jili, 2000:69). The emphasis is here two-folded. On the one hand, the emphasis is on the need for economic and political renewal on the continent, and on the other hand, on the need for the transformation of the world's political and economic order, including its institutions. The culturalist perspective, Eddy Maloka argues that it sees the 'African Renaissance' as a movement calling for a return to 'roots' (cited by Jili, 2000:70). The

Culturalist perspective is arguably the most dominant perspective in the popular discourse pertaining to the African Renaissance. There is more and more interest in the public sphere in those practices and beliefs that are believed to be traditional African practices and beliefs. One element of this perspective is the notion of Ubuntu. While the culturalist perspective according to Eddy Maloka pertaining to an African Renaissance argues that Africans are in the first instance products of culture (cited by Jili, 2000:70). How they define their culture determines how they define themselves (Jili, 2000:70). If Africans are to avoid defining themselves in the shadow of the West, then they must have the courage to consider discarding some of the ineffective and culturally irrelevant institutions and structures that have been promiscuously copied from the West (cited by Jili, 2000:71).

The legacy of Pan-Africanism, Black Consciousness, Negritude, and Consciencism lies in their contribution to the goal of decolonizing the minds of Africans and liberating African states from colonialism. Furthermore, these philosophies have inspired the construction and development of the African Renaissance in a manner that allowed it [the African Renaissance] to examine Africa's present position and the efforts made by individuals on the African continent to transform the structures and ideologies that are not effective for Africa's development. Therefore, the African Renaissance can only be successful if the aims and objectives are defined by Africans themselves if its programmes are designed by Africans themselves and they take responsibility for the success or failure of their policies. It is important to note that a vision of a continent's or country's destiny starts with discourses and/or ideologies (Mihindou, 2006:87). It is, however, in these discourses and/or ideologies women often do not have a voice in shaping the world or global governance. Women have been excluded in the processes of development for generations, which some African feminists believe was a precedent set in the African Renaissance project. Therefore, women remained excluded in the development of the African Renaissance project, however, women acknowledge that as long as they are not active participants in the development strategies of their countries and those of the continent, the Renaissance will not be realized. Nevertheless, for the purpose of this Report, it becomes fundamentally imperative to ask that since men pioneered the processes of development, how women can now contribute to the reconfiguration of the African Renaissance. The new millennium is a critical opportunity for transformative change in women's advancement towards equality.

The subsequent chapter elaborates how women should be key partners for development and that their capabilities and leadership skills should be used if there is to be a significant change within the efforts aimed at empowering women and the achievement of an African

Renaissance within the African continent. The complete participation of women in the decision-making processes will bring about an equitable sharing of resources and sustainable human development to the African Renaissance. However, the literature reviewed has presented some limitations. The African Renaissance as a concept within the African continent remains misunderstood which has in some parts of Africa resulted in communities remaining disadvantaged. Furthermore, the literature has exposed how not inclusive the African Renaissance is of women even though they constitute a statically majority on the continent. According to Mihindou (2006: iii), there is no significant Renaissance that can take place while sectors of the population under transformation are victims of oppression. Analysing the historical and modern positioning of women within Africa's development, it becomes imperative to understand the implications of gender in the discourse. This then brings forth the question "why has the African Renaissance not included women and can it continue being considered as a discourse of renewal without the voice of women"? The African Renaissance has become vital to the democratization of Africa, thus, the voice of women and the role that gender plays should be of great importance.

Chapter 3: African Women and Oppression.

Introduction.

The struggles women face, which is often rooted in social inequality and violence can be traced back to histories of sexist ideologies and practices. Although women make up a significantly large percentage of Africa's population, they remain marginalised and deprived. According to Mihindou (2006: 12) women remain systematically excluded from any form of participation in political and economic markets, furthermore, in most African countries they (women) are often relegated to domestic chores which are often perceived as "the suitable role for a woman". According to Strobel, it was only until the late 1980s that historians analysing the standard political topics and using traditional documentary sources, ignored women (1982:109). Strobel maintains that economists focused on formal sectors of the economy and the wage-labour force, where women's work was underrepresented (1982:109). Even anthropologists who investigated rural life and noted the sexual division of labour, social organization, and political mechanisms often failed to ask who benefited from these structures and processes (Strobel, 1982:109). Even political scientists who studied the rise of nationalist movements occasionally mentioned the mobilization of women by a nationalist party, but questions pertaining to the real power of women passed relatively unnoticed.

Furthermore, women's economic history according to Katz, Stern & Fader (2005: 65) illustrates how for centuries gender has inscribed a durable inequality into the structure of the African labour markets that civil and political rights have moderated but not removed. This economic experience of women reflects the paradox of inequality in Africa: the coexistence of structural inequality with individual and group mobility. The process of internal differentiation characteristic of the history of groups defined by sex, race, or ethnicity provides the key to understanding how the paradox of inequality works (Katz, Stern & Fader, 2005: 65). Liberal feminists viewed women as victims of development rather than equal partners with men in the processes of nation building (Okeke, 2004:482), ironically, within the same year, Mrs Mbeki affirmed women as the core of civil society within the continent. However, it remains alarming that although African women have joint social and political movements and organisations in large numbers, their impact on state policies remain minimal. According to Turshen (1994:90), there is still a pervasive lack of recognition of the position and contribution of women in Africa.

Sadasivam asserts this point by mentioning that "without a clear recognition that women's rights are human rights, and that they overlap with various aspects of the development process, the African Renaissance will grind to a halt" (1998:28). Thus, this chapter is aimed at providing an overview of the condition and position of African women, pre-colonialism

(c.1800s), during colonialism (post-1880) and post-colonialism (post-1900). It, therefore, becomes imperative to be cognisant and understand the conditions that are essential to the existence of women on the African continent that affects their state of being. Furthermore, this chapter will explain the impact of colonialism and patriarchy on women, it will analyse if the vision of the African Renaissance characterizes a historical perspective that justifies the discourse in women's struggle against patriarchy and colonialism. In essence, this chapter is primarily aimed at analysing the political, economic, social, cultural and historical context regarding the positing of women more closely.

However, it is important to clarify what the use of the term “gender” means in the context of this Report. In demonstrating how varied notions of gender are used, Joan Scott in her article, titled “Gender: A Useful Category of Historical Analysis”, draws attention to various definitions of gender. One of which is according to Fowler's dictionary, which defines gender as "to talk of persons or creatures of the masculine or feminine gender, the meaning of the male or/and female sex" (1986:1053). Recently, feminists have begun to use the term [gender] in a manner that refers to the social construction of the relationship that exists between sexes. According to Scott the recent usage, of "gender" seems to have first appeared among American feminists who wanted to insist on the fundamentally social quality of distinctions based on sex (1986:1054). The word denoted a rejection of the biological determinism implicit in the use of such terms as "sex" or "sexual difference" (Scott, 1986:1054). The writings of women into history involves redefining and enlarging traditional notions of historical significance, to encompass personal, subjective experience as well as public and political activities (Gordon, Buhle & Dye, 1976:89). Therefore, how history includes and accounts for women's experience rests on the extent to which gender could be developed as a category of analysis.

Therefore, following Scott's approach, the purposes of the usage of the term "gender" is as a synonym for "women", in its simplest usage, as in various books and articles whose subject pertains to the history of women, "gender" is a substitute "women". The reason for this substitution is that the term "gender" seems to be appropriate within the scientific terminology of social science particularly its association with the politics of feminism (Scott, 1986:1056). The usage of the term "gender" carries with it a statement about inequality and power, it is used to emphasize an entire system of relationship between power, social constructs and women. This descriptive usage of the term “gender” has been employed by historians in the aims of mapping out new terrain (Scott, 1986:1057). In its descriptive usage, then, gender is a concept associated with the study of things relating to women

However, I acknowledge that the term “gender” is one that implies many notions, it is often used to refer to social constructs, power relations, may apply to both males and females, even those that are regarded as non-gender conforming. However, the theorizing of gender, in particular to this thesis, is perceived as a primary way of signifying relationships of power. It might be better to say, gender is a primary field within which or by means of which power is articulated. Hence, gender has been employed literally or analogically in political theory to justify or criticize the reign of monarchs and to express the relationship between rulers and ruled. The use of the term gender [as a synonym for women] within the context of this thesis emphasizes an entire system of relationships that may include sex, but is not directly determined by sex or directly determining of sexuality (Scott, 1986: 1057). These descriptive usages have been employed by historians most often to map out a new terrain. As social historians turned to new objects of study, gender was relevant for such topics as women, children, families, and gender ideologies. This usage of gender, in other words, refers only to those areas-both structural and ideological-involving relations between the sexes with primary focus on women. It is restricted to political philosophy, this chapter mainly draws on work belonging to liberal and socialist feminism. This chapter is also limited to a presentation of the contribution made by feminism to political philosophy at the most general level.

However, drawing on Scott's arguments, I make a similar assertion with the awareness that even though gender is not a new topic nor is it a new department of historical investigation it remains a concept that necessities further investigation, particularly with its use in applied research. Furthermore, I make this assertion without invalidating the efforts made by feminist historians to employ a variety of approaches to the analysis of gender.

Therefore, the purpose of the following discussion is to analyse the history of women to gain insight and understanding as to how women got to the position of needing a Renaissance as well as comprehend where precisely in African history did African women get excluded in the pursuit of an African Renaissance. Not only limited to that but to further expose the contributions made to the pursuit of a Renaissance despite their disposition and oppression. Essentially, to understand what is, we ought to understand what was.

1. The Precolonial History of African Women.

It becomes important to acknowledge that there is limited literature pertaining to the history of gender relations during pre-colonial Africa, which creates the assumption that little attempt has been made in pursuit of that literature. The precolonial historical status of African women has been mostly poorly researched according to Ogbomo & Ogbomo (1993: 431), many studies have focused on elite African female leaders, founders of settlements and warrior queens. What this narrative prompts is to minimize the role as well as the importance of women from other classes, it does not acknowledge their contribution to the development of societies they belonged to. It is, however, not a secret that men everywhere in Africa have dominated politics, this becomes evident when examining available literature and how it celebrates male contributions in society while neglecting the contribution made by females. Most studies ignore the contributions made by women through their economic, religious and social activities (Ogbomo & Ogbomo, 1993:433). Which in turn reinforces the narrative and myth that women have no real importance in history. Therefore, the purpose of this section is to highlight the roles that women played as well as the contributions they [women] made to the development of their various communities with particular focus on African women (Ogbomo & Ogbomo, 1993:437). Additionally, this section aims to go against the myth that the history of African women is limited to them being oppressed. I believe that this perspective is strengthened by the tendency to write history backwards, because the common belief is that since women today are oppressed, then it must mean that women have always been oppressed, sometimes even more in the past. Therefore, I aim to highlight how women [not just elites] have contributed to the development of society. In support of this narrative, I will narrow into the development of Nigeria, particularly the Iyede and Owan regions.

1.1. Women and the Economy.

Ogbomo & Ogbomo (1993: 439) illustrate how women exercised considerable power during the pre-colonial era amongst the Iyede people. Since the pre-colonial Iyede was a patriarchal society, women undeniably were victims of male oppression in such aspects as circumcision, widowhood, and the centralization of political authority, which came with the introduction of a monarchy. Despite women's relative subordinate position, they played enduring roles, exercised significant influence in the economy and overall development in various pre-colonial societies. In examining women's economic contribution, an Iyede woman was an asset to her husband and society, she did not leave the entire burden of financing the home to her husband. An Iyede woman assisted their husbands in farming, fishing, oil palm processing, and trading activities. However, farming was the most prominent and important occupation during precolonial Iyede, women contributed largely to the labour processes of farming, from

preparing the plots, to planting to harvesting. According to Leis, farming was by far the most important occupation of women, furthermore, they [women] devoted themselves to preparing and caring for the farms (1964:55).

Interestingly, Uvoh (1981:29) mentions that not only did women labour the farms but they reaped what they were remunerated for it (cited by Ogbomo & Ogbomo, 1993). Through that, they were able to economically support their families, just as men often do in societies. According to Uvoh:

In times past and even now, women contributed and still contribute a lot to agricultural production. Women cultivated different crops and they process the food items they cultivate. Women assisted their husbands in harvesting and storage, even I was a young girl followed my mother to the farm to weed (1987:34).

Not only limited to agricultural produce, but trading was imperative for the Iyede women during the pre-colonial era, according to Ogbomo & Ogbomo the trading was essentially the sale of their products and was oftentimes organised between the markets of village groups (1993:433). The Iyede women just like the Ga women of Ghana dominated the local marketing activities, however, beyond organising the market systems, the women according to Bradburg (1957:136) were responsible for the long-distance trade with neighbouring ethnic groups. Therefore, it was because of their contributions in their societies that these women influenced crucial decisions, Ogbomo & Ogbomo mention how they [Iyede women] enjoyed comparable if not equal status with their male counterparts (1993:434). This was fundamental because they acquired their status as a consequence of hard work. As Marxian theorists would argue, whoever controlled the productive forces and commercial exchange in society could hardly be called oppressed (Ogbomo & Ogbomo, 1993:435). Following this, one could easily argue that Iyede women were most likely more powerful economically than men.

1.2. Women and Politics.

The role of individuals in the political process of any society "may be defined in terms of their participation, direct or indirect, in the activities of government, and subgroups which exercise authority" (Lebeuf 1963: 93). Women in pre-colonial African societies had a "tradition of practical participation in public affairs" (1963: 114), although it was usually the men who were called to rule. In pre-colonial Iyede, politics was not the exclusive preserve of men. An examination of the pre-colonial socio-political organization of Iyede will attest to this assertion. Even though female status was defined by marriage, as might be expected in a patriarchal society, the women possessed an organisation through which their collective voices were heard. Some might say that they were far from helpless, Ovueferie argues that nothing could be done

in Iyede without the consent of its women (1987). This can be seen in how even though the political head within the society was assisted by a council composed of men, women were given a voice in the decision making processes. These would often express themselves in the creation of women's councils within societies, for instance, in Iyede there was a council known as *Ogbegwa-Eyana* which attended clan assemblies.

Often the perspectives of the women's council were presented before the clan assembly, not only limited to that but individual women were allowed to express themselves during those clan assembly meetings. This political arrangement made it possible for women not only to express themselves openly but also to influence and exercise political authority. Both males and females operated as an overriding principle, Iyede's pre-state political organisation was comparable to the dual-sex political system as identified by Okonjo (1976). Female effectiveness is attributed to the strength of the women's organisation. Although Iyede women may not have exercised direct political power they certainly influenced politics. Of note is the dual-sex political system which made it possible for women to assert exclusive rights over purely females.

1.3. Women and Social Belief System.

The role of an individual in any society is a by-product of the status the individual occupies in that society. Linton, a social scientist, defines status as "the polar position ... in patterns of a reciprocal behaviour" (Onwuejeogwu 1975: 19). Basically, the polar position consists of the rights and duties of the individual. Hence Linton argues that "status has a double connotation: a position in the social structure occupied by a person, and a collection of rights and duties which the position confers on the person" (Onwuejeogwu 1975: 19). This section of the paper examines the rights and duties of women in the Iyede social belief system. Pre-colonial Iyede had numerous social activities in which women played very significant functions. They include circumcision, marriage ceremonies, funeral rites, religious as well as traditional festivals. In each of these activities, the women's age grades were seriously involved. The position of women in Iyede's economic life meant that they featured prominently in ritual and religious matters. Religion in the context of the ritual was another cultural institution of the people. Like other institutions, it was a vehicle for satisfying the needs of society. Women have been well-known diviners during times of trouble. They knew the necessary sacrifices or rituals required for specific problems. Pre-colonial Iyede women were no exception. Hence it has been asserted that religion "plays an important part in determining the status of African women" (Umeagudosu, 1987:1). Whenever there were an epidemic or frequent deaths, particularly

amongst children, the elders requested the women to do something about it, this was a clear recognition of the ritual powers of females.

Women dominated the religious-ritual life of Iyede. This seems to represent an even greater dominance in earlier centuries. However, it remained a powerful tool. Goddesses and priestesses pervaded the social conscience of the people. All good things in Iyede came from female spirits, and only females could summon them to society's relief and benefit. This belief implanted in males a psychological view of the world as predominantly controlled by females, both their spirits and human representatives. Male office-holders were almost irrelevant to the cycle of life. Similarly, one can trace similar conditions in Akan, Yoruba, Ashanti, Yombe, Songo, Mubunda, Okavango, Bemba, Lamba, Tonga, Nyanja, Ondonga societies [to mention a few] where males are primarily purposed for reproduction. In these societies, matrilineal structures are followed, where women are in charge of horticulture, thus, providing food for their families and the rest of the clan, and are in charge of the systems of education (Sarpong, 2003; Danese. 2020; McGee, 2015). Furthermore, they [like the Tuareg women] play vital roles in the decision making processes of their tribes, especially pertaining to the naming ceremony of children, initiation, marriage and funerals. In these societies, matrilineal structures are pre-dominate and women are 'kings' in their societies, thus, leading and making critical decisions regarding how their lives are to function. They [like Asantwea] lead battles, are in charge of their agriculture and form their own systems and intuitions (Sarpong, 2003; Danese. 2020; McGee, 2015).

In light of the above, it becomes clear to assume that at least during the pre-colonial era there was some sort of gender equality, which has been illustrated by the extensive examination into the social structures of Nigeria. Therefore, on the eve of colonialism, women dominated agriculture, much of commerce, and the religious beliefs and rituals of most African societies. Whatever the balance in authority between genders, females certainly could not be perceived as oppressed in the 1800s. What becomes imperative to realize is that today, women have become the oppressed gender.

2. The Colonial Legacy.

To completely understand the present positioning of women on the continent, it is imperative that we first analyse the colonial past. A convenient starting point is an argument made by Todaro (1989:19), he argued that colonial powers had a histrionic and long-lasting impact on the economies and political-institutional structures of African colonies. This was a direct result of tradition-dismantling ideas, these ideas were primarily aimed at eroding the autonomy of communities as well as exposing them to new forms of exploitation. As a result, colonialism

destroyed Africa's ancient cultures and thus undermined its social order (Wepman, 1993:29). According to Mbeki, the key to maintaining the economic system of exploitation was the construction of the supremacist discourse that justified and legitimised the control of Africa and Africans (1992:2). The purpose of this discourse was to create the perception that Europeans were superior, civilized, rational, progressive and modern, while Africans were to be perceived as inferior, primitive, irrational, static and backward (Mzamane, 2001:2).

However, this study will be doing an injustice if it does not analyse the impact colonialism had on women. Masculinity and femininity must be understood within the framework of power dynamics as well as social roles attributed to sex. For a long time, Western feminism has been blind to race in the analysis of women's oppression. This situation can be explained by its propensity to homogenize the female category on a global scale without taking into account the diversity of experiences (Mohanty, 1984:134). The discourse on the oppression of women in Africa is always generalizing as if women have the same social class and experience as oppressed males. Women have different trajectories and roles, and as we will see further, colonization has influenced patriarchy on the continent (Hutchful, 2006:18). This could be seen at two levels: the affirmation of the biological inferiority of women and in some societies the destruction of social relations has led to the subordination of women. Thus, to think about the oppression of women in Africa despite independence is also to articulate the impact of colonial domination on racialized bodies. Sexism and patriarchy as well as race are at the foundation of the international capitalist structure. These are processes that were simultaneously articulated against the colonized and enslaved peoples.

Thus, even if we tend to describe homogeneously the experience of slavery, it remains that the social hierarchies during this period placed women at the bottom of the social scale compared to black men (Mbembe, 2006:40). A context of oppression that was prolonged and accentuated with the colonial period. The black man, dehumanized, is inferiorized by the white man who removes his status as a man (Fanon, 1952: 1). He is also humiliated in front of the black woman who becomes the possession of a white man. We can argue that in post-colony women's oppression is also linked to the desire of former colonized black men to reproduce or enjoy the female body without resistance. The coloniality of gender allows us to surround the contemporary oppression of women in Africa for a long period. Then, it is important to analyse the discourses that have been produced to understand the implementation of norms and the processes of control, surveillance and domination (Foucault, 1976:123).

What is important to underline in order to illustrate the entanglement of the imaginary around sexual inequality is that the colonial state, just as the project itself is a state-controlled

by men. As a consequence, "in many places this exclusively masculine, colonial administrative and bureaucratic apparatus got rid of pre-colonial systems, which, although different by gender, had political functions and titles of importance and influence diverse for both women and men" (Mama, 2006). According to Lugones (2007:98) the new social hierarchies introduced by colonization seem to have destroyed the systems of solidarity and complementarity that existed in so-called "primitive" societies before the European conquest. Hence, according to Mendoza claims that it is "through sexual violence, exploitation, and systems of cohabitation, the colonizers used to break the will of indigenous men and women, imposing new hierarchies that were institutionalized with colonialism. The bodies of women became the land on which the country negotiated under new conditions "(Mendoza, 2016).

However, there is in fact behind this critique of the impact of colonization on gender identities, a thought that it is the normalization of patriarchy in African societies by colonization that has consecrated the oppression of women in Africa. Patriarchy is an ancient social and political organization of societies that existed in many forms (Bennet, 1989: 261).

But patriarchy was not the main political and social organization in Africa before colonization (Amaduime, 1997:65). There have been many matriarchal societies where women held important roles and constituted the balance of society. The hegemony of patriarchy has its roots in Indo-European nomadic culture before spreading on a planetary scale (Diop, 1989). Diop argued that in pre-colonial Africa there was no transition from matriarchy to patriarchy since the social structure was essentially matriarchal in the sense of female rule, female transmission of property and descent, and man being the mobile element in marriage or sexual union (cited in Amaduime, 1997:74).

Furthermore, Oyeronke Oyewumi asserted that colonization in Africa, although violent, had different impacts on men and women, she explains this difference mainly by the fact that the colonizers were white men. The colonial state is, therefore, first, a patriarchal state. Despite the presence in the colonies of white women, although oppressed, enjoyed the privilege of the race. But power and authority were exclusively concentrated in hands of white men (1997:116). This is why Oyewumi believes that women in Africa are a colonial manufacture. Oyewumi sums up her thought in these terms:

The very process by which females have been categorized and reduced to women made ineligible for leadership roles. The emergence of women as an identifiable category, defined by their anatomy and subordinated to men in all situations, resulted, in part, from the imposition of a patriarchal colonial state. For females, colonization was a twofold process of racial inferiorization and gender subordination. The creation of "women" has a role in the colonial

state. It is not surprising, therefore, that it was unthinkable for the colonial government to recognize female leaders among the colonized. The transformation of state power to male gender power is accomplished by the exclusion of women from state structures. This was in sharp contrast to the Yoruba state organization, in which power was not gender-determined (Oyewumi, 1997, 124-125).

However, it is important here, to note that Oyewumi's work can't be applied to the entire African continent, whose cultural realities are manifold. Therefore, the coloniality of gender allows us to grasp the continuity of gender relations and representation of sexuality in Africa. The contemporary binary conception of sex and the hierarchy of gender relations could be perceived as an extension of Eurocentric thought.

With that, the African Renaissance is concerned with the lasting impact of colonialism on African systems of governance and traditions. Mbeki debates that it (colonialism) had an adverse impact on the psychology of Africans (1992:6), Bongmba asserts that this psychological impact made them (Africans) view themselves in a negative light (2004:309). Critics of the African Renaissance believe that the ideology does not recognise the dominance of gender when confronting the colonial legacy, Msimanga (2007:73) contends that:

If the African Renaissance is at the core of a decolonisation project, then it is an ideology and/or a movement that cannot hope to reflect on or transform relations if it does not use a gendered lens. In Mbeki's own words, the African Renaissance is the hope of a decolonised Africa. In its current state, however, at best, it can only offer a partial response to decolonisation, but it cannot pretend to present a liberation theory if it is gender blind.

As a result, in Africa, colonialism is presented entirely as hegemonic and totalising in its impact (Stomquist, 1998:27), hence, the impact of colonialism was explicit and political (Mihindou, 2006: 16). Charlton asserts that colonialism created an unscrupulous educational foundation for women (1997:10), mainly because men were given preferential treatment pertaining to opportunities not limited to education but also with employment and resources. According to Tamale & Oloka-Onyango (2000:3) even though French colonies educated girls and boys, the kind of education offered to girls was more religious and orientated towards grooming them into becoming housewives and mothers. With this in mind, it is clear that colonialism exaggerated gender inequalities, it utilised inequality to further imbed itself in the lives of those it oppressed. However, another construction utilized by colonisation was separating women from each other, Rowan-Campbel explains:

By placing strictures on association across race and class lines, colonial rule enforced distances between mistress and servant, between merchant's wife's and soldier's wife, between local and

expatriates. Women who joined a common condition and experience could not join together to explore the possibility of fighting for change (1999:14).

Therefore, the impacts of colonialism are still seen and felt today, mainly because classism, racism and sexism collectively create what is often referred to as the triple oppression of women. Essentially the patriarchal ideology left by the colonial legacy has resulted in unfavourable conditions for women in Africa, particularly regarding the lack of power, resources, education and many other social conditions in respect to power and influence societies offer men.

3. The current position of women in African institutions of politics.

History has shown that for generations, women have been joining forces to fight male supremacy and advance interests that arise from their unique life experiences. Women have been determined to form part of the ideologies that will offer them opportunities to voice out their thoughts in shaping the world or global governance. With that, the African Renaissance is perceived by various thinkers as a discourse, a totality of ideas that are shared by an elite group. In the post-colonial era, women have the desire to cultivate their own thoughts with which describe the conceptions they choose to live by. They aspire to be part of the decision-making processes that shape their lives and want to make their voice heard in any political negotiations where men are often times are principal role players. The implementation of policies designed to establish the gender balance should be highly prioritized. It is in this issue that women should largely be included in the pursuit of an African Renaissance.

Harding asserts that women should not be excluded from participating in projects that are primarily endocentric because partial and distorted understandings of women and the world can result in a culture that systematically silences and devalues the voices of women (1987:7). According to Mihindou African governments tend to voice their commitment to advancing the status of women on the continent (2006: 67), however, the structural and ideological barriers that militate against women's social mobility still exist. Women across the continent have suffered a significant degeneration that reflects patriarchal continuities and contradictions of a hybrid contemporary society, they have been subjected to subordinate statuses in comparison to men. According to Okeke (2004:483), it is because of these contradictions that women sought to figure out ways of influencing the process as befits their cultural and historical notions. It is important to realize that gender concerns are relevant to the creation of political identity (Msimang, 2000:68). In fact, it becomes imperative to examine the concerns that women hold in retrospect to the idea of the African Renaissance.

According to Xingwana (2004:7) in a speech made at the SAWID mentioned that for the African rebirth to be realised, women cannot be excluded. Mainly because they need to play a vital role in the processes of developing the continent since they represent the poorest and most marginalized communities on the continent according to the McKinsey Power of Parity Report: Advancing Women's Equality in Africa, which asserts that women are responsible for 60% of work done yet earn 10% income (Moodley *et.al* :2019). In Africa, 70% of women are excluded financially and the continent has a US\$42 million financing gap between men and women (Moodley *et al*, 2019). Xingwana further explained that during colonialism, various African states advocated for the liberation of women, therefore, the fight for the emancipation of women was subsumed with the national liberation movements (2004:8). However, despite all the advocacy to include women in systems of politics, there are key factors that remain unaddressed and heavily influence the subordinate position African women to find themselves in. These factors remain stumbling blocks for a successful African Renaissance that includes women, the following are some of the key factors that remain unaddressed and adversely impact the positioning of women in institutions of politics. Political, socio-economic and cultural barriers predominantly constrain or prevent women's participation. These and other factors are discussed in this section:

3. 1.Violent conflict, sexual violence and war.

In many African states, politics is marred by violence, persecution, intimidation and torture. While both genders are victims of this, it presents particular barriers to women's engagement and political participation. According to the United Nations (2015:15), an Afrobarometer survey showed that women feel “a sense of vulnerability to political intimidation and violence”. The Afrobarometer survey further showed that in Guinea, for instance, 64% of women say they are very concerned about political intimidation (2015:16). The effects of war continue for years after the fighting ends. While entire communities suffer the impact of armed conflict, women and girls are often the first to lose their rights to education, political participation and to livelihoods, among other rights being bluntly violated.

3.2. Electoral contests:

Voter intimidation, persecution, arbitrary arrests and assassinations. Election violence is a coercive and deliberate strategy used by political actors, incumbents as well as opposition parties to advance their interests or achieve specific political goals in relation to an electoral contest (Adolfo, Kovacs, Nyström, & Utas, 2012:25). As a consequence, many politicians' resort to illicit electoral strategies and make use of militant youth wings, militias or the state security forces to either win the election or strengthen their post-election bargaining position.

Electoral violence is one problem that has been identified as a stumbling block to the robust participation of women in the political process and governance. Violence against women is used as a targeted and destructive tool in various ways throughout the electoral cycle to dissuade women from participating as election administrators, voters, and candidates (ParaMallam, 2015). Zakari (2015) further states that violence against women in elections could be overt or subtle; beyond the violence that does physical harm, there is violence manifesting in terms of gender-based hate speech, with the sinister aim of deterring women from presenting themselves as candidates or voting elections. Failure to address these electoral barriers creates an atmosphere that makes women have a negative attitude towards political activities. Behrendt-Kigozi (2012) notes that political violence and the social stigma that politics is a dirty game is a further stumbling block for women to enter politics.

3.3. Institutional factors: party politics.

Another mechanism through which violent conflict can induce structural changes that affect the supply of female politicians is institutional. Institutional constraints include barriers such as political systems that operate through rigid schedules that do not take into consideration women's domestic responsibilities, and the type of electoral quotas used (if any) (Kangas, Haider, Fraser, & Browne, 2015). The adoption of new electoral or party rules during or after the war may facilitate women's entry into politics. Lack of adequate support structures to rectify existing codified institutions to include women in political leadership and achieve gender equality in global politics (Morobane, 2014). Political parties do not want to implement reforms because they fear they would lose political support and consequently, political power. They, therefore, oppose changes that are likely to make them cede power. Perhaps this might be because of the assumption that they would be serving political parties that are patriarchal and practise unclean politics. A number of them appeared to be blindly following political leaders with very little knowledge of what is going on.

3.4. Cultural and traditional norms.

According to George (2019:45), women's ability to engage politically both within and beyond the voting booth particularly as community organisers and elected officials is often shaped by norms that drive wider social structures. Fundamental to the constraints that women face is an entrenched patriarchal system in which family control and decision-making powers are in the hands of males. Traditional beliefs and cultural attitudes especially as regards women's roles and status in society remain strong, particularly in rural areas (Sadie, 2005:3). Traditional roles and the division of labour are still clearly gendered. Social norms make it more difficult for women to leave their traditional domestic roles for more public roles outside of the home

(Kangas et al., 2015:325). Women's gender identity is still predominantly conceived of as being domestic in nature and continues to act as a barrier to women's entry into formal politics.

3.5. Economic factors.

The socio-economic status of women to a greater extent plays a significant role in enhancing their participation and representation in political decision-making bodies (Kassa, 2015:190). Women lack the economic base which would enhance their political participation (Suda, 1996 cited in Karuru, 2001:52). The lack of an economic base for women has been a factor in their participation or lack of it in politics because the cost of campaigning is very high. Lack of financial resources can limit participation given the costs associated with elections (WPL, 2014; Kayuni & Chikadza, 2016; Common Wealth, 2017). Access to power tends to emerge from familial, communal and economic linkages, and these factors may help explain patterns of participation.

To further quantify, one may look at the gender differences in laws that affect developing and developed economies and women. According to the World Bank, over 2.7 billion women are legally restricted from having the same choice of jobs as men (2018:1). Of 189 economies assessed in 2019, 104 economies still have laws preventing women from working in specific jobs and in 18 economies, husbands can prevent their wives from working (United Nations Women, 2017:69). In that, women remain less likely to participate due to their lack of access to the labour market, which according to the United Nations, the labour force participation of women aged 25—54 is 63% compared to the 94% of men (International Labour Organization, 2018). Thus, in 2019, women's global labour force was rated at a 48.5%, which was 26.5% below men (International Labour Organization, 2018). The United Nations further reported that women are less likely than man to have access to financial institutions, this is because 65% of men have access to formal financial institutions, while only 58% of women do (International Labour Organization, 2018). Access to power remains restricted due to multiple factors including those mentioned above. Therefore, in light of the above, it is clear that women still lag behind in terms of their political participation, which is attributed to several reasons, which include cultural and socio-economic constraints.

Conclusion.

Women's full and effective political participation is a matter of human rights, inclusive growth and sustainable development (OECD, 2018:2). The active participation of women, on equal terms with men, at all levels of decision-making and political involvement is essential to the achievement of equality, sustainable development, peace and democracy and the inclusion of their perspectives and experiences into the decision-making processes. Despite this, Kumar

(2018:28) states that in the twenty-first century, women are facing obstacles in their political participation worldwide. Women around the world at every socio-political level find themselves under-represented in parliament and far removed from decision-making levels. As noted in the Millennium Development Goals (United Nations, 2019), women's equal participation with men in power and decision-making is part of their fundamental right to participate in political life, and at the core of gender equality and women's empowerment.

Strategies to increase women's participation in politics have been advanced through conventions, protocols and international agreements for gender mainstreaming, but they are yet to prove effective in achieving gender parity in the highest government rankings (Morobane, 2014:1).

Given the fact that many states have ratified international conventions and protocols on gender equality and women's political participation, the low level of women's representation in government and politics may be considered a violation of women's fundamental democratic rights. The African government's public commitments have not materialized into better protection for women and support for victims and this has made women play outside the political ground. According to Rop (2013:2), many African states signed and committed themselves to promoting gender parity in political participation but end up shelving the agreement. Thus, women continue to be underrepresented in governments across the nation and face barriers that often make it difficult for them to exercise political power and assume leadership positions in the public sphere. The UN (2011) concurs and states that "women in every part of the world continue to be largely marginalized from the political sphere, often as a result of discriminatory laws, practices, attitudes and gender stereotypes, low levels of education, lack of access to health care and the disproportionate effect of poverty on women".

Literature has shown that the factors that hamper or facilitate women's political participation vary with the level of socio-economic development, geography, culture, and the type of political system (Shvedova, 2005; Alzuabi, 2016). In Africa, for instance, women are striving to assert an influential role in determining the course of their states but, they have been faced with many challenges that have actually strengthened their resolve. Moreover, the political environment and conditions are often unfriendly or even hostile to women (Shvedova, 2005). Often the after-effects of the consequences of abuses that women and girls face during conflicts are ignored and under-reported, especially when it comes to political participation and women's involvement in politics and governance. Lack of political representation comes from political parties in Africa who only think of how they can expand their power and win elections. This has jarred the confidence of women in their ability to participate in political processes.

Chapter 4: African Renaissance and Gender.

Introduction.

It becomes inefficacious to speak about an African Renaissance without speaking about gender. Various scholars have made the link between what value of the African Renaissance is in addressing the question of the positioning of African women. Scholars such as Piekielele Mihindou believe that Africa is currently undergoing a tremendous gender revolution that is central to the African Renaissance (2006: 4). Furthermore, Mihindou (2006:4) explains that gender is often understood in the context of “disadvantaged situations of women”, the notion refers to the power relationship that exists between women and men. The term gender focuses on the interactions as well as power relations between women and men, it further, draws attention to the elements that establish and sustain gender relations. Saskia Everts asserts this point by stating that cultures naturally differentiate between men and women and that this differentiation carries a heavy influence pertaining to how people feel and behave, it further influences the opportunities and the resources they can access as well as how development programs benefit men and women (1998:59).

According to Bunwaree (2007:75), gender inequalities are deeply entrenched in most societies, and a multiplicity of practices and institutions exist which contribute to the perpetuation of the status quo. The dynamics of gender are complex, according to Mutekwa (2012:16) what becomes pertinent is that gender issues in Africa need to be informed more by female generated perspectives, which are ought to include those of African womanists. Hence, the polarisation of genders appears not to be helpful in realising an African Renaissance. Gender equality, and the full participation and co-operation of women and men in Africa's development, are prerequisites for realising the African Renaissance (Mutekwa, 2012:17).

Recognizing the need for the centrality of women in the African Renaissance, Mbeki (1999) advocated for the notion of gender equality not only in South Africa but throughout the African continent through the African Union (AU). As Matthews (2018, 500) observes, the AU's initiatives "represent the revival and re-emergence of Pan-Africanism under the general rubric of an African Renaissance". Yet, despite Mbeki's pro-gender-equality African Renaissance within the AU, and even though the continental body had a woman as the chairperson of the AU Commission, concerns were still raised about the discrimination within the commission itself against female employees (Allison 2018, 3).

This discrimination is alleged, which supposedly manifested itself in the regular overlooking of experienced women for more senior roles in favour of men. This simply demonstrates that the African philosophical struggle for the “truth” should be aimed at, according to Wamba-Dia-Wamba, the protracted struggle for the “complete liberation of the entire African people” (1991, 224). Such liberation entails the destruction of “every form of exploitation of man by man” (Wamba, 1991:224). In the use of the words “complete liberation” and “entire African people”, there is a recognition that the task of the liberation struggle could be “incomplete”, and that the fruits of the liberation struggle could be enjoyed by “some” and not by “all” (Sesanti, 2016:506).

Therefore, the African Renaissance as an ideology not only seeks to emancipate thought, but also aims to create institutions in which emancipated thought can be mastered, capitalised on, developed, and applied by African nations in solving their challenges (Hountondji, 1996). However, throughout African history, the power relations between women and men have, for the most part, left women in a disadvantaged position because they were always forced to confront the issue that men have always been in control of the knowledge systems within the continent. It has been evident that women have been excluded from the enterprise of creating symbolic systems [meaningful social symbols that represent the world about us] and interpreting historical experiences (Mihindou, 2009:4). It thus, becomes slightly clear that it is this lack of control over the systems that has created a society where women are marginalized. Mainstream literature on African Political Thought underestimates and ignores the contributions made by women, this is often seen through the difference in the treatment of their status, beliefs and behaviours, which are often perceived as unimportant in comparison to men (Kegley & Wittkopf, 1997:532).

Thabo Mbeki's notion of the African renaissance can be said to have popularized the thought around the continent. As already indicated, what is new about this period is the prevailing balance of forces as embodied at the end of the cold war and prospects of redemocratisation across the continent. However, little mention is made of gender issues in the African Renaissance although Thabo Mbeki has suggested that South Africa's progress to a democratic transformation should be measured by the progress recorded in the struggle for gender equality (Okereke, 1997:29). However, an African renaissance is inherently not just about cultural regeneration, but more critically, about accelerated economic modernisation that involves African women. Black women can, as Okereke puts it, ‘serve the collective eye’ by demonstrating women's worth and capabilities, and they can help to transform society by making it conscious of gender issues (1997:30).

Without a revolution in gender relations what has been described as women's 'missed potential' by the World Bank, will take its toll on the continent and impact negatively on the renaissance (Bunwaree, 2007: 76). Although a commitment to gender equality is generally among the principles associated with the African Renaissance and has indeed become a catchall phrase, women on the continent find themselves increasingly trapped in a cycle of extreme poverty and socio-political disempowerment. The liberation and emancipatory project of the African Renaissance appears more and more difficult to achieve.

Amoako (2001) raised his concerns and questions pertaining to the gender implications of a renaissance and whether or not women on the African continent and the African Diaspora can traverse the millennial highway with their male equivalents. When addressing the gender issue, former South African President Thabo Mbeki asserted that the issue of gender equality and the emancipation of women is imperative if "we" are going to pursue a genuine democratic society (Msimang, 200:12). Kofi Annan raised the point in the UN that the challenge in this post-colonial era is ensuring that the wisdom, experiences, and ideas of women are fully harnessed for the benefit of all as well as ensuring that women are active participants in all processes of decision making (cited by Wandia, 2003:8). Without a clear recognition that women's rights are human rights, and that they overlap with various aspects of the development process, the African Renaissance will grind to a halt (Sadasivam, 1998:28).

African women have remained marginalised throughout history, through patriarchal and capitalistic ideologies, they have been exploited, subordinated, and oppressed. According to Mihindou (2006:13), African Renaissance advocates acknowledge that the purpose of the ideology is to bring forth rebirth and renewal, however, women continue to be given subordinate positions that prevent them from establishing their own identity, firstly, as individuals in their own right, and secondly, as a group whose participation is significant in the development and implementation of initiatives aimed at nation-building. Okeke further argues the following:

What is evident, however, is that from the colonial period to the present times, the status of women across the continent has suffered a significant decline that strongly reflects patriarchal continuities and contradictions of a hybrid contemporary society (2004:483).

However, once liberation was realized on the continent, new priorities arose, concerning the reconstruction and defending of new nations, which resulted in issues pertaining to the freedoms of women being left at the bottom of the agenda. Manzini asserted that the process of the African Renaissance will only be successful if it draws on the energies and resources at the disposal of the continent (2002:5). Without the active participation of women in the pursuit

of an African Renaissance, it will never reach its full potential, because it leaves out a vast majority of the African population.

1. The importance of Women's Involvement in the pursuit of an African Renaissance.

Women make up a large proportion of the population within the continent, they [African Women] bear the majority responsibility for dealing with many of the social issues that the Renaissance aspires to address. Furthermore, women account for a disproportionate number of Africa's poor and are politically marginalised. Thus, this section is aimed at examining, women's subordinate status in society, and, the importance of including women in development projects aimed at upholding the promise of the African Renaissance.

Women's subordination is often seen as merely a social problem but in many countries, it is also entrenched in law. The institutionalisation of gender-based discrimination is a common feature of patriarchy worldwide. The term 'women's subordination refers to the inferior position of women, their lack of access to resources and decision making etc. and to the patriarchal domination that women are subjected to in most societies. Therefore, women's subordination means the inferior position of women to men. The feeling of powerlessness, discrimination and experience of limited self-esteem and self-confidence jointly contribute to the subordination of women (Sultana, 2011:7). Discrimination against women constitutes a subordinate position of women and a violation of basic human rights and is an obstacle to the achievements of the objectives of women's equality, development and peace. In the last two decades, discrimination against women emerged as one of the most visible and articulated social issues in Africa which generate women's subordination. Male domination and women's subordination are the basic tents of Africa's social structure. All forms of discrimination constitute the social, political, economic, religious and cultural differences between men and women and establish a male-dominated society. It also eliminates women's equality with men, forms women's subordination and constructs a social system that produces women's subordination (Mahtab, 2007:21).

The last thirty years have seen a further decline in the conditions of women as a social group in large parts of Africa. The so-called 'feminisation of poverty is a symptom of this decline with women making up an increasing percentage of the poor' (UN, 2000). Neo-liberal economic policy is often blamed for this; traditional economic assessments tend to overlook women's largely unpaid contributions to the economy and therefore fail to take their needs into account (Manuh, 1998). Women are of vital importance in society throughout the continent yet remain victims of widespread and serious structural discrimination (Longwe, 2002: 32). This dual relationship to society marks women out as a particularly important group in both planning

and benefiting from development projects if they truly aim to bring about an African Renaissance.

It, therefore, becomes important to include women in the mission of an African Renaissance because Africa's prosperity can only be triggered and sustained if truly gender-inclusive developmental states are developed and consolidated. 'Gender-inclusive democratic developmental states' refer to states which have been elected by the people and which formulate and implement gender-equitable policies for the attainment of their development goals (Bunwaree, 2007:76). The rejection of all forms of what Diane Elson (1989) calls 'male biases' in policies and legislation are therefore necessary for equitable development and this, in turn, is relevant to an African Renaissance. The African Renaissance is meant to be a multifaceted philosophy or/and framework which encompasses different dimensions for the renewal, revitalisation and reawakening of Africa. Most of Africa is undergoing various waves of democratisation and at the same time, we keep hearing of what a series of 'Rs' and 'Ds'. The Rs refer to terms such as renaissance, renewal, reconfiguration, reinvention and reconstitution, and the Ds refer to decomposition, decay, destruction, dismantling and so on' (Bunwaree, 2007: 201).

If gender mainstreaming and programming continue to elude African policymakers, it is more than likely that Africa will move closer to the 'Ds' rather than to the so desperately sought renewal. The history of the continent (including its islands) is one of the multiple forms of exploitation. Unshackling the continent from the legacies of these exploitations demands a new vision. It is this very vision which is captured in the notion of a renaissance, based on, among others, the following principles: economic recovery of the African continent, political transition and democratisation political transition and democratisation, building more equitable relations between Africa and the world economic building more equitable relations between Africa and the world economic powers, mobilising Africans to reclaim as well as take their destiny into their owns mobilising Africans to reclaim as well as take their destiny into their owns hands, ensuring people-centred development ensuring people-centred development, working towards the development and consolidation of African knowledge working towards the development and consolidation of African knowledge systems and commitment to gender equality commitment to gender equality (Bunwaree, 2007:76).

2. Case Studies.

Although a commitment to gender equality is generally among the principles associated with the African Renaissance and has indeed become a catch-all phrase, women on the continent find themselves increasingly trapped in a cycle of extreme poverty and socio-political disempowerment. The liberatory and emancipatory project of the African Renaissance appears more and more difficult to achieve. Therefore, it becomes imperative to assess all major initiatives such as NEPAD, MAP and MSD, the purpose of this analysis is to see if these policies are just being politically correct by including sections on gender equality or they action their commitments.

2.1. The New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD).

As stated above, the African Renaissance cannot be explored without interrogating NEPAD, because many agree that NEPAD can be a catalyst to African Renaissance. The NEPAD programme is an attempt to substantiate as well as facilitate the idea of the African Renaissance, it having been adopted as the economic development programme of the African Union, advocating sustainable growth and development, integration into the global economy, poverty eradication and the empowerment of women, as well as African integration and ownership (Meredith, 2005: 128). NEPAD's underlying principles of a commitment to Good Governance, democracy, human rights and conflict resolution further recognise that such principles are fundamental to the creation of an environment that will promote investment and long-term economic growth (Gumede, 2005:206). The attempted unification of Africa that saw the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) replaced with the African Union is equally consistent with the ideas of the African Renaissance (Hunter-Gault, 2006: 103).

Critics argue that NEPAD is a form of African sub-imperialism, that it narrows the scope of the African Renaissance, foreign donors and investors being more likely to be benefactors of the trade liberalisation that NEPAD advocates than the African peoples, and that NEPAD fails to address human rights or be able to solve crisis situations (Saul, 2005: 213). They (Maloka, 2000; Gumede, 2005; Saul, 2005) maintain that although the implicit acknowledgement of NEPAD that Africa's problems are not solely self-inflicted and that solutions to them are to be found inside Africa promises a solution that does not necessarily look to the West for answers or aid, NEPAD might "just as easily have been framed in the offices of the World Bank and IMF" (Saul, 2005: 252). African Renaissance as being "mostly about words" (Herwitz, 2003 187; Gumede, 2005:203), criticising the fact that NEPAD essentially advances economic liberalism that does not solve the concrete problems encountered by the poor masses.

Such critics see the features of the African Renaissance as deliberately vague and “high on sentiment, low on substance” (Jacobs, 2002: 125) and meant to distract attention from the real problems facing the country, poverty and unemployment, by “inflating words with the illusion of political force” (Herwitz, 2003: 187). According to such reasoning, any African renaissance “must end the economic discrimination the continent faces” (Jacobs, 2002: 130) to accomplish any real changes, its success being interconnected with that of economic and political advancement (Ramphele, 1995: 2003). The African Renaissance might end up not benefiting the blacks that are meant to benefit from it, but instead ironically being “the best thing that has happened to South Africa’s (still overwhelmingly white) capital in a long time” (Jacobs, 2002: 115-116). One can therefore criticise the imitative nature of Mbeki’s economic liberalism for counteracting or contradicting the “proud” Africanism of the African Renaissance.

Initially, NEPAD seems to be gender-aware; the promotion of women in terms of political participation and social and economic development is a principal objective of the plan (NEPAD, 2001: 10). However, an analysis of the document leads Longwe and others to conclude that the authors “seem to be genuinely, deeply and comprehensively ignorant of all matters relating to gender and development” (Longwe, 2002a: 29). The document promotes an idea of women’s situation which completely ignores the structural violence and social and cultural discrimination many face. The document’s answer to gender discrimination is: Promoting the role of women in social and economic development by reinforcing their capacity in the domains of education and training; by developing revenue-generating activities through facilitating access to credit; and by assuring their participation in the political and economic life of African countries. (NEPAD, 2001: 10, para 49). As well as being a remarkably short list of solutions (possibly due to the neglect of gender analysis in identifying problems), this locates the blame for women’s subordination with women themselves.

NEPAD advocates that women are trained to participate, helped with acquiring access to money, and encouraged into public life (Wanyeki, 2005; Longwe, 2002a: 5). This attitude towards gender issues is influenced by economic efficiency models which have depoliticized the issue and therefore focused only on women's access to resources (Afonja, 2005). The gender-blindness of NEPAD can be explained by entrenched patriarchal culture across Africa and the almost complete absence of women from the bodies that created and promote NEPAD, including many state governments (Longwe, 2002:7). This is despite plenty of potential female leadership and female interest in the politics of NEPAD (Manuh, 1998). The absence of gendered analysis, targets, or indicators leaves NEPAD unable to promise an 'African

Renaissance' for women (Wanyeki, 2005). This leads me to predict a continuation of the previous miserable record' rather than a turning point. Many analysts predict a continuing increase in gender inequality as a result of NEPAD. Not only does the plan not address existing problems, but it also reinforces Africa's acceptance of the neo-liberal agenda which has generally proved to be detrimental to women since its introduction (Tadesse, 2002: 7). Good governance, meaningful democracy and sustainable economic growth are all dependent on women's inclusion in the system (Tadesse, 2002: 3).

Therefore, NEPAD is gender-blind despite its commitment to furthering the emancipation of women. Issues that are problematic for women are almost completely ignored in the analysis; structural impediments to gender equality are also overlooked entirely, and the commitments made early in the document are not followed through to any gender-based outcomes. As a result, NEPAD is very unlikely to improve women's positions in society and may further add to women's problems through a continuation of neoliberal economic policies. I have shown that NEPAD as it stands cannot promise a 'renaissance' for Africa's women. For a true renaissance to begin, women need to be intimately involved.

2.2. The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

At the beginning of the new millennium [2000], world leaders gathered at the United Nations to shape a broad vision to fight poverty in its many dimensions. The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) are the world's time-bound and quantified targets for addressing extreme poverty in its many dimensions; income poverty, hunger, diseases, inadequate housing while promoting gender equality, education and environmental sustainability (MDGs Nigeria Report: 2010). The blueprint was tagged the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) with an eight-point agenda and specific target. That vision, which was translated into eight Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), has remained the overarching development framework for the world for the past 15 years. The eight goals of MDG are; eradicating extreme poverty and hunger, achieving universal primary education, promoting gender equality and empowering women, reducing child mortality, improving maternal health, combating HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases, ensuring environmental sustainability, and developing a global partnership for development. However, the focused goal for the purposes of this paper will be on goal 3: Promote gender equality and empower women.

Although significant achievements have been made on many of the MDG targets worldwide, progress has been uneven across regions and countries, leaving significant gaps. Many people are still being left behind, especially the poorest and those disadvantaged because of their sex, age, disability, ethnicity or geographic location. Women continue to face

discrimination in access to work, economic assets and participation in private and public decision-making. Women are also more likely to live in poverty than men (World Bank, 2011:12). Women remain at a disadvantage in the labour market. Globally, about three-quarters of working-age men participate in the labour force, compared to only half of working-age women (ILO, 2010:12). Despite continuous progress, today the world still has a long way to go towards equal gender representation in private and public decision-making.

According to the World Bank (2011:25) improving gender equality and empowering women are pathways to making sustainable human development and to achieving other MDGs (especially accelerating maternal and child health care, improving education and reducing poverty and hunger). Gender equality increases people's abilities [both women and men] to be educated and healthy, have voice and influence, take advantage of opportunities and make informed choices. These abilities are vital for societal and national transformation and development. Achieving this goal sets the climate for realizing all other MDGs while creating a virtuous circle for sustainable human development (Pollard, Sumner, Polato-Lopes & Mauroy, 2010: 34). According to United Nations, Women empowering women and girls is central to promoting quick and equitable economic growth and long-term stability (2010:12). For instance, facilitating poor women's access to productive and financial resources, while promoting gender equality in the household and in society more widely, also generates large development pay-offs. Expanding women's opportunities in public works, agriculture, finance and elsewhere accelerates economic growth, helping to mitigate the effects of economic shocks and natural disasters.

World Bank (2011:32) shows that countries that invest in promoting the social and economic status of women tend to have lower poverty rates. Women's empowerment shows a dynamic relationship with most other MDGs. When women are more educated they also, for example, delay marriage and pregnancies, leading to a lower likelihood of maternal and child death during childbirth, and a greater probability that children will be strong enough to attend school and survive into adulthood (Nyarko, 2011). More educated mothers have the skills to compete for high-skilled and well-paid jobs and will therefore be in a better position to feed, care for and educate their children (Nyarko, 2011). According to USAID empowering women and girls through education also enables them to be involved in decisions at all levels, from the household through to local and national levels, and influence the allocation of resources in a gender-sensitive manner (2008:3). This contributes to higher productivity, which increases economic growth and resources (in the form of taxes and additional incomes) to finance

investments in social services (USAID, 2008:4). Consider it another virtuous circle. The cost to society of not investing in gender equality and female empowerment can be heavy.

Progress on this goal is encouraging because many countries are making notable progress, especially on gender parity in primary school education and the number of seats held by women in parliament, but promoting women in paid employment outside agriculture is still a challenge. Cultural practices (including inequitable inheritance practices, early marriage and household power dynamics), few economic opportunities for women and too little political will still impede progress. For sustained advances, cultural transformation aimed at addressing the negative perception in society of gender equality and women's empowerment is imperative. Policy changes should be directed at addressing discrimination against girls and women in educational systems, encouraging greater participation of women in productive and remunerative economic activities and increasing women's voice in making decisions at all levels of society. Economic and social policies that respond better to the needs of men and women including the reform of customary laws that discriminate against women and girls, and more human and financial resources to enforce and implement such laws are crucial for meeting this goal. And countries with educational disparities against boys should address that issue.

Africa's performance over time, relative to other regions of the world, is promising but there is room for improvement. An important driver of progress is the adoption of legal frameworks for a minimum number of women representatives in parliament. Although political participation (as measured by the seats held by women in national parliaments) in many African countries is comparable to elsewhere in the world, there is scope for strengthening their political empowerment (as measured by the ratio of women to men in ministerial positions and the ratio of women to men in parliamentary positions). For sustained gains, it is important to focus on cultural practices that hold back women's empowerment. With determined advocacy on such empowerment's importance in face of the need to transform cultural impediments, it is possible to create awareness that girls and women can perform the same tasks as boys and men. In a similar vein, policy changes should address factors that discourage women from attending and completing a full course of education confronting factors that promote early marriage, the seclusion of girls and the education of boys rather than girls and should promote women's participation in productive economic activity and politics. Boosting women's participation in wage employment requires a range of measures to improve conditions and widen their opportunities in the labour market.

Specifically, efforts to eliminate all socio-cultural impediments to girls' education and increase women's access to productive and financial resources (such as legally guaranteeing

land rights for both men and women) are vital to enhancing women's wage employment. On the data front, national statistical institutions need to strengthen their capacity to generate and analyse regular gender-disaggregated labour market statistics, as a basis for gender-sensitive policymaking. Deliberate efforts at enhancing the status of women through involving and committing the top political class are vital. Beyond allocating resources [financial and social capital] explicitly passing and enforcing laws are pivotal steps. Indeed, affirmative actions and explicit constitutional provisions for dealing with gender-based discrimination have advanced women's positions in Ethiopia, Mozambique, Rwanda, South Africa, Tanzania and Uganda. But such actions are a means to achieve gender equality and women's empowerment, not an end. To link gender equality to an African Renaissance, Africa should go beyond participation to "capacitation". In the political realm, efforts are needed to break the socio-cultural impediments that hinder women's political participation through training and advocacy on how women can enhance their leadership role and contribute fully to public debate and policy decisions.

2.3. Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Nations of the world met in September 2015 at the UN in New York and adopted the Sustainable Development Goals, the successor framework to the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). The MDGs concentrated largely, though not exclusively, on social outcomes while key development priorities, such as infrastructure and energy, were absent from the list. The SDGs reflect the challenges Africa faces in development, emphasizing the underlying drivers of sustainable development and not just measurable outcomes. The SDGs have adopted an all-inclusive approach, taking on board challenges faced by all nations and promoting the cooperation between the private and public sectors in the execution of the goals.

The Sustainable Development Goals are made up of 17 goals (United Nations, 2015), which include; ending poverty in all its forms everywhere, ending hunger, achieving food security and improved nutrition, and promote sustainable agriculture, ensuring healthy lives and promoting well-being for all at all ages, ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote life-long learning opportunities for all, and achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls amongst many. However, for the purposes of this paper, I will focus on goal 5: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls.

Each target is attached to a goal for the purposes of monitoring and evaluating the progress during the pursuit of fulfilling the goal. Therefore, the targets that are associated with this goal in particular that are most to the study are (United Nations, 2015):

Target 1: End all forms of discrimination against all women and girls everywhere.

Target 2: Eliminate all forms of violence against all women and girls in the public and private spheres, including trafficking and sexual and other types of exploitation.

Target 3: Eliminate all harmful practices, such as child, early and forced marriage and female genital mutilation.

Target 5: Ensure women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making in political, economic and public life.

With less than a decade to 2030, the UN assesses that "while some forms of discrimination against women and girls are diminishing, gender inequality continues to hold women back and deprives them of basic rights and opportunities (Koehler, 2016:54). The continent is struggling to reach "critical mass" in terms of the necessary political energy or investments to achieve SDG 5 or the gender dimensions of other goals by 2030. But the challenge is not only the need for more funding for evidence-based interventions, more voices engaged in innovative problem-solving, more power devolved to women's rights organizations and women themselves (Koehler, 2016:55). Sustainably addressing gender disparities requires adaptable solutions that are fit for the complexity of the problem. In too many countries, resources are underutilized, and the root causes of gender inequality are obscured as policymakers and implementers are lured by silver-bullet solutions that are not capable (on their own) of delivering transformational and sustainable change (Center for Women's Global Leadership, 2017:1). Development practitioners often focus on approaches to expand the agency of individual women and girls. Examples include building women's and girls' skills and self-confidence through training on literacy, entrepreneurship, negotiation, and legal rights; and resource transfers targeted to female beneficiaries. These kinds of interventions support profound and necessary improvements in women's and girls' lives. In many cases, the outcomes they deliver healthier, better educated, or more productive women and girls can have ripple effects that affect communities and institutions (Esquivel, 2016). However, individual capacity improvements do not necessarily lead directly and inevitably to increases in gender equality.

Gender inequality is not caused by shortcomings within women and girls, though it is manifest when women and girls lack skills, opportunities, and a sense of self-efficacy as compared to their male counterparts (Gupta & Vegelin, 2016:445). It is a common mistake to conflate ends with means, and causes with consequences. The success of efforts to address gender inequality must be assessed through their impacts on the women and girls who overwhelmingly bear the

burden of that injustice (Esquivel & Sweetman, 2016:6). And similarly, the pathways to gender equality must critically engage and amplify the voices of women and girls. But achieving gender equality is not possible with an exclusive focus on women and girls; after all, gender equality is a social ideal that necessarily involves people of all genders and changes in the institutions that govern human opportunities, rights, and behaviour.

It is well understood among both feminists and mainstream development practitioners that the achievement of gender equality is dependent on structural change (Esquivel & Sweetman, 2016:7). In fact, this was a demand well met in the articulation of SDG 5 which, unlike the MDGs, has an explicit focus on structural change, expressed in targets focused on non-discrimination in political institutions, elimination of gendered forms of social control such as harmful traditional practices and violence against women, and addressing such barriers to employment as unpaid care. Nevertheless, the idea persists that targeting women and girls with individual-level interventions is sufficient in itself to contribute to greater gender equality (Floro & Willoughby, 2016:16). And this error has profound practical implications. Focusing on women's and girls' capabilities without addressing the relationships and systems that shape their opportunities makes them less likely to deliver sustainable results (Floro & Willoughby, 2016:17).

Conclusion.

This chapter has outlined the relationship [lack of] that exists between the African Renaissance and gender [women in particular]. Literature has shown how there has been an unspoken precedent that was set by the former scholars of the African Renaissance project that excluded women. It, therefore, concludes that even though women make up a significant majority on the African continent they remain the most disadvantaged group. They continue to be excluded from effectively participating in political and economic sectors. This chapter has illustrated how women have suffered colonial injustices, patriarchy and inequality even post-independence. Economic, political and social prospects remain the most vital determinates for measuring the progress of women on the continent. The African Renaissance should therefore reflect the need to empower African [particularly women] people to deliver themselves from the legacy of colonialism and neo-colonialism through the advancement of African economic, political, or other pressures to control or influence other countries, especially former dependencies and to situate themselves on the global stage as equal and respected contributors to, as well as beneficiaries of, all the achievements of human civilisation. Africa cannot do with a 'leaner and meaner kind of stateness'. Africa needs the hands of the state to be very strong and visible, though this does not imply states in which the elite continue to exploit resources in

the interests of the privileged few and perpetuate the status quo. Perpetuation of the status quo would also mean that efforts to unshackle the continent from patriarchy are unlikely to come to fruition.

Furthermore, there remains a lack of recognition of the position and contribution of women in Africa. This has been clearly illustrated in detail through the analysis of NEPAD, MAP and MSD and how those structures contain limited references to action plans that seek to empower women. This paper has shown the importance of including African women in development projects. Women are therefore both a great resource and a target for development projects such as NEPAD, MAP and MSD, it becomes clear that for an African Renaissance to occur, it would have to involve women. What literature has shown through the analysis of the chosen case studies is that firstly, NEPAD is gender-blind despite its commitment to furthering the emancipation of women. Issues that are problematic for women are almost completely ignored in the analysis; structural impediments to gender equality are also overlooked entirely, and the commitments made early in the document are not followed through to any gender-based outcomes. As a result, NEPAD is very unlikely to improve women's positions in society and may further add to women's problems through a continuation of neoliberal economic policies.

Secondly, the MDGs are silent on issues of equity in access to social services, and have been "over-abstracted", "over-generalized", "over-simplified" and altogether misinterpreted as global one-size-fits-all targets, and perceived as yardsticks against which countries' performance is to be measured and judged. In fact, "the MDG agenda has overlooked differences in initial conditions and capacities of countries. Lastly, even though the SDGs are an improved version of the MDGs, they still have within them built-in politics and structures of patriarchy. Naila Kabeer reflects that the SDG were weakened by their very narrow interpretation of women's empowerment (2015:2). She writes that much more is needed to dismantle more resilient structures of inequality, and while the SDGs offer some grounds for cautious optimism, there is a continued lack of emphasis on rights (Kabeer, 2015:2).

Furthermore, this chapter has outlined how the African Renaissance failed to take gender into account, which should be stated that the term gender in this chapter is used to refer to women as outlined in the introduction. For the purposes of this paper "gender" was utilized as a synonym for "women", in its simplest usage. As in various books and articles whose subject pertains to the history of women, "gender" is a substitute for "women". The reason for this substitution was that the term "gender" seems to be appropriate within the scientific terminology of social science particularly its association with the politics of feminism. The usage of the term "gender" carries with it a statement about inequality and power, it is used to

give emphasis to an entire system of relationship between power, social constructs and women. Nonetheless, the value extracted from this chapter illustrates how without a more precise gender planning and mainstreaming, women will continue to lag behind and the African Renaissance will be pushed back even further. Kevane (2004, 2) succinctly summarises the plight of a large number of women and girls in Africa: they continue to face unequal educational opportunities; less inheritance and ownership of assets; discrimination in employment and occupations; violence at home and in public spaces, and limited political representation. These conditions result in diminished welfare and a reduced capacity to fulfil their life aspirations.

Amartya Sen (1999, 85) notes that goals can be achieved only if society changes its social relations such that the objectives of democratic causes such as socialism, feminism, antiracism, environmentalism cohere and means and ends interpenetrate to achieve the desired moral outcomes. For the African Renaissance to be embedded, and for the nexus between African Renaissance and development to be strengthened, there is an urgent need for the effective inclusion of gender (and especially women's interests) into development theory and practice. However, this too depends on profound and far-reaching changes in all facets of society. Africa should strive to find ways and means to compel the rest of the world to work towards the 'interpretation of the ends and means' alluded to by Sen (1999) to realise the African Renaissance.

Chapter 5: Summary and Recommendations.

The concept of the African Renaissance speaks to the notion that African people can and must overcome their socio-economic and political challenges that have come to be synonymous with Africa (Jonas, 2012:92). In Mbeki's view, in order for African Renaissance to be achieved, the following key areas must receive abiding and undivided attention from policy makers: social cohesion, democracy, economic rebuilding and growth, and the establishment of Africa as a significant player in geo-political affairs (Ayittey, 1999:7). According to the advisor to the former President Mbeki, Vusi Mavimbela, African Renaissance is the 'third moment' in postcolonial Africa, following decolonization and the outbreak of democracy across the continent during the early 1990s (1998:11).

Seepe is of the view that African Renaissance is not a new invention. He points out that past African leaders such as W.E.B. Du Bois, Kwame Nkrumah, Julius Nyerere, Mangaliso Subukwe and Steve Biko preached the same concept (Seepe, 1999:1) He also argues that these leaders essentially propagated self-reliance, economic recovery, political and economic independence, democratic governance and sustainable development as the cardinal pillars of African Renaissance (Seepe, 1999:1). Although the notion of an African Renaissance is not a new idea, it is the most prominent initiative to re-emerge out of Africa in recent times. Besides being a proposal to harness Africa's potential, it is also an effort to remove the sources of conflict, restore its self-esteem and turn it into a zone of economic prosperity, peace and tranquillity (Louw, 1998: 11). Pioneers of African Renaissance believe that the beginning of their rebirth as a continent must be their own rediscovery of the African soul. Therefore, this study has examined the interconnection between gender, development and the African Renaissance by questioning the conceptualisations of development and prescriptions for gender equity.

In the first chapter, I narrowed and focused on the background of the study. In the second chapter was directed to the conceptualization and origins of the African Renaissance as a philosophy and as a discourse. It has been argued that the African Renaissance as a discourse of African development is constructed through three arguments in relation to three great periods of African development. The first moment is seen as a relatively idyllic African past with glorious discoveries. Mbeki sees this as a feature of the social harmony, with perfect political policies and economic development as it was in other parts of world. The second moment is characterized by the impact of colonization and the consequences experienced in Africa such as the loss of African identity, the appearance of corruption, immorality and poverty. The third

moment is highlighted by the need for an African rebirth, which means a shift from neo-colonization, poverty, underdevelopment, devaluation of African culture and marginalization to development and rediscovering identity.

In the third chapter was in particular aimed at providing an extensive background to the history of women in relation to oppression in Africa. The literature within this chapter has shown that the representation of women in processes of decision-making within government structures and managerial position, the participation of women is essential in the pursuit of a gender inclusive rebirth of the African continent. This chapter has led to a need for attention to be given to the values and practices that recognize and raise women to the equal level that man are held at socially and politically. Therefore, this paved way to understanding the need for gender emphasis in the discourse. In the words of Mihindou (2006:90) “The voices of women must also be audible because no meaningful cultural renaissance can take place while sectors of the population under transformation are victims of silencing”. It therefore, become clear that Africa is in need of positive changes that will influence ideologies and opportunities for women. The challenge of participating in a transformed state needs a clear vision, achievable goals and programs that are easy to implement. Therefore, without those changes, gender and the African Renaissance will be a far distant dream as expanded on in chapter four.

In the fourth chapter, the relationship between gender and the African Renaissance was unpacked and case studies were implored to elaborate how continental agreements haven't achieved their commitment to gender equality & equity. The principal aim of this chapter was to uncover and demonstrate how the gender blindness of policies has the potential to impact negatively on the renaissance project, and that unless more effort is put into gender planning, programming and mainstreaming, the continent may slide even further into marginalisation. For the African Renaissance to be embedded, and for the nexus between African Renaissance and development to be strengthened, there is an urgent need for the effective inclusion of gender (and especially women's interests) into development theory and practice. However, this too depends on profound and far-reaching changes in all facets of society. Africa should strive to find ways and means to compel the rest of the world to work towards the ‘interpretation of the ends and means’ alluded to by Sen (1999) in order to realise the African Renaissance.

Therefore in conclusion, I firmly believe that the idea of a Renaissance within the African continent is vital and deserves extensive attention than it is receiving, because of various reasons.

- The African continent needs renewal primarily because of the unwarranted socio-political and economic conditions. These conditions do not require quick fixes, but rather an engagement that requires the moral, cultural, political, and economic resources of the continent. African countries face a long and difficult road to transformation and this must begin with the renewal of African values. There is a long tradition in Africanist discourse that has articulated calls for the regeneration of the intellectual, cultural, and spiritual resources of the continent.
- The idea of Renaissance has a rich intellectual and cultural history and the present desire for an African Renaissance must be taken seriously. I do not imply that Mbeki's call for a Renaissance is similar to all discussions of the Renaissance or of Renaissance movements. If there is any commonality here, it is largely the shared sense of renewal and a call for the articulation and implementation of values that would restore and revitalise human communities. It is only in this general sense that I locate Mbeki's call for a Renaissance in a wider intellectual and cultural history. I do not claim that such calls share similar ideals, because each generation has faced different circumstances and each has drawn upon different ideals to sustain and renew its society.

Furthermore, African Renaissance must not end with the surface needs and problems facing Africa but it must honestly focus on the root problems, which this writer presents as being twofold, and of the following nature. Problems of Africa are rooted in social inequalities within each country. This inequality can take the form of ethnic divisions, class and gender inequalities or regional discrimination. Several African theorists have shown that discrimination is a long-term result of colonization and neo-colonization in order for its adherents to excuse themselves or their co-temporal policy makers. This should be now seen as an internal problem, which causes multiple community violence, wars, genocide, rape, and individual insecurity. The deep character of the problems facing Africa is a result of African policy, which does not take care of the majority of poor people but focuses on satisfying the elitists. The rebirth of Africa must be concerned with reform in education for all, land reform, social services facilities, and rural development. This must be achieved by government policies for the disadvantaged sectors of society.

In the pursuit of the African Renaissance that conciliates the politics of gender difference, it is imperative to strategically focus on an integrationist African policy. African co-operation must be a goal in itself and not a means to attract foreign investment from developed countries. With regard to organizations promoting African unity, these should provide an institutional framework for the promotion of Africanity. These propositions are not the only possible

strategies of the African Renaissance and African development but are shown as being important to deal with multiple problems experienced by African people.

The establishment of the Millennium Africa Recovery Program (MAP) could conceivably address the second proposition and provide the institutional framework and concrete strategies for achieving African integration and the African Renaissance. For it calls for investment in people and improvement of the quality of life of Africans, diversifying of production and exports through value adding and reforming trade rules, investment in energy, telecommunication, transport, water and sanitation, as well as in Information and Communication Technologies in order to access the knowledge economy (Mkuhku, 2001:1) However, like previous African development initiatives it has its shortcomings, but it also opens up new opportunities for creating a balanced relationship between the state and the market, promoting the capacity of state and civil society and increasing the autonomy of the state by combating corruption, widening democracy, and institute good governance. That of which in turn speaks to President Mbeki's conviction as an African Renaissance catalyst that Africa's problems should be solved on the political, economic and cultural terrain. Unfortunately, an evaluation of the Millennium African Recovery Program is beyond the scope of this thesis.

Although the notion of an African Renaissance is not a new idea, it is arguably the most prominent initiative to come out of Africa in recent times. Besides being a proposal to harness Africa's potential, it also is an effort to remove the sources of conflict, restore its self-esteem and turn it into a zone of economic prosperity, peace and stability. Gender remains a critical issue for Africa's development. While much remains to be done to show the particular ways in which gender gaps undermine Africa's growth potential, looking at such issues through a gender lens is an essential step in identifying how policy can be shaped in a way that is explicitly gender inclusive and beneficial to growth. The intention of the concept of the African Renaissance is to create an opportunity for African people to deliver themselves from the legacies of the past and to restore their self-esteem, to use Africa's strengths to influence major role players with regard to the reconstruction and redevelopment of the continent and the establishment of a sound and growing economy, which is ought to include women in realizing the vision.

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