

Pan-Africanism, transnational black feminism and the limits of culturalist analyses in African gender discourses

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Living the conjuncture

Feminism and pan-Africanism, as 20th century political positions, intersect in various ways but also follow different paths as they challenged entrenched systems of racial and gender domination.¹ Because women have been consistently erased from the history of pan-Africanism, it is important to assert from the outset that there has been a presence of active women from the very start of pan-Africanism. Many of these women explicitly indicated women's rights positions in their work and activism. Pan-Africanists who were feminists, (or feminists who were pan-Africanists), practised the art of navigating a variety of complex positions around race, gender, class, national origin and culture within the larger goal of the liberation of African peoples internationally. These political positions place them easily within current understandings of transnational black feminism.

Early coverage of the 1900 Pan-African Congress reveals delegates, "all eminent in their sphere" who represented the United States, Canada, Ethiopia, Haiti, Liberia, Sierra Leone, the then Gold Coast, most of the islands of the then British West Indies. Importantly, in the powerful US Delegation were: W.E.B. Dubois, Miss Anna Jones (Kansas), and Mrs. Annie Cooper (i.e. Anna Julia Cooper) (Washington, D.C.) (see Adi & Sherwood 2003, for listings). Anna Julia Cooper was by then the author of *A Voice from the South* (1892), one of the first books to put together theoretically race and gender and perhaps one of the reasons she was invited to the 1900 Conference, held six years later. She was also an activist for black and women's rights but has disappeared from definitions of pan-Africanism (see Guy-Sheftall 2007 for additional discussion). It is clear from the orientation of Cooper's work towards race and gender that she could not also follow a masculinised pan-Africanism as

a singular discourse. At one of the subsequent DuBois organised pan-African congresses, Jessie Redmond Fauset serving as an National Association for the Advancement of Colored Peoples delegate provided a reflection titled “Impressions of the 2nd pan-African Congress” which is included in Bonnie Kime Scott’s *Gender in Modernism: New Geographies, Complex Intersections* (2007, 247-252). The fifth Pan-African Congress held in New York in 1927 is identified as being co-sponsored by the Women’s International League for Peace and Freedom.²

For these transnational black feminists the sense of a conjunction (the “and”) of seemingly disparate political positions (pan-Africanism and feminism) was signified as a co-identification rather than an alternative as indicated by the “or” between pan-Africanism and communism which would come later.³ Feminism does not of course appear explicitly in many of these formations even though there was an active movement at the time. In my reading though, the fullest manifestation of a conjunction appears via the political orientation of early activist women, i.e. those who were not operating from a separate black feminist movement then, (which would also come later) but an understanding of the simultaneity of political oppressions and therefore of political positions. For example, in discussing the Garvey movement, Honor Ford-Smith provides substantial evidence in her discussion of Cathryn McKenzie, an early Jamaican feminist, and women in the Garvey movement generally, indicating that “[H]istorically, all over the Third World there has been a close connection between the anti-colonial and feminist movements” (Ford-Smith 1991: 73).

The most recent manifestation of a conjuncture though i.e. the simultaneous historical occurrence between these two ideological positions, this time the result of the long work over historical time of these two political positions, occurs interestingly in 2005 via two instruments of international law ushered in by the African Union. Rhoda Reddock in her introduction to *Feminist Africa 7* (2007) draws attention to this linkage in her discussion of diaspora feminisms and the meaning of Africa, putting them in one frame of analysis. She finds it important that the African Protocol on women was passed in 2005 in the same time frame that the African diaspora was recognised officially (Reddock 2007: 1).

It is my contention here that there were always and have continued to be activist women who occupied that position and therefore provide consistent

connections between nationalist, feminist and earlier communist positions. The tendency has been, however, in succeeding years to disarticulate feminist frameworks of analysis as unrelated to pan-Africanist positions and thereby to minimise the work of pan-Africanists who were women. This therefore includes limiting analyses to sometimes very narrow local, culturalist ethnic-based contexts. I am deliberately using “culturalist” as opposed to “cultural” approaches to signify this deterministic tendency to reify culture and render it exclusive from other social formations (see McClendon 2003, for example).

In this regard, it is important also to reference a few women of Africa and the African Diaspora who consistently created those conjunctions or “lived the conjuncture” as Stuart Hall would describe the coming together of different movements in a particular historical moment (2007: 272-273). Mabel Dove Danquah attended the 2nd Pan African Congress. Her husband Joseph Boakye Danquah, himself a major pan-Africanist was one of the African students that Amy Ashwood Garvey nurtured in the West African Students Union in London. According to Tony Martin, upon his return home to Ghana, Joseph Danquah was instrumental in helping Ashwood trace her family lineage and Ashanti origins (Martin 2007). Mabel Dove Danquah is perhaps known only in limited African literary circles for her short stories, which poked fun at old traditional chiefs confused by their own excessive practices of polygamy and by their desire for new wives. In Ghanaian circles, she is known also as a pan-Africanist but deserves, in my view, to be studied separately as a pan-African feminist and located within the frameworks of transnational black feminist practice.

Beverly Guy-Sheftall (2003) also has interesting details about Adelaide Casely Hayford, who married the pan-Africanist J.E. Casely Hayford in 1903 and as a pan-Africanist herself, headed in Freetown the branch of the UNIA after her marriage to Casely Hayford disintegrated. She spent two years in the U.S. studying girls schools, became an associate of U.S. women like Nannie Burroughs, and would later herself develop her own school for girls. In 1927 she attended the fourth Pan-African congress in New York which had been organised by W. E. B. Du Bois. Guy-Sheftall (2003) reveals evidence that these women often worked collaboratively across continents, maintained international friendship and communication.

Left-identified women such as Communist Party U.S.A, theoretician and activist Claudia Jones is documented as attending the same meeting as Mrs. Funmilayo Ransome-Kuti, at the World Congress of Women in the USSR in

1963 (see Jones 1999: 110). And again in Japan in 1964 they both helped to pass a resolution against the proliferation and use of atomic and hydrogen weaponry (see Boyce Davies 2008). They were both affiliated with the Women's International Democratic Forum (WIDF) which has been identified as a leftist women's organisation. In that regard it is important also to place Ransome-Kuti in a much more class-conscious framework than how she has been recently identified mostly as Fela's transcendental mother in the (2008-2012) *On and Off-Broadway* play of the same name (see Odim and Mba 1997, Moore 1982 and Mba 1982).

A few other iconic diasporan figures who lived transnational black feminist lives also demonstrate the connection between these two political positions. In this way, what they offered concretely and theoretically may be revealed as will the intersections we identified at the outset. Amy Ashwood Garvey, the first wife of Marcus Garvey and co-founder of the UNIA who maintained a friendship with both C.L.R. James and George Padmore publicly claimed an identity as a feminist while she lived as an active pan-Africanist strategist, as explored by Rhoda Reddock in this issue. Martin (2007) reports that Amy Ashwood Garvey complied with Jones' request for an essay on Ghana for the premier issue of the *West Indian Gazette* and that "Jones particularly desired Amy's comments on federation and possible independence for the Caribbean and "how (if at all) Ghanaians view this new federation within the context of Nkrumah's plan for a Pan-African Federation" (p.272).

The conjunctions become more apparent when Claudia Jones talks about being influenced by the work done in response to Mussolini's invasion of Abyssinia as the impetus for her political activism. The analyses she cites as clarifying were coming at that time from James, Padmore, Amy Ashwood who were then members of the International Friends of Abyssinia. Claudia had obviously known Amy in New York as well before migrating to London and from all reports, the apartment complex on Edgecombe Road in Harlem in which Claudia lived was known for its pan-Africanist activity. Students like Azikiwe would visit, and even a young Nkrumah is identified as visiting the residence of a range of people from Claudia Jones and Lorraine Hansberry to W.E.B. Du Bois.⁴

Another important conjunction between pan-Africanism and feminism is revealed in the practice of Una Marson, known as a feminist activist and journalist who talked and wrote about Black women's experiences and

facilitated Caribbean Voices for the BBC which would launch the careers of many of the well-known Caribbean writers of today (Jarrett-Macauley 2010). She joined the Women's International League for Peace and other organisations. Confronting racism in England made Una Marson more aware of race equality issues around the world. More significant to this discussion is that she worked as secretary to the League of Coloured Peoples, the first Black-led political organisation in England and became secretary to Haile Selassie and travelled to the League of Nations with him in 1936 to plead for the liberation of Abyssinia. As perhaps the first major woman poet and playwright of the Caribbean she has gained a reputation as a literary pioneer who would focus her writing on the public representation of black women, especially questions of hair, ahead of the contemporary interest, in poems like "Kinky Hair Blues." Besides her work with Haile Selassie, additional pan-Africanist credentials include that she had pleaded the cause of Rastafarians before it became popular to do so. But she is also identified as working with anti-colonial struggles, and assisted Norman Manley in this regard.

Una Marson, like Claudia Jones and Funmilayo Ransome-Kuti, is identified as working transnationally with women's rights organisations like the International Alliance for Women, a global feminist organisation. Allison Donnell has an interesting take on Marson, suggesting that her women's rights positions pre-date her going to London (2003:125). Clear about the simultaneity of oppressions her awareness of pan-African movements ran parallel to her other interests and allowed her to see "the urgency of contesting racial hierarchies." (Donnell 2003: 117) One sees in this formation immediately a series of challenges to "all systems of domination," linked to the development of a full humanity in which political and economic power is shared. This formation, in some ways, recalls the early incarnation of the second wave of Black feminist politics in the U.S. (1980's as well) which had similarly begun an articulation of a feminism that accounted for class and race along with gender (also see the introductory essay in Hull, Scott and Smith 1982).

The limits of “culturalist” analyses of African women’s rights

Interestingly for both pan-Africanism and feminism, what dominated the discourse as we move towards the end of the 20th century was politics as cultural politics which tended to celebrate or delineate culture and not so much address political systems. This was a necessary move as culture provides one of the critical levers for empowering formerly colonised communities (see Fanon 1961).⁵ However, this approach to culture, devoid of analyses which link to other socio-political and historical systems, provides a culturalist orientation which obscures a variety of inter-related forms of oppression. It is here that I want to locate the evasion of class as a critical variable in the recent turns in the study of African gender systems.

The critique of Euro-feminism as an overarching position has already come from a variety of locations, all challenging the assumption that women experience oppression in the same way or have access to power in a unilinear way. European-American cultural formations often assume a certain universality as well as implicit colonial privilege, even within the feminist discourse that developed within this formation. Thus an African feminism was necessarily defined by African thinkers, like Filomina Steady from Sierra Leone. However, such early articulations were very nature/culture-oriented and essentialist even as they called for social transformation (see Steady 1981 and Boyce Davies & Graves 1986).

The definition of gender systems, for women in African and Caribbean contexts, began to take the place of feminist critical studies at the institutional level. This mode of approach linked gender and development studies institutionally, with units named as such, in places like the University of the West Indies. Centres for Gender and Development also became linked to various NGO processes which defended women’s rights, following various UN mandates into a development framework. In terms of scholarship, a series of conceptualisations of the position of women in an African context began also to engage development from a variety of angles. ‘Molara Ogundipe (1984) seemed acutely aware of this issue, even calling titularly for “Another development” as she located women within socio-economic realities. Using deliberately a Maoist “mountain” metaphor, she provided an assessment which illustrated a range of oppressions: colonialism, tradition, neo-colonial realities of underdevelopment and poverty, male power, and race which she divided along class and race lines. Ogundipe’s discussion then presented a line

of reasoning which was involved in a process of analysing African women's realities along a class/gender system basis but articulating how these realities become cultural practices.

A different body of scholarship though, more Afrocentric in nature, took up the critique often levied at feminism as a western import by situating itself within particular ethnic/cultural paradigms. Thus, Ifi Amadiume (1987) used her particular Igbo community to demonstrate that different gender/power dynamics operated which allowed women, if they accessed economic privilege, to have some of the rights which are assumed for men, thus recognising some women's economic activities as an essential basis of their power but also challenging Western gender systems as the most advanced model for emulation. In the subsequent *Re-Inventing Africa: Matriarchy, Religion and Culture*, Amadiume (1998) further clarified her intent to bring back under-represented African epistemologies. Amadiume (1987), which had a major impact on the field of African gender studies, provided the model of using very specific examples from particular ethnic groups to contest overarching definitions of Western unitary understandings of gender. Some Western feminists began to generalise from Amadiume's work to understand this as pertaining to the entire Igbo society and to larger African cultural understandings on issues like marriage and sexuality. Amadiume's later work clarified her position further and interestingly described herself as critiquing developmentalism to advocate a commitment to equity and gender democratisation. However, what she proposes is redemption through the "collectivist, humanist culture of traditional African matriarchal heritage" (Amadiume 2000: 302). Amadiume's work therefore seems to move in two directions: critiquing Western gender assumptions, while returning women to a traditional place in an African cultural heritage.

This allows us to put in context the approach of Oyeronke Oyewumi (1997) which would similarly develop an ethno-cultural argument using her particular ethnic group – Oyo-Yoruba as the basis for a larger critique. Oyewumi (1997) takes this cultural argument further by arguing that gender did not exist in her reading of Yoruba society, but is in fact a western imposition. There are four particular arguments, which appear in *The Invention of Women* (Oyewumi 1997) and repeat themselves in various ways so that the conclusions are unmistakably clear:

- 1) African Studies is Western-dominated and as such its categories are Western categories applied to African realities.

- 2) Western, colonial structures of dominance (knowledge, economics, cultural life, language categories and gender categories), modes of approaching intellectual life and applications to people inform the academy, with the result of a generation of African scholars that too easily applying Western assumptions about patriarchy to African societies.
- 3) Western feminist scholarship has assumed the universal subordination of women and that women are constituted as a group without differentiation; further it is these Western feminist scholars who have made assumptions about all cultures based on gender.
- 4) The major argument however to which the three prior ones lead is the boldly provocative assertion: That Yoruba culture is gender free and that any application of gender categories attaches to Yoruba society a system that did not exist until colonialism.

From my angle of reading these assertions, it seems that in the process Oweyumi (1997) constructed an undifferentiated and static Yoruba society or perhaps an essential Yoruba identity. A large part of her analysis relies on language to conclude that Yoruba is a gender-free, or genderless language (Oweyumi 1997: 175). The attempt to find a path outside of the dominant analytical categories is a laudable activity. Therein, in my view, resides much of the bold-facedness of this book following what was called in Ibadan, the *bolekaja* (come down and fight) approach to intellectual work.⁶ In this way Oyewumi finds a weakness in Western feminist work through which she is able to mount a contending argument: “Yoruba social categories were not based on anatomical differences” (1997: 176).

Still, the assumption that Yoruba culture did not have any existing gender systems is an analysis which defies basic logic regarding the nature of humankind, the ways that societies were stratified before and after colonialism. It also assumes an exceptionalism for Yoruba culture without the benefit of deep historical and social research into pre-colonial Yoruba systems of organisation. In this context Bibi Bakari Yusuf’s (2004) analysis of the contributions of this work provides an important revision of the culturalist assertions of the Oyewumi work. Bakare-Yusuf (2004) draws the conclusion that this extreme analytical approach often obliterates class/economic

intersections, noting the intersection between seniority and other power relationships, including those of gender.

The “woman question” according to Oyewumi is a Western question, and not a proper lens for viewing African society. Still, while one can assert that the “woman question” is in its inception Western, it is important to clarify that this naming was generated out of the socialist politics of Clara Zetkin (1934) who debated this position with Lenin in order to put the issue of women on the table in a context when it was not being addressed in basic class analyses (also see Boyce Davies 2007). The “woman question” then comes out of an earlier critique of the erasure of the contributions and participations of women as thinking and acting subjects in a variety of systems. By reverting to this kind of ethnic- specific analysis, Oyewunmi offers a simultaneous inscription of nativism. African gender systems then become loaded with an avoidance of the earlier socio-political and class intent of African feminist articulations that “lived the conjunction” as described at the start of this paper.

The idea of “recovering local epistemologies” is however a compelling one, and in that context the discussion of the role of *iyalode* may provide a kind of model for advancing an available construct transferrable in terms of women’s leadership to someone like Funmilayo Ransome-Kuti. As described above, Ransome-Kuti was a feminist activist in her own right, with international connections to left-oriented women’s groups. She absolutely applied a gender/class praxis in her approach to advancing women’s rights in Nigeria. Oyewumi’s work unfortunately dissolves some of the issue of poor working class women and men into undifferentiated Yoruba people. A class-free position is adopted even as class escapes as an analytical category and is never a frame of this analysis. This is an area begging for further research and which of course will have to use a gender/class analytical approach.

Class/gender systems in feminist analysis

The conjunction between left-thinking and feminism has for the most part been neglected in recent work on African women, and is perhaps the missing aspect in the culturalist feminism being critiqued here. The exploration of class/gender systems as these pertain to African societies clearly needs more attention. A survey of the journal *Feminist Africa* for the last ten years is illustrative. Several issues have been devoted to culture (Issues 2, 5, 6, 16, 17), a few on intellectual politics and the role of the universities (Issues 1, 8, 9)

and on various modes of activism (Issues 4,5, 8, 11, 18), and one dealt with the diaspora (Issue 7). However, the special issue on “Land and Labour and Gendered Livelihoods” (Issue 12) is exemplary in that it pursues the discussion about women’s work in the various modes of production.⁷

Since there is good social science research by African women scholars that addresses the intricacies of class and gender dynamics, particularly as these engage women’s contemporary realities (see Ampofo 2007 for example), it may be that the recent academic popularity of cultural studies has overshadowed the political economy work in which some of these class/gender related questions are inevitably raised. Thus, it may be useful to pose an ongoing research question, regardless of the coming and going of popular discursive fields: what are the class/gender relationships in African societies that position poor women at a disadvantage in contemporary economic systems?

In earlier left studies, the critique levelled by feminist historians like Joan Scott in the face of class-only analyses was that gender was also “a primary way of signifying relationships of power...a primary field by which power is articulated” (1986: 1069) because “within Marxism, the concept of gender has long been treated as the by-product of changing economic structures; gender has no independent analytic status of its own” (Scott 1986: 1061). Wynter’s critique of what transpired was that “in the wake of the sixties, women activists had ceased the earlier “echoing” of Marxist thought and had redefined the Woman Question into an issue that was specific to their own concerns, rather than being, as before a subset of what might be called the Labour Issue” (2003: 312). For her though, it was always the “multiple movements related to these questions that had most forcibly erupted in concrete political and social struggles all over the globe...” (Wynter 2003: 312). Marxist-Feminists in the pre-1960’s period addressed these multiple movements. Yet much earlier during the 1940’s and 1950’s intellectual/activist women like Claudia Jones were already addressing the socio-economic status of working class black women (see Boyce Davies 2007). There is no longer a static sense of gender in scholarship, as black feminist scholarship sought to address power intersectionally for some time. The way that gender and class intersect in an African context continues to be an on-going critical lever of analysis.

By these means we can get to the concrete realities of those who live and operate in a heavily gendered, classed and racialised world which determines

everything from what wages African women will get, whether they will eat, or whether their oil will be exploited and expropriated by a combination of corrupt officials at the local and international level. The women who overtook the Chevron and Exxon companies in Nigeria are testament to this (see Ekine's 2008 feature in FA10).⁸ That they were women who carried out this action is significant. While the gains of this activism can be defined as minor in the scheme of things, women are able to get minor concessions such as microcredit for investments and the promises of educating and hiring their children. Class/gender activism in contemporary social and economic realities then still has relevance, even when using some older gendered strategies like the use of the disrobed female body during the Aba Women's Riots of 1926 which returned, for example in Liberian women's peace activism and other examples.

The strength of analyses that link gender to class and race is becoming again a prominent mode of inquiry. Dayo F. Gore (2011) reveals how a generation of activist women, internationally informed, provided the connecting link for class/gender analyses of feminism that originate the race, class and gender framework that activists like Claudia Jones popularised. Repeated concerns were with the super-exploitation of women, especially as this pertains to the black woman's location in society; the effects of war on women's lives and the need to organise generally across a variety of fields; but also to create women's peace organisations and to develop the international connections between women. And the fact that women make up half the world remains as relevant now as it did then (see the essays in Boyce Davies 2011).

Transnational black feminism or pan-Africanist feminism

Today, what is called transnational black feminism brings together the logic of the intersection between pan-Africanism and feminism. According to Julia Sudbury (2005: xviii):

...transnational feminist work functions as part of a wider anti-imperialist, anticapitalist endeavour...Transnational feminist practices parallel antiracist feminists in theorising the intersections of gender with race, class and sexuality... this approach focuses on the linkages that emerge out of transnational networks of economic and social relations."

Jacqui Alexander (2005) offers one of the most detailed articulations of some of the discursive positions that transnational black feminism occupies. Her conclusion is that:

As we recognise that the nation-state matters more to some than to others, we also need to recognise that the borders of the nation-state cannot be positioned as hermetically sealed or epistemically partial. Our knowledge-making projects must therefore move across state-constructed borders to develop frameworks that are simultaneously intersubjective, comparative and relational, yet historically specific and grounded. And because fragmentation is both material and metaphysical, and both epistemic and ontological, these frameworks would need to be attentive to the underbelly of superiority and the psychic economies of its entrails as part of an explicitly political project" (Alexander 2005: 253-4).

A growing body of scholarship, produced by black women and women of colour themselves is systematically addressing the specificities of women's lives in myriad locations, identifying what the particularities of gender, sex, sexuality, race, class and so on mean when looked at with different lenses, or at least when removed from the fixed location of 'under western eyes.' More recently Chandra Mohanty (2003: 2-3) provides an influential discussion of decolonisation, its application to feminist movements, and a contemporary justification for transnational feminist politics, noting new challenges: "while feminist ideas and movements may have grown and matured, the backlash and challenges to feminism have also grown exponentially."

Examining the literature on transnational black feminism, (Boyce-Davies 2008, 2010), I assert that in many ways Claudia Jones's work pre-dates what we define today as transnational black feminism or anti-imperialist black feminism. I concluded that transnational black feminist work recognises that our current geographical locations are products of multiple historical processes, many of which we had no control over, which have produced us as subjects in various 'nation-states' of the world, having to interact with other similarly or differently produced individuals. These displacements are the end product of some very hateful processes: wars of domination, colonialisms, enslavements, holocausts, encampments, dispossession and genocide, modernism, colonialism, and their various enterprises. Claudia Jones had clearly already gestured to this interconnection as early as the 1940s, when she called for internationalising women's peace work, by which she meant building coalitions that work on enhancing people's lives outside of perpetually masculinist war frameworks. The Claudia Jones model reveals a labour-intensive set of activities which link activist work with intellectual work.

Minimally then, analysis that brings feminism and anti-imperialism together engages meta discourses from a variety of locations. Transnational feminism arises from two basic assumptions: that working across borders and cultures is an essential feature of our contemporary world, and that our own specific locations and identities must be part of the bases of our analyses. With this in mind then, any contemporary cultural and political work which wants to move out of fixity and specific imperialistic interpellations has to account for its particular location, articulate its own specificity, and move towards the recognition of the existence of other cultures and political realities in some trans-locational way.

Perhaps the most critical recognition, in doing transnational feminist work is that understanding that the nation states in which we live as subjects have themselves been produced out of specific political imperatives and histories and therefore seek to contain, arbitrarily, a variety of peoples subject to the vagaries of these same nation state enterprises. If those nation-states attain dominance as has happened in the case of the United States, then, unwittingly, even those identities subordinated domestically in those states are implicated in that dominance. The series of persons displaced via global economic processes, who must constantly reconcile themselves to existing emotionally and physically in different spaces, may enter what is popularly referred to now as “diaspora”, a space which resists centring even as it identifies longing, homelands and a myth of origin. Still, there are those who remain outside diaspora, as well as those who live in intersecting or overlapping diasporas.

Since progressive feminist thinking in the context of globalisation, cannot help but be transnational, and a transnational version of black feminism influenced by pan-Africanism has been identified, a more fully relational scholarship and activism allows us to find models which already existed in prior activist/intellectual work. For those of us working in this phase of capitalist globalisation, and in the presence of a phenomenal rise in the distinctions between those with and without access to power and resources, a refined critique of imperialism in its many forms has to be redesigned. It is important nevertheless to note that earlier black communist women also practiced a form of transnational black feminism. Thus one can see some continuities with the internationally-orientated communist/feminist work, which afforded them the ability to assert resisting positions, at the intersection of a variety of positionalities – anti-imperialism and decolonisation struggles,

activism for workers' rights, the critique of appropriation of black women's labour, the challenge to domestic and international racisms, and their links to colonialism. This gave them the ability to articulate transnational black feminism in ways which preceded the contemporary. This ongoing work has significant implications for contemporary articulations of transnational African pan-Africanist/feminist politics.

Endnotes

1. I offered a graduate class on this subject, through Cornell's Africana Studies Centre to begin a process of studying this intersection formally. Conversations with Rhoda Reddock have been one aspect of pursuing this issue from different angles. Rhoda Reddock presented a paper "The First Mrs. Garvey and Others: Pan-Africanism and Feminism in the Early 20th Century British Colonial Caribbean" at the Caribbean Studies Association conference in San Andres. Versions of this paper were also presented at the same CSA, at the University of Legon in Ghana in April, 2010, and at the *Callaloo* conference in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia: "Black Movements: Poetics and Praxis."
2. See "The Pan-African Congresses, 1900-1945" on blackpast.org which includes a photograph from the 1921 Brussels Conference which shows two women on the stage.
3. By the time of one of the major theorists of pan-Africanism, George Padmore, there would be a need to create alternatives, between two political schools of thought as is indicated with his "or" between pan-Africanism and communism.
4. See Reddock's feature in *Feminist Africa* 19 for a detailed discussion of Amy Ashwood Garvey's role in the pan-African movement.
5. Fanon (1961) has one of the most well-known articulations of the importance of national culture, though he was speaking generally and not accounting for women as a separate group, more reflective of the earliest forms of black nationalist politics. The critique of Fanon on his treatment of gender is well known.
6. Oyewumi who was an undergraduate at the University of Ibadan during the late 1970's when I was there in graduate school, would have been oriented in this approach which saw scholarly ideas as contending positions. The *bokelaja* approach which she uses was quite popular then and advanced by some of the intellectuals like Abiodun Jeyifo who was a young professor then.
7. *Feminist Africa* 12(2009) has a wonderful range of essays on various locations from Ghana to Kenya, looking at issues like the gendered politics of farm household production.
8. "Nigerian Women Force Oil Company to Take Corporate Responsibility" [<http://gbgm-umc.org/umw/legislative/oilcompanies.html>] accessed 12 August 2014.

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