An analysis of Twitter's role between 2012 and 2018 in contributing to the new way Black Millennials of African Ancestry produce 21st Century Pan-African Knowledge and Social Activity

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Compulsory Declaration

This work has not been previously submitted in whole, or in part, for the award of any degree. It is my own work. Each significant contribution to, and quotation in, this dissertation from the work, or works, of other people has been attributed, and has been cited and referenced.

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Acronyms

AAPF - African American Policy Forum

ANC - African National Congress

BLM - Black Lives Matter

FMF - Fees Must Fall

GMF - Gandhi Must Fall

ICT - Information and Communications Technology

LGBTQI - Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer or Questioning, and Intersex

NAACP - National Association for the Advancement of Colored People

NEPAD – New Partnership for Africa's Development

PAILGA - Pan Africa International Lesbian Gay Bisexual Trans and Intersex Alliance

PAU - Pan-African University

PAC – Pan-African Congress

PASMA - Pan African Student Movement of Azania

POC - Person/People of Color

QWOC - Queer Women of Color

RMF - Rhodes Must Fall

RU - Rhodes University

SHN - Say Her Name

SNCC - Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee

TWoC - Trans Woman of Color

UCT - University of Cape Town

WOC - Women of Color

Abstract

Social media has provided new opportunities for Black millennials[1] (individuals born between 1981–1996) of the diaspora and Africa to communicate, learn, build social and political movements, and curate joint identities. As a result of this group's active use of social media over the last decade, Black millennials of African ancestry — referred to collectively in this thesis as 'Africans' — have become primary research subjects in the study of social media patterns. This research reveals a contemporary tendency for these Africans to engage in Pan-African social and political activities online. Twitter, in particular, has emerged as one of the most useful tools for centralizing Pan-African ideas and activities. The inclusion of Twitter in Pan-African discourses is a new phenomenon that has only narrowly been explored by scholars that analyzed the impact of Twitter on the global African community (Black Africans and Black People of African Ancestry). These works, however, have neglected to illustrate the ways in which Twitter, and most notably 'Black Twitter'[2], has aided in developing a new 21st century definition of Pan-African activity and knowledge. The research explores the way millennials of African ancestry — particularly American-born Africans who have the greatest access to internet channels amongst African millennials (Nielsen 2018) — used Twitter's technological and communicative tools between 2012 and 2018 to build and promote a more inclusive and wide-reaching Pan-African movement that encouraged new ideologies, including new social activity, political

[1] Millennials - The term first used in preparation for those born in the early 1980s and the projection of them as youth by 2000. Millennials are identified as individuals born between 1981–1996 (Howe and Strauss 2000).

[2] A global Twitter social network that focuses on issues of interest to the Black American community. A similar Black Twitter community developed in other African countries in the early 2010s. (See Serino 2013.)

movements, and intersectional leadership that were not previously exhibited in mainstream 20th-century Pan-African movements.

Chapter 1

Introduction

1.1 Background to the Study

Pan-Africanism, as defined by Pan-African scholars Hakim Adi and Marika Sherwood (2003:vii) as "the belief in some form of unity or of common purpose among the peoples of Africa and the African diaspora", first gained prominence in the late 19th century as a result of the literature produced by African intellectual diasporic philosophers Martin Delany, and later Alexander Crummel and Edward Blyden (Logan 1965:90). Pan-Africanism initially developed as a set of intellectual ideologies that were concerned with identifying and promoting global Africans' common goals and interests in relation to their shared cultural, economic, and political experiences (Odamtten 2013:172). At the core of Pan-African ideologies was the concern for uplifting and unifying all people of African descent, and the adoption of Blackness as a unifying factor. Throughout the 20th century, Pan-African ideology was used as the benchmark for many Pan-African intellectual, cultural, and political movements, including Kwame Ture's All-African People's Revolutionary Party, Aimé Césaire's Negritude movement, and Robert Sobukwe's Pan-Africanist Congress (PAC) (Adi and Sherwood 2003: vii).

Early in the development of Pan-Africanism, the movement extended beyond its largely intellectual and cultural origins to embrace a political and results-driven subset of the movement – political Pan-Africanism. According to Professor Harry Odamtten, Political Pan-Africanism is concerned with "political activism and nationalism in the form of civil protest marches,

demonstrations, legislative challenges, and political agitation and organizing, which aims at challenging and changing the racial status and socioeconomic conditions of Black people globally" (Odamtten 2013:172). Political Pan-Africanism did not rely solely on Pan-Africanism's original intellectual leadership structure and agenda. Instead, it used these ideologies to empower collective change through grassroots campaigns designed to address African people's systematic marginalization. The breakdown of political Pan-African organizations towards the end of the 20th century subsequently led Pan-Africanism as a whole to lose its mainstream prominence leading into the 21st century. The breakdown in political Pan-African movements was so devastating that, even today, scholars debate the relevance of Pan-Africanism, and attempt to determine if it still exists in its natural form (New Vision 2012).

Over recent years, research on political Pan-Africanism in the 21st century has consisted of analyzing its contemporary relevance on a philosophical and ideological level according to the scholarly methodological conventions of the past. Whereas much of the previous research on the subject focused primarily on political Pan-Africanism's traditional methods of academic knowledge production and grassroots activities, the research produced in this thesis will centralize Twitter and the way Africans have employed the social media website to shift the landscape of political Pan-Africanism. The contemporary accounts of political Pan-Africanism today are what inspired this research. Instead of analyzing political Pan-Africanism through a philosophical and ideological lens, this thesis analyzed the contemporary knowledge making trends of political Pan-Africanism through surveying Twitter activity. The parallels between political Pan-African activity of the 20th century and 21st century are highlighted throughout this thesis. Twitter is introduced as a new variable that created an advanced way for members of the

global African community to share political news, organize demonstrations, and develop ideas that would further African peoples' political power. The evidence presented in this thesis will conclude that Twitter, as a 21st century communication channel, has altered the state of Pan-African political activity and the knowledge authorities and ideological leaders who oversee and create this content.

I chose to focus on millennials (people born between 1981 and 1996) in this thesis because many of social media's most popular platforms were created by millennial age people and have been largely used by millennial age consumers. In fact, 88% of people between 18 and 29-year-olds claim to use some form of social media and 78% of people between the age of 30 and 49-years-old also claim to use it (Smith and Anderson 2018). These sites include Facebook, founded in 2004 by now 34-year-old Mark Zuckerberg, and Instagram, the brainchild of now 34-year-old Kevin Systrom founded in 2010. Twitter, although not founded by a millennial age person (Twitter was launched in 2006 by Jack Dorsey, 41, Biz Stone, 44, Evan Williams, 46), has experienced significant engagement from millennial age people (Carlson 2011). As of 2018, close to half (45%) of millennials were predicted to be Twitter users, a number that has fallen since the social media network hit its peak in 2012 (Smith and Anderson 2018).

Amongst all of the popular social media platforms, Twitter stands out as one of the most prominent news sources and spaces for social, political, and economic commentary. Twitter's popularity among millennials and its focus on social and political commentary made it the prime choice for studying political Pan-Africanism's new 21st century activity and activists. Furthermore, as a result of Twitter's popularity among millennials, the political Pan-African movements that have gained the most prominence on the platform were led by millennial age

political Pan-African activists. This rise in prominent young political Pan-Africanists and their relationship with Twitter is further examined later in this thesis.

African social media users from around the world have notably flocked to these platforms to communicate about social and political issues (Clark 2014). Within these conversations, they have utilized the ideologies and philosophies of 20th century Pan-Africanism. Through humor and serious dialogue, Africans on Twitter have developed a powerful community that reporters and scholars have donned "Black Twitter". Black Twitter, and its most prominent members and discussion topics, will be at the center of the discourse surrounding how and why Africans use Twitter to promote political Pan-African activity.

1.2 Aims and Objectives of the Study

This thesis seeks to uncover how millennials of African ancestry used Twitter's technological and communicative tools between 2012 and 2018 to promote a more inclusive and wide-reaching political Pan-African movement that encouraged new intersectional leadership and new ideologies that were not previously identified in 20th-century political Pan-African movements. It hopes to do this through addressing the following:

(1) Provide an analysis of early political Pan-African history and its transition through the 21st century. These historical accounts will attempt to uncover some of the possible reasons why 21st-century political Pan-Africanists may feel compelled to keep political Pan-Africanism alive, even at the expense of seemingly shedding many traditional political Pan-African methods of activism, knowledge production, and ideological beliefs. A brief explanation about what caused the fragmentation of African people around the world, the relationships and feelings this

separation caused, and the false information that derived as a result, will further highlight the ostensible need for Twitter to connect African people from around the world.

(2) Provide information about 20th century political Pan-African grassroots activism, its top leaders' ideas about African unity, the rules of knowledge production, and the movement's most notable figures. This information will provide a benchmark to analyze the growth and major shifts in 21st century Pan-Africanism that were accelerated by Twitter and other notable advancements in technology and social activity. Expressing the importance of these functions of political Pan-Africanism, both in its early years of development and in its contemporary Twitter context, tracks the direct ways Twitter has contributed to the 21st-century's shifting vision of Pan-Africanism.

(3) Display the ways in which African people, particularly American-born African people, utilized Twitter as a platform to promote intersectional activism and leadership within a new cycle of political Pan-Africanism that no longer predominantly centered the ideas and methods of educated African male scholars and activists (Davies 2014), but now prominently prioritizes the voices of African women and LGBTQI people.

(4) Show how Twitter encouraged (in the trends studied within the limits and scope of this mini-thesis) new methods of social activism and organizing among African people living on the continent and in the diaspora. Additional research conducted by experts of social media concepts like 'Black Twitter' and 'Twitter activism' is cited to provide insight into why Twitter emerged as one of the primary communicative mediums for 21st-century political Pan-Africanism and intersectional leadership, and how the site's technological and communicative functions align with Pan-Africanism's new goals and ideology.

Through these aims and objectives, the thesis will seek to highlight a more detailed picture of just how significant the presence of Twitter was in reenergizing new political Pan-African movements that are meant to accomplish many of the same goals it was originally created to address in the late 19th century. In doing this, the research presented will show how social media positively contributed to political Pan-Africanism's shift in becoming more inclusive and accessible to a larger group of people, beyond the traditional educated Black men who had once dictated its ideology and texts. The information provided about the popularity of new political Pan-African figures made up of Black women and LGBTQI people, as well as lower-income communities, will explain how Twitter's unsanctioned and loosely monitored platform has allowed for these groups to rise to prominence within political Pan-African dialogue. Moreover, their contribution to political Pan-Africanism via Twitter will be documented and used as an example of the new 21st century developments outside of traditional scholarship and male-dominated ideologies, grassroots projects, and other functions of 20th century political Pan-Africanism.

The research provided in this paper will analyze how Twitter's global reach, accessibility, limited censorship, and instant sharing ability have enabled the social media website to become one of the most productive tools of the 21st century in the global efforts to restore political Pan-African activity and promote a larger appreciation of the movement amongst a new generation of African people. These organizations and people use Twitter to further political Pan-African discourse and connect African people from around the world by creating and sharing information about popular political Pan-African driven 21st century movements such as #RhodesMustFall

(RMF)[3], #BlackLivesMatter (BLM)[4], and #SayHerName (SHN)[5]. By analyzing research collected concerning the popularity of Twitter movements started by marginalized groups, including African women and African LGBTQI people, I hope to show a connection between the growth of these groups within political Pan-Africanism movements, and the technological and communicative elements of Twitter that enabled it to happen. In addition to illustrating Twitter's assistance with introducing new political Pan-African intersectional leaders, I seek to display how these leaders have leveraged Twitter to initiate new intersectional political Pan-African activity. I collected research to demonstrate how these new leaders used Twitter to connect with other leaders, organize local protests, share historical data, and produce new political Pan-African ideologies.

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[3] #RhodesMustFall - A student led social movement and Twitter hashtag created in 2015 in South Africa to petition administrators to remove a statue of colonialist Cecil John Rhodes from the university's campus. According to students, Rhodes statue was a symbol of colonialism that disrupted a safe learning environment. The protest went on for several months and resulted in students' forcibly removing the statue themselves after a number of clashes with police and school administrators. Throughout their journey to remove the statue students heavily utilized Twitter as a way to share their feelings about the statue, organize campus events, and provide updates about their progress (Francis and Hardman 2018).

[4] #BlackLivesMatter - A social and political activist organization and movement that emerged in 2013 following the acquittal of white neighborhood watch participant George Zimmerman in the murder of unarmed Black teenager, Trayvon Martin. It was created to address the frequent violence black people endure at the hands of police officers and white Americans. The term 'Black Lives Matter' was first popularized by the organization's three Black female founders Alicia Garza, Patrisse Cullors, Opal Tometi on Twitter, and quickly became a rallying call at international protests that seek to highlight the injustice Black people face around the world. The official organization has branches in different cities around the U.S. and participates in various grassroots organizing (BLM Website).

[5] #SayHerName - A social movement and Twitter hashtag created by African American Policy Forum (AAPF) in 2015 following 28-year-old Sandra Bland's fatal interaction with police. SHN was created to shift the conversation about police violence against Black people from a predominantly male narrative to one that shines a spotlight on the Black women affected by police violence. The movement has called for media reporters and activists to integrate Black women's struggles into the larger public conversation about police violence against Black people and has been used to advocate for other Black female victims of police violence (AAPF Website).

Chapter 2

Literature Review

There is a significant amount of literature written about Pan-Africanism in the late 19th and 20th centuries. These texts were authored by participants of Pan-African social, economic, or political movements and academic scholars. During the 20th century, at the peak of Pan-Africanism's popularity, African people from around the world contributed written articles and books, held conferences, conducted lectures, and facilitated rallies and protests all centralized around the promotion and development of Pan-African ideologies. As will be discussed in the following passages, the knowledge creation and distribution process were primarily dominated by African male scholars that were educated in Western institutions (Davies 1994). This reality contextualizes the common language, speech, and themes found in 19th and 20th-century Pan-African literature that tended to prioritize the male agenda while suppressing the voices of underrepresented groups like women, children, and low-income people (Davies 1994). Furthermore, details about this period dominated by Black male political Pan-African leadership, provide a benchmark for which to compare the conditions of Pan-Africanism's new 21st-century intersectional leadership that gained social capital, authority, and recognition through Twitter.

Contemporary accounts of political Pan-Africanism in the 21st century are less thoroughly and widely documented than the previous time period. Academic scholars and journalists have produced media articles and contributed essays documenting political Pan-Africanism over the last eighteen years, however, there is not much written about top leaders of

the movement nor the new ideologies they've championed. In fact, much of the writings produced about political Pan-Africanism in the 21st century questions whether or not political Pan-Africanism is still relevant today (New Vision 2012). At the center of these contemporary dialogues about political Pan-Africanism, is pop culture and technology, and the way that millennials have leveraged this new culture, that includes the instant sharing of new ideas, music, art, and literature on social media. For example, South African students' use of Twitter during its two most recent student-led protests, #RhodesMustFall and #FeesMustFall, inspired several scholarly articles (Francis and Hardman 2018) that focused on the new ways African students engage in political Pan-African activism. Accounts from these student-led movements and additional commentary on contemporary political Pan-African movements like BLM, shines a light on a phenomenon of marginalized groups, telling their own stories directly to the masses rather than through media outlets or traditional Pan-African leadership (Bosch 2016).

2.1 The History That Inspired Pan-Africanism

Before it is possible to understand the development of Pan-Africanism, it is important to acknowledge first, what led to the physical separation of African people and how this disbursement encouraged the subsequent complex and fractured relationship that extended across vast geographic boundaries and centuries. There is a wealth of knowledge on this subject that has been extensively documented by academic scholars according to the accounts of third party and primary subjects that have a relationship with or advanced knowledge of this period. One such scholar is John Fobanjong. According to Fobanjong's essay "Articulating Cabral's Regionalist and Pan-Africanist Visions" (2006), beginning in the fifteenth century, during Europe's initial

conquest of Africa, Africans were captured, forcibly uprooted from their communities and introduced as slaves into the Caribbean, South America, Europe, and North America. Following this violent pillage, a naturalization process took shape throughout the next 500 years that sought to groom African people in these new lands according to European culture and identity. Africans were forced to abandon their languages, names, music, and religious practices and adopt European standards of living. Fobanjong's work revealed that this process was meant to make Africans "see themselves not as people whose roots were in Africa, but as people whose identity is defined and conferred by Europe" (Fobanjong 2006:114). The separation of African people from their African identity and rich history was used as a controlling method that would quell any notion of collective resistance or struggle. It was also used to solidify the European concept that Africans were an inferior group that were destined for captivity, and therefore unable to escape this fate (Adeleke 1998).

Enslaved African people held captive in these new lands were victims of the growing concept of Eurocentrism, an idea which places European values, history, and heritage above all others. In Tunde Adeleke's essay "Black Americans and Africa: A Critique of the Pan-African and Identity Paradigms," (1998:505) the author defines Eurocentrism as "an ideology designed to create a world order of white supremacy, sustained by the pains, miseries, and subordination of blacks, and Pan-Africanism is proposed as the tool for dealing with this threat. Perhaps the most distinguishing characteristic of Eurocentrism is the glamorization of its own historical heritage and experiences, and its negation of historicity of blacks, inducing in many blacks the loss of a sense of history, cultural heritage, and identity, rendering them vulnerable to Euro-American cultural manipulation and domination." As noted by Adeleke, the rise of European

presence and culture in Africa directly correlated with African's loss of identity, as well as physical freedom. African culture was held in direct contrast to European values, and according to European colonialists of the time, could not coexist without causing deep conflict (Adeleke 1998).

According to Adeleke, the separation of African people from their African identity and history was used to solidify the European concept that Africans were an inferior group that were destined for captivity, and therefore unable to escape their fate (Adeleke 1998). Science, religion, academic scholarship, and political policies were produced to complement the ostensible superiority of Eurocentric values and designed to demean and suppress traditional African values. On the continent and in the diaspora, Christian teachings directly attacked traditional and spiritual African beliefs and justified the subordinate conditions of African people. Enslaved and colonized Africans were pressured into adopting Christianity as the supreme religion (Manala 2013). Scientific studies produced at the time also reaffirmed the false narrative that African people were intellectually, physically, and emotionally inferior to European people. The introduction of anthropology further established these scholarly accounts of Africans' biological and mental shortcomings. Towards the latter part of colonization, the introduction of political regimes like apartheid followed a long-standing pattern of European powers instituting policies that favored European-minority interests in African nations. As revealed by psychiatrists Dr. Joy DeGruy (2005), author of *Post Traumatic Slave Syndrome*, policies like apartheid formalized the inferiority of African people and made it illegal for African people to engage in activities that could possibly defy Eurocentric superiority. Centuries of these false practices and teachings left a

significant impression on both African people and Europeans that continued to support a social, economic, and political disparity amongst the groups (DeGruy 2005).

The United States, in particular, took an aggressive approach to delegitimize the history, culture, and identify of African peoples. Research from Professor F. Nwabueze Okoye (1980:5) revealed that the United States' long-standing practice of chattel slavery was a form of "absolute slavery", which solidified slavery in the U.S. as an unwavering part of Africans' past, present, and future. Slavery was introduced as an experience that was exclusive to African people and justified this by producing Eurocentric history and scientific reports that confirmed the biological inferiority of African peoples (Mendenhall 2013). As enslaved African people were restricted from reading or writing in the U.S., slaveholders used physical, mental, and emotional tactics to enforce Eurocentric identities. African people were forced to adopt their slaveholder's last names and were provided a new European first name, physically beaten for using their native tongue, and taught historical narratives that disputed what they had previously associated with their homeland (Morgan 1997). Enslaved people's distance from Africa and centuries spent in the U.S. made it difficult for them to maintain their native traditions. Without access to the continent and its traditions, enslaved African people in America curated their own joint identity that combined traditional African culture, Eurocentric beliefs, and a long history of Southern plantation life.

Africans who remained on the continent did not fare much better than their diaspora-raised counterparts. European occupation of African territories remained strong on the continent, even following the 1807 abolition of the Transatlantic Slave Trade. Although the end of the Transatlantic Slave Trade signified a formal legal sanctioning against capturing African people and forcing them to perform slave labor, it did not stop European people from destructively

colonizing African territories and enforcing external policies and restrictions. Up until The Berlin Conference of 1884-85,[6] European occupation in Africa had been relatively unrestricted and informal. The negotiations that took place at the conference, which was attended by 14 Western nations, set the rules and territorial boundaries for Europe's official imperial conquest of Africa (Griffiths:204). Over the following decades, European colonies were permitted, under the conditions established at the conference, to externally govern the African nations they laid claim to and treat the Africans who inhabited these lands as their citizens and laborers. Africans were subsequently stripped of their previously held rights, land, trade methods, culture, and traditions in exchange for a Eurocentric lifestyle and economic system that almost exclusively benefited European nations. The conflicts that evolved from this petitioning of borders not only aggravated relations between Europeans and Africans but between diverse African groups who were now forced to live amongst one another and were often pitted against one another (Griffiths:209).

Eurocentrism was similarly introduced to Africans living on the continent in the form of Christian missionaries. Manala's research (2013) on Christianity displayed how Christian preachings directly conflicted with the traditional practices and traditions of African spirituality. In order to avoid what missionaries described as a disastrous or unfavorable fate, African people were encouraged to follow Christianity and abandon their own religious and spiritual beliefs. Once more, the monopolization of Africa's natural resources empowered European colonizers to force African people to financially depend on them (Inikori and Engerman 1992). In particular, the Transatlantic Slave Trade heavily utilized Africans to capture members of rival African

[6] The Berlin Conference of 1884-85 was organized by representatives of 14 European countries to formally divide Africa into territories and solidify which European country had the right to govern specific African territories. The territorial boundaries that were established during this conference have largely remained the same over the last century.

communities. The financial incentive produced from these negotiations overwhelmingly benefited slaveholders and other European colonialists who, despite maintaining little physical presence on the continent, were able to control African people through economic means, mental and emotional mistreatment, and the same false claims of inferiority that were utilized to enforce the practice of slavery in America (DeGruy 2005).

Following the formal abolition of chattel slavery in the U.S. at the end of the 19th century, education was introduced to newly liberated Africans during a period referred to as Reconstruction. An education reform strategy was instituted throughout the diaspora as a way to integrate formerly enslaved people into Western society. In Carter G. Woodson's book, *The Mis-Education of the Negro* (1933:4), the author, and noted Pan-Africanist conducted research and shared heavy criticism about the education system that was developed ostensibly for the betterment of African people. Woodson claimed that "the so-called modern education, with all its defects, however, does others so much more good than it does the Negro, because it has been worked out in conformity to the needs of those who have enslaved and oppressed weaker peoples."

In the Southern half of the country, where the bulk of formerly enslaved people lived, Northern abolitionists built new schools and churches to help African people integrate into American society. In the South, special schools were established to educate Black people, who prior to the end of slavery, were not granted access to formal or informal education. The most prevalent educational curriculums were concerned with teaching formally enslaved people labor skills that they could utilize to find jobs in farming and mechanical trades (Woodson 1933). According to Woodson, the educational patterns that developed during this period of education

“justified slavery, peonage, segregation, and lynching. The oppressor has the right to exploit, to handicap, and to kill the oppressed. Negroes daily educated in the tenets of such a religion of the strong have accepted the status of the weak as divinely ordained” (Woodson 1933:4).

For those institutions that did provide liberal arts education to formerly enslaved people, they did so with a curriculum that was created to serve and reflect the experiences of European life. Educators like W.E.B. Du Bois championed this method of scholarship over that of trade education, while African leaders like Booker T. Washington disputed the need for liberal arts education and advocated for a technical and labor based academic curriculum (Adi and Sherwood 2003). Yet, despite the apparently well-intentioned reconstruction process, African educational standards were not proficient enough to successfully integrate former enslaved African people into the fabric of American life. The curriculum did not include information about their history in Africa, and until the early 20th century when Carter G. Woodson introduced the study of African Americans as an academic discipline, the only chronicling of African history was done through white educators. This cycle of what Woodson calls “miseducating” African people manifested in several different forms throughout the next two centuries and is one of the major factors that sparked cultural and intellectual Pan-African theory. Africans’ access to proper education still remained significantly less than their white counterparts during this time, which resulted in many of them receiving inferior educations, lower paying jobs, and no chance to lift themselves up from the inferior positions that they were subjected to at birth.

During this same period of educational evolution among Africans living in America and other sections of the diaspora, Africans living on the continent were introduced to formal education through the instruction of European teachers and textbooks. Biblical teachings and

western interpretations of history, language, and science dominated this new school system (Gallego 2010). The new educational institutions that were introduced to the continent in the late 19th century did not largely deviate from the academic institutions that were introduced in earlier decades. In fact, the scramble for Africa[7] and the extreme prominence of colonization by England, Spain, and France, created communities of African people whose first and primary language was the one introduced to them by the foreigners who'd colonized their land and externally governed it through Western formal policy and educational instruction. Like in America and other sections of the diaspora, this pattern in educational standards in African continued throughout the 21st century. In Africa, where elder storytellers were held in high regard and were responsible for preserving histories and passing them along orally to younger generations, the introduction of Western education greatly conflicted with Africans' belief in themselves and the world around them, and created a rift between African communities around the world (DeGruy 2005).

2.2 Pan-Africanism in the 20th Century

Pan-Africanism as an intellectual ideology was first developed in the late 19th century by African scholars H. Sylvester Williams, Henry McNeal Turner, and Alexander Crummell (Adi and Sherwood 2003). Each one of these men grew up and were educated outside of Africa (Williams was born in Trinidad and Tobago, Turner in South Carolina, and Crummell in New

[7] The Scramble for Africa was a period in colonial history when European powers systematically exploited Africa for financial and political gain. The scramble began in the 1860s when the British and French invaded several West African nations and placed them under external political control. This scramble continued over the next several decades and was formalized at the Berlin Conference in 1884, which was held to prevent conflict between European nations during the colonial process (Michalopoulos and Papaioannou 2011).

York). Despite growing up in the African diaspora, the narratives produced by Pan-Africanism's forefathers focused heavily on the liberation and development of the African continent and advocated for people of the diaspora and Africa to combine forces to achieve this goal. According to Adi and Sherwood, since the beginning, Pan-African ideology has consisted of "chronicling a variety of ideas, activities, and movements that celebrated Africanness, resisted the exploitation and oppression of those of African descent, and opposed the ideologies of racism." Adi and Sherwood additionally describe Pan-African people as women and men of African descent whose lives and work have been concerned, in some way, with the social and political emancipation of African people and those of the African diaspora (See Adi and Sherwood 2003.). The definition provided by these scholars reveals the long-standing desire for African people to advocate for the rights of the global African community through collective political, intellectual, and cultural effort.

2.2.1 20th Century Pan-African Ideologies

The theories and concepts introduced by Williams, Turner, and Crummell provided a blueprint for Pan-Africanism's development as an intellectual ideology. Early in its development, an elite class of Pan-African intellectuals produced literature and discourse that strived to provide a counter-narrative to the mainstream, Western knowledge that already existed about African people. As explained by former President of Ghana, Kwame Nkrumah, in his books *Africa Must Unite* (1963) and *Revolutionary Path* (1973), this new knowledge and renewed method of thinking was developed to aid in the spiritual recharging of African people and dispel many of the documented and less formally acknowledged oppressive and unjust myths about Africa and

its people. Nkrumah, widely considered one of the most prominent Pan-African scholars and a leading anti-colonial political figure, stressed that as an ideology, Pan-Africanism was most concerned with the "revival and development of the 'African Personality', temporarily submerged during the colonial period. It finds expression in a re-awakening consciousness among African and peoples of African descent of the bonds which unite us – our historical past, our culture, our common experience, and our aspirations" (Nkrumah 1973:205).

As will be discussed later in this thesis, written works by African intellectuals, most of which were produced by African western educated men, provided the primary index for which Pan-African academic scholarship, social activism, political initiatives, and economic movements were based. The theories and concepts detailed in these literary works provided many of the formal definitions of Pan-Africanism that developed over the last century and solidified its purpose beyond an ideological and intellectual standpoint. Some of the most prominent themes that appeared in these works includes the global unity of African people, recognizing the historical bonds that connect African people living around the world, empowering African people to rise beyond the inferior conditions that European interference facilitated, and developing a sense of pride in Africanness or Blackness. In some cases, other African movements were combined and used in conjunction with Pan-African ideologies, this

included Césaire's Negritude movement[8] and the international Black Nationalism[9] movement. These ideologies were consistently referenced in the works of Pan-African scholars and were at the core of the intellectual, social, political, cultural, and economic Pan-African movements of the 20th century.

Through 20th century Pan-African literature, a chronicling of Africa's past and visions of the future began to take shape. This literature sought to re-historicize Africa through the lens of African people and contradict the claims of inferiority that were introduced during slavery and various periods of colonization. Although African scholars often created these texts in conjunction with Western academic practices and in non-African languages, they often produced alternative narratives in their works that sought to further the enrichment of African people's lives with alternative accounts of African history (Adi and Sherwood 2003). Nkrumah, specifically, determined that the best way to ignite a desire for change and success was to inform African people of their value and heritage. The introduction of cultural Pan-African scholarship into Western universities with the assistance of Woodson and intellectual leader and educator W.E.B DuBois helped spread cultural and intellectual Pan-African ideologies to educated African audiences living in the west. On the continent, Nkrumah and other African-born Pan-Africanists contributed their own research and ideas to cultural and political Pan-Africanism. Nkrumah

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[8] Negritude is an ideology and literary movement spearheaded by French intellectuals of African ancestry in the 1930s and 1940s to encourage African people to take pride in their heritage and to dispel myths of racial hierarchy and African inferiority. The intellectuals who led the movement, including its founders Leopold Sedar Senghor, Leon-Gontran Damas and Aime Cesaire, wished to position African people as equals and centralize Pan-African activity to aid in the global upliftment of all African people (Onwumere and Egbulonu 2014).

[9] Black Nationalism is a concept that is concerned with racial solidarity amongst all African people. It affirms that African people have a shared cultural background that should be celebrated and acknowledged and encourages African people to unite to form their own independent political, economic, and religious opportunities. Certain organizations have used Black Nationalism to advocate for the creation of a stand-alone nation that is completely governed by African people and which only African people were able to live by (Bracey Jr., Meier, and Rudwick 1970).

wrote of his contribution explaining, “I was determined, soon after Independence had been achieved in Ghana, to take practical steps to revive the cultural and spiritual unity of the African people, and to promote research into every aspect of our heritage, so that the African personality would become a strong driving force within the African Revolution, and would at the same time become a factor to reckon with in international affairs (Nkrumah 1973:205).”

Pan-Africanism’s association with academia and western scholarship made the concepts and ideas produced in these works often unobtainable and sometimes irrelevant to the vast majority of African people. The group of scholars, writers, and educated individuals who held the greatest authority in Pan-Africanism were what Woodson classified as “highly educated Negroes” (Woodson 1933:4) or what Harlem Renaissance writer Alain LeRoy Locke famously described as “New Negroes” (Locke 1925). Woodson asserted, “The ‘educated Negroes' have the attitude of contempt toward their own people because in their own as well as in their mixed schools Negroes are taught to admire the Hebrew, the Greek, the Latin and the Teuton and to despise the African” (Woodson 1933:5). His remarks point to popular criticisms of African intellectuals and their apparent inability to successfully uplift the global African community, who for the most part, did not have access to formal education, were unable to understand Western languages, and did not have the means to escape the confines of colonial labor conditions. Intellectuals that adopted Pan-African ideologies were seen as more capable than traditionally educated African people to lead the charge in the unification and upliftment of African people. The class-based division within Pan-Africanism led to deep conflict within the community, and for several decades, left the control and direction of African people’s social, economic, and political freedom in the hands of a small minority of Black Western-educated male elites (Harris

2003). This was true in both American and Sub-Saharan Africa until the latter half of the 20th century.

2.2.2 20th Century Pan-African Leaders

Throughout each decade of the 20th century, dozens of notable Pan-African figures emerged at the forefront of Pan-African movements. Each one of these leaders brought with them new, and sometimes conflicting, ideas about Pan-Africanism and sought to apply these concepts in social, political, cultural, and economic contexts. For the first half of the 20th century, Pan-Africanism and its concomitant knowledge creation processes were exclusively dominated by African intellectuals. As detailed in Ali A. Mazrui's (2005) essay "Pan-Africanism and the Intellectuals: Rise, Decline and Revival", intellectual dominance over Pan-Africanism's direction and its main principals was deliberate. Mazrui theorizes that V. I. Lenin's "theory of socialism" was employed in the early establishment of Pan-Africanism. This theory was said to prioritize intellectuals and upper-income groups over others in the pursuit of socialism. Lenin believed "it takes intellectuals and educated minds to conceive and construct an alternative social paradigm" (Mazrui 2005:56). Although Lenin acknowledged that the general public would be the people responsible for carrying out the change, intellectuals were seen as the only appropriate choice to direct the social shift. Pan-African leaders' use of Lenin's theory was extremely recognizable, particularly in the gathering of Pan-African leaders for literary contributions and public speaking events. For example, Mazrui explained that although people from various social and economic backgrounds were present at Pan-African conferences, almost all of the events' guest speakers and hosts were almost solely men of great intellectual accomplishment (Mazrui 2005).

In the first half of the 20th-century W.E.B. Du Bois was one of the foremost intellectuals and contributors to Pan-Africanism, and today is recognized as one of the founding fathers of Pan-Africanism. Du Bois contributed significantly to intellectual and political Pan-Africanism and fiercely advocated for the sort of academic liberal arts education that would expose a larger group of African people to this form of Pan-African knowledge. Du Bois did this with the creation of the American Negro Academy, and through his duties as vice-chair of the U.S. branch of the Pan-African Association (Adi and Sherwood 2003). Additionally, Du Bois was one of the primary contributors to Declaration of Principles, a document that outlined "a new political programme of protest and agitation that demanded political and social rights" (Adi and Sherwood 2003:49). The content of this declaration, coupled with other works produced by Du Bois, introduced a new political side of Pan-Africanism and dictated the appropriate ways to fight for the rights of the global African community through legislative means. Groups like the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), in which Du Bois once held a director position, also assumed this political approach to Pan-Africanism. Through the disbursement of literature and research, and as legal aids in court, the politics of Pan-Africanism became a major priority to assure the constitutional rights of African people. Du Bois was also a major proponent of Lenin's theory of socialism. Du Bois' 'Talented Tenth' theory sought to train a group of educated African elite, which he suggested accounted for ten percent of the African population, to lead the rest of the African community to similar conditions of social, political, economic, and cultural success (Du Bois 1898).

Later in the 20th century, Pan-Africanist and Martinique-born writer and psychiatrist Frantz Fanon rose to prominence by researching and promoting the cultural and intellectual

aspects of Pan-Africanism that were concerned with how African people around the globe were dealing with vast injustices from a psychological and behavioral point of view, and how the adoption of Pan-African ideologies could address these issues. Fanon saw the segregated and unfamiliar relationships between African people living around the world as a major roadblock on the road to complete African independence. Through his writings and speeches, Fanon emphasized the need for African unity (Adi and Sherwood 2003). His call for African unity was echoed by Kwame Nkrumah, who concerned himself with both the cultural and political aspects of Pan-Africanism. As the first president of the free republic of Ghana, Nkrumah used political means to establish a socialization process in the country that was extremely Pan-African in nature. Nkrumah heavily emphasized the necessity to address the political side of Pan-Africanism by reestablished African nations as independent territories with democratic policies (Nkrumah 1963).

In the Southern half of Africa, prominent Pan-African leaders like South Africa's Robert Sobukwe righteously promoted political Pan-Africanism, while simultaneously attempting to squash the African nationalist agendas that had begun to develop in South Africa and surrounding African countries. According to researcher Teboho J. Lebakeng, Sobukwe "was strongly pan-Africanist, believing that the future of South Africa should be in the hands of indigenous Africans" (Lebakeng 2018:77). Sobukwe's longing for an exclusively African-led Africa differed greatly from the ANC's multi-racial leadership structure and its ideas of 'South African exceptionalism'. Sobukwe's desire to ensure the unity and success of all African people across the continent is what encouraged him to form PAC, which sought to politically mobilize African citizens to petition for independence across territories (Lebakeng 2018). According to an

article by Grahame Hayes and Derek Hook, Sobukwe's Pan-African ideas were heavily utilized by student participants of South Africa's #MustFall movements. His name was used as a rallying cry during protests to signify that the students were seeking the same form of political liberation that previous Pan-African leaders before them petitioned for (Hayes and Hook 2016).

Du Bois, Fanon, and Nkrumah were just some of the many Pan-African leaders whose extensive social, political, and economic work in the field greatly informed the ideologies of Pan-Africanism. In Adi and Sherman's historical analysis of Pan-Africanism, over two dozen African males were recognized as prominent figures in the movement. As mentioned previously, men, because of their superior social status and their greater access to higher education, dominated Pan-African leadership roles and the knowledge production process. As mentioned in Carole Boyce Davies' texts "Pan-Africanism, Transnational Black Feminism and the Limits of Culturalist Analyses in African Gender Discourses" (2014) and *Black Women, Writing and Identity: Migrations of the Subject* (1994), African women involved with Pan-Africanism in the 20th century were issued lesser, more administrative roles and were frequently prevented from making any real literary contributions, which dictated much of Pan-Africanism's ideologies and activism. Without access to significantly contribute academic literature about Pan-Africanism, African women's actions at the time, although now recognized as being just as influential and pertinent to the movement as men's contributions, were overshadowed and often undocumented. Uneducated, LGBTQI, criminals, lower-income people and youth were also often ostracized from contributing to Pan-African literature, and like African women, were not the primary beneficiaries of its initiatives.

Without proper representation at 20th-century Pan-African conferences, academic settings, and social and political movements, the concerns that were specific to women, uneducated people, criminals, youth, LGBTQI people, and other underrepresented groups were not adequately addressed or were ultimately not addressed at all. Because of this, Pan-African ideas often prioritized the fight for racial upliftment that did not recognize the intersectional struggles that plagued African people beyond racial hierarchies (Hale 2018). Underrepresented groups were forced to develop their own sub-category of Pan-Africanism that applied Pan-African concepts and ideas to their unique struggles. These sub-groups are what birthed organizations like America's Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC)[10], and South Africa's Pan African Student Movement of Azania[11]. These organizations took Pan-African intellectual ideas and political theories to the streets and empowered underrepresented groups who lacked the access or ability to absorb Pan-African knowledge through its traditional literary methods.

Even with the participation of the academic community and grassroots movements, Pan-Africanism's true purpose was often lost in translation and interpreted in different ways depending on the area or movement. The lack of communication between Pan-Africanists around

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[10] Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) was an American-based civil rights movement founded by African college students that was designed to work against the enforcement of Jim Crow laws in the southern half of America. Beginning in the 1960s, SNCC organized a number of public protests and demonstrations to empower African people politically and culturally.

[11] Pan-African Student Movement of Azania was formed in 1997 (out of the 1989 original movement) at the University of the Western Cape as an extension of the Pan-African Congress (PAC). The student-led movement mobilized university students to demand a better learning environment and materials. (See Kurebwa and Dodo 2019)

the world led to a breakdown in Pan-Africanism's most important element — unity (Mazrui 2005).

2.3 Pan-Africanism in the 21st Century

2.3.1 The Decline of Traditional Pan-Africanism

The depth of knowledge concerning traditional Pan-Africanism in the 21st century is significantly less available than knowledge concerning 20th century Pan-Africanism. It is unclear whether the lack of information stems from a lack of interest in Pan-Africanism or if the lack of literary content and mainstream Pan-African leaders led to this disinterest. Nevertheless, there has been a great deal of content that highlights the decline of traditional Pan-Africanism in the 20th century which now reveals much about how it is recognized in the 21st century. Mazrui theorizes that the decline in Pan-Africanism at the second half of the 20th century can be directly tied to the anxiousness for African people to make advancements in the de-colonial process, as well as the decline of Black intellectualism.

According to Mazrui "Africans were becoming more less idealistic and more pragmatic as cautious post-coloniality replaced the vigor of anti-colonialism". He also asserted that "Within African countries domestic forces were unfolding which were lethal to both the spirit of pan-Africanism and the ideals of intellectualism" (Mazrui 2005:58). The absence of Pan-African intellectuals appeared to be one of the most devastating blows to the movement. Without powerful Pan-African figures to create and distribute knowledge through traditional academic channels, the history of Pan-Africanism and many of its ideologies were kept from 21st-century

African audiences whose standard education curriculums were primarily Eurocentric. This Eurocentric-education curriculum rarely included Pan-African studies or provided historical and cultural background about Africa that would empower African people (Adeleke 1998).

Many scholars, including Adeleke, credit the fractured relationship between African-born people and people of African ancestry as one of the major barriers in the establishment of African unity, and subsequently, the decline of traditional Pan-Africanism in the 21st century (Adeleke 1998). Without significant access to one another due to geographical distance and economic devastation, and in light of the decline in Pan-African intellectuals, African people and African people of the diaspora have heavily relied on mainstream information about one another from third party sources, primarily produced by Western media, publishing companies, and scholars. The way one group characterized the other was directly influenced by the lens in which Eurocentric teachers, media outlets, and other third-party mediums depicted the group. This led to a psychological and mental distancing between the groups that attempted to dismiss the experiences and history all African people shared. Adeleke declared this dismissal as a major setback in the unity of African people towards the end of the 20th century and a trait that has ultimately prevented African people from confronting the dangers of Eurocentrism.

Adeleke also asserted that "faith in Pan-Africanism is reinforced by the memories and knowledge of the success of an earlier cooperation between Africans and black diasporans, a cooperation that was instrumental to the dismantling of colonialism" (Adeleke 1998:506). Not only does Adeleke discuss the benefits of African people learning about their culture and history prior to Western interference, but he also asserts that African people have been historically driven to act after discovering how Pan-Africanism helped connect African people from around the

world and defeat certain elements of Eurocentrism. Adeleke explained this knowledge of earlier Pan-African movements would help encourage new generations of Pan-Africanists.

Dr. Joy DeGruy further analyzed the consequences of African people's lack of knowledge about African history and culture. In her book *Post Traumatic Slave Syndrome* (2005), the psychologist presents psychological data that suggests that African people who are unaware of their history are likely to face difficulties related to that void in knowledge. Furthermore, she believes that the negative and terrorizing retelling of dark times in African history without the presence of positive moments may psychologically damage African people mentally and emotionally. Dr. DeGruy points to trans-generational adaptions of trauma developed from slavery as a way to explain why Black Americans respond to events and live life the way they do. "The enslavement experience was one of continual violent attacks on body, mind, and sprit. Men, women, and children were traumatized throughout their lives and the violent attacks during slavery persisted long after emancipation. In the face of these injuries, those traumatized adapted their attitudes and behaviors in order to simply survive, and these adaptions continue to manifest today" (DeGruy 2005:19). She identified this idea as Post-Traumatic Slave Syndrome and credits the psychological parody as something that both advances and limits the experiences of African people today. Adeleke's explanation of the dangers of Eurocentric knowledge and DeGruy's study of 21st-century African people's psyche, present compelling evidence that helps explain the decline of Pan-Africanism in its traditional form at the beginning of the 21st century.

The fracturing of the global African community and the inability for the groups to find commonalities that would encourage unity has perpetuated an internal conflict that has played out in social and political settings around the world. An example of this social conflict can be

found in the early 21st century relationships between American-born Africans and continental Africans. Following the United States' passing of the 1980 Refugee Act, there was a heavy migration of African people to America (Ross-Sheriff and Moss-Knight 2013). This period was the first time large numbers of American-born Africans and continental Africans were able to physically interact and live among one another. Several conflicts between the two groups erupted during this time, many of which were caused by the misinformation one group was given about the other. This conflict between American-born Africans and continental Africans has been heavily researched y scholars and addressed in conjunction with the declining presence of Pan-Africanism. Some studies reveal that African or Caribbean immigrants were made to feel superior to Black Americans because they were deemed harder workers and willing to compromise and accept working conditions that Black Americans ostensibly wouldn't (Nsangou and Dundes 2018). This idea also sparked the notion that Black Americans were lazy, defiant, and ungrateful for the opportunities African people valued. Other studies point to the initial hesitation and foul treatment of African immigrants by American-born Africans that created a rift that, as this research thesis seeks to reveal, is just now beginning to mend through the utilization of Twitter and other social media platforms.

2.3.2 A New Kind of Pan-Africanism in the 21st Century

Despite traditional Pan-Africanism's perceived dip in relevancy during the 21st century, there is still ample research about what it looks like now, whether or not it is still relevant, and its future. A lot of this research does not explicitly mention Pan-Africanism, rather it speaks to the rising

unity of African people that has been indirectly or directly inspired by the ideologies and principles introduced by early Pan-African thought. This modern integration of Pan-Africanism into new 21st century political movements will be discussed further in this thesis. Pan-Africanism in its traditional intellectual form, recognized by the acknowledgment of its principles, its history, and the active application of its theories in a 21st-century setting remains an area of research that is dominated by intellectuals. Much of the research available on Pan-Africanism can be found in scholarly articles, books, and speeches given by college-educated African people around the world. Although the information provided about Pan-Africanism remains at the dictation of African intellectuals, the gender make-up has altered quite a bit. The heavy increase of African women earning college degrees has contributed significantly to this shift in the gender of Pan-African knowledge creators. In America, African women held 66% of all Bachelors' degrees earned by Africans living in the U.S (Jones-DeWeever, 2014). As will be discussed later, the intellectual African women who are leading a new Pan-African renaissance on Twitter have benefited greatly and could accredit their success to their greater access to education.

According to Sabelo J. Ndlovu-Gatsheni's (2013) essay "Decolonial Epistemic Perspective and Pan-African Unity in the 21st Century", which analyzed the current state of Pan-Africanism, there have been plenty of other advancements in Pan-Africanist activity and knowledge production over the last several years. Ndlovu-Gatsheni lists the creation of the African Union in 2002, the revival of the African Renaissance coalition in the early 2000s, and the launch of the Pan-African University (PAU) in December 2011 as major 21st century accomplishments in the efforts to revive the spirit of Pan-Africanism and expanding its influence

on African people (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2013). The author highlighted the curriculum at the PAU as being one that is particularly crucial to the success of 21st century Pan-Africanism because it focused on Eurocentric epistemological issues. According to Ndlovu-Gatsheni "A realization seems to be emerging that recognizes that the new Pan-African agenda cannot be informed and eradicated on hostile and imperialistic Euro-American epistemology that underpins global imperial designs. The realm of knowledge production and cultures that influence those institutions that produce knowledge cannot be ignored in the new struggles to deepen Pan-African unity" (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2013:404). Ndlovu-Gatsheni's perspective carries the ideas of Woodson's educational values into the 21st century and reveals current Pan-Africanists willingness to implement Woodson's strategy to produce knowledge and disperse it through channels not plagued by Eurocentric values.

What appears to be revealed in some of the research about the state of 21st century traditional Pan-Africanism is that it is primarily concerned with the political and economic aspects of Pan-Africanism. This research seems to focus on the creation of organizations driven by the desire to boost African people's political and economic means, rather than encourage the social and historical benefits Pan-African activity also provides. Ndlovu-Gatsheni suggests the political and economic Pan-African initiatives are being carried out by politicians from African nations as well as economically savvy business people as a way to strengthen Africa's economy and become more powerful political forces amongst other globe powers (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2013).

Chapter 3

Research Method

3.1 Research Strategy

Over the last decade, a great wealth of research has been collected about social media's social impact on society. The research gathered about this subject is extremely diverse and tends to utilize a mix of qualitative and quantitative methods, depending on the area of focus. For the essay "Tweets, Tweeps, and Signifyin': Communication and Cultural Performance on 'Black Twitter'", Sarah Florini (2014) employed qualitative research methods to retrieve information demonstrating a linguistic pattern amongst Black Twitter. Florini collected her research by surveying popular Twitter hashtags and reading public tweets published by African users. Quotes from the collected tweets were featured throughout the essay to illustrate a connection between language and the formulation of Black Twitter's cultural identity. Florini was successful at presenting an adequate argument through her qualitative research method. However, her analysis would have benefited greatly from including quantitative data specifying the number of times the key phrases she referenced were used, and from tracking the months and years these phrases experienced the highest spike in popularity.

Alternatively, in Homero Gil de Zu´niga's, Nakwon Jung's, Sebastian Valenzuela's (2012) research study "Social Media Use for News and Individuals' Social Capital, Civic Engagement and Political Participation", which analyzed social media's impact on social capital and political participation, the authors collected quantitative research data that was accumulated

through surveys. Graphs were used to present statistical findings from a survey the researchers distributed to a controlled sample of people. The statistics separated respondents by age, gender, race, education, and other identifying characteristics. Although their findings helped to establish a pattern of social media usage and the social capital it provides certain groups, it does not provide information about the **type** of content each group produces on social media and how it has contributed to their social capital.

For this thesis, I employed qualitative research methods to collect data. In order to better display the relationship between Twitter and Pan-Africanism, I analyzed new studies about Pan-Africanism in its contemporary 21st-century digital context that now encompasses new literature, language, communicative channels, social ideologies, and leaders. I primarily collected literature that was published within the last six years, as that is the period of time my Twitter research is most concerned about because of the sudden emergence of largescale Pan-African Twitter movements like BLM and SHN. It is important to note that the people and movements discussed in this thesis are not explicitly recognized as Pan-Africanists by any one traditional or formal definition, nor do they necessarily publicly identify as Pan-African. The people cited in this thesis have publicly engaged in, curated, or facilitated activity on Twitter that reflects Adi and Sherwood's definition of Pan-Africanists leaders as "women and men of African descent whose lives and work have been concerned, in some way, with the social and political emancipation of African peoples and those of the African diaspora" (Adi and Sherwood 2003:vii).

The articles and essays I cited were largely sourced from academic journals and digital media websites. I discovered a significant amount of literature through visiting academic search engines like Google Scholar and typing in the phrases "Pan-Africanism today", "Pan-Africanism

21st century", and "Pan-Africanism in the digital age". I also used this research method to discover information about traditional Pan-Africanism's historical origin starting in the late 19th century when the concept first developed, all the way to the late 20th century when it began to lose mainstream prominence. To narrow the focus of this large research area to a do-able scope for the purposes of this limited study, I primarily researched Pan-African leaders who were primarily concerned with social issues, and whose work frequently appeared in 21st-century Pan-African discourse. I also selected leaders like W.E.B. Du Bois, Kwame Nkrumah, and Carter G. Woodson, who contributed their own written literature about Pan-Africanism so that I could include quotes from primary sources.

The bulk of the secondary research for the analytical portion of this thesis was gathered through scanning news articles and journals that discussed Black Twitter, or social media social activism. For my research on social media activism, I employed written texts produced by scholars that statistically illustrated social media activism's popularity amongst millennials. These texts provided information directly tracing the success of political policies, the emergence of new social movements, and the impression social media activism has on the economy. This data was also presented in media reports that attributed a shifting social dialogue and political climate to Twitter's vast popularity. In addition to the statistical commentary, news media sites also provided qualitative research through quoted tweets and the analysis of Twitter hashtags. This research displayed the leading conversations and topics on Twitter and analyzed what they mean to the people engaged in these online dialogues. The broader texts presented about social media activism or Twitter were compared to the historical patterns and behaviors of African people and used to further theorize the appeal and growth of Pan-Africanism on Twitter.

The six-year time period I chose to explore is particularly notable because of the series of events that transpired on Twitter during this time that significantly shaped Pan-Africanism as a social movement and concept. I attributed this shift in Pan-Africanism to the public outrage concerning the murders of unarmed African children by White people, as well as Sub-Saharan African millennials' recent decision to take local decolonization movements global through digital channels. Some of the key moments of the time include the murder of Trayvon Martin in 2012 in the U.S., which sparked the creation of the Black Lives Matter Twitter movement (Bates 2018), and the Twitter activity surrounding the protests in Ferguson, Missouri that occurred following the police killing of Michael Brown in 2014. South Africa's 2015 Rhodes Must Fall and Fees Must Fall movements were also analyzed in conjunction with other student-led Twitter movements in sub-Saharan Africa, including the University of Ghana's #GandhiMustFall[12] campaign. I chose to focus on these moments because of the connection they have with Pan-African ideologies and social activity, and because of their prominent use of Twitter to promote and exchange this knowledge.

I chose to focus on almost a dozen top Pan-African leaders and movements that made a dramatic impact over the last six years. In particular, I examined intersectional social movements and leaders who were traditionally marginalized in earlier Pan-African movements, but have since benefited from new Pan-African social activity on Twitter. The two marginalized groups that are discussed the most in this thesis are African women and African LGBTQI people. These

[12] #GandhiMustFall is a social and Twitter movement created by lecturers and students at the University of Ghana in 2017 to petition for the removal of a Mahatma Gandhi statue from the university's campus. Participants of the GMF movement used the hashtag on Twitter to share stories about Gandhi's history of anti-African rhetoric and demand he be removed from the campus as a result of his misconduct and hatred towards African people. The Twitter hashtag was also used by citizens in Malawi who have also been petitioning to end the current construction of a Gandhi statue in their country (Flanagan 2018).

two groups were selected because a number of the top Pan-African leaders on Twitter are a part of either one or both groups. I surveyed the tweets and interviews of diasporic leaders Johnetta 'Netta' Elzie, DeRay Mckesson, and Janet Mock, as well as continental African leaders Siyanda Mohutsiwa and Carol Ndosi. The Twitter movements I chose to focus on were #BlackLivesMatter, #SayHerName, #GirlsLikeUs, #RhodesMustFall, #FeesMustFall, and #GandhiMustFall. I employed Twitter's search browser to look up these hashtags. I also searched individual hashtags like #PanAfricanism, #PanAfricanist, #BlackUnity, #BlackNation, and #BlackNationalism to study the information provided about the subjects that could paint a broader picture of Pan-Africanism's presence on Twitter.

Through tracking the conversations and movements started by African Twitter users living in Sub-Saharan Africa and the diaspora, I was able to uncover activity that although may not be recognized by millennials today as Pan-African, maintains the characteristics and goals of traditional 20th century Pan-Africanism.

Overall the bulk of this paper will explore the literature, language, and other forms of media shared on Twitter by African millennials that have subsequently orchestrated a shift in Pan-Africanism's social agendas and leadership roles.

3.2 Ethical Responsibility

I followed the UCT Ethical Guidelines for the Humanities. The bulk of the research on Twitter's impact on Pan-Africanism was acquired from surveying the public tweets of verified Twitter users and popular Twitter hashtags. I used quotes from these Twitter postings throughout this thesis to support my analysis. I only included quotes from Twitter postings shared by users that

possessed Twitter's blue verified check and public accounts, and therefore I did not require the permission of the authors as their work is available for public consumption and has already been published. I found and cited the original Tweets to clarify the date, time, and location these tweets were sent. To properly credit the authors for the introduction of new concepts or movements introduced by specific tweets, I used first and last names when provided on their profile, or their Twitter handles (the name displayed on Twitter profiles following the "@" symbol) if no first or last name is provided. I provided full quotes and information about individual tweets at the bottom section of the reference page. These quotes are presented unedited with spelling errors and the original wording and style.

It is important that I credit the authors of new Pan-African ideas and movements in this research project. The individuals I chose to highlight transcend Twitter and have become proper Pan-African activists outside of social media activism. These people are classified as public figures, having appeared on political television shows, written books, given talks, and contributed scholarly or media articles of their own that explain their tweets and the movements that developed from them. With this being said, I use direct quotes from these individuals' appearances on talk shows or statements to the media. I credit the author of these opinions and reference any public tweets from such an individual to provide a broader context. Based on these ethical guidelines I chose not to reach out to each individual being quoted or thoroughly examined in these articles, as their privacy has not been violated.

Chapter 4

Discussion and Analysis

4.1 Social Media Social Activism and Advocacy

4.1.1 The Phenomenon of Social Media Activism

There are several notable works that analyzed millennials' use of social media, specifically how they use social media as a tool for social and political activism. Some of these important works include Paolo Gerbaudo's (2012) book *Tweets and the Streets: Social Media and Contemporary Activism*, Safiya Umoja Noble's and Brendesha M. Tynes' (2016) book *The Intersectional Internet: Race, Sex, Class, and Culture Online*, and Lisa Nakamura's and Peter Chow-White's (2012) book *Race After the Internet*. In each text, the authors highlight the rise of social media activism and how it has shaped the social, political, cultural, and economic landscape offline. Gerbaudo's book notably illustrates activists' use of social media as a "means of representation" and a "tool of 'citizen journalism' employed to elicit 'external attention' (Aday et al., 2010)" (Gerbaudo 2012:3). This method of reaching external audiences outside of individuals or organizations' traditional audiences, has proved instrumental in soliciting outside attention to social issues not covered by mainstream media brands. The external audiences are thus informed of these issues through social media users practicing in a form of "citizen journalism" that relies on their first-person visual account or knowledge of an event or issue.

Gerbaudo also notes an internal or local approach to social media activism in which activists use social media to mobilize their local communities or the people who are traditionally within their reach to take action and get people active on the streets (Gerbaudo 2012). This

internal or local approach has assisted with the organization of local protests, events, and petitions to advocate for things that directly affect local citizens. Internal and social media activism is often used in combination to solicit as much local and global attention as possible and distribute information that is pertinent to promoting their cause. For example, 'citizen journalists' provide first-hand, and sometimes immediate, accounts of events organized by a collection of internal social media users. As will be discussed further in this thesis, the combination of these social media activities has led to a shift in documenting and organizing movements and has shifted power from the hands of traditional gatekeepers, like members of the media and academic agents, to ordinary citizens with access to the internet.

Many of the concepts based in Gerbaudo's work are centralized around Manuel Castell's essay "Network Theory of Power" (2011), in which he describes how new technology has created a power shift and altered the way people have evaluated power since the introduction of new communication media. Castell's work emphasizes the decreased role mainstream media and institutions like the government have over public opinion and theorizes that individuals, with the help of new digital social networks, now have the ability to create their own networks of power to counter those that previously dominated society. He explained this concept further by stating:

> "I contend that social power throughout history, but even more so in the network society, operates primarily by the construction of meaning in the human mind through processes of communication. In the network society, this is enacted in global/local multimedia networks of mass communication, including mass self-communication, that is, the communication organized around the Internet and other horizontal digital communication networks. Although theories of power and historical observation point to the importance of the state's monopoly on violence as a source of social power, I argue that the ability to

> successfully engage in violence or intimidation requires the framing of individual and collective minds. The smooth functioning of society's institutions does not result from their policing ability to force citizens into compliance. How people think about the institutions under which they live, and how they relate to the culture of their economy and society defines whose power can be exercised and how it can be exercised" (Castell 2011:779).

This new reliance on peer to peer communication for social and political commentary was heightened through the introduction of social media. Social media platforms thus hold a great deal of power because they dictate not what its users share, but the ways in which they are able to communicate them. Even with the policy restrictions of social media platforms — many of which decry bullying, hate speech, certain forms of nudity, and other lewd misconduct — they are not able to properly police all of the content being produced and therefore unable to control the rate in which ideas are shared and the number of people it reaches. This can be shown by studying the U.S.'s most recent 2016 presidential election, in which the Russian government is accused of using Facebook to promote content that would impact the minds of voters and subsequently disrupt the nature of the results (Lapowsky 2018). Gerbaudo's and Castell's works illustrate that the content shared by these individual citizen journalists, has the ability to impact the minds of people around the world without the help or restriction of traditional network powers such as the government or mainstream media, and with limited restriction from the social media platforms they are using.

Activists who employ the internal and external methods of social media activism do so as a collective. Social media provides a place for activists with similar interests to congregate and organize. Twitter, in particular, has stood out as a premier place for activists to come together and

voice their concerns. In the article "Happiness is assortative in online social networks" Johan Bollen, Bruno Gonçalves, Guangchen Ruan, and Huina Mao (2011) attributed the diverse socio-cultural elements of Twitter as a major draw for activists. According to the essay "distinct socio-cultural factors affect the expression of emotion and mood on Twitter, and cause users to cluster according to their degree of expressiveness" (Bollen, Gonçalves, Ruan, and Mao 2011:13). The socio-cultural factors that bind social media users together include shared racial, ethnic, cultural, political, and in some cases, economic identities.

Twitter enables users to engage with one another according to various shared social interest. Users with similar social views organize on Twitter to share news about their particular interests and organize ways to further initiatives that would support their personal or communal agendas (Gerbaudo 2012). The introduction of Twitter hashtags[13], which will be discussed in-depth in the following passages, is an example of one of the technological tools Twitter created to connect users with like-minded people through a comprehensive search channel that organizes tweets that feature certain keywords. Simply by searching the name of a popular hashtag, researchers are able to pinpoint popular topics on Twitter and identify the people who are engaging with these topics. This digital method of consensus provided yet another advantage to social media activists looking to communicate and organize with other users. Once more, it can illustrate how much a certain topic affects people and witness the way users react and discuss them.

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[13] A hashtag is a Twitter function that allows users to index keywords and topics on Twitter by inserting the "#" symbol followed by a word or a number of words joined together without spacing. Clicking or searching a hashtag on Twitter directs users to a page that features public tweets from other users who have used the hashtag in their postings. Hashtagged words that are used repeatedly in a short amount of time often appear on a list of trending topics that are featured on Twitter home feeds for users to see the most talked about subjects of the day. (*Twitter*).

4.1.2 Social Media Use in African Communities

Although the bulk of social media research has analyzed Western society, there is also adequate research about the general use of social media amongst African people living on the continent, in the U.S., and other sections of the diaspora. The current field of study on Africans' relationship with new media is very expansive and has been tackled by many scholars over the last two decades. Herman Wasserman's (2005) essay "Renaissance and Resistance: Using ICTs for Social Change in Africa" is one of the very few bodies of work that directly researched how social movements that explicitly identified as Pan-African, utilized new technology in the 21st century. In the essay he mentions the interests of the Pan-African NEPAD programme and the African Union in utilizing new media to reach local and international audiences in a more convenient and less censored manner. Wasserman's research was conducted prior to African users' wide-spread adoption of social media, and therefore, focused on new media communications via the Internet, email and cell phone messaging. As a result, his research does not explicitly mention how Twitter or any other social media channel was used by Pan-African movements.

On the topic of digital media use amongst Black Americans, Anna Everret's (2009) book *Digital Diaspora: A Race for Cyberspace* narrowly focuses on how the internet was utilized by young Black people in America over the last two decades. Through qualitative research collected from similar books and published social media postings shared by participants of the African "Digital Diaspora", Everret tracked the visible advancements in the use of technology among Africans living in America and how it has shrunk what researchers refer to as the "digital

divide"[14] or the racial imbalance between active internet users that prevents people of color, including Black people, from accessing internet tools and technology at the same rate as white people. According to a 255-page report published by Fress Press, a DC-based public interest group, structural barriers, structural discrimination, and bias against people of certain races and ethnicities all have a direct impact on the digital divide (See Turner 2016.). Everret's book might possibly provide the largest comprehensive view of how digital media has been adopted and used by African people over the years. However, her analysis does not illustrate how Africans still living on the continent today utilize social media.

Approaching the 21st century, African people around the world began to aggressively participate in the global digital and internet movement. As noted in Banji Oyelaran-Oyeyinka's and Kaushalesh Lal's (2005) essay "Internet Diffusion in Sub-Saharan Africa: A Cross- Country Analysis", continental Africans' increased access to the internet corresponded with the growing economic prosperity of the group, which permitted more African people to purchase personal computers and mobile devices. Considering the expense associated with internet access during its early days, the slim but steadily growing middle and upper middle-income African community were among the few who could afford to participate. The growing affordability of mobile phones on the continent also contributed significantly to this growth in mobile phone users. As a result of the economic hardships and inefficient internet carriers available on the continent, continental Africans were behind in actively using certain digital technologies compared to their African diasporic counterparts. Africa's deep digital divide did not prevent

[14] Digital Divide - A term coined by Lloyd Morrisett in 1995 to describe the disparity in access and use of digital technology between certain groups of people. It is also used to illustrate the difference in technological efficiency and knowledge between these groups. Groupings can be analyzed based on race, social, economic, or cultural factors. (See Oyelaran-Oyeyinka and Lal 2005).

those witnessing North Africa's "Arab Spring" from utilizing Twitter and other social media tools to record and plan their political mobilization and share news with international audiences. Access to mobile phones, and subsequently Twitter, during the Arab Spring's peak (2010-2012) made an undeniable impact on the movement and is arguably one of the first major African movements to use Twitter to organize politically.

In America, Africans also benefited from a rising middle and upper middle class. The digital divide between this group and White Americans began to lessen dramatically during the 21st century. According to a 2018 study by Nielsen, 90% of Africans in the U.S. live in a household that owns a smartphone (Nielsen 2018). Comparatively, in sub-Saharan Africa, a median of 41% across six countries are reported to use the internet and 33% of across sub-Saharan Africa reportedly own a mobile smartphone (Silver and Johnson 2018). The introduction of social media has greatly influenced the way and frequency in which African people use the internet. According to Cheryl Grace, Nielsen's Senior Vice President of U.S. Strategic Community Alliances and Consumer Engagement, Africans living in the U.S. are "leveraging innovations in technology and the anonymity of social platforms to level the playing field and get ahead in a marketplace unencumbered by corporate scrutiny" (Nielsen 2018).

As Africans' access to technology and smartphones continues to spike, so has their presence on social media. Africans living in America are an extremely prevalent group on Twitter and contribute significantly to the site's user count and engagement. According to Meredith Clark, "At the height of its popularity among black internet users between 2010 and 2013, nearly 25 percent of all black people in America who were online also used Twitter. In 2014, the last year for which the Pew Research Center published data on Twitter use among African-

Americans, that number dropped to 22 percent" (Clark 2018). Twitter's prominence within the African community corresponded with the decline in African themed media journals and publications, which left a void in the distribution of black news, particularly news created by African people about African people (Olivia 2015). According to a 2014 study published by the Media Insight Project, 75 percent of black Americans believed news media accurately reported on their communities only "moderately" or "slightly/not at all." Participants said mainstream news media tend to focus only on narratives of deviance or exceptionalism among black Americans and ignore the complexities of identity and power" (Clark 2018:47). With the decline in the African media journals and publications that had previously published more in-depth information about African people, Twitter emerged as a way for African people to self-report and document their own experiences and news.

Over the last 10 years, the phrase "Black Twitter" has been used to identify a large and powerful group of primarily Black American Twitter users who interact with each other on the platform and trade cultural and ethnic epithets based on shared language, experience, and interests. This group has been widely characterized by both academic and media works, yet no formal definition has ever truly been established. According to Clark, Black Twitter "now introduces a digital dimension of cultural richness that is inextricably tied to the legacy of the lived Black experience in the United States. Into Black Twitter comes our personal experiences with a shared historical legacy of marginalization, systemic and often subtle racism, and paradoxically, a denial of opportunity to interact with the dominant culture as individual actors uncharacterized by media stereotypes of Black people and Black culture" (Clark 2014:64). Clark's definition of Black Twitter points to a shared cultural history that is reflective of the

experience of living as an African person in America. This group's formation is an example of the socio-cultural factors referenced by Bollen, Gonçalves, Ruan, and Mao that drive like-minded people to seek each other out on Twitter to have a more engaging and positive emotional interaction. Black Twitter's popularity and desirability reflect the void in channels in which African people feel free to voice their concerns with one another and non-African people. According to a study conducted by the Knight Foundation, "Black Twitter allows everyday black people to serve as gatekeepers for the news and information needs of a plurality of black American experiences—with coverage, perspective and consideration not found elsewhere" (Clark 2018:39).

Definitions of Black Twitter have been criticized for painting a monolithic narrative that limits the true nature and experience of the Black community as a whole. The varied experience of the group and the mix of African people representing different social, economic, and political classes, have made it necessary to establish sub-categories that above all else are centralized around blackness, and then the interests and experiences of its Twitter participants. Clark asserts that Black Twitter transcends the simple parameters of ethnic identification: "Being a part of Black Twitter is more than being Black, having a Twitter account, and using it to interact with other Black users. As a phenomenon, Black Twitter is often purposefully active — made up of the ongoing, everyday cultural conversations of hundreds of thousands of networked users (Brock, 2013)" (Clark 2014:61). Clark also explained that in order for people to truly feel like they are represented or representatives of Black Twitter, "individuals must have a sense of belonging to the larger community (group membership); there must be a perception that the member's needs will be fulfilled by the community; the individual must believe he or she matters

and/or has some influence within the community, and there must be an emotional connection with others in the community" (Clark 2014:61).

The sub-categories of Black Twitter have become just as important to examine as the broad Black Twitter community itself. As will be discussed later in this text, Black Feminist Twitter, Black Queer Twitter, and other sub-groups have created their own digital narrative on Twitter that, although may compliment and contribute to the overarching ideas of general Black Twitter, also present a separate agenda and conversation that reveals the multifaceted nature of Black Twitter. In addition, besides creating sub-communities based on gender or sexual preferences, Black Twitter users, much like in real life, have tended to separate themselves according to social, economic, and political interests. Hashtags like #BlackConservativesMatter and #BlacksForTrump, represent a small group of Black Americans whose social, economic, and or political beliefs and conversations on Twitter tend to fall more on the conservative side, unlike the large majority of Black Americans, who studies suggest, identify largely with liberal or moderate politics (Smith 2017).

Continental Africans on Twitter have likewise created communities based on shared interests and traditions. African nations have created sub-communities that are based on geographical boundaries to share national information or engage in conversations with local people. In Kenya, Kenyans often include the hashtag #KenyansOnTwitter or #KOT in tweets they want other Kenyans to see. The hashtag's page results contain thousands of tweets from Kenyans discussing topics related to politics, the economy, and social and cultural issues. The same can be said about South Africans, who also define the local Twitter community as 'South African Twitter'. Additionally, African people living on the continent are also often labeled as

members of Black Twitter. Several local news reports in South Africa include mentions of Black Twitter when discussing local or international Twitter discussions predominantly consisting of Black South Africans. Popular trending topics like #IfAfricaWasABar, which garnered the participation of African Twitter users from around the world, is also associated with the cultural dynamic of Black Twitter. As will be discussed later in this thesis, #IfAfricaWasABar is recognized as a prime example of Pan-African cultural activity reflecting political news and progress on Twitter.

4.2 New Intersectional Pan-African Leaders on Twitter

4.2.1 How Twitter Aided in Intersectional Pan-African Leadership

The demographics of Pan-African leadership shifted drastically in the 21st century. African women, LGBTQI people, low-income citizens, and non-college graduates were, for the first time in large numbers, assuming high ranking social positions as noted Pan-African leaders. As mentioned previously in this thesis, a number of factors contributed to this shift, including African women having greater access to higher education and the introduction of new technologies that allowed mass audiences from different countries and socioeconomic classes to communicate more efficiently and frequently. In the following analysis, I explored the ways in which these new technologies, and more specifically, the introduction of social media website, Twitter, encouraged a shift in the demographics of Pan-African leadership, and how this shift subsequently resulted in new forms of Pan-African social activity. Twitter's technological and social tools were analyzed in relation to this new digital Pan-African movement in order to illustrate how these specific elements aided in the development of new intersectional leadership

and social activity, and furthermore, how these new leaders continued to employ these tools to spread the ideologies of Pan-Africanism with wider audiences.

Whereas in the past, Pan-African theories and histories were documented purely through academic scholarship from the intellectual African male elite or male-dominated organizations led by older generations (Davies 2014), today, Twitter has provided access for women, young people, LGBTQI communities, and low-income individuals to communicate with one another across geographical boundaries to curate an original Pan-African dialogue of their own. The quality of these new dialogues and the extensive reach of the social media platform have ultimately helped these new ideas integrate into mainstream 21st-century Pan-African theory and social activism. These new sub-groups utilized Twitter to share messages that apply Pan-Africanism's most popular and earliest theories and concepts in a way that best addressed the unique struggles of a diverse array of African people.

Activist and artist Bree Newsome Bass, an African woman born in America, uses her Twitter platform to share historical information about African people and advocate for African unity. In one post she addressed the erasure of the joint history and culture African people share. Bass tweeted, "Black Americans are neither settlers nor immigrants. We are descended from West Africans who were kidnapped & held in bondage here. Folks deny our existence as ethnic group w/ a distinct history & culture while continuing to make commodities of these things" (@BreeNewsome 2018). This tweet, much like many of her other tweets addressed a problem Pan-Africanists like Nkrumah and Du Bois spoke about for years — the erasure of African history and culture. However, instead of going through the traditional male-dominated

channels to share this info, Bass shared it on Twitter and was able to receive thousands of immediate responses and acknowledgment of her words.

Not only have these new groups used Twitter to advocate for the various sub-groups within the African community, they've also embraced the concept of intersectionality, which is concerned with the interconnection of all oppressed people to fight for a common goal of upliftment and equality for all (Brah and Phoenix 2004). Intersectionality was first coined by critical race theory scholar Kimberlé Williams Crenshaw in the 1980s and has since been popularized and used by millennial Pan-African women and LGBTQI people on Twitter as a way to urge people to consider the relationship between race, gender, and sexuality within oppressive systems. During Crenshaw's 2018 TED Talk about violence against African women, Crenshaw acknowledged that "African-American women, like other women of color, like other socially marginalized people all over the world, were facing all kinds of dilemmas and challenges as a consequence of intersectionality, intersections of race and gender, of heterosexism, transphobia, xenophobia, ableism, all of these social dynamics come together and create challenges that are sometimes quite unique" (Crenshaw 2018). Although not a millennial herself, Crenshaw's invention of intersectionality provided language for Pan-African millennials to use to explain their overlapping struggles.

Crenshaw's collaboration with millennial age people furthered the push for Pan-African intersectional activity online and led to the creation of Twitter movement #SayHerName, which highlights violence against African women. Crenshaw, along with her organization, African American Policy Forum (AAPF), helped popularize the #SayHerName movement to address the large numbers of African women killed by police officers. She used the hashtag to share and

bring awareness to the police killings of these young women as a means to summon greater outrage and advocacy over the matter. The hashtag gained mainstream notoriety in 2015 following the death of Sandra Bland while in police custody in Waller County, Texas (Brown, Ray, Summers, and Fraistat 2017). The hashtag sparked a dialogue about the media and the public's willingness to disregard the deaths of African women and prioritize the deaths of African men. It even pointed out #BlackLivesMatters' shortcomings in addressing the gender disparity in highlighting police killings.

Crenshaw's contribution to intersectional advocacy can be recognized by examining the way millennial Pan-Africanists have chosen to identify themselves and their politics. Somali-born millennial and U.S. congresswoman, Ilhan Omar, describes herself as an "Intersectional Feminist" in the information section of her Twitter profile. By identifying as an intersectional feminist, Omar has affirmed that she is not only interested in addressing gender-based feminist concerns, but in other factors that marginalize women including race, socioeconomic conditions, sexuality, and educational matters. As an African woman, Omar's feminist values and advocacy would have previously been seen as separate and distant from Pan-African affairs, but through an intersectional framework, it is recognized as interconnected to race issues. As will be discussed in the following passages, the introduction of intersectionality into the movement, a concept that Boyce believed was consciously omitted from 20th century Pan-Africanism (Boyce 2014), helped to build a new Pan-Africanism in the 21st century that is more inclusive and addresses the needs of people beyond the intellectual African male elite community it was initially suited to uplift.

Roderick Graham and Shawn Smith's article documenting the content produced by Black Twitter users associate African millennials' new diverse and intersectional voices and opinions with American critical theorist and feminist Nancy Fraser's concept of a 'counter public'. Fraser describes a 'counter public' as "parallel discursive arenas where members of subordinated social groups invent and circulate 'counter discourses' to formulate oppositional interpretations of their identities, interests, and needs". She further asserts that these new platforms function as "spaces of withdrawal and regroupment . . . and training grounds for agitational activities directed towards wider publics" and that "members of subordinated social groups—women, workers, peoples of color, and gays and lesbians—had repeatedly found it advantageous to constitute alternative publics" (Graham and Smith 2016:434).

Fraser's 'counter public' theory can also be used to identify the new Pan-African leaders of the 21st century. In their case, the public space for which they chose to congregate was Twitter. The intellectual origins of 20th century Pan-Africanism, though responsible for laying the primary groundwork for which 21st-century Pan-African ideology is based, largely represented the mainstream thoughts and ideas of the group's primary authorities — the intellectual African male elite. On Twitter, African women and LGBTQI people provided their own anecdotal accounts of Pan-Africanism that are based on experiences and perspectives that deviate from Pan-Africanism's 20th century male authorities, and therefore provided a counter view that may conflict with what has previously been articulated or written about the movement. These counter views subsequently led to new social activity based on what's best for this new more inclusive Pan-African social movement.

On Twitter these new Pan-African leaders formed sub-categories within the broader index of Pan-Africanism that specifically addressed Africanness or Blackness in relation to gender, economic class, political beliefs, age, and other identifying characteristics. Instead of these sub-communities identifying as separate entities whose interests were unrelated to or in direct contrast to traditional Pan-African beliefs, new millennial Pan-Africanists used Twitter to combine the issues of the sub-groups with the ideas of African upliftment and unity that Pan-Africanism's founding fathers believed in. This type of intersectional activism was largely spearheaded by leaders of Black Feminist Twitter and Black LGBTQ Twitter, both of which contributed significantly to Pan-Africanism as a whole and are some of Twitter's most active users (Knight Foundation 2018). Bass confirmed African queer activists' contribution to Pan-Africanism on and offline in a series of 2019 tweets. She stated "Young Black queer women activists and organizers represent an even more vulnerable subset among an already vulnerable population. Many are doing the daily work, on the ground, often with little to no resources or compensation, of organizing for our collective liberation" (@BreeNewsome 2019). She followed up on this message by tweeting, "The violence they face because of systematic racism & heterosexism is compounded by police state repression (in response to their organizing efforts) and bigotry from within the community" (@BreeNewsome 2019).

Arguably one of the largest African social movements of the 21st century, #BlackLivesMatter, was the product of the new intersectional Pan-African movement. Co-founded in 2013 on Twitter by activists Alicia Garza, Patrisse Cullors, and Opal Tometi, BLM was initially created to address the rising trend of unarmed African people being killed. The movement included protecting "the lives of Black queer and trans folks, disabled folks,

undocumented folks, folks with records, women, and all Black lives along the gender spectrum" as well as "those who have been marginalized within Black liberation movements" (BlackLivesMatter.com). As will be discussed later in this text, BLM's intersectional agenda was firmly championed by other dominant leaders and groups associated with Pan-Africanism's Twitter community. The popularity of BLM not only disrupted the gender hegemony of Pan-African leadership it also disrupted the language these leaders used and the ideas they advocated for. The presence of wide-spread movements concerned with the welfare and respect of African women represented a dramatic shift in Pan-Africanism, particularly on the social level.

Both America and Sub-Saharan Africa have witnessed a rise in new Pan-African leaders. Among these new leaders, a concern to share and connect with people around the continent and the diaspora about common social, political, and economic issues increased. Twitter as a connective platform notably provided a wide-reaching, generally accessible, and convenient way to enable this desire for communication. Mohutsiwa's 2016 Ted Talk about Africa's Twitter revolution revealed that "for the first time ever young Africans could discuss the future of their continent in real time without the restriction of borders, finances, and watchful governments. Because the little-known truth is, many Africans know a lot less about other African countries than some westerners might know about Africa as a whole (Mohutsiwa 2016)." In this digital age, Twitter's social reach has served the same purpose as Pan-African conferences and summits of the 20th century.

Whereas previously scholars, political activists, and general Pan-Africanists met in one centralized location on a bi-annual or annual basis to discuss policy change, upcoming events,

and resources to support global Pan-African efforts, in the age of social media, these conversations were happening in really time on Twitter. The efforts and financial investment contributed to organizing a Pan-African conference such as the All-African Peoples' Conference of 1958 held in Accra, Ghana, were no longer necessary to facilitate a conversation about Africa's affairs and grow connections among global African citizens. Furthermore, the accessibility of Twitter has allowed people who had previously been formally or informally excluded from these conferences (women, uneducated people, LGBTQ people, and low-income people) to actively participate and contribute to these Pan-African discussions. During BLM rallies, female leaders heading political marches and public protests would often share updates and news on Twitter revealing the purpose of the demonstrations as well as the overall outcome. These methods of communication are more immediately inclusive compared to the conferences of the 20th century.

In Mohutsiwa's speech, she acknowledged the pre-existing desire for a large number of African people, even those who do not directly consider themselves Pan-African, to communicate with one another, but lacking the means to do so. She explained that although Pan-Africanism's relevancy was being questioned by contemporary scholars she recognized that Twitter had the potential to reignite its relevancy among Black Twitter users if utilized by Pan-African leaders properly: "I realized that Pan-Africanism could work. That we had before us, between us, at our fingertips, a platform that just needed a small spark to light in us a hunger for each other (Mohutsiwa 2016)." This renewed hunger for people of African descent to communicate and exchange in meaningful dialogue, aligns with Nkrumah's desire for Black people of the diaspora and the continent to work towards forming a single African identity.

Mohutsiwa believe that the formation of an African identity, and subsequently a more successful Africa will be achieved once other African people, like herself, begin to employ Twitter to share and build with one another across economic, social, political, and national boundaries (Mohutsiwa 2016). In 2015 she reaffirmed her own commitment to using Twitter to promote Pan-Africanism by tweeting, "My dream is for a united Africa. And as a Pan-Africanist I want all Africans to move away from allegiance to the idea of nation-states" (@SiyandaWrites 2015).

4.2.2 Pan-Africanism's New Feminist Perspective

Prior to the rise of digital media, Black women were often given less prominent roles and recognition for their contribution in Pan-African movements (Davies 2014). Davies explained part of the isolation of women stating, "The tendency has been, however, in succeeding years to disarticulate feminist frameworks of analysis as unrelated to Pan-Africanist positions and thereby to minimize the work of Pan-Africanists who were women. This therefore includes limiting analyses to sometimes very narrow local, culturalist ethnic-based contexts" (Davies 2014:80). The deliberate separation between feminist ideologies and Pan-African ideologies by male authorities in the movement did much to discredit women, many of whom simultaneously advocated on behalf of feminism and Pan-Africanism. Mohutsiwa acknowledged the history of Pan-Africanism and Feminism's separation tweeting, "I am both a Black Consciousness advocate and a Pan-Africanist and I am also a Feminist. Why do I have to choose?" (@SiyandaWrites 2015). According to Davies' account, male Pan-Africanists only associated Pan-Africanism as an ethnic struggle meant to solely focus on uplifting the Black race without concern for gender, sex,

or other marginalized character traits. Shifts in Pan-African advocacy in the late 20th century further isolated women's interest and voices from the core of Pan-African advocacy. Davies spoke of this shift stating:

> "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). 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" (Davies 2014:83).

As a result of the limitations placed upon African female Pan-Africanists, and the general disinterest among African male Pan-African authorities to consider other marginalized identities, women who did participate in the movement were often forced to sacrifice their own well-being and interest in order to work within the patriarchal reigns of Pan-Africanism (Davies 2014). It was not until the introduction of social media that African women were provided a large global platform to openly share their own unique ideas about Pan-Africanism. Social media provide an environment in which the previous formal and informal gatekeepers of Pan-African theory and history (Western academic spaces and cis-gender intellectual African men) held no true authority, and therefore could not censor or mischaracterize the ideas of African female Pan-Africanist or their contributions. In particular, Black feminist Twitter, a sub-community of Black Twitter and Feminist Twitter dominated by African women, maintains significant authority in the digital space and is widely cited by media websites, journals, and academic texts in discussions related to Pan-African matters as well as general feminist matters (Knight Foundation 2018). The

integration of Black feminist thought in Pan-Africanism can largely be credited to the rise of Black feminist Twitter and their interests in advocating on behalf of African women as well as African men.

To truly understand the accomplishments of Pan-African women on Twitter, it is important to recognize the statistical reach and overall social and political influence of the movements they've created. BLM is one of the greatest examples of a largescale Pan-African movement led by African female Twitter users. Although founded in the U.S. and sparked by violence against American-born Africans, the organization's decision to use the term 'Black' rather than 'African Americans' illustrates the movement's commitment to the global struggle of protecting and encouraging all African people. The official BLM website states, "The call for Black lives to matter is a rallying cry for ALL Black lives striving for liberation." The movement promises to fight for "Black queer and trans folks, disabled folks, undocumented folks, folks with records, women and all Black lives along the gender spectrum" (BlackLivesMatter.com). These intersectional beliefs have attracted great support on social media. On Twitter alone, over 300,000 users follow the official BLM Twitter page, and as of July 2018, the BLM hashtag (#BlackLivesMatter) had been used on Twitter almost 30 million times (Cohen 2018). As a result of the movement's success, BLM's founders Garza, Cullors, and Tometi, are now recognized as true authorities of Pan-Africanism. Much like the male leaders of the 20th century, the founders have been cited in scholarly works, appeared on talk shows, organized protests, met with political leaders, and introduced new concepts and ideas.

BLM's popularity on and off Twitter can be attributed to a number of factors, including African women's inclination to push for an inclusive agenda that is representative of all people

of African ancestry regardless of socioeconomic class, age, gender, or sexual preference. Women like Newsome echoed BLM's dedication to intersectionality on Twitter through using pro-intersectional language and publicly addressing the wide variety of oppressive conditions that affect African people. Newsome encouraged Pan-African movements to adopt intersectionality by tweeting, "It is not possible to advocate for the liberation of Black people while permitting the exploitation and silencing via intimidation of Black women + LGBTQ" (@BreeNewsome 2019). Millennial scholar and Black political commentator Jenn M. Jackson shared her support of Pan-African intersectionality by tweeting, "I'm an unapologetic Black queer Feminist who believes none of us are free until all of us are free. This means I support prison abolition, investment in Black and Brown communities, transformative justice, and protection of Black trans women at all costs" (@JennMJack 2019). Without explicitly mentioning Pan-Africanism in their tweets, Newsome and Jackson's use of the words 'liberation' and 'free' in relation to all African people reflects the language and goals of 20th-century Pan-African movements. The primary difference between this new form of advocacy and previous movements is the demographic of recognized leaders and the distribution channels for which their thoughts and ideas are shared.

On Twitter, the BLM movement and hashtag have sought to centralize and amplify the voices of female Pan-Africanists and new intersectional Pan-African theories. In fact, Abigail Sewell (2018) suggests that BLM attempts to curate underrepresented voices and ideologies is at the core of the movement's philosophy. According to Sewell, "It is not sufficient, then, to tie BLM to ideas that do not centrally integrate the resistive theorizing and movements of black queer and black feminist thinkers, activists, and communities. Black queer, feminist, and intersectional thought is not a mere thread of BLM; it is the central thread of #BlackLivesMatter

and its intellectual lineage" (Sewell:144). As the founders of BLM, Garza, Cullors, and Tometi, have sought to promote these new intersectional Pan-African concepts by utilizing platforms like Twitter to highlight the voices of the other African women developing new intersectional ideas. Through retweeting posts, engaging in public dialogue, and documenting African women's work on Twitter, the founders created an informal digital historical index that chronicles the contributions and ideologies produced by African women as a way to ensure that their issues and ideas could no longer be ignored or overshadowed.

The formation of a digital sisterhood has built a sense of camaraderie that famed 20th-century African feminist and writer Audre Lorde (1978) considered necessary in the fight against African oppression. In her short essay "Scratching the Surface Some Notes On Barriers to Women and Loving", Lorde explained, "When black women in this country come together to examine our source of strength and support, and to recognize our common social, cultural, emotional, and political interests, it is a development which can only contribute to the power of the Black community as a whole" (Lorde 1978:46). Pan-African millennial women's tendency to describe themselves as Black Feminist on Twitter and advocate for one another reveals their commitment to stimulating African female unity. In October 2018 BLM's Garza tweeted, "Black. Queer. Femme. Feminist. I vote. I get others to vote. Change laws. Change culture. Vote em all out. Transform power so this NEVER happens again. I believe in us and my money is always on Black women" (@AliciaGarza 2018). Bass confirmed Audre's philosophy by tweeting, "I agree with others that the focus should be on how we are supporting, uplifting and empowering the young Black queer and women organizers who have been on the front lines against police

violence since before there was any money or spotlight attached to it" (@BreeNewsome 2019). Professor Barbara Ransby (2018) documented the value of African feminist allegiance stating:

> "Black feminist organizing is situated within a larger political context, and the reason I think it's important is not just because I'm a black woman but it's that the politics of intersectionality are radically inclusive politics, and they're radical politics in the sense of they get to the root of injustices, multiple injustices, not just single issues. And so, in that sense, it is a set of politics that promises transformative change if we embrace it. So, we have to think of rethinking the schools, rethinking the economic system, rethinking prisons, all of that is a part of the mission of black feminist work. So, if we do that work, we end up with a more just society" (Ransby 2018).

This new community of African female Twitter users collectively sharing ideas and organizing publicly is a radical move that has disrupted the hegemony African men previously held over Pan-African leadership and social activity. The mere act of African women publicly voicing their concerns on Twitter, specifically concerns that challenged Pan-African concepts introduced by African men, was an extreme act of defiance that in the 20th century would have been met with great hostility and possibly quelled by not only non-African people but African men as well. According to Lorde, Black men of the 20th century viewed "sexism and the destruction of Black women as tangential to Black liberation rather than as central to that struggle" (Lorde 1979:64). Because sexism is something that adversely affects African women more than men, it was delegitimized within race centered Pan-African ideology.

African women who publicly spoke about sexism and feminism, or organized groups that addressed these issues, were vigorously challenged and sometimes physically harmed by African men and other groups who felt the need to discourage this discourse out of fear that it would

overshadow male-centered issues (Lorde 1979). Finland-born Nigerian female journalist Minna Salami, founder of *MsAfropolitan* a Pan-Africanist feminist blog followed by many Pan-African millennials, acknowledged this history of anti-feminism within Pan-African movements. She tweeted a quote from female Nigerian poet Molara Ogundipe-Leslie that stated, "They like to declare they're not feminists, as if it were a crime to be a feminist. The denials come from unlikely writers such as Bessie Head, Buchi Emecheta, even Mariama Bâ, I put this down to the successful intimidation of African women by men" (@MsAfropolitan 2018).

The threat of being dismissed or ostracized from contributing to Pan-African thought was lessened by Twitter's digital sisterhood, which often collectively worked together to ward off the extreme hate speech and threats on Twitter that disproportionately affects this group more than any other group (Amnesty International 2018). This sort of collective action on Twitter has provided African women a space to introduce new ideologies and insert their unique struggles into mainstream Pan-African dialogue with little censorship, less risk of violent repercussions, and a wider audience than ever before. The Twitter hashtag #ProtectBlackWomen was used to petition for the protection of African women in the future and those who were silenced and mistreated in the past. Pan-African millennial female activist Brittany Packnett used #ProtectAllWomen in a tweet that stated, "We will not be silent while Black Women are abused. We are our sister's keepers!" (@MsPackyetti 2018). In defense of African sports journalist, Jemele Hill's controversial suspension from the ESPN network and subsequent Twitter attack from Donald Trump, Pan-African millennial female activists, and speaker Tia Oso tweeted, "Now it's Jemele Hill. Anyone keeping count of how many Black women this administration and its surrogates have targeted? #ProtectBlackWomen" (@Tia_Osos 2017).

The hashtag #ListenToBlackWomen is another prime example of how millennials on Twitter have petitioned to centralize Pan-African women's voices. The hashtag first gained significant attention following the 2016 U.S. presidential election. According to African writer Bee Quammie, the popularity of #ListenToBlackWomen stems from the immense opposition African women on Twitter publicly waged against Donald Trump prior to and during the election. "Black women globally have been speaking out about systemic inequalities for decades —in politics, criminal justice, housing, socioeconomics, and more. We've also shared our perspectives on what will push society forward to a more equitable future. However, it wasn't until Trump entered the White House that America—and the world at large— turned a more attentive ear to the words of Black women" (Quammie 2018).

People of various races, ages, and genders used #ListenToBlackWomen to emphasize the value in listening to African women and to encourage people to not disregard African women's opinions or experiences, as they are extremely relevant and capable of dismantling all oppressive structures. Egyptian feminist Mona Eltahawy used this hashtag in a recent tweet to illustrate a pattern of African women's opinions only being legitimized once white women co-sign them. She tweeted, "I moved to the US in 2000. I'm a sexual assault survivor. I've been angry forever. I know from living here that until white women express or feel something it isn't considered real. The reason #ListenToBlackWomen should be everyone's mantra is because if you did, we would be free" (@MonaEltahawy 2018). Eltahawy's encouragement to #ListenToBlackWomen was a rallying call meant to urge people to recognize the power African women have to liberate African people as well as other marginalized groups. Many other Pan-African Twitter users have ushered this sentiment. African female journalist Kenya Downs tweeted "Pointing out that

@rosaclemente been saying for weeks the death toll in #PuertoRico was false & really well into 100s. #ListenToBlackWomen" (@LiveFromKenya 2017) and African female activist Leslie Mac tweeted, "OWN YOUR SHIT. THAT is what Allyship looks like. And for fucks safe [15]#ListenToBlackWomen PERIOD" (@LeslieMac 2017).

Highlighting the consequences of silencing African women has been a key component of the hashtag #ListenToBlackWomen. Huffington Post writer Ja'han Jones asserts that the hashtag must recognize centuries of African women's voices and not allow their previous grievances and struggles to go unacknowledged, particularly the ones that still persist today. Jones wrote, "If 'listen to black women' is to mean anything substantive, it will require that we not only listen to black women in the here and now, but also the black women in our past. Their political impact remains with us even if they themselves have inexplicably been erased from our national memory" (Jones 2018). Jones' analysis of #ListenToBlackWomen illustrates a pattern of Pan-African Twitter using the hashtag to highlight long-standing issues that have been historically overlooked. This includes the safety and wellness of African women, which has proven to be a great threat to African people for centuries, and now African millennial women.

African U.S. Senator Kamala Harris, adopted the #ListenToBlackWomen generation to publicly address a large number of African women who have died during or directly after childbirth. In August 2018 Kamala tweeted, "Racial bias against Black mothers in the health care system is real. It impacts women from all walks of life and it has devastating consequences. Last week, I introduced the Maternal CARE Act to help address this public health crisis. #ListenToBlackWomen" (@SenKamalaHarris 2018). Harris used the hashtag to illustrate the

[15] As directly quoted

negative impact of anti-African racism and how it contributed to silencing African women's voices. She also acknowledged the long-standing period of neglect and presented a solution to eradicate this issue. Her tweet is a prime example of how African women have utilized Twitter and popular hashtags as a tool to publicize their opinions and ignite change in the pursuit of African upliftment.

4.2.3 Pan-Africanism and the LGBTQI Community

African LGBTQI people have been major contributors to Pan-African movements. In the 20th century, activist Bayard Rustin, writer James Baldwin, writer, and activist Audre Lorde were all LGBTQI identifying people (Johnson 2018) who produced works and engaged in sociopolitical activities that centered Pan-African ideologies. Although Rustin, Baldwin, and Lorde's contributions to the movement as it relates to race have been well documented and are considered important pieces of Pan-African literature, the works they published that included gender and sexual advocacy were less highly regarded in mainstream Pan-African circles. In fact, many of the LGBTQI Pan-Africanists at the time purposely did not publicly address their gender or sexuality in their work or in general (Lorde 1979). The hyper-focus on race in 20th century Pan-Africanist, combined with African communities documented hostility towards LGBTQI people due to religious and traditional cultural values (Barnes and Meyer 2012) created a condition that silenced LGBTQI Pan-Africanists from including the agendas and issues of their communities in their work. It forced this group to create separate movements of their own that would directly address their unique experiences as African and LGBTQI people. The exclusion

of LGBTQI issues demonstrates that not only was Pan-African ideology a reflection of African intellectual males, it also centralized heterosexual people.

The visibility of LGBTQI people on Twitter encouraged new Pan-African leadership that is more transparent about their gender and sexual preferences, and willing to engage in public discussions about the experiences of African LGBTQI people. Twitter has allowed this group to congregate in a virtual world that lessens the threat of danger that had previously helped to silence their voices (Lorde 1979). It also provided a space where they could organize around issues that are both exclusive to their experience and central to Pan-Africanism as a whole. Some of the most popular millennial LGBTQI Pan-African leaders on Twitter include Janet Mock, DeRay Mckesson, Johnetta Elzie, and two of the BLM co-founders, Alicia Garza and Patrisse Cullors. These leaders, who have publicly identified as either trans, homosexual, or queer, have all used Twitter to stress the need for intersectional Pan-African activity that included fighting for issues that primarily affect African LGBTQI people. New Pan-African organizations like Pan Africa International Lesbian Gay Bisexual Trans and Intersex Alliance (PAILGA) have also used Twitter to highlight these issues. Tweets like "I am a BLACK gay person fighting for us and yet some of the black won't fight for me. That ain't the revolution, family. #BlackLivesMatter" (@Moore_Darnell 2015) from African writer Moore Darnell, presents an argument for the inclusion of intersectional African ideologies into the same African 'revolution' that 20th-century Pan-Africanists Malcolm X and Marcus Garvey called for.

Pan-African millennial female writer and LGBTQI activist Janet Mock used her Twitter account to address issues related to African women's rights and LGBTQI issues. In 2014 she tweeted her dedication to intersectionality proclaiming, "My key issue is intersectionality. As a

young, poverty-raised #TWoC, I can't live a single-identity life" (@JanetMock 2014). As an African trans woman, much of Mock's activism on and off of Twitter focuses on securing the rights of African trans people and highlighting the issues that affect them most. Mock is one of the most outspoken and recognized African trans activists on Twitter with over 170,000 followers. She rose to prominence on the platform through sharing African LGBTQ content that mainstream media outlets ignored and through the creation of the Twitter hashtag #GirlsLikeUs. Mock created #GirlsLikeUs in 2012 to "be an encouraging space, for debate, for love, for hope, for struggles. I want younger girls to have the space to be frivolous, to talk about transition, to talk about genitals if they want, to ask after the types of procedures people had, etc. It's your choice to answer or not. I also want it to be a space where women can discuss hot topics, debate about issues, point out privilege blind spots, and share new articles, policies and essays regarding issues facing trans women and women in general" (JanetMock.com). Although Mock has confirmed that #GirlsLikeUs, which has been used over 150 000 times on Twitter (Jackson, Bailey, Welles 2018), is not exclusive to women of color, organizations like QWOC Media (Queer Women of Color) adopted the movement as something that first and foremost represents QWOC, since, unlike the media and other mainstream movements, it highlights the stories of QWOC and was started by an African woman (McCarrol 2012).

Mock's dedication to intersectionality is not purely related to African feminist and trans movements. In discussing #BlackLivesMatter, Mock is also a stark proponent of African upliftment and applies Pan-African ideologies to interconnect the struggles of all African people, regardless of sex or gender. In an interview with Mic she explained her dedication to intersectionality stating, "For me, it's always about trying to communicate nuance and

complication, and the fact that none of us are just one thing. We are all many things, and we experience all of those things and those identities and those facets of ourselves simultaneously, not separately. When I talk about race, I have to also talk about class and gender. I cannot leave race or gender or class behind" (Mock 2017). In her work, Mock has been vocal about the shift in African leadership and how this shift has contributed to the progressiveness of African unity and upliftment. During a keynote speech at Binghamton University's Black Student Union, Mock explained that the voices that are heard the most in the African community "tend to be cis-gendered, straight, college-educated black men. That's who the microphone usually tends to go to. We're in a space now where the charismatic male leader is being challenged" (Mock 2016). Mock considered male-dominated leadership a threat to intersectionality, as it only tended to focus on race and not other external factors. Mock explained, "If you look at many racial justice, feminist and LGBT activist coalitions, one is on race, one is on gender and one is on sexuality. Because we work and think in a single identity focus politic, we forget certain people that don't simply fall in line, and they fall in between the cracks of those coalitions."

Activist DeRay Mckesson's rise to social media prominence is yet another prime example of Twitter's ability to empower previously underrepresented LGBTQI voices. With over 1 million Twitter followers, Mckesson, who identifies as a homosexual Black man, is one of the most notable and followed Pan-African activist on Twitter. Compared to the Black male Pan-African leaders of the 20th century, Mckesson's sexual preference and willingness to openly disclose and celebrate this is outside of the norm. Mckesson credits Twitter as one of the primary tools that have enabled him to speak out about issues that he felt mainstream media outlets were not covering or were misrepresenting, especially as it relates to African people. Mckesson spoke

on the fearlessness Twitter enables stating, “For so many of us, the world is a place where we're not supposed to make noise, where we're asked to hide who we are and be silent about the injustices that we face” (Mckesson 2015). Although his most notable contribution to Pan-African activity on Twitter has been his work documenting the Ferguson protest and other Black Lives Matter protest around the world, he has also used the platform to successfully petition for meetings with presidential candidates, organize protests, and share data and historical accounts that are centered on Blackness and the interconnection of all African people. Mckesson affirmed that centralizing Blackness and its diversity has defined and helped improve much of the work he has done:

> “One of the many unintended consequences of the [Black Lives Matter] movement has been opening up space for talking about the complexity of black identity and that blackness is not monolithic. It’s so many things to so many people. People have different identities. We’re talking about the trans community in public in ways that we haven’t before. As a gay black man it’s important to me to show up — that I’m able to show up as my whole self, in every space that I’m in, because that’s how I’m able to be the most true to who I am” (Mckesson 2016).

Media reports and individuals inside and outside the movement have labeled Mckesson one of the most influential members within Pan-African social movements. This popularity, according to Netta, can be attributed to his maleness. Even though the originators of the Black Lives Matter movement and his fellow Ferguson leader are all prominent members of the Pan-African community, it is suspected that Mckesson’s gender led him to garner more than three times the amount of Twitter followers and countless television appearances and speaking engagements. His partner Netta explained that he accumulated such a disproportionate amount of

notoriety “because the media still wants the token black man, even though he is not straight” (Netta 2016). Unlike in the past where Mckesson’s maleness may have led to a dangerous overshadowing of African women and represented a male-dominated agenda, his sexuality still places him in a space within Pan-Africanism where he is ideologically marginalized. According to a feature Mock wrote about Mckesson, he “challenges the myth that blackness is synonymous with male, cisgender, and heterosexual. Their leadership upends the myth that the leader of the movement must be a black straight man. Mckesson’s blackness stands at the intersection of racial identity and queerness in the black political movement” (Mock 2016).

Other Pan-African leaders have also inserted LGBTQI issues into mainstream discussions related to Pan-Africanism. As queer women leading the biggest contemporary Pan-African movement, Garza and Cullors used their powerful platforms to dictate what and who deserves advocacy. African transgender women’s rights were one of many LGBTQI issues BLM addressed. Using Twitter, BLM called for African cis-gender women and men (people who identify as the sex they were assigned at birth) to hold rallies in their city to bring attention to the increasingly high murder rate of African trans women. Additional efforts have been made on Twitter to centralize the voices of African trans people, including the introduction of hashtag #AllBlackLivesMatter, which is often used in conjunction with #BlackTransLivesMatter. African model and singer who goes by the stage name, The Vixen, tweeted “Remember that your fave Black Drag Queens are Black Men by day…and we face real oppression in these streets. So treat the black men at the club and in the street with the same respect you treat me. Because, I’m no different. #AllBlackLivesMatter” (@TheVixensworld 2018).

The hashtag was also used to raise awareness of the anti-African and anti-trans attacks that occurred around the globe. African millennial female model Munroe Bergdorf tweeted, "In the UK two in five trans people (41 percent) have experienced a hate crime or incident because of their gender identity in the last 12 months #stopkillingus #blacktranslivesmatter" (@MunroeBergdorf 2018). In February 2017 the official BLM Twitter account tweeted, "Seven Transwomen of Color have been murdered so far in 2017, and SIX of them are Black. #BlackTransLivesMatter (@Blklivesmatter 2017). In 2014 BLM also released a series of statistics on Twitter that included, "41% Black trans women report being arrested at some point, often after having been profiled by the police #BlackTransLivesMatter" (@Blklivesmatter 2015). Like African women who utilized #ListenToBlackWomen, LGBTQI people made their voices heard with #BlackTransLivesMatter, and used the hashtag to centralize their voices in the larger mainstream context of Pan-Africanism.

4.3 Intersectional Leaders Fueling Pan-African Grassroots Twitter Activism

4.3.1 Pan-African Millennials' Protests Against Police Violence in the U.S.

The new intersectional Pan-African millennial leaders on Twitter leveraged their extensive digital audience and authority over the past six years to encourage grassroots social activism on and offline. Although many of these Pan-African movements began and were fueled on Twitter, the impact they've had on the movement extends beyond the scope of social media. More than just a tool to document African resistance and existence, Twitter was utilized to organize offline

protests, petition for boycotts, and encourage users to become active in political, economic, cultural, and social matters that impact African people. African women and LGBTQI people once again led the charge on this type of Pan-African social activity by heavily sharing valuable information on Twitter through imagery, retweets, hashtags, and other literary mediums.

One of Twitter's biggest Pan-African grassroots moments occurred in 2014 during a time when thousands of African activists gathered in Ferguson, Missouri (U.S) to protest the police killing of unarmed American-born African teenager, Michael Brown. African Twitter users mobilized to share images and videos from the protests and called for donations and organization on the ground. This was a landmark event that helped solidify the importance of the relationship between Pan-Africanism and Twitter and catapulted some of its top leaders into mainstream conversations (*The New York Times* 2015). Mckesson confirmed the power of Twitter in Pan-African social movements like Ferguson when he tweeted, "We exist in a tradition of erased histories. Twitter has helped us tell our own story. We are sitting in history and making it. #Ferguson" (@deray 2014). Leading African Ferguson activist Zellie Imani additionally shared his thoughts on Twitter's impact tweeting, "Twitter activism? Whatever you want to call it, strangers through Internet communication are helping protestors in #Ferguson. That's real" (@zellieimani 2014).

Mckesson was very successful at encouraging grassroots social action through Twitter. He first gained notoriety among Pan-Africanists on Twitter through live tweeting his experiences protesting Ferguson. In fact, Mckesson was initially made aware of the events in Ferguson after he himself uncovered footage and tweets shared by Ferguson activists (DeRay 2016). As an activist on the ground, Mckesson shared footage of himself and others being tear-gassed by

police, as well as various other forms of violence protestors experienced in Ferguson. He felt compelled to share his experience on Twitter to show a counter-narrative to what was and was not reported by mainstream media outlets. Mckesson found that "CNN was sort of painting this picture about chaos and Twitter and Instagram were painting a picture about pain" (Mckesson 2015). The pain Mckesson referred to can be found in tweets from Imani who in 2015 shared, "My biggest fear is I won't hear about the next Black man being killed by police because it'll be me" (@zellieimani 2015).

Mckesson's activity on Twitter during the Ferguson protests encouraged other protestors to share their experiences and advocate on behalf of the cause. Users did their part by retweeting and sharing Twitter posts to bring attention to important moments, and many were inspired to contribute to protests and demonstrations offline. African people on Twitter used the events in Ferguson to voice their concerns about related forms of African oppression including violence against African people by police, the censorship of African voices, as well as the misrepresentation of African people in the media. Users documented their displeasure with the treatment of African people and demanded many of the same rights as the Pan-African activists that preceded them–better education, political empowerment, and the removal of racist policies and social and political structures. In a HuffPost video, Imani confirmed the empowering nature of this time of self-documentation and why it was important that African people had the platform to tell their own stories. Imani stated, "A lot of us don't rely on the mass media we rely on ourselves, we rely on our own voices. We really rely on ourselves as authoritative figures and experts in our own lives and experts in what's going on in the streets" (Imani 2015).

On Twitter, this new generation of digital Pan-Africanists replaced the old regime to assume the role of documentarians and knowledge producers. However, unlike the Pan-Africanists of the 20th century that used formal academic channels and literature to share ideas, organize, and promote Pan-Africanism, this new generation benefited from having the ability to informally spread their messages on Twitter in a less censored manner and to larger audiences. Pan-Africanists on Twitter had direct access to the people they wished to address and were able to share and interact with people in real-time and organize support for social initiatives at rapid rates.

The access to leaders also encouraged greater social activity from less notable and recognized Pan-Africanists and provided a large audience the language and knowledge to characterize the African struggle. In Abigail Sewell's article "The intersectional, structuralist, and anti-geneticism centres of Black Lives Matter" she explained, "Through a social media call-and-response tactic engineered by the young adults of today, Garza, Cullors, and Tometi created a cultural toolkit of language scripts and narrative symbols to question Americans' resolve to realize equity for black, brown, indigenous, queer, poor, and disenfranchized people" (Sewell 2018:1146). The new 21st-century Pan-Africanist's language was characterized in movements through Twitter hashtags like #BlackLivesMatter, #BlackTransLivesMatter, #SayHerName, #RhodesMustFall, and #GandhiMustFall. Without explicitly mentioning Pan-Africanism, these users were participating in Pan-African social activity by using these hashtags to fight for the betterment of all African people.

4.3.2 Pan-African Millennial Students' Movements to Remove Colonial Memorials

According to Wasserman (2005:177), continental Africans' interest in facilitating social change in Africa through new media networks was a reaction against globalization. Wasserman asserted that new media "acted as the 'connective tissue'" of anti-globalization movements in Africa and "therefore, the global reach of new media technologies has meant that the very forces whose negative consequences are being protested on a global scale can be harnessed for these protests." He also confirmed that in the early 2000s information and communication technologies (ICTs) "raised hopes of serving as a new media 'commons' where community movements, activists, and social interest groups may share information more freely and with less of the space limitations and distribution problems than is the case in traditional media (Kidd 2003)." (Wasserman 2005:178). Wasserman's early research on 21st-century Pan-African social organizations' use of new media technology (internet, email and cell phone messaging), foreshadowed an even bigger trend of continental Pan-Africanists using new media technology like social media to further their social movements.

Over the last six years, Millennial Pan-African students living in Africa have employed Twitter to aid in the success of their biggest and most controversial social movements. Like BLM, student leaders of South Africa's #RhodesMustFall and #FeesMustFall movements employed the use of the internet to organize their peers and share their goals and ideas, which included forcing South African universities to remove colonial influence from their curriculum and learning environment (Francis and Hardman 2018). UCT and Rhodes University students, including a large number of women and LGBTQI activists, were at the forefront of the

movement with UCT students demanding Rhodes' statue be removed, and RU students demanding the institution's name be changed. One of RMF's primary missions was to force universities to remove colonial memorials from their campuses in order to decolonize the space and break the university's ties with imperialism (Masondo 2015). On Twitter South African user Kwizera questioned Rhodes University's decision to maintain a colonial leader's name. Kwizera tweeted, "Why is this university still name after Cecil Rhodes, the man who paved the way for apartheid?" (@therealkwizera).

As a student-led movement, RMF activists were the 21st century members of the intellectual class that led many Pan-African movements in the 20th century. The primary difference between this new group of leaders, besides their new demographically diverse makeup, was their ability to combine their intellectual knowledge and access to higher education with the popularity of social media activism in order to reach wider audiences and produce knowledge in less formal and censored spaces. From the beginning of the movement, UCT students used an official #RhodesMustFall Twitter page to organize protests and meetings for members and prospective members (Francis and Hardman 2018). Twitter was used as a news sharing and consumption platform that provided first-hand accounts live from student protests and information about the goals of the movement. Users like African Feminist Phumzile Van Damme outlined her hopes for RMF tweeting, "The #RhodesMustFall debate must go beyond the statue to address substantive transformation & creating an inclusive campus #RhodesHasFall" (@zilevandamme 2015.)

Videos and photos of students' interactions with police and school officials were shared on social media by students, journalists, and supporters. Students of the movement also took to

Twitter to share their thoughts and ideas about what was happening on campus, particularly because they were displeased with the way South African and international media companies were covering the protests (Bosch 2016). African artists and writers shared their irritation about the way the media reported on the movement, and how it decentralized the students from the conversation tweeting, "Formal media is so predictable. The young people who started #RhodesMustFall should be the ones on the interview circuit, not politicians" (@victordlamini 2015). Twitter allowed activists to confront the issues of media misrepresentation, engage with the media and respond to published articles to either confirm or dispute their stories. According to Bosch, "#RMF successfully set the agenda for public debate in other virtual and real-world spaces including campus workshops and meetings, as well as mainstream print and broadcast media; and that the Twitter discourse also played a key role in public perception of the movement" (Bosch 2016:2). Twitter allowed RMF activists to document their own experiences and become the leaders of their own narratives.

In the spirit of Pan-Africanism, the RMF movement expanded for a united front beyond the borders of South Africa and sparked similar movements in the UK at Oxford University. Students from South Africa, neighboring Sub-Saharan African countries, and the diaspora engaged in conversations on Twitter about the necessity for universities to remove colonial symbols from their campus and institute memorials and a curriculum that properly reflects African people and their history (Francis and Hardman 2018). American-based African millennial sociologist Crystal Marie Fleming tweeted, "I'm so incredibly proud of the student protests challenging racism on campuses across the globe #ConcernedStudent1950 #RhodesMustFall" (@alwaystheself 2015). American-based Imani tweeted, "The Black

Liberation Movement is internationalist. #WitsFeesMustFall #RhodesMustFall" (@zellieimani 2015). The removal of the statue in 2015 marked a major milestone in the history of Pan-African Twitter grassroots activism and global unity.

The conversations surrounding RMF and similar movements on Twitter inspired other African nations to create grassroots movements of their own to address racist memorials in their homeland. As mentioned earlier, in 2016 Ghanaian students and faculty created the Twitter hashtag #GandhiMustFall to successfully petition for the removal of Mahatma Gandhi statues on university campuses. Petitions were shared on Twitter that garnered thousands of signatures, and activists on campus shared their experiences working to have the statues removed. African people around the world showed solidarity with the movement and used the hashtag to share information on Twitter about Gandhi that revealed a history of anti-African and racist behavior (Kondowe 2018). On Twitter, Mohutsiwa shared an image of an anti-African Gandhi quote and accompanied the image with the statement, "Gandhi, your hero". The quote read, "Ours is one continued struggle sought to be inflicted upon us by the Europeans, who desire to degrade us to the level of the raw Kaffir, whose occupation is hunting, whose sole ambition is to collect a certain number of cattle to buy a wife, and then pass his life in indolence and nakedness" (@SiyandaWrites 2016).

Africans on Twitter revealed a counter-narrative that disputed Gandhi's mainstream characterization as a peaceful protester that fought diligently for independence. Queer African millennial political analyst Preston Mitchum tweeted, "Ya'll really have to stop putting Gandhi on a pedestal when he was racist. Y'all have to stop thinking King led a "non-violent" revolution" (@PrestonMitchum 2017). African millennial multidisciplinary artist Ferrari

Sheppard shared, “Gandhi was an anti-black racist and who slept naked with girls to ‘test his faith’ which is why I never tell oppressed people to be like him” (@stopbeingfamous 2018). Ghanaian millennial musician who goes by the stage name M.anifest tweeted, “Imagine my surprise whiles in college when I discovered Gandhi’s racist South African past. It all boils down to who controls the narrative” (@manifestive 2016). Mitchum’s, Sheppard’s, and M.anifest’s words against Gandhi were used to expose him for sharing words that attacked the image and value of African people. Like with RMF, GMF supporters on Twitter wanted to rid educational spaces from anti-African emblems and false academic narratives that could potentially taint the ethos and adversely affect the educational experience of African students. In the early 1900s, Pan-Africanist Carter G. Woodson similarly took on this subject in his literature where he addressed the need for pro-African academic spaces controlled by forward-thinking African people.

The GMF movement spread throughout Africa with other African nations calling for the removal of Gandhi memorials. This petition grew to include Malawi, which as of February 2019, continues to fight against the construction of a Gandhi statue in the heart of Blantyre (Kondowe 2018). Twitter users also called out Ethiopia, Tanzania, and the U.S. for their statues of Gandhi and demanded their removal.

The global movements to remove anti-African emblems not only illustrates African people’s stand against racism but the ability for African people on social media to unite for a common cause across geographical boundaries. Twitter users from the continent and the diaspora all offered their solidarity for the movement by using GMF, RMF, and FMF hashtags to bring attention to the movement on a global platform and centralize the discussions. This sort of

collective social effort has become the norm in relation to contemporary Pan-Africanism's most popular and successful grassroots movements.

Chapter 5

Conclusion

This thesis sought to analyze Twitter's role between 2012 and 2018 in contributing to the new way Black millennials of African ancestry produced 21st Century Pan-African knowledge and social activity. The research presented illustrated Twitter's ability to empower new intersectional voices within Pan-Africanism and provide new tools for which Africans around the world used to engage in social activity. To best highlight this relationship between Twitter and Pan-Africanism, I quoted tweets, explained key hashtags, and documented the contributions of some of Pan-Africanism's new intersectional voices. This qualitative method of research provided first-hand accounts from those participating in Pan-African social activity as well as my own personal analysis of this trend. I believe this research provided a brief understanding of how Pan-Africanists of today view social media and the ways in which they are using it to shift the movement's trajectory.

As illustrated by Castell's 'Network Theory of Power' and Gerbaudo's analysis of the research's connection with social media, the advancements in 21st-century technology have made a significant impact on the way people communicate and absorb knowledge. Twitter has allowed for a new autonomous curation of news, knowledge, and ideas to be shared with masses audiences will little monitoring or restriction by the government, mainstream media, or the company that operates these gateways of information sharing. As a result of these new channels of less-restricted communication, previously overshadowed or underrepresented voices have been able to leverage the reach of social media to gain local or global recognition and share

information that had previously not been widely dispersed. Pan-Africanism, analyzed in this paper as a social ideological concept, was a direct beneficiary of Twitter's network of power. Pan-African Women and LGBTQI people benefited greatly from the platform, as they were able to use the social media website to take leadership positions in social movements that were previously reserved for African intellectual males. Subsequently, this new shift in Pan-African leaders also contributed to the shift in Pan-African social activity, which benefited from new ideas and new ways to organize and share information.

African women and LGBTQI people used Twitter to develop a counterculture of online individuals whose voices had not been properly documented in Pan-Africanist movements of the 20th century. Through the use of Twitter tools like hashtags, retweeting, and favoriting, this group was able to disperse their ideas spread around the world and redistribute the ideas of other users. The more retweets, shares, and hashtags used gave African women and LGBTQI people more authority within the realm of Pan-African knowledge creation and social activism. These new intersectional leaders used their authority to share ideas that, because of their status, had higher credibility and became a part of mainstream Pan-African knowledge. Garza, Cullors, and Tometi illustrated the desirability of intersectionality and women's leadership in Pan-Africanism with the success of BLM. Similarly, Mock and other African LGBTQI activists revealed African LGBTQI people's dedication to including their struggles within the larger scope of Pan-Africanism with hashtags like #BlackTransLivesMatter and #AllBlackLivesMatter. They also used these hashtags to document the new language people were using to display allegiance to goals that mirrored traditional 20th-century Pan-African ideas.

The global African community's participation in Pan-African social activity on Twitter, led by intersectional African women and LGBTQI people, reveals a major shift in Pan-Africanism. Because of Twitter, African intellectual men's voices are no longer centered in mainstream Pan-African knowledge. The global reach and great access Twitter provides underrepresented and marginalized voices resolved a long-standing issue among Pan-African movements that tended to only perpetuate ideas produced by African intellectual men. Twitter enabled African women, LGBTQI individuals, low-income and uneducated people to share their stories that intersex race issues with sex, gender, and class issues. The intersectional ideologies that had been integrated into Pan-African movements and championed on Twitter showed a willingness for African people to be more inclusive in their fight for upliftment, and subsequently rally bigger crowds to congregate on behalf of African upliftment in a very public and social way. This thesis has shown that Twitter's technological and communicative tools were used by millennials between 2012 and 2018 to build and promote a more inclusive and wide-reaching Pan-African movement that encouraged new ideologies, including new social activity, political movements, and intersectional leadership that were not previously manifested in mainstream 20th-century Pan-African movements. In these new political online activities a new 21st century definition of Pan-Africanism and knowledge is being formed and articulated.

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