The Contradictions of Recapturing a Relevant Past: Pan-Africanism in the age of (predatory) Globalization

When the "object" gazed at is called Africa and when the gazing subject is Africa, the observer cannot help but conclude that any gaze that is related to Africa is an intersection of gazes calling forth several questions: Who is looking at Africa? What is Africa looking at? Who looks at the one who is looking at Africa? Two problems emerge from this: the identification of the subject, and the discrimination among objects and themes produced by the limited scope of these gazes. If the gaze at (or of) Africa is an intersection of perspectives, these perspectives will only find stability if they are related to the African history that is in the making. This is a plural history, for geographic diversity, and the multiplicity of acting figures and sociopolitical organizations give African history a "changeable and diverse" character.

---Jean-Godefroy Bidima, 1998: p169

Introduction

The gaze of globalization is hardly about diversity and changeable characters, even if it has many unintended consequences. Nowadays, however, it appears to be everyone’s slogan who seeks to illustrate the world in a-historical and binary ways. Similarly, Africa in the age of globalization, especially for much of the diasporic African consciousnesses, can appear to be the undifferentiated and designated, rather than the chosen, gaze upon Africa on offer, and it continues to be negative and even one-dimensional. They are the usual litany of media generated generalities of failures to overcome poverty and indebtedness; unwilling to acknowledge and confront crises such as AIDS; persistent corruption and authoritarian impunity; and proliferating conflicts pock marking continental landscapes, making Africa in an age of globalisation seem, to use the expression of one British commentators a place of "exclusion and the containment of anarchy." This flattening, one-dimensional view elides difference and specificity and treats Africa like the country it is in so many of the mouths of American schoolchildren, evincing the most basic Afro-pessimist view which sees in Africa all this and more (or less).

The one-dimensional Afro-Pessimistic gaze upon Africa is also instructive in that it corresponds to, or cross fertilizes, with a certain kind of disabling analysis that, intentionally or otherwise, pits the hegemonic forces of globalism against an apparently impotent structural institutionalism. In this gaze, by compulsion or default it, Africa is duty-bound to accept the constraints upon its once sovereign nations had, or promised to have, in the model of post-colonial national states. This model consumed optimism of many of its continental and diasporic Pan-African precursors alike up until the advent of decolonization. One part of globalization can certainly lie in the compulsion of adopting norms and practices that issue from forces in places and processes that diminish the capacity of states to act autonomously. It also lies in an imperative of being required to converge at some point around an assumed consensus, and having the terms of reference defined by that consensus, especially in relation to what one might call the norms of development, and its more recent neo-liberal universal norm and correlate, "good governance". What meaning can we give to Pan-Africanism after nationalism and in an age of neo-liberal consensual globalization?

The first point is that when we talk off globalization we can see today as the current, but ongoing endpoint, of a process of global interconnectedness, which, as we shall see, went
hand-in-hand with the evolution of a diasporic consciousness, and that started over 500 years ago, was called by a different name, and in its African incarnation Samir Amin once called accumulation on a world scale, and what he now calls (1997) Capitalism in the Age of Globalization. The first phase of this process pivoted around and gained its impetus from the regional globalization of trade, inclusive of the slave trade; the second was that of from the 1800s on and gave momentum to industrialization; and the third was both the advent of fascism (think of the invasion of Ethiopia by Mussolini) and most importantly, the aftermath of the second world war, inclusive of the creation of the United Nations, the Bretton Woods economic institutions, and the cold war (Robertson, 2002). Nationalism, by being members of these institutions, would be implicated in the practices of globalism.

Notwithstanding this view, I will state what for many might appear obvious. It is that much of the ethos, no less than the intent, of a certain vision of Pan-Africanism must necessarily be undermined and made contradictory in this new phase of global interconnectedness, and especially under conditions, after Richard Falk (1999), of predatory globalisation, or negative globalism--the globalizing combination of state power and market power. This is the globalisation from above whose market oriented propensities are subject to the dictates of transnational corporations, transnational banks and international multilateral banks that some would claim are integrating the global economy and who generally work in association with the leading developed states and through their international agencies.  

It is also this form of globalisation which many would claim has also led to the globalisation of poverty. Whatever one thinks of the merits of this depiction, Falk believes that it can be changed and that there is an alternative, positive globalisation--which is a humanistic, radically inclusive vision that one would be hard pressed to deny that would have been embraced by Padmore and Nkrumah, and certainly another Pan-Africanist, Cabral. It is a globalisation from below, where those social forces, movements, voluntary organizations, and NGOs are supportive of a humane global civil society, while trying to create something of a community beyond the territorial state committed to human rights, to economic fairness and environmental sustainability (Falk, 1999).

I will try to show this through two interrelated illustrations that demonstrate less the existence of a predator, and perhaps more of a Trojan horse for it, but which at the same time superficially appears to be part of what one might call positive globalisation of the increased role of NGOs throughout Africa. This increased profile, however, is a symptom of the weakening claim to legitimacy on the monopoly over state development activity whilst other agencies of development such as the World Bank, the IMF and NGOs gained a higher profile, and is part of the “global-local networks of power” (Callaghy et al, 2002).
Relatedly, if apparently more mundane, but ultimately no less important in terms of the direction that Africa might seek to take in terms of a given Pan-Africanist vision, is the creation of the African Union and its specific economic blueprint. Even if the thrust of this new Pan Africanism comes out of the laudable attempt by some African leaders and Pan-ocrats to actually see some of the new policies, or at least programmatic orientations of the African Union, overcome the materiality (or the lack thereof) beneath the media-generated images. As a continental-wide organization superceding the old OAU and its aims, it would seem to me that one blueprint in particular appears to create as many new dependencies as it seeks to overcome—that of the New Partnership on African Development (NEPAD). Despite its apparent provenance, and although it is a continental-wide, Pan-Africanist initiative of cooperation and intended economic practice, it is still part of the process of a globalizing, predatory or otherwise, in that terms of its expanded and contracted sovereignty, where one is beholden to norms and regulations not of one’s own making, and which are intended to universalize key neo-liberal practices. Indeed, the case is to be made that this narrower, contemporary Pan-Africanism, shorn of its radical past, is in fact an accommodatory response to a form of predatory globalisation, which uses much of the normativity of development and globalisation from below to capture the new Pan-Africanism for global ends. What I shall call the new Pan-Africanism of the African Union has accommodated itself to a consensus of a certain form of globalisation, and in so doing, has denuded itself of its radical past by being affirmed as an “Indigenous”, home grown, and therefore Pan Africanist legitimating of neo-liberal policies.

II

Recently, there has been a burgeoning literature of diasporic-cum Pan-African issues that, it has been claimed, need speaking to. All of these issues are concerned with the production of knowledge and the uses to which that knowledge is put. Among some Africanist scholars (Martin & West 1997; cf. Lowe 1997, Akyeampong, 2001), African Studies is viewed as being prisoner to academic constructions, which are based upon artificial separations between studies of the continent and studies of the African Diaspora, something that the older Pan-Africanist did not do. For some, the renewed popular and scholarly interest in the African Diaspora, and the globalization of an academic racial consciousness, makes it appear propitious for Africanists to rethink the Diaspora’s role in re-charting and re-inscribing new Pan African academic practices.5

Adi (2002) further claims that there is also the view that African Studies and development studies have paid insufficient attention to the contributions that the Diaspora has made to Africa as part of its anti-colonial and national heritage. For example in our typology above, each of these phases can be found in Padmore’s tacit assumptions about the origins of the Diaspora, its relationship to Africa, and by extension, therefore, a form of Pan-Africanist consciousness and movementism that could be built upon to develop possible sustainable Pan-African institutions. Indeed, Padmore’s own work pointed to the way in which the phases of global connectiveness correspond to a historical consciousness. The first phase was that of dispersal, not only to the Americas, but also to Europe. Padmore speaks here in the context of the creation of a new diasporic identity
that was both concrete and contributory towards--- however poignant at this juncture (given his examples of Liberia and Sierra Leone his examples might be--- then extent of some understanding of African liberation, which began with emancipation. Similarly, the incipiency of industrialism spawned a new form of (legitimate) trade that shifted demand for goods that the British and others would eventually colonize much of Africa for. What nationalism did was open up a temporary – and perhaps in hindsight, illusory -- space for the assumption and possibility of relative autonomy as sovereignty and national development, and a vision of racial equality (Wamba-dia-Wamba, 1996).

Further, there is an additional need to explore the Diaspora’s contributions to development in light of the formation of the African Diaspora’s historical evolution as part of a globalized and racialised capitalism, where remittances and return, development organizations, religious networks, cultural dynamics, and political institutions, are central to the reconfiguring of identities, well being, and economic survival of some communities on and the throughout continent (Mohan and Zack-Williams 2002; Akyeampong, 2001, Takyi, 2002). What is certainly true is that nationalists and Pan-Africanists of Padmore and Nkrumah’s generation gave insufficient weight and attention to (or if they did, as with Nkrumah, they were suspicious about) those sub- and supra-national identities that are increasingly out there, which globalism in its current form reinforces, even where it often undermines the ability of the nation state to offer singular or, in many instances, even the primary form of political identity. Additionally, because of their state-centric direction and developmentalist attitudes of the nation, the local, the community and the singular/s (what today we might call civil society) were given short shrift. On the eve of independence and in the immediate thereafter, it was the state which conferred legitimacy upon civil society. Today, the normative relationship of legitimacy has been reversed.

What is interesting about some of the recent discussions of a diasporic consciousness and the newer forms of diasporic Pan-Africanism is that, except en passant, they appear exclusive of their older, diasporic content, and say very little to the role of the old Diaspora. This is not to say that Pan-African organizations do not exist within the Diaspora; they do, but much of that attention has been focused upon such issues as reparations. Racially consciousness and politically committed diasporic Africans often raise issues of some import for the purpose of lobbying and bringing into focus and bringing to the attention of their domestic governments this or that policy (such as on pharmaceuticals and AIDS, or about development packages for African States). There may well be scope for foreign investments by African-Americans and others; there may be possibilities for trade relations between diasporic economic blocks (such as CARICOM), but they are likely to appear marginal to the overall thrust of the narrowly political economic vision, which is concerned with global foreign investment and trade issues.

There seems, moreover, very little interest in and about the cultural concerns (unless they are linked up with value added, such as tourism, exhibits and cultural production in general) that once animated continental and diasporic African alike. Together they were concerned not only with ridding Africa of foreign rule, but were also interested in the
cultural dimensions of decolonization, about cultural recuperation, which those like Ngugi (1983) maintain is also cultural decolonization: a true liberation from colonial and neocolonial domination requires which has yet to be accomplished. Thus when one talks about the relationship between Pan-Africanism and globalisation, one must be aware of what the usable legacy consists of, who in fact might use it, and to what end.

To be sure, on the eve of the centenary of George Padmore’s birth, if the question to be posed is no longer about Communism or Pan-Africanism but perhaps pan-Africanism and/or globalisation, it is really about what form of Pan Africanism and what sort of globalisation. Recall, the issue for Padmore was not a choice between socialism and Pan-Africanism. For Padmore, there were other enemies to the quest for continental, transnational and diasporic liberation—colonialism and its other face, imperialism. The latter is what today we might call a form of globalisation, its highest theoretical, if contentious, expression being Empire. the one world, which while to be sure has its margins, one of which runs through Africa, has no outside. Here, the view of the world is that nothing notable exists outside the current regimes of production, and where forms of governance apparatuses that creates and regulates customs, habits, economic and productive practices become ubiquitous, at least in intent, as the obvious point is that this situation hardly obtains in Africa.

Padmore’s gaze, like that of Du Bois’ before him, and Nkrumah’s afterwards, was of the historically informed diasporic gaze. It was a gaze that today we would refer to as being transnational, in that it necessitated traversing both the conceptual and physical colonizing boundaries that circumscribed the idea of what identity means. Such circumscription was about limiting the scope and substance of African liberation through colonialism’s power to not only limit what people do and deny them their capacity to be, but also in deciding who belongs: who is or is not an African, and who can choose to help Africa play some role in the on going creation of its destiny.

Throughout all of its phases, so much of this historically informed disposition gave substance to the foundational norms of dignity and self-determination for all blacks and Africans across the globe, and was coupled with the race consciousness Pan-Africanist notion that no black person could be free until all of Africa was free. Moreover, Pan-Africanism in this guise embraces solidarity with all progressive forces, regardless of race, ethnicity and/or religion. The search for international solidarity, for social justice, and for peace and security for all appears as fundamental tenets, and a condition for being a member of the Pan-Africanist movement. If Africanists conceive Pan-Africanism as a movement with a creed which tries to overcome people’s apparently insignificant ethnic (what they called “tribal”), and national differences in order to enable Africans to achieve self-rule, they did so in the belief that there can be no compromise on the position of religious and/or ethnic minorities being on equal standing with the black majority in Africa; Padmore’s’ further urges a confederacy among African provinces under self-rule as a first step to the creation of an African Union of States where individuals are allowed to enjoy both freedom and equality. This, of course we be the skeletal idea, that would eventually become both the foundational, albeit compromised,
vision for the OAU, and the African Union charters, although as we shall see later with
different and telling emphasis.

Adekele (see especially 1997, 1998), claims that even before the onset of globalisation,
that The Nkrumah/Padmore vision was still born from the outset of independence and rapidly declined even further, both in principle as well as practice. With the ascendance of most African states to independence, gradually the grounds for resurrecting and solidifying Pan-Africanism diminished. Acting as both cause and symptoms of the collapse of some nations states, several critical factors contributed to condemning of the Padmorish-Nkrumahist vision of Africanism Nationalism to virtual irrelevance. The first being the compromise of independence and the associated neocolonialism; the second, the corruption and failure of Africa's political leadership; and thirdly and relatedly, the ascendance of ethnic chauvinism, regionalism and sectionalism, all of which gave free reign to the endemic crises that the continent is currently engulfed in.

Even if Adekele were right, it would not help understand how and why the African Union came into existence. Rather it is precisely because of the perilous state that Africa found itself in at least from the leaders down, there was the compelling need to form the African Union, a compulsion that itself derives from are precisely the imperatives of globalisation, its programmatic documents, notwithstanding (AU, 2003).

There is, then, nothing in principle incompatible between certain forms of globalisation and Pan-Africanism. It should be evident that its liberationary intent identifies with the kind of non-elite participation in decision-making found in the noble and open-ended democratic sentiments of those social movements, civil society activists, and, increasingly, development agencies and the World Bank, which have become coincident with theoretical impulses which undergirds a very global phenomena in Africa--the NGOisation of much of development, a soft shell with a very hard and bitter neo-liberal centre whose main role is to limit the role of the state that was at he centre f the Pan-Africanist vision, but which has now, notwithstanding the genuine role played by civil society activists, become beholden to a political theory of local vindication through international accountability.

David Held, for example, has argued that in order to assist the emerging “international form and structure of politics and civil society”, a number of the bases of democratic thought and practice need to be reshaped, three of which are particularly relevant to any discussion of the conduits of development assistance through NGOs. The first requirement is “territorial boundaries of systems of accountability” being put in place to contend with “those issues which escape the control of the nation-state.” Second, is the need to reconsider “the role and place of regional and global regulatory and functional agencies” so that they become more constructively engaged in “public affairs”. Finally, there must be the insurance that relations with political institutions are genuinely re-evaluated, and that significant groups within “international civil society” should be
allowed to become part of the procedural democratic process (1993: 39-40, my emphasis). Three of the principal multilateral organizations from which so much African “donor” assistance comes, various agencies in the UN, the World Bank and the E.U., as well as the OECD and numerous bilateral agencies, most especially USAID, have all committed themselves to “listen to” and take into account of the views of such groups, especially endorsing and supporting the role of international NGOs and civic organizations in both the North and the South.\textsuperscript{12}

Here is a globalizing political theory, built upon notions of humanitarian assistance, and a conception of rights linked to and threaded by a of civil society perspective that is practically and conceptually in opposition to the state. This theory merges with the issue of the limits of sovereignty and/or the legitimacy of states to act in their own self-interest. A drastic and unfortunate true-life expression of these limits can be found in Joseph Hanlon’s (1997) apposite and valuable depiction of post-civil war Mozambique. Hanlon claims that Mozambique was held in thrall by an acute dependence on all forms of international assistance, whether international NGOs or the IMF, as both have, in effect, became substitute states. The former having the liberty to move wherever they wanted to, in part because of the freedom of movement granted at the end of the war and also because of the diminished authority of government; and the latter because of its ability to impose adjustment and stabilization policies upon the Mozambican state. The point is that non-state actors are viewed not as substitutes for global institutions, but as parallel and complementary to them.

This matching of functions has been coincident with is a second factor in the causality of NGOs— the growth and political activity of local “civil societies” before the development of liberalizing and pluralistic formal democratically party politics in Africa. To Stephen Ndegwa (1994, 1996), this link has been associated with important challenges against authoritarian governments and with fundamental political change in African countries. He claims that this link is an important correlation that allows for theorizing about the capacity for political influence among associational groups and non-state actors, and NGOs in particular. For example, in focusing on particular conflicts between NGOs in Kenya and the Kenyan government, he attributes a combination of factors that enabled NGOs to effectively counteract state control of their development activities. In particular, he identifies the availability of political opportunity to articulate dissent; the combined resources of NGOs and the degree of their collective organization; but especially important was the NGO alliance with international donor agencies and a coalition between NGOs and other oppositional forces in civil society\textsuperscript{13}. NGOs were identified with political liberalization \textit{and} economic liberalization and with a donor agenda, or at least donor support. The net result of this, in Bratton’s language, federated structure of the linked, external partners, was to promote the perception of NGOs in Africa as having greater legitimacy (see Bratton, 1994, Bratton and De Walle 2000).

Joseph Stiglitz (1999), the former Senior Vice President, and Chief Economist of the World Bank retrospectively summed up the motivation of the Bank in their support of political liberalization and civil society by turning a kind of practice of groups in
opposition to the state into a political theory of and for practice:

There is a second prong to the strategy [of participation]: strengthening the "checks" on abuses of this power and influence. This prescription encompasses at least three elements. The first is to strengthen civil society, as a source of countervailing power - from political parties, to unions, to consumer groups, to think tanks, and to a variety of other NGOs. In the parlance of modern economics, ensuring participatory processes, and promoting the public good more broadly, is itself a public good. As with other public goods, there will be too little provision of such participatory processes in the absence of public support. A strong civil society is an important element in a strategy of implementing meaningful democratic reforms.

However, Ndegwa’s analysis, like Stiglitz’ so post hoc liberal appraisal of the role and function of NGOs and civil society, is partial. It is only one side of the from-below story of a forged a nexus of local NGOs, civil society and international agencies arrayed against the African development state. An alternative, or at least an amended, explanation can be found elsewhere in the opposition to the duress of adjustment and the authoritarian state, as both often went hand-in-hand in the eighties and 1990s (see Gibbon et al, 1993 and Mkandawire, 1998, Nyang’oro, 1994). In the case of Tanzania, ordinary people in groups within the informal economy developed various autonomous and resistive strategies politically and economically to the overarching state; ordinary people also came to have just as an important impact upon the state as the elites and the international agencies through the networks that they had created, both because of, but also in spite of adjustment (see Tripp, 1994). In contrast, Frederick Anang (1994) showed in the case of Ghana that the various relationships and strategies available to NGOs were constrained by the centralizing Rawlings state, and that all NGOs, indigenous and international, had to operate through a specific ministry which sought to control their activities. To be sure, in other cases there was conflict and confrontation; but in others there was also rank opportunism and cooptation as well (see Gary, 1996). Finally, in several other instances, many local and international NGOs and advocacy groups came together as global networks, and sometimes as loose coalitions, to variously demand a greater say in the adjustment process, to insist on greater poverty alleviation, to demand more project lending, and, in some instances, to abort the process altogether (see Nelson, 1997). In short, responses to the State by NGOs are frequently complex, as are the local and international forces and groups that have engaged them.

Regardless of the perspective one may hold on the origins of political liberalization, or about the specific and particular relationship they might have with the state, NGOs have regularly been deemed to represent the best that personifies the effectiveness of local development, and that they have come to embody a large part of development as “civil society”. The positive agendas and values of superior economic efficiencies and greater political participation are believed to result in a shift in power away from the state and the powerful to the less powerful. Indeed, for or some, their proliferation is seen as a part of an “associational revolution” (Clarke, 1998). NGOs belong to intermediary, “mediating” institutions, which relate to everyday lives in ways in which the abstract (and sometimes
oppressive) state cannot do. In the de Toquevillian sense, they supposedly provide “schools for democracy”; and for others—simplistically in my view—NGOs provide a third force set against both state and market. NGOs are part of an “associative democracy”, which has put in a new set of political actors between the people and the government, which would take over certain services of the state while staying embedded in civil society (Robinson and Riddell, et al, 1995; Clarke, 1998; cf. Fowler, 1996).

Unlike central government, the problems that people face would be known intimately by internal and/or external associative groups, who would be able to gather the appropriate information about the communities that are the subject of development and be capable of realizing and executing more effective public policy. NGOs, therefore, can be considered good associates, even partners of governments and of development agencies, able to deliver particular kinds of programmes more effectively than the traditional providers—the state. Much of this third force identity can be self-serving. As Streeton says (1997: 205), citing Judith Tendler, “NGOs often derive their identity by defining themselves in contrast and opposition to government, which is said to be large, rigid, inflexible, bureaucratic, hierarchical, and incapable of reaching the poor. In spite of this rhetoric, the relations between NGOs and government are often complex, rich, and intricate.”

Nevertheless, from a normative standpoint, it is easy enough to see how this thinking, like the call for cosmopolitan democracy, could also be entirely compatible with the so-called “paradigm shift” in development thinking. This was a shift in philosophy which stressed “participation in ... decision-making by the clientele group, [and] building the capacity of individuals and institutions in the development process” (Blunt and Warren, 1996 p.xiii; cf. Chambers, 1997; Nelson and Wright, 1995). As we earlier suggested, among development practitioners and institutional donors, as well as many academics, this change led to a growing concern with trying to accommodate the perspectives and the voices of the subjects of development. There, was, for example, an insistence upon utilizing “the nature of indigenous or local-level community-based knowledge and how it provided the basis for both individual and community-level decision-making”(ibid.), while emphasising a requirement that communities and grassroots groups be involved in policy discussions and implementation, stressing participatory planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation techniques.

The arch of moral decentralized cooperation can be replicated repeatedly, whether from major organizations doing the funding or by the extraneous NGOs whom they do it through. Typically, because, this is a discourse of meeting local needs, is one of involving partnerships, and because there appears to the decentralization of economic and civic decision-making, it can be presumed to be good in both the intrinsic moral sense and in the consequentialist sense of providing efficiently and effectively what other, namely government, forms of organization cannot.

However coincidental, there is certainly an appropriation of the alternative development models of participatory development, especially when, as in the case of Stiglitz, it is couched in a language directed towards vindicating a neo-liberal model of the state. If these conjunctural shifts in development thinking and practice are not all causal, their parallelisms are not entirely coincidental either. The growing significance of NGOs in part lies in the actual declining power and importance of African governments, primarily,
although not only, because of the constraints on their economic capacity through instruments of structural adjustment and stabilization policies and the impact of privatising economic policy. This weakening of the African state has further re-enforced the complementarities of non-state actors like NGOs, who have made themselves attractive to global institutions because they appear to be able to fill policy and practical lacuna created by inefffectual, impecunious and financially indebted governments and “their” programmes.

This has been as much a factor in the multilateral and other, bi-lateral donor appeal to NGOs, as has been their inclination to support the development of liberal democratic democratization. It has also come about, however, because of the reality and the perception of the failure of markets, and the inability of the weakened state to compensate for their deficiencies in the face of the problems created by market adjustments. That is, NGOs are viewed as being able to carry out primarily project-based tasks that neither the state nor the market can achieve; they are the “result of disillusionment with government, combined with a reluctance to hand over all activities to private profit-seeking enterprises” (Stretton, 1997: 195). Perhaps so, but disenchantment with the state has also lead to a contracting out of services.

NGOs have often taken on what Robinson (1997) has called “public service contractors.” Hulme and Edwards (1997: 6) are quite explicit that for many donors, NGOs “are seen as the preferred channel for service provision in deliberate substitution for the state”, often against the interests and wishes of host countries themselves, authoritarian or multiparty. The preference for NGOs as a conduit for development and services is in part, again, because there is the belief that they, rather than the local state, can engage in good governance. The state’s engagement with NGOs, both indigenous and external is so much so, that even some analysts and NGO practitioners have worried about their own complicity in the process. They are concerned that they would be used to substitute for government in ways which they believe to be damaging to democratic development and even the provision of efficient social (i.e. health and education) services, and where international donor agencies must recognize that "good government" does not mean "less government". Indeed, Fowler has put it quite starkly when he says that the proliferation of NGOs throughout Africa has become part of the new colonialism (cited in Hearn, 1997: 89). Another observer has called the proliferation of NGOs in Kenya, the NGO-isation of Society (Hearn, 1997), all of which lends itself to the practices of NGOs making it even easier for state authorities to pass on problems and discharge themselves of the responsibility of their actions, or inaction, and to as it were pass the buck to others, while diminishing and the authority and presence of the state.

The delegitimating of the African state corresponded to, and has even been part cause of, the moral emboldenment for the voluntary sector, one piece of which are NGOs who have become partial policymakers and who have come of age in a neo-liberal world. As we have seen, they and their institutional supporters have prescribed a moral ought as much as a practical should; and they have contributed to a process of practical imperatives becoming moral norms.
It would be easy and in many cases unfair to argue that the real source of NGOs’ recent and proliferating engagement in development is a kind of supply-side realpolitique, most especially through the AID regime, which dispenses resources to them (Tvedt, 1997). It has, however, become increasingly evident that regardless of the various motivations that inform their intent to assist development in Africa, NGOs have become part of globalizing process. NGOs, we said at the outset, have become a part of globalization as much because of the values they have begun to inscribe as their ubiquity in the policy process of affirming Africa’s sustained dependence on outside assistance. Much of the continent’s perilous economic and political status throughout the eighties and nineties created a space not just for the presumption of such values, but also practices that, to many, have become consonant with a political economy of economic and institutions that displaces the role of the state—the de-stating of Africa, as more efficient providers of welfare to people and communities in the development process. In the absence of the state with capacities to deliver services and resources, especially to the poorest and most vulnerable, other agents, instruments or institutions must be positioned to supply people with the capabilities that increase the range of opportunities that they cannot provide themselves. That this may or may not be true appears not to be the point, for, as we have identified, and Fowler has affirmed (1995), support for emphasizing the role of NGOs rests on ideological grounds rather than empirical confirmation. NGOs have become part of the ideological reconfiguring of the relationship between state and society, civil or otherwise, that until recently was once presumed to be given in the various models of development that characterized the post-colonial state up until the late seventies and the recent adjustment processes, most African political economies have undergone in the name of a new development paradigm. 14

Without throwing out the baby with proverbial bathwater, and while also acknowledging the doing good that many NGOs do, we might nevertheless want to periodically question their claims on their own implicit or explicit normative principles, and the political space that they operate within; we might want to ask more concretely when needs area met through NGOs, and in what ways they assist in the process of development. With NGOs playing such a central role throughout the world, and with their playing a pre-eminent role in Africa, it is time to look and scrutinize more acutely, not just their role, but their reasons for their roles to see whether indeed the language about delivery, about participation, and so on is actually effected. What appears certain, however, is that given the inevitably contradictory interest and outcomes of NGO activities identified in the context of the neo-liberal agenda of contemporary development, many African communities and states will, for good or ill, remain at the mercy of their significant assistance for some time to come.

III
In this light, it is not hard to see where and how NEPAD comes in. It is coincident with the, as it were, revolution and globalization from “below”, even if much of its programmatic sources lie in the demands from the globalization from above under the guise of being the latest version of “African Solution to African Problems” (ASAP).
Part of the reason for NEPAD being so keenly promoted by the African (and many industrialized) governments, but denounced by so many others?

As an ASAP, NEPAD's roots go back to the failure of Western responses to the Rwandan Genocide. In the wake of genocide and ensuing regional wars, collapsed or fractured states around the Congo and elsewhere, the call for post-independence "African Renaissance" could be heard. This Afro-optimism overlapped with the partial political liberalization of several countries; with the destructive World Bank and IMF neo-liberalizing structural adjustment and stabilization programmes imposed on debt-burdened African countries; and with so-called "donor fatigue", where the costs of economically and politically reforming and policing Africa were deemed too expensive. Western governments' support for ASAP seemed a derisively inexpensive excuse for neglect, providing neo-liberal cake while continuing to eat it.

Anti-globalization protests in Seattle, Quebec City, Genoa and throughout the world temporarily stung industrialized countries prior to 9/11 into refocusing the optics of their global self-interest, sidetracking critiques that sought reforming or dismantling the exploitatively harsh global economic order by promoting the "G8 Plan for Africa", for discussion at the Kananaskis, Alberta G8 summit. Host to that summit, Canada obviously wished to re-depict Western concern for Southern well-being. Maintaining its position within the globalizing consensus on trade and investment, the Chrétien government was attentive to priorities other than ones dictated by United State's fixation with security, the 'War against Terrorism', and Western economic problems in the wake of post-9/11. Chrétien would appear as Western champion for the cause against world poverty: Africa, the West's neediest client, was placed atop the development agenda, its plan for ASAP, NEPAD, promoted, and a minister conducted consultative meetings over NEPAD by bringing civil society representatives from Africa.

Devised and promoted as a Pan-African initiative primarily authored by South Africa's Mbeki and Nigeria's Obasanjo, with support from Algeria and Senegal, NEPAD's direction towards "partnership" and "ownership", self-monitoring and African peer review of policies, assigns Africans responsibility for their actions, and is entirely consistent with, as we have seen the somewhat vacuous language of responsibility and partnerships to found in the paragraphs of every development document these days. It demands African governments commit to liberal democratic governance to ensure the restitution of peace and security and to give Africans better market access for their exports, increased foreign direct investment, and improved kinds of development assistance. Despite its provenance, and the fact that it promoted by the African Union, NEPAD is surely the latest prescription for African leaders to honor donor expectations of economic and political liberalization, human rights and good governance, and is consistent with World Bank loan conditionality and structural adjustment agreements.

The pitiful financial commitments by the G8 countries at the last G8 summit (less than 10th of what Africans asked for) drew ire from numerous commentators and activists; this pointed to dependencies and constraints NEPAD sought to avoid, but which are built
into its contradictory terms of reference. Others have criticized NEPAD leaders, not only because they appear to capitulate to international capital, but also because, and consistent with their elitism, they have barely consulted with civil society, forcing homegrown adjustment programs upon the majority of Africans without voice. Others from outside of Africa, and some who are subject to arbitrary brutality within, have criticized NEPAD leaders like Mbeki and Obasanjo for insufficiently chastening and bringing to brook the likes of Mugabe.

Whatever the criticisms, the origins and debate about NEPAD shows that ASAP is Pan-Africanist in an important, but narrowing way in which Pan-Africanism is understood and is expected to be practiced.\textsuperscript{15}

**Conclusion**

Today we are at a juncture when globalisation has become a focal point around which so many and different political and social movements are struggling to create new, progressive sovereignties and against the supposed universalistic norms of globalisation from above. Today, if there is to be a new pan-Africanism it would appear few within African states are willing to be taking up this radical cudgel. However, we might, to coin a phrase, be careful of the pitfalls of this global consciousness and its norms, as it provides leakage for new dependencies that while ostensibly being about doing good, about being from below and being for an alternative globalisation that appears non-predatory, actionable and grassroots. If Senghor’s standard was that Africans should absorb what was best in what Europe had to offer but without being assimilated by it, it is not clear that these initiatives, measure up. No doubt to the World Bank, we are doing very, very well.

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\textsuperscript{1} This paper remains in draft form in that it does not have full, finished nor proper citations, and does not contain a full bibliography, which can be obtained from me on request. (pidahosa@yoku.ca)

\textsuperscript{2} Hoogvedt, 2001

\textsuperscript{3} Ironically, much of this kind of caricature “argument” mirrors the culturist pathology view of Achille Mbembe’s Africa of the postcolony, despite his call to acknowledge Africa’s pluralism and heterogeneity of the likes of, 1995, "Provisional Notes on the Postcolony." A\textit{frica} 62.1: 3-37. See Idahosa and Shenton, 2003 “Africa’s New Clothes”.

\textsuperscript{4} It follows that each of the phases of global interconnectiveness were in different ways all “predatory”—slavery, colonial-imperialism, and the exigencies of the Cold War, from which few (no?) African countries benefited.
Indeed, this was the theme of the 2001 American African Studies Associations meetings in the United States, which emphasized the caveat that independent studies of Africa will continue to be explored. One hopes so.

Padmore, or Nkrumah after him, deal very much with the African Diaspora to the Arab world or South Asia.

To put it bluntly, one cannot imagine a contemporary Fanon, Padmore or DuBois sitting in drafting ideas for heads of state, and if there is such an intellectual, he is likely to be a continental African one.

There are those, like Adekele (1997:82), who have claimed that despite the revival of a Pan-African Consciousness in the United States through such movements as Afro-centricity, there is little in common by way of real relationship between African Americans and Africans because their “modalities for mutual cooperation and struggle” are so different. This may or may not be true, but it is hard to know how to gauge the importance of pan-Africanist activist throughout the world, which in some quarters at least retains some radicalism across continents, even if their effect may be small.

He remained a life-long socialist, but, from the vantage point of Africans in general and Negro workers in particular, railed against the unprincipled authoritarian and manipulative state communism.

Sentiments that continued to be expressed—at least in the speeches and resolutions—in the radical 6th Pan-African Congress in Dar el Salaam in 1974, where delegates again called for an end to foreign rule and domination in Africa, reminding us of the legacy of Fanon and Cabral, and which called for the end of foreign (Wamba-dia-Wamba, 1996), as well as at the 7th Congress in Kampala, where a permanent secretariat was set up, and where the for the first time prominent voice for Women were heard, and where, interestingly enough, the largest delegations came from the United States an Canada (AJPS, 1996).

Eight years ago an Overseas Development Institute (1995) report stated, “A direct effect of the growing influence of the reverse agenda [between NGOs and aid agencies] has been to increase the common ground between donors and NGOs. No longer is it easy to talk of distinct differences between NGO and donor approaches to development.”

They fall, as do most civil society groups, into a number of overlapping categories: those concerned with supporting political liberalisation, those concerned with promoting economic liberalisation, and those furthering the rights and political participation of particular socially excluded groups, such as rural women or the urban poor. Even if it is true that many NGOs and many development practitioners remain hostile to the main thrust, not say consequences, of neo-liberalism (e.g. Oxfam), their intentions are in a sense only part of the point.

The fuller, vision whose goals are incontestable, are as follows.

• To achieve greater unity and solidarity between the African countries and the peoples of Africa;
• To defend the sovereignty, territorial integrity and independence of its Member States;
• To accelerate the political and socio-economic integration of the continent;
• To promote and defend African common positions on issues of interest to the continent and its peoples;
• To encourage international cooperation, taking due account of the Charter of the United Nations and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights;
• To promote peace, security, and stability on the continent;
• To promote democratic principles and institutions, popular participation and good governance;
• To promote and protect human and peoples' rights in accordance with the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights and other relevant human rights instruments;
• To establish the necessary conditions which enable the continent to play its rightful role in the global economy and in international negotiations;
• To promote sustainable development at the economic, social and cultural levels as well as the integration of African economies;
• To promote co-operation in all fields of human activity to raise the living standards of African peoples;
• To coordinate and harmonize the policies between the existing and future Regional Economic Communities for the gradual attainment of the objectives of the Union;
• To advance the development of the continent by promoting research in all fields, in particular in science and technology;
• To work with relevant international partners in the eradication of preventable diseases and the promotion of good health on the continent