Questioning Pan-Africanism: A Deconstructionist Evaluation

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Abstract

Despite the lofty ideals on which Pan-Africanism was conceived over a hundred years ago, it has not led to a more secure Africa with the strong ethics of brotherhood and cooperation. Africa has witnessed more inter- and intra-state wars than any other region of the world. This paper applies this position to provide a critique of Pan-Africanism by looking at the basic principles and ideals such as unity and solidarity that the ideology sets out to promote. It applies a theoretical paradigm which it calls meta-Africanism (defined as the study of ideas and concepts that are implied and applied by the idea of Africa to determine their validity and viability) to critique Pan-Africanism. The paper suggests that Pan-Africanism appears to function on a wrong assumption of human nature and proposes the need to seek for fresh ideology for a worthier African future. The work applies the twin methods of expository criticism and intuitive deductions to arrive at its positions.

Keywords: Africa, Pan-Africanism, Deconstruction, Critique, Neo-Africanism, Unity, Solidarity

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Introduction
There apparent deficiencies of the ideas on which Pan-Africanism have functioned all these while and calls for a proposal for a review of the ideology. Needed is a deconstructive approach to Pan-Africanism which aims at articulating how best the idea can be renovated to achieve some of the ideals implied by the movement, especially those that are found to be relevant to the flowering of African humanity or how to realize the vision of a secure and productive Africa through the ideology. It does this, not by taking on the extent to which the word Africa itself has become contentious and assumed different meanings (Mazrui, 1980; Opata, 1993; Radu, 2003), but by applying the idea of Neo-Africanism to interrogate the concept. By Neo-Africanism is implied establishing the fundamental assumptions around which the idea on which Africa is found to be cogent or valid and seek a meta-theoretical attempt to capture those beliefs and assumptions in terms of which it is effective to refer to a people, an idea or a concept as African and binding enough to be so held.

The work does not contest the validity of the idea of pan-Africanism (that is whether it signifies any valid belief) or whether there "hardly ever been a defined, precise or rational concept" of Pan-Africanism (Immanuel Geiss as cited in Abdul Bangura 2012:6). Instead, I seek to interrogate the fundamental ideas on which pan-Africanism holds and to examine the kind of solidarity Africans should demand from themselves and the ideological basis on which they should seek such sympathy and whether Pan-Africanism should stand as the functional ideology or belief through which such solidarity should be explored. Through a critique of Pan-Africanism in this regard, the work will provide the basis for a search for a more viable ideology for Africa that can cause a re-think of the long-running ideology of Pan-Africanism. The work will explore deconstruction to address these issues, captured under the term meta-Africanism. The work comes in three parts. I (i) provide a summary of the idea of Pan-Africanism. After that, I (ii) justify my critical turn to the idea of Pan-Africanism. I then (iii) provide a critique of the concept of Pan-Africanism by applying what the paper calls the Neo-African paradigm.

I
A Summary of the Idea of Pan-Africanism

Pan-Africanism is the ideological movement that emphasizes the sameness and oneness of the African family as a basis for unity and growth of African peoples. Initiated in Paris in 1891 by W.E.B. Du Bois, this movement, anchored on a racial consciousness of the African identity, believes that the African destiny the world over is interlinked and that efforts made to improve the lot of Africans at one front must be aimed at improving the lot of Africans elsewhere. The ideals of this movement can be summarised in the words of Sekou Toure, first Guinean political icon, who held that "...Africa should be considered as the human body, when a finger is cut off, the whole body suffers."

In the attempt to articulate the ideals of Pan-Africanism, I rely on the views or positions of three African leaders who to a large extent could be said to be the founding fathers of the idea and around whom the idea finds adequate expression. These are Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana; Julius Nyerere of Tanzania; and Kenneth Kaunda of Zambia. In relying on their positions to discuss the ideals that define pan-Africanism as an ideology, I do not deny the fact that the idea of Pan-Africanism pre-dates their emergence on the African political scene. I only wish to draw on the fact that their views express the maturation of the idea after what could be called the infancy stage of the idea: the period during which it served merely as a blueprint in Africa's search for an ideology that defines the African future and directs the march to that future. As Nkrumah himself wrote,

> The expression Pan-Africanism did not come into use until the beginning of the twentieth century when Henry Sylvester Williams of Trinidad and William Edward Burghardt Dubois of the United States of America, both of African descent, used it at several Pan-African Conferences which were mainly attended by scholars of African descent of the New World. (1975, p.341)

For Nkrumah, the idea of Pan-Africanism is summarised as the quest for "a continental government for Africans" (1975, 344) and "the need to maintain a common currency" (345). These include the

establishment of a unified military and defense strategy, the need to adopt a unified foreign policy and diplomacy to give political direction to their "joint efforts for the protection and economic development of our continent" (345). Nkrumah's position is anchored on the fact that:

> We [Africans] need the strength of our combined numbers and resources to protect ourselves from the very positive dangers of returning colonialism in disguised forms. We need it to combat the entrenched force dividing our continent and still holding back millions of our brothers. We need it to secure total African liberation. We need it to carry forward our construction of a socio-economic system that will support the great mass of our steadily rising population at levels of life which will compare with those in the most advanced countries (344).

Nkrumah's vision of Pan-Africanism is anchored on the need for an "inward look into the African continent for all aspect of its development" (345).
For Julius Nyerere, the need for Pan-Africanism arises from the fact that "each of the African states is separately weak about the outside world and so dependent on it" (328). Thus, his theory of Pan-Africanism arises from the need to create a compelling centre which would be vested with some powers to protect and direct the future of each state. For Nyerere:

> The objective of unity demands that an all-African body should have power in certain vital matters. And that the constituent parts of Africa should cease to have power in these matters. In relation to the outside world, there must be just one authority in Africa (329).

Nyerere's idea of Pan-Africanism is anchored on the need to create "one source of ultimate power as far as non-African powers are concerned" (329). For this reason, he recommends that Pan-Africanism should imply the "cessation of natural sovereignties" (329) and its replacement "by the sovereignty of Africa as a single unit, incorporating all the separate units" (329). In practice, Pan-Africanism should translate into "African self-policing," to "a common market," "a single currency," "free trade" (329). Thus, the substance of Nyerere's theory is a demand for a form of Pan-

Africanism which would lead to "a continent-wide state, single and indivisible" (330).

Nyerere supports this thesis with the view that there is already a form of emotional unity in Africa which finds its expression in the concept of "African personality" (334). But in his view, this emotional unity should be allowed to express itself more realistically through strong economic and political unity which will lead to a United States of Africa. This, he believes, should lead to "unity of action together with the greatest possible degree of local self-expression on things which affect only that locality" (334), for, as he puts it further, "only with unity can we be sure that African resources will be used for the benefit of Africa" (335). Nyerere goes forward to map out strategies to achieve his idea. One of this is the formation of a "loose association of states" among African states and the "constant exchange of visits" (335) by Heads of States of associating states. He advocates for the formation of East African Federation of States comprising Kenya, Uganda, and Tanganyika which he considers "comparatively easy to achieve" *(*335) for a beginning.

The idea of Pan-Africanism suggested by Kenneth Kaunda demands more rigour. Kaunda proposes the principles that should define the Pan-African project of unity with a criticism that the idea of Pan-Africanism should not be built on what he calls "fond illusions" (348). He suspects the assumption that the desire for freedom in Africa as reflected in the Manchester conference amounts to a collective desire for unity and backs this suspicion with the example of the position of the first Nigerian Prime Minister Tafawa Balewa who, in 1960 when Nigeria gained independence, said that "Nigeria has not the slightest intention of surrendering her sovereignty, no sooner has she gained independence, to anyone else…" (348). His view is that while the project of Pan-Africanism may be desirable, erecting such bond of unity may not be fruitful without an attempt to dialogue with the components of the desired union. He notes that such unity should be founded on dialogue and evolution of ideas that define the African person to achieve what could be called a Pan-African morality. Without such morality, that is, a shared ethical worldview that regulates a common value, the unity desired by the project will not be productive. For a step in the achievement of such a

moral and intellectual base for this idea, Kaunda endorses the recommendation of the then Emperor of Ethiopia Haile Selassie , that there is the need to set up an African university where "the future leaders of Africa can be trained in an atmosphere of continental brotherhood" (349). In such a university: "...the supra-national aspects of African life would be emphasized and study would be directed towards the ultimate goal of complete African unity" (349).

As implied by the above citation, such a university will raise Africans who will be educated to see Africa wholly and to see it steadily. From among the products of such university, the idea of Pan-Africanism can gain its relevance.

After a short survey of the basic tenets of pan-Africanism, I now turn to the next task – that of presenting considered problems with the pan Africanism. I engage the objective through what should amount to a meta-African critique of the idea. Hence, I justify this effort.

II
The justification for a Critique of Pan-Africanism

A summary of the concept of Pan-Africanism prevalent in the views of the three leaders outlined shows that it is aimed at the formation of a higher and stronger governmental force that will direct the affairs of African states and protect Africa from undue hegemony from the imperial world. Such a higher authority will serve to moderate the activities, policies, and programmes of independent African nations by appealing to the spirit of an assumed African brotherhood that pre-dates the emergence of the states. The countries invariably would be less vulnerable to foreign imperial forces that would intervene negatively in the attainment of the desired freedom and progress of these states. This position appears attractive, especially in the light of the young stage of Africa. Apparently, Pan-Africanism is an ideological response to the challenges of decolonization and modernization

Pan-Africanism has its strength and weakness, no doubt, which calls for an evaluation of its tenet, which I shall turn to in the remaining part of this work. I, however, highlight a point that justifies this effort. Pan-Africanism had assumed the status of an unquestionable truth in the intellectual history of Africa.

The need to provide a critical study of Pan-Africanism arises

from the overbearing significance of the ideology and its outstanding relevance in African scholarship and politics. By this, is implied the oppressive weight on African intellectual industry and political affairs as a result of which it has garnered aesthetic, moral, political and economic worth and relevance and moderated the search for alternative frameworks for enhancing the development of the African mind. At the moment, no ideology has impacted on African life and thought in modern times as Pan-Africanism, as a result of which it easily serves as the umbrella of African ideologies and defines the significance and relevance of an idea that is African. By this Pan-Africanism, has provided a framework for research and scholarship, as a result of which ideas are conceived based how they can affect the life and thought of Africans at a macro-level or are seen to have the potentials to do so.The implication is that under different forms and meanings, Pan-Africanism has served as a mental gaze for the African mind, This claim is evident in the arts and humanities where there are several academic conferences, programmes, and projects that emphasize a Pan-African outlook. For instance, it is common to read such terms and concepts as "Pan-African History" (Adi, Hakim and Marika, Sherwood, 2003); "The Panafricanist Worldview" (Agyman, Opoku, 1997); " Pan-African Film Festival"(Francis Nyamnjoh, 2010:36);"Pan-African Poetry"(Francis Nyamnjoh,2010:36) and it is arguably based on this that Abdul Bangura (2012:8-9) writes that:

it would be sensible to break down the concept of Pan-Africanism by discipline; for instance, in the area of the natural science – geology, biology, medicine, pharmacology, etc.

In canvassing this idea, he applies what he calls "Pan-African methodologies" to support his claim. This position is a vivid illustration of the diverse disciplinary meanings that the concept of Pan-Africanism has assumed. In applying the Pan-Africanism this way, it does not mean that thoughts or objects to which the pan-African reference are thereby made stronger or more accurate; it only says that they are made more relevant, at least, within the mental universe of the African. It is almost as if a body of knowledge achieved and applied in these disciplines and in relation to Africa would only be found to be valid and significant based on how Pan-African they are understood or believed to be. To invoke the idea of

Pan-Africanism easily amounts to making a plan very relevant and cogent in its modern demand.

In politics, Pan-Africanism has led to the formation of Organization of African Unity which has since transformed into African Union. It has also served to engineer the framework for the New Partnership for African Development (NEPAD) which serves as a socio-political framework for African development at the moment. Paradoxically despite all these "no African scholar of note will deceive himself or herself into believing that all is well with Africa"(Leonard Shilgba;2012) just as the Nigerian scholar Theophilus Okere submits that:

Africa is looking like a basket case. The entire map… is littered with debris of rogue states, failed governments, violent successions… and villains and victims, violently repressed secessions, interminable wars, interminable rows of wandering refugees, endemic diseases, endemic poverty, hopeless debt burdens, ugly slums, desperate recourse to religion and magic, massive unemployment for youth. (2004:4)

And for this reason, Africa, as he goes further and say,

leads the world in virtually every form of crime against good governance, child soldiers, child amputees, child labour, mass graves from forgotten but enduring civil wars, mass graves from the epidemics of Ebola, Lassa fever, and now AIDS, not to forget malaria our perpetual scourge. (4-5)

Pan-Africanism claims to be addressing the needs of a complex cultural segment of humanity without locating the demands of this complexity, conceiving or locating economic and political transformation in terms what instead amounts to an outward gaze without looking at the cultural requirements of the project. If African scholarship at the moment is probed further, it is doubtful if such blurring of the intellect is what is desirable. It would be discovered that what is most needed in Africa at the moment is the application of rigorous reasoning and a more scientific search for truth about Africa – one which can seek to establish facts based on its ability to stand the demands of evidence or rigours of logic. This should be followed by determined criticism of the ideas or what should amount to the mental purification of views to enable it to gain the basis of legitimacy in the mental geography of the African mind. It is doubtful, the extent to

which Pan-Africanism can fulfill this desire.

The second reason for which it is justified to embark on a critical review of Pan-Africanism is that this is a viable path to a rational redefinition of Africa for a proper conceptualization of issues and problems that define African humanity. Here I have in mind the need to check the tendency for Pan-Africanism to mask and distort topics through a loose interpretation and application of issues and principles. This aspect of ideology gives it a dogmatic character for which it functions as the absolute truth and the only way of interpreting reality about issues and matters concerning Africa. By doing this it prevents the vision of alternatives and disallows the room for interrogating and critiquing its positions. The danger in this state of affairs has been well captured by the Ghanaian scholar Kwasi Wiredu (1980) who berates ideology in general favour of philosophy because the later rather than the former urges a people "to think critically about abstract notions which lie at the base of ideological discourse" (Oladipo,1996:59).

It is important to note that there are several ways the ideology of Pan-Africanism could be critiqued. By this, I mean that we can talk of epistemological critique of Pan-Africanism – that is, a critical look at Pan-Africanism based on its implication to human knowledge in Africa; anthropological analysis of Pan-Africanism – a critical review of the idea based on its possible effect to human nature, talents, and tendencies in Africa; economic analysis of Pan-Africanism – implied to mean the economic implications of a pan-African worldview; moral critique of Pan-Africanism – that is, the moral values that are suggested or implied by Pan-Africanism, etc. My interest, however, is limited to a meta-African critique of Pan-Africanism and this I now turn.

III
Towards a Neo-African Critique of Pan-Africanism

A critique of Pan-Africanism finds its worth and root in the idea of Neo-Africanism. By a review of Pan-Africanism, I employ a meta-theoretical analysis of ideas that find their origin in the African worldview or are emphasized by this worldview by interrogating the virtues, values, beliefs, suggested or implied by them. It is the attempt to locate the concepts indicated by and applied to the idea of Africa; to

demonstrate how and why they have been framed; the implications of these and whether it is justifiable and valid to   hold such views. In other words, by, interrogating the beliefs, it becomes pertinent to assess these ideas regarding their significance to human aspirations in general. Thus, Neo-Africanism demands the re-grounding of the concept of Africa through a significant re-evaluation of the values and principles it defends and the import and relevance of same to space, time and history, especially for the African people. The overall objective here proposes a "de-essentialisation" of Africa in favour of Africa that admits contrasts, criticisms, and dynamism whereby the idea of Africa would point to an African agency that plays a catalytic role in the advancement of the human community.

This strand of Neo-Africanism favours a non-exclusivist notion of Africa. Accordingly, the idea of meta-Africanism finds justification within the theory of *positionality;* that is, the fact that truths and opinions are often coloured within the prism of the speaker or writer as a result of which there is an element of the speaker in the speech. P.F. Strawson and Jacques Derrida emphasize this point in their theories of deconstruction. For a thinker like Derrida (1998, 1987), the refusal to name or to assign a meaning to a thing almost becomes a virtue or an ideal. Thus in the light of these, there is the need to filter the truths or concepts that are applied to locate and discuss Africa to sieve through their validity.

To further articulate the idea of Neo-Africanism are certain principles that define this epistemological paradigm for the study of Africa. One of such tenets holds that Africa should first be located through what the Ghanaian philosopher Kwasi Wiredu has called "cultural universals" (1996) that is a culture that arises from human nature as a reliable basis for understanding what it means to be human and African. Through this, it recommends an African self-critique through a mental overhaul of the underlying assumptions through which ideas are held to be African to see whether it is justifiable to do so or whether they are dubious and false. It would, therefore, seek to locate and interrogate the source, origin, grounds or justification for the ideas and concepts applied for these reasons, and their process of acquisition or accumulation.

The second principle is that whatever is taken to be African must be able to fall within the regime of scientific reasoning or at least

admit verifiability through which it can be assumed to be one. Whatever is held to be African should be knowable to any mind that seeks the explanation. Such concepts and ideologies such as "African personality," negritude," "Africanity," etc. which seem to be exclusively African by their meanings and import find locus here. The implication is that all these and the whole lot of values and virtues they demand should be demonstrated through a scientific application of reason (scientific in the sense of showing their validity within an accountable rational framework).

Thirdly, Neo-Africanism seeks for the best terms, through which Africa can be understood and reconstructed within the imperatives of modernity; through a knowledge process that generates fresh ideas and through structures and cultures of thought. In other words, Neo-Africanism seeks to revitalize knowledge and growth about African humanity in ways that could lead to African modernity – one that will lead to a mental overhaul of the fundamental principles of African life and thought in a manner that will re-engineer the basis for African modernity.

In the light of the preceding, I appropriate the above idea of Neo-Africanism to interrogate the ideology of Pan-Africanism to see how or whether it is in a position to address the desires and demands of African people. This exercise amounts to a review of the ideology of Pan-Africanism through a critique of the ideals it defends or suggests. To do this, I begin by attempting to delineate the fundamental models of the doctrine of Pan-Africanism, namely-(a) unity, (b) solidarity, (c) difference, and (d) empowerment. In making a critique of the ideology this way the need arises to locate the terms through which these ideals should be understood and therefore desired and whether Africans were right in canvassing for an ideology that harbours these ideals. To do this, I shall limit my meta-African critique to the first two ideals itemized, namely, the model of unity and the ideal of solidarity.

About unity, the Neo-African question is what is unity and under which terms should uniformity be desired in Africa? Are Africans right in canvassing for an ideology that harbours unity as its component; as a basic option for their development? What manner of integration should be demanded of African states for which Pan-Africanism stands as a preferred option? In response to these

questions, it is important to note that unity merely amounts to a pooling together of persons,resources or items.It is also important to note that unity is much more desired, especially in relation to persons, under the condition of physical threat and insecurity than under conditions of leisure. In other words that unity is more of a survivalist imperative than a normal compelling human drive;and this is as arising from the various basic challenges of the human self in a competing world of opposites.Indeed, unity is basically a project of interest which should arise from and be determined by the nature of the interest desired and the mutual benefit which each unit is in a position to secure by belonging to the union. By this, I mean that unity is a contributory principle desirable only to the extent that it has the capacity to serve the interests of the members of a union. In the light of this it can be held that unity as a political ideal was quite cogent during the era of physical of colonization of Africa because Africa was entirely subjugated. But at the moment insecurity in Africa is not merely artificial but that with the eradication of physical colonialism which has led to what can now be called mental colonization (Ngugi Wa Thingo 1980, Kwasi Wiredu,1995); it is very doubtful whether and how unity should remain the driving principle of African political project.

While there could be aspects of African life where unity maybe needed, there are also aspects of African life where unity may play a negative role. For instance, while unity may serve for some socio-political ends, the principle of unity has no intellectual purpose regarding generating the ideas that will direct the cause of the African state. Unity has no place in adding to the disclosure of truths about African life which should be disclosed and known for a relevant political order in Africa. Thus, when Nkrumah emphasizes the need for "a continental government for Africans" (345), it is important to question whether this should be seen as an end and whether there is a principle of unity that can lead to this already. Furthermore, it is essential to know whether the vast challenges implied by these can be met by unity. By this, I mean the need to question unity in relation to the challenge of governing Africa at a supra-national level; the need to determine the specific items Africans should galvanize to solve their problems and whether they have such skills already and, where not, to learn whether the potential for such force can be found among

them; that is, assuming that it is the case that the major force against Africa is external. In relation to this, I submit that this proposal does not just amount to a simplistic postulation but one founded on an unrealistic assumption given the social egoism that defines human society for which the power to dominate would usually follow the constitution of a supra-national Africa. The argument is that seeking for unity as the platform for African development amounts to saying that Africans were underdeveloped or conquered culturally because they are not united because unity is mere assemblage of things or items without any superior import or implication. Ironically, the demands of running a mega-African state do not endorse the project of unity demanded by Pan-Africanism because such a project would be too complex. Thus while it may be necessary to make concessions and compromise, it is doubtful the extent to which complete unification of structures and institutions may be desirable. It is also pertinent to argue that there is need to determine the kind of strength Africans need to secure their political desire for security and independence against external forces and whether this is lacking before seeking for a solution regarding unity.

The second position of my work is that the organizational demand of a Pan-African state as mapped out by the protagonists of Pan-Africanism is challenging and that there is need to suspect the prospects of the success of such effort and the extent to which Africa can survive and sustain such union given the dynamism and changing nature of world powers and politics. The view here is that what it should take to raise a strong force of unity among a large group is bigger and more demanding than what it should take to promote unity among a smaller group.

The third item on which the project of Pan-Africanism should be seen to harbour a suspicious idea of unity could be discovered by interrogating whether Pan-Africanism addresses the needs of all Africans profitably given that the quality of development of different African ethnic nation-states differed considerably before their collective subjugation under the European colonial project. The argument here is that a project of unity will be making similar demands on unequal partners and this is dodgy and entirely wrong.

A critical reading of the ideology of Pan-Africanism would show that it makes important assumptions on African unity which

endow it with a salvific status and potential without making room for a proper study of the idea of unity. For instance, the idea that lies at the heart of Pan-Africanism is basically the idea of unity yet it does not provide a convincing illustration of how unity should form a fundamental ideal in modern Africa. Unity is a project of interest which should arise from and be determined by the nature of the interest desired and the mutual benefit which each unit is in a position to secure by belonging to the union. By this, I mean that unity should serve private interests before it satisfies the desires of the public. Unity is a contributory principle or value desirable only to the extent that it can serve the interests of the members of a union. For this reason, unity is a loose concept without clearly articulated principles of the union or a careful determination of the potentials of its members. Integration is a void without stronger ideals such as equity, equality, and justice and has no compelling meaning and implication unless it is associated with stronger ideals such as justice. Thus, it is not always the case that unity of resources could eventually translate to stronger models and is capable of achieving the very ends for which it is desired such as when the very existence of the funds depends on such union. Unity is an instrumental principle which demands specific purposes to become real and relevant. For instance, a unity of forces to fight a common enemy is purposeful if it is believed that such enemy is more significant than the parts and the parts can only survive through such union but if the contrary is the case when such unity is not useful and is wrong. Above all, even when it is established that such unity is directed to a greater ideal such as fighting a common enemy, there is still the need to study where the power of the enemy lies, the kind of strength he wields, and the tactics he is applying so that the unity of resources would be in that specific direction; for where not, such unity may play to the advantage of the enemy. Thus, we can see the fault with Nyerere's claim that "only with unity can we be sure that African resources will be used for the benefit of Africa" (335), for it can also be the case that with unity African resources can be tactically exploited against Africa. One has only to imagine what it should amount to if there is unity of resources that lack a proper knowledge and coordination or one that is in the hand of a rogue leader to see the need to question the idea of unity that has defined the project of Pan-Africanism.

Unity, invariably, is a negative virtue. The view is that the quality of unity must be ascertained beforehand by looking at the constituent parts of the union, for only in that way can it be justifiably expected that the desired outcome of such unity will be productive. Although unity is usually translated to mean strength, this can only be so to the extent that the constituent parts were strong or potentially strong in the first place or have the potential to be strong. A unity of weaklings, on the other hand, can only yield an enlarged weakling. In relating to Pan-Africanism, the specific possibilities, strengths, and weakness of each state must be articulated before the idea of unity of states will achieve its desired relevance. It is, I believe, with this in mind that Julius Nyerere, himself a proponent of the idea of Pan-Africanism, would later turn to say;

> Indeed, I believe that a real dilemma faces the pan-Africanist. On the one hand is the fact that pan-Africanism demands an African consciousness and an African loyalty; on the other hand is the fact that each pan-Africanist must also concern himself with the freedom and development of one of the nations of Africa. These things can conflict. Let us be honest and admit that they have already conflicted (cited in Issa Shivji, 2011).

The second item that I wish to apply for a Neo-African critique of Pan-Africanism is the idea of solidarity. To share solidarity with someone is to share a common aspiration; to have a common ground on which dreams and desires can be defined. It is to be predisposed to participate in the project initiated by the other and to identify with the other and his or her needs. In the light of this, the project of Pan-Africanism implies that Africans should identify with each other's need, approve this need and demonstrate a common sense of fellowship with each other. Here we need to recall the words of Sekou Toure pioneer President of Guinean that: "Africa should be considered as the human body, when a finger is cut off, the whole body suffers. "This virtue of solidarity as captured by Nyamnjoh and Shoro (2010) includes "inspirational project towards a world informed by solidarities and identities shaped by a humanity of common predicament" (p.3).

But the project of solidarity is demanding. This is because it requires approval of the Other. It also invokes belief that the actions,

plans, and aspirations of the other should be supported for the other, for the wishes and goals of the other. But in recommending this, the emphasis is forgotten that this should be found to be useful and acceptable to the extent that the actions or desire of the other is commendable. The question of the relevance of the other is not brought to focus, the implication of which is that solidarity operates on the assumption that the other (his or her deeds, thoughts, actions or aspirations) would always be good enough to deserve the support of the other. As a result, the other who is invited to show solidarity may have to approve the desires of the other even when this approval may be harmful to the approving party. This, in effect, questions Pan-Africanism from a rational and moral standpoint because solidarity is a principle which demands a compelling inner force. Solidarity is akin to kindness which is required by the need of the other and should be held to be valuable based on the nature of the need for the other.

But human needs differ, and the needs of Africans as social groups vary considerably. Based on the contingencies of time and history and given the different periods during which the different ethnocultural and political units of Africa evolved to their present stage and state, it should be expected that some Africans have advanced in some aspects of life more than others. Given the different economic and political history of the components that make up modern African states, it should be seen that although they may be functioning in the same nation-state, their socio-political needs are not equal and that certain parts of Africa have become more privileged than others. While some may have more technical skills than others, others may have had more military and diplomatic skills than others such that pan-Africanism can hardly be considered profitable to all in the same measure and in the same way even under the same common state framework.

Pan-Africanism, consequently appears lodged on the idea of Africa supplied by the modern African states and that it is a movement that finds its roots in postcolonial Africa; one which evokes the principle of solidarity in sustaining these new states disregarding the tensions that define these states. Again, this is where the virtues of Pan-Africanism and the policies it endorses need to be questioned to know whether it is right in doing so. This is because it has legitimized the colonial contraptions that were not the result of a

well-thought-out project of state creation in Africa. It has more or less keyed into what can becall "the curse of Berlin" which signifies the effective bondage of African nationals by European state project, which has been aptly referred to as "bondage of boundaries"(Mazrui, 1994). The critical stand of Neo-Africanism here   is that the state project on which Pan-Africanism has been built does not have an African origin and that there is a significant collision between the old idea implied by this project. As of now, an essential visioning of the African state is questionable at least in the light of the demands of postcolonial African modernity.

Conclusion

This work has provided the basis on which the idea of Pan-Africanism should be reviewed. To do this, it articulated the ideals of Pan-Africanism drawing enormously on the sub-Saharan version of the ideology to articulate its claims. It has also applied metatheory of deconstruction to critique the ideology of Pan-Africanism by examining the meaning and import of two fundamental ideas on which the movement is anchored, namely, the ideals of unity and solidarity. The effort has been to see whether Pan-Africanism, as it is held about these concepts, is justified. It is hoped that further attempt to achieve a Neo-African ideal would go beyond the Pan-African rhetoric. Hopefully, this will lead to an enthusiastic review of the idea and cause a paradigm shift in the approach for the birth of more relevant ideologies that will lead to better growth of humanism in Africa.

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