AFRICANITY AND THE POLITICS OF AFRICAN XENOPHOBIA: A STUDY OF TWO PARALLELS

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Abstract

The search for sustainable home-made solutions to both internal and external challenges especially the colonialist and neocolonialist epistemologies as well as the Eurocentric construction of African history that Africa is faced with has, in part, led to the call and coining of the concept of Africanity. While this call has, on several occasions, been racially discredited by the West, it has now assumed a pivotal space in Africa's developmental agenda. Again, while efforts geared towards the re-awakening of the consciousness and belief in the African Indigenous system and its capacity to spearhead the much desired goal of Africa's development continue to be intensified, the recent manifestations of the xenophobic attitudes in Africa now negates the spirit of Africanity and the goal of a united Africa, consequently posing a major hindrance to Africa's development. Findings have however shown that the concept and propagation of Africanity in the wake of the xenophobic experience in Africa is largely paradoxical. It has been observed that Africans are equally neck-deep in what this concept is set out to achieve. As a corrective response to the racist and sexist ontology of the West, it has paradoxically failed to illuminate the true Africanness of Africans in contemporary racist, sexist and xenophobic Africa. Consequently, this paper concludes that the whole concept of Africanity in contemporary Xenophobic Africa is paradoxical. It can however turn out to be a

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reality only when the continent is eventually cleansed from the pathologies the concept is set out to achieve.

Keywords: *Africa; Africanity; African xenophobia; paradox; and pathologies.*

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Introduction

For most parts of history, Africa and its people had, for so long, been defined, portrayed and viewed from the Eurocentric lens. Borrowing from Asante's words "Africa was seen as being marginal, uncivilized and one sitting on the periphery of historical consciousness". [Asante, 1990] European standards and values were used to evaluate the African people and their way of life. And once a deviation from the western way of life is noticed in Africans' lifestyle, Africans are then perceived as being barbaric, primitive and less civilized by the West. Over time, the western narratives have been providing distorted versions of the African worldview and its philosophies. Motivated partly by the need for the glorification of their homelands and several untold economic rewards, most western writers had chosen to neglect the truth by twisting the hands of history and constructing African history as one that's got no roots and incapable of lifting the faith and self-belief of the African people in developing themselves. This challenge and several internal complications have plagued and robbed the continent of the needed firepower to kick-start its development goals. This has led to the search for a viable means of providing superior evidence to counter the Eurocentric denigration and downplaying of African worldview, history and philosophies. However, the search for sustainable home-made solutions to both internal and external challenges, especially the colonialist and neocolonialist epistemologies as well as the Eurocentric construction of African history that Africa is faced with has, in part, led to the call and coining of the concept of Africanity which was first conceived by one of the Afrocentric greats, Alli Muzrah, to correct the racist, xenophobic, and the sexist ontologies and epistemologies of the West in Africa.

Paradoxically, Africanity, as a vision, is now being triggered and championed in an environment and by people that are highly xenophobic, racist, sexist and sentimental. It has however become nothing other than a paradox to see both

Africanity and xenophobia being championed in the same environment, though from differing set of persons. It is now observed that so many Africans are equally neck-deep in what this xenophobia and racism concept is set out to achieve. And as result, despite being a corrective response to the racist and sexist ontology of the West, it has paradoxically failed to illuminate the true Africanness of Africans in contemporary racist, sexist and xenophobic Africa. In fact, there is virtually no region within the African continent that has not played a host to xenophobia. This intolerance is not only peculiar to the Xenophobic Attacks witnessed recently in South Africa, it had manifested in the Ghana Must Go Saga in Nigeria in 1983. It was also identified in the way the people from Burkina Faso who have settled in the cocoa plantations in Côte d'Ivoire for many generations were humiliated and made targets of racial discrimination in that respective region. While Ivoirité suddenly became the new identity for true citizens of the country, being Mossi became synonymous with anti-Ivoirité or non-Ivoirité. And consequently, it exposed all the Mossi tribes to constant danger of attacks. Equally, in Northern Africa, the same thing occurred. Libyans hardly welcome Sub-Saharan Africans. And when job seekers from the sub-Saharan region of the continent found their way to Libya, they suffered attacks and, many a times, they were forced to leave the country of President Muarmuar Ghadafy and return to where they came from. These and many more cases abound. The bigger question here is that how then can the vision of Africanity materialize in Africa when Africans have phobia for fellow Africans? Or can Africa give or present what it doesn't have? This then draws us to the proposition made earlier in this paper that unless Africa is cleansed from the internal pathologies the concept of Africanity is meant to correct on the larger-scale in Africa, the goal and vision of Africanity might not see the light of the day in Africa.

Understanding the Concepts of Africanity, African Xenophobia and Vision

Africanity connotes simply an ideal and a quest for unity, cooperation and justice for Africans on the continent and diaspora. It's an evolving orientation for more cohesion and wholeness amongst the African peoples to suppress the continued fragmentation, dislocation and dehumanization that was occasioned by years of xenophobic slavery, colonialism and neo-imperialism by the West in contemporary times. [Muzrah, 2002] It's a rising consciousness for greater unity and African solidarity amongst the African peoples which has equally led to the establishments of common Pan-African Organizations such as the African Union and other regional

bodies with a view to providing a dialectic interface and connection between where Africa is coming and its envisaged future. Since, according to Ngugi, memory is the link between the past and present, between space and time, and the base of one's dream, Africanity then becomes the reservoir of memories needed in knowing and connecting the African roots with its promising future. [Ngugi, 2009] Africanity has also assumed a pivotal role in the developmental agenda of virtually all African states. It has been realized that it is not only instrumental in challenging the Eurocentric conception of African worldview but also capable of drawing the African solidarity, oneness, wholeness, brotherliness, and togetherness needed amongst the African peoples for the advancement of Africa's development. It is now seen by African states as a call and means towards achieving greater cooperation, friendliness, harmony, tolerance and integration amongst the African peoples and states. This suffices to imply that the onward advancement of Africa's development is now hinged on this concept. Africanity can thus be regarded as a state of development. If attained, it is capable of heralding another phase of development. It is a state of development that other spheres of development are dependent on. If conceived as a state of unity, oneness, selflessness, harmony, togetherness, solidarity and allegiance to the black heritage, it then goes to say that it Africanity now connotes a means to end (which is development) and actual state of development itself because the afore-mentioned qualities are indicators of a developed society. In this light, this paper construes Africanity as not just a means to an end but an end in itself. It is thus taken as a vision, and when realized it becomes an actual state of development that is capable of heralding another sphere of development.

   African Xenophobia: Whilst it might not be fallacious to aver that xenophobia is a worldwide phenomenon, it will be too mechanistic and deterministic to suggest that xenophobia is the same world over without considering the environmental peculiarities of the scene where it is manifesting. It is not peculiar to Africa alone but its causes have African peculiarities just as its causes elsewhere are peculiar to where it is manifesting. According to Center for Human Rights (2009), xenophobia is basically a perceived fear, hatred or dislike of a non-native or foreigner in a particular country. Being a product of two Greek words, xenophobia is made up of xeno and phobos which literally connotes the fear of a foreigner. [Bordeau, 2010] So, to this end, xenophobia is taken to mean an embodiment of discriminatory attitudes, dispositions, beliefs, actions and behavioural tendencies that usually culminate into violent attacks on foreigners, refugees and fellow nationals. Simply

put, it is the fear or hatred of foreigners or strangers embodied in discriminatory attitudes and behaviour which usually culminate into violence, abuses of all types, and exhibitions of hatred. [Mogekwu, 2005] Buttressing this point, Harris (2002) likened it to a form of dislike, hatred or fear expressed by a group of people towards foreigners.

Importantly, however, as Harris (2002: 170) correctly emphasizes, xenophobia is 'not just an attitude but also an action. As reflected by the South African incidents, xenophobia invariably then entails acts and processes of violence, physical, as well as psychological and social. Furthermore, as also reflected by these incidents, in the South African context, xenophobia is not directed at just anyone. It is largely directed at people especially foreigners of a divergent colour and ethnical background. McDonald *et al*. (1998) competently defined xenophobia as a discreet set of beliefs that can manifest themselves in the behaviours of governments, the general public and the media. This suffices to imply that it's any form of hatred or fear of foreigners or strangers based on a discreet set of beliefs that may be expressed verbally or manifested in the behaviours of governments, the media and the general public. A more comprehensive and illustrative conceptualization of Xenophobia was given by Bihr (2005:1) who asserts that it literally refers to the fear/hatred of the stranger. He further stressed that xenophobia is "a system that is necessary for the symbolic economy of historical societies as it enables the reconstitution of social unity by exporting internal divisions and conflicts, hiding the internal origin of the latter – for which exogenous figures are held solely responsible." This therefore means that every xenophobic attack is targeted at people other than the original occupants or indigenes of a given community or state. Bihr (2005:1) also observed that the stranger that is hated is one that is close, "the stranger hated by the xenophobia is not only a neighbour, often living next to him, but also a stranger who is un-foreign as possible so to speak, a stranger who differentiates himself as little as possible, through his social and cultural features from the group of belonging and/or reference of the xenophobe." In line with the foregoing definitions of xenophobia, the concept can be quipped to refer to a fear and hatred of strangers or foreigners or of anything that is strange or foreign. To Blank and Bucholz (2005), "Xenophobia can also be seen as an economic cost factor since it generates economic cost for a society." According to them, studies show that foreign African entrepreneurs provide new jobs by establishing businesses or increasing the aggregate demand as a result of cross-border trading. The foregoing assertion is in contrast to the very claim of South

Africa xenophobes that foreign immigrants in the country take their jobs. However, Kollapan (1999) has warned that xenophobia cannot be separated from violence and physical abuse. In this wise, a review of the notion which sees xenophobia as just an attitude is not only necessary but imminent if a holistic and broader view of the phenomenon is to be achieved. Xenophobia as a term must then be reframed to incorporate practice. It is not just an attitude, it is an activity. It is not just a dislike or fear of foreigners, it is a violent practice that results in bodily harm and damage. More particularly, the violent practice that comprises xenophobia must be further refined to include its specific target, because, in South Africa and elsewhere in Africa, for example, not all foreigners are uniformly victimized. Rather, black foreigners, particularly those from Africa, comprise the majority of victims.

Vision: In a loose sense, a Vision is often referred to as the ability to think about or plan the future with great imagination or wisdom. It's all about visualizing and articulating what an institution intends achieving. It's a dreamed or an imagined destination and a state of fulfilment. It can also be a target or a goal. It can be construed as an inspirational description of what an organization would like to achieve or accomplish in the mid-term or long-term future. It is intended to serve as a clear guide for choosing current and future course of actions. [Business Dictionary, 2016] It's a company's roadmap, indicating both what the company wants to become and guiding transformational initiatives by setting a defined direction for the company's growth. [Wikipedia, 2016] A vision focuses on the potentials inherent in the company's future, or what they intend to be. It's basically a description of what the company intends to become in the near future. [Your Dictionary, 2016]

Countries, international organizations, inter-governmental organizations, non-governmental organizations and corporate bodies have been employing the utilities of a Vision in achieving their set out goals. For instance, the Millennium Development Goals was a global vision conceived by the United Nations and implemented by national governments to bring about development in the eight areas identified in vision across the world by 2015. The recent Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) is another example of a vision with a global scope. In Nigeria, the current Vision 2020 is a vision conceived by the Nigerian government with a view to becoming one of the twenty largest economies in the world by year 2020.

However, a defining and ever constant attribute of all visions is that they could either turn out to be successful or non-successful. While some visions have been completely or partially successful in the past, some have out-rightly failed. This

then brings us to the question as to whether the Africanity vision in Africa has been a success or a failure in the contemporary xenophobic Africa. The answer is self-evident!

The Chronological Development and Manifestations of African Xenophobia

It may be shocking to whoever knows that the manifestations of this heinous act date as far back as the 1960s. Its first institutional manifestation was recorded in November, 1969, precisely forty-nine days after the assumption of Kofi Busia into office as Ghanaian Prime minister, following the introduction of the Aliens Compliance Order which was intended to expel undocumented aliens residing in Ghana. Aliens that did not possess work permit were given two weeks' ultimatum to get it and those that couldn't were eventually expulsed. [Gocking, 2005] Surprisingly, it was alleged, as Aremu and Ajayi (2014: 176) put it, that foreigners were responsible for the large-scale unemployment that had befallen Ghana at this period in time. It however remains an irony to know that agents of foreign direct investments could also be accused of stealing jobs.

Similarly, in 1972, the Ugandan Authorities expelled thousands of foreigners of Asian descents due to the purported deteriorating economic conditions. [Hansen, 2000] Asians from Britain, India, Pakistan, Kenya, Tanzania, and Zambia were given three-month ultimatum to leave Uganda. However, the aftermath of this development did not yield any economic returns as the country further witnessed more economic downturns.

The Gabon had also been a harbour and contributed indirectly to the growth of African xenophobia. In 1978, it expelled all Beninese on the grounds that the Beninese President at this time, Kerekou casted aspersions on President Bongo and the people of The Gabon. [Gray, 1998] While the former had accused the latter of masterminding a foiled mercenary coup that was intended to oust him from power. As a response, president Bongo of the Gabon became enraged and ordered the expulsion of 9,000 Beninese from The Gabon without examination or screening of the Beninese' travel documents. [Henckaerts, 1995]

A similar experience was equally recorded in Nigeria in 1983. Owing to the purported worsening economic situations in Nigeria in the aftermath of the oil boom witnessed in the 1970s, Nigeria had to expel more than two million foreigners from the country. With more than a million of the expelled foreigners being Ghanaians, Nigerian Authorities claimed that foreigners were not only

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responsible for the prevailing economic woes in the country but also the prevalence of crimes. Having realized that the expulsion was not salvaging the dying economy, Nigeria resorted to another round of expulsion of over three hundred thousand (300,000) Ghanaians in 1985. Surprisingly, these expulsions could not stop the deterioration of the Nigerian economy. [Obakhedo, & Otoghile, 2011]

In a related experience, the former Ivorian President, Bedie, came up with the idea of "Ivoirite" in the wake of declining economic situations in Cote d'Ivoire in the 1990s so as to grant the citizens of Cote d'Ivoire unhindered access to the limited political and economic resources at the expense of the foreigners. Migrants from Burkina Faso who have settled in the cocoa plantations in Côte d'Ivoire for many generations became victims of humiliation and racial discrimination in Côte d'Ivoire. While Ivoirité suddenly became the new identity for true citizens of the country, being Mossi became synonymous with anti-Ivoirité or non-Ivoirité. And consequently, it exposed all the Mossi tribes to constant danger of attacks in Cote d'Ivoire. This eventually led to the expulsion of between 8,000 and 12,000 Burkinabe farmers from Cote d'Ivoire following a purported schism between the Ivoirians and the Burkinabe farmers in 1999. [Human Rights Watch, 2001]

In Equatorial Guinea, it was alleged that there was an attempted coup by foreign mercenary against the president. This however spurred a clampdown on foreigners residing in the country whilst Equatorial Guineans who did not belong to security apparatus were ordered along with the conventional security apparatus to arrest those suspected to be illegal foreigners. [Human Rights Watch, 2009] An estimate of about one thousand (1,000) foreigners ended up being expelled from the country. [Human Rights Watch, 2009] Coupled with this, by 2007, the Government of Equatorial Guinea had also banned West African Nationals from owning grocery stores in the country. In cases of violation, those stores were either taken over by the Government or shut down. [IRIN News, 2008]

In 2004, the Angolan Government expelled an estimated hundred thousand (100,000) Congolese from Angola on the pretext that the Congolese were stealing natural resources that naturally belonged to the Angolan people. Buttressing this fact, Adebajo (2011: 91) informed that over one hundred and sixty thousand Congolese were expelled from Angola between December 2008 and December 2009.

As a retaliatory measure, the Democratic Republic of Congo's government expelled fifty thousand (50,000) Angolans in 2009 following a popular demand for a reprisal to the inhumane treatment meted out by the Angolan government to Congolese residing in Angola. [Human Rights Watch, 2012]

On the same note, Burundian Authorities expelled almost one thousand two hundred (1,200) foreigners from Burundi on the pretext that a routine of this nature was imminent so as to address high crime rate in the country. [Human Rights Watch, 2012]

Furthermore, in a related development, Tanzania's government expelled close to eleven thousand (11,000) undocumented foreigners with a view to flush out the purported criminal elements in Tanzania. [Ghosh, 2013] This was purportedly informed by the prevalence of armed robbery, bus attacks and hijacking attributed to foreigners in the Kagera axis of Tanzania, and the need to make dividends of governance accessible by the citizens. [Naluyaga, 2013]

The incessant terrorist attacks from the Somali al-Shabaab group in Kenya have purportedly aroused anti-Somali sentiments amongst Kenyans. Following the 2013 Westgate terrorist attack, the Kenyan government initiated the 'Operation Usalama Watch' to serve as a counter-terrorist measure. This operation eventually resulted in the arrest of four thousand (4,000) Somalis. Every time the Kenyan government has tried to combat terrorism, it has been found that the Somali community in Kenya has always been targeted. [Buchana-Clarke, & Lekalake, 2015]

Further, Congo Brazzaville, in 2014, initiated Operation Mbalayabakolo (meaning 'Slap of the elders') with a view to, as purported, flush criminal elements out of the country. [Reuters, 2015] This singular operation eventually led to the expulsion of over fifty thousand (50,000) citizens of the Democratic Republic of Congo. [Reuters, 2015]

Following the suicide bomb attacks in N'Djamena, Chad, in June 2015, by elements of the BokoHaram Terrorist Network, the Chadian government, in a responsive and precautionary measure, expelled close to three hundred (300) Cameroonians [Ernest, 2015] and over two thousand (2,000) Nigerians [Telegraph, 2015] in a bid to flush out undocumented foreigners that were, as purported, perpetrating terrorist and criminal acts in the country.

Xenophobic attacks were first witnessed in South Africa in 1994 when three immigrants of African descents, i.e. two from Senegal and one from Mozambique, were brutally killed in a train, after they have been accused of stealing jobs by South Africans (The Eastern Province Herald of 4th September 1998 quoted by Abdi, 2009:1).

Similarly, in 1996, a crowd of approximately one thousand South African inhabitants of an informal housing settlement attempted to drive all foreign nationals

out of the settlement. Two foreign nationals as well as two South Africans were killed in the ensuing violence. [Hill, & Lefko-Everett, 2008] In 1997, South African informal traders in Johannesburg launched a spate of violent attacks over a 48-hour period against foreign national informal traders. The attacks were accompanied by widespread looting. In 1998, six South African police officers were filmed setting attack dogs loose on three Mozambican migrants while hurling racist and xenophobic invectives at them. [Hill, & Lefko-Everett, 2008] More so, in 1999, it was reported that six foreign nationals accused of alleged criminal activity were abducted by a group of South Africans in Ivory Park, a township on the outskirts of Johannesburg. One of the six managed to escape from the mob's clutches, three others were seriously injured and two were reportedly killed by means of the notorious 'neck-lacing' method. [Hill, & Lefko-Everett, 2008] In 2000, two Mozambican farm workers were assaulted by a vigilante group after they were accused of stealing. One of the workers subsequently died directly as a result of the attack. In 2001, residents of Zandspruit, an informal settlement in Johannesburg, set fire to the houses of hundreds of Zimbabwean migrants forcing them to flee the settlement. In 2006, several Somali shop owners were reported to have been forced to flee a township outside Knysna in the Western Cape Province, as a result of violent intimidation. In 2007, more than 100 shops owned by Somali nationals in the Motherwell area in the Eastern Cape Province were looted during a series of attacks on African refugees over a 24-hour period. [Hill, & Lefko-Everett, 2008]

More recently, in May 2008, South Africa was hit by another wave of violent attacks against foreigners from the majority of the world. These xenophobic attacks resulted in the death of more than 70 persons, many injured and displacement of approximately 120,000 people, all of them people of colour and most of them poor. [Peberdy, 2009]

On the evening of 11th of May 2008, in Diepsloot, a township in the north of Johannesburg, in the Gauteng province of South Africa, a Mozambican migrant, Ernesto AlfabetoNhamuavhe, was torched alive while a group of South Africans stood by laughing as he burnt to death. [Worby *et al.*, 2008] In the public memory, it was this cruel and gruesome event, more than any other, which marked the unfurling of a frightening wave of xenophobic violence that was to engulf the South African landscape for several weeks thereafter. [Peberdy, 2009]

When, by June 2008, South Africans took stock of the horrendous excesses committed in their name during the preceding months, it was reported that 120,000

people had been displaced, 670 had been injured, 70 had been murdered and countless women had been raped. [Matsopoulos *et al.*, 2009; Peberdy, 2009] In 2005, a new wave of xenophobic attacks was incited by the Zulu King resulting in the death of a South African teenager and seven other persons with loss of properties and displacement of thousands of foreigners. [Essa, 2015]

Most contemporary of all these xenophobic attacks is the attacks on foreigners in April, 2016, in Zingalume and Chunga, Zambia, over the allegations that foreigners were using Zambians for rituals in exchange for economic and business prosperities. Shops belonging to foreigners were looted while identified foreigners were descended on at sight. The xenophobic riot followed the discovery of a mutilated body in Zingalume, Zambia on the 16th April, 2016. However, the Zambian Police was quick in arresting the event before degenerating into a nation-wide catastrophe. [Financial Watch News, 2016]

The Rise and Causes of African Xenophobia: A Theoretical Discourse

Multiple factors that are believed to have contributed in one way or other to the rise and manifestation of African xenophobia are, albeit hypothetically, considered to be diverse. These factors, ranging from citizenship/identity crisis, to poor immigration policy, and media effects, as well as leadership failure on the part of the government to deliver the dividends of governance to its people and general state of dwindling economic conditions, are believed to have accounted for this pathology.

While this study recognizes the plethora of insightful explanations provided by the Isolation thesis and the Relative Deprivation thesis [May *et al.*, 2000; Pillay, 2008] as well as Bronwyn Harris's scapegoating hypothesis (2002) as to the root causes of the xenophobic attitudes and attacks in Africa in general, it finds Nieftagodien's Endemic poverty Explanation (2008) and John Dollard and Neal Miller's Frustration-Aggression theory (1939) more relevant and appropriate to this discourse as they capture the very underlying nitty-gritty and the prima facie of the African xenophobia.

The Relative Deprivation theory cannot be relied upon in providing a convincing explanation on African xenophobia because it doesn't account for why foreigners of colour and particularly African foreigners are the ones who bear the brunt of this anger and resentment. Although, it provides a glimpse of insights as to why there are feelings of hostility from Africans towards foreigners by locating it in the perceptions of being deprived of basic privileges because of others. The South African, Ghanaian

and Nigerian cases provide an insight as to how deprived citizens could resort to xenophobic attacks in expressing their plights. As May *et al.* (2000) and Pillay (2008) put it, "inequalities in income have become increasingly pronounced amongst blacks since 1994, and that they rank amongst the highest in the world". While the poor are becoming increasingly poorer, the new political elites in Africa are becoming richer at the expense of the poor. And in the face of this naked display of self-enrichment on the part of the new political and corporate elites, the responses of the marginalized, the unemployed and the working poor to their apparently unchanging plight have turned out to be violent xenophobia. And in a continent, in which xenophobic discourses are encouraged and reproduced by the ruling elites to score cheap political points from their opponents, this anger and resentment are inevitably directed at foreigners and they are being scapegoated for crimes they know nothing about. Moreover, migrants are infinitely easier targets than the new political and corporate elites who typically construct themselves as the allies and champions of the poor in Africa, whereas, it is not so.

Worthy of noting here, as earlier informed, is Bronwyn Harris's scapegoating hypothesis (2002) which argues that xenophobia occurs when indigenous populations turn their anger, resulting from whatever hardships they are experiencing, against 'foreigners', primarily because foreigners are constructed as being the cause of all their difficulties and predicaments. However, like other theories, the traditional criticism directed at the scapegoating hypothesis, of course, is that it does not explain why foreigners are the group that is burdened with the hatred and abuse of autochthonous groups instead of the political class that are constantly milking and cashing out on the poor populace in Africa. More specifically, it does not explain why foreigners of colour in the context of contemporary South Africa invariably bear the brunt of the prejudicial and murderous hatred of the local population instead of the high-profile corrupt politicians so to say.

Now, at this instance, it's imperative to consider Nieftagodien's Endemic Poverty Explanation (2008) on the rise of African xenophobia. In his study, Nieftagodien discovered that xenophobia is bound to find fertile ground in areas where there is poverty or worsening economic conditions. For instance, in the case of Ghana, Nigeria, Angola, Uganda, South Africa, and to a lesser extent, Cote d'Ivoire, The Gabon and Equatorial Guinea, xenophobic reactions and attacks were largely spurred by economic considerations. [Akinrinde, 2018] Although, in some instances like Tanzania, Burundi and Congo Brazzaville, xenophobic reactions were considered as

a product of the need to curb crimes in these countries. In other instances, it can be seen as object of political consideration like the expulsion of Angola from Congo Kinshasa. By and large, the majority of instances of xenophobic attacks that had been witnessed so far in Africa were largely spurred by economic factor. This equally explains the manifestation and the first triggering of the xenophobic attacks in May, 2008 in Alexandra, a town that is considered relatively poorer than many other towns in South Africa. According to Nieftagodien (2008), Alexandra, where the xenophobic attacks of May 2008, took place in South Africa, for instance, is a township area characterized by desperate and brutalizing poverty. Specifically, Alexandra is a township area where the overwhelming majority of a population of 350,000 people live in makeshift shacks that are crammed into a mere 2 km^2; with an unemployment rate of approximately 30 per cent; and where 20 per cent of households subsist on a paltry monthly income of ZAR 1,000 (i.e. approximately \$128) or less. [Nieftagodien, 2008]

It is, however, worth mentioning here that there are places in the world where people are as poor as or poorer than the inhabitants of Alexandra, where xenophobia has manifested. Yet these places have not witnessed the extremely high levels of xenophobia seen in Africa, especially in Alexandra and similar townships in May 2008. This, of course, alerts us to the probability that endemic poverty or the economic factor on its own cannot account for the African xenophobia and violence.

Another theoretical explanation worth discussing here is the frustration-aggression theory, proposed by two great academics such as John Dollard and Neal Miller. The Frustration-Aggression hypothesis attempts to explain why people scapegoat. It attempts to give an explanation as to the cause of violence. It holds that frustration causes aggression, but when the source of the frustration cannot be challenged, the aggression gets displaced onto an innocent target. This explains why foreigners who are neither culpable nor guilty of the economic woes in places where xenophobia had manifested in Africa were scapegoated and made victims of the citizens' frustration with their system leading to transfer of aggression from them to the foreigners.

Frustration has also led to aggression by unexpected blocking of goals. In other words, the sudden failure of any expected goal could lead to frustration. And it has been arbitrarily proven that frustration is a strong antecedent of aggressive behaviours. [Berkowitz, 1969]

If the assumption given above is juxtaposed with the African experience of xenophobic attacks, it will however not be out of place to infer that the level of

Aggression vented on the foreigners by natives of African countries where xenophobia had occurred before was as a result of their economic frustration that is hinged on their inability to meet their economic needs.

Conclusively therefore, it should be pointed out here that based on the recognition of the fact that no single theoretical frame can independently and succinctly capture the dynamics of African xenophobia without taking into cognizance other theoretical perspectives, two broad theoretical theses have been adopted in this study to provide us with insightful explanations on the rise and causes of African xenophobia. It must be bore in mind that in trying to fully and holistically capture the causal factors of this xenophobia, several theoretical perspectives must be explored because these factors are not only numerous but equally complex in nature. Nonetheless, the two adopted theses in this study provide us with the linkage between the economic frustrations of the native population from the countries where xenophobia had manifested before and the attendant aggression that was expressed in physical attacks on foreigners in these countries. This then implies that if poverty and other economic problems are not resolved by African governments in areas where unemployment and poverty hold sway, the quest to banish xenophobia from Africa may not be actualized. There is therefore the need for African governments to tackle the source of their peoples' frustration that is leading to aggressive xenophobic behaviour.

The Stupendous Oxymoron and Paradox of the Vision of Africanity in Xenophobic Africa

First, it's nothing but a paradox to be talking of Africanity in an environment that is devoid of the basic ideals of Africanity itself. If Africanity is still what it was conceived to be by the great Ali Muzrah, then it remains a paradox to be propagating this vision when the continent itself is against it while also embracing its antithesis. The whole concept of Africanity as conceived by its originator, Ali Muzrah, is a vision, a consciousness, that when tapped into, is capable of defacing the already constructed Eurocentric view of African worldview, and one that is capable of unleashing African solidarity, belief, unity and togetherness for Africa's develop-ment. Ironically, it's the antitheses of this vision that are being embraced in contemporary Africa. Xenophobia, racism, ethnic cleansing to mention but a few are defining characters of the African continent. It's now laughable to be seeing scholars and even government officials talking about the importance and utility of using the Ideals of Africanity to provide an alternative African stance to the arrogant

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Eurocentric worldview when the continent is still wallowing in those pathologies the vision of Africanity is aimed at correcting at the global level. Isn't it a paradox?

From the time the vision was conceived up to this present day, it has failed to deliver its inherent prospects that are capable of transforming the African continent and catapult it to an enviable level owing largely to the African version of xenophobia otherwise known as African xenophobia. Africanity talks about maintaining a united front to any imperialistic tendencies of any sort, but Africans still have phobia for fellow Africans. Where then are the ideals of Africanity that can bring about the true state of Africanity as a state of development that is capable of heralding other phases of development in Africa? Evidently, Africanity has failed to yield the desired results because of Africans, their attitudes towards one another and their tolerance level. The ideals of Africanity were evident in relations amongst Africans prior to the advent of colonialism. These ideals were evident in the way Africans traded with one another especially between the Sahara and Sub-Sahara merchants. Africans lived and co-existed peacefully as brothers. Although, one of the reasons that have been put forward by the colonialists as justification for colonizing Africa was that African societies were into war with one another but this narrative has been discredited by Afrocentric scholars for being fallacious and baseless. [Adu, 1989] One of the legacies of European rule in Africa is the disarticulated economies inherited by Independent African States that they are still grappling with after many years. This undoubtedly is the foundation of the worsening economic conditions that is fuelling the embers of xenophobia amongst Africans.

However, since it was identified, through the manifestation of these xenophobic attacks in Africa, that most of them were stimulated by the economic factor, the emphasis was on finding a solution. African governments could move forward in their attempt to enshrine the ideals of Africanity and drive away the threat of xenophobia.

Conclusion and Recommendations

In concluding a paper of this nature, two basic questions need to be answered. First, what is the focus of this paper's argument? Has this paper contributed to the search for sustainable solutions to the identified societal problem such as xenophobia and the failures of Africanity? These questions will serve as the launching pad to providing an all-round concluding remark here. In light of these, the paper has argued that the current propagation of the vision of Africanity in the

face of African xenophobia is nothing other than a paradox. Or how can two sides of a coin and opposites be reconciled? A failed vision, I guess. The paper has recounted how series of xenophobic manifestations have stalled the realization of the ideals and vision of Africanity in contemporary Africa. The paper has also been able to identify a common attribute to most of the xenophobic manifestations in Africa. The attribute is grounded in economic factor. It however argued conclusively that, unless the bane of what the paper itself regards as African xenophobia due to its African peculiarities, is urgently quenched, the Vision of Africanity as conceived by its originator, Ali Muzrah, might not be redeemed from its present pit of failures. Needless to say, for now, that the Vision of Africanity remains a failed vision but nevertheless, it is not beyond redemption if revisited and repositioned on the path of success by eliminating its greatest enemy, African xenophobia. How then can African xenophobia be banished from Africa?

First, since it was discovered that worsening economic conditions in terms of unemployment rate, literacy level and standard of living of the places where the attacks had been perpetrated in Africa contributed immensely to the African xenophobia, we need to point out here that African governments might need to take the economic needs of their people seriously.

Second, African governments must, through the auspices of a supra-national continental body like the African Union, endeavour to institute a mass awareness and sensitization program across the continent on the ills of xenophobic attacks. More so, the media outlets in Africa should be charged towards upholding the ethics of their profession rather than engaging in sensational journalism by misrepresenting facts and figures as well as telling the people what they want to hear in lieu of reporting actual facts. Similarly, the Police, Security agencies and other governmental authority that directly deal or relate with foreigners in African countries should be tutored on the importance of upholding their oath of practice rather than giving room for the temptations that could ignite xenophobic, racial, discriminatory tendencies within them.

Third, since education is the key in any human organization, as it has been observed in the course of this research, African governments need to do more in tackling illiteracy amongst its citizenry. The colonial legacy of educational disparity still subsists in Africa as a whole and statistics further show that majority of Africans that participated in these xenophobic attacks are illiterates and ignorant of the African philosophy of peaceful coexistence and brotherhood. In fact,

according to an Afro-barometer survey, within the South African context for instance, South African natives living in the rural areas harbour more xenophobic sentiments than people in the city. [Afro-barometer, 2016] Hence, the need for promotion of mass literacy level in Africa.

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