

11-1-2012

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Saul Tobias Ph.D.

California State University Fullerton, stobias@fullerton.edu

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Recommended Citation

Tobias, Saul Ph.D. (2012) "Neoliberal Globalization and the Politics of Migration in Sub-Saharan Africa," *Journal of International and Global Studies*: Vol. 4: No. 1, Article 1.

DOI: 10.62608/2158-0669.1113

Available at: <https://digitalcommons.lindenwood.edu/jigs/vol4/iss1/1>

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Neoliberal Globalization and the Politics of Migration in Sub-Saharan Africa

Saul Tobias PhD
Department of Liberal Studies
California State University Fullerton
stobias@fullerton.edu

Abstract

Over the last few decades, many states in sub-Saharan Africa have adopted draconian anti-migrant policies, leaving refugees and migrants vulnerable to violence, harassment, and economic exploitation. These policies represent a shift from the relatively hospitable attitude shown by many African nations in the immediate post-colonial period. Explanations at the local level do not adequately explain the pervasiveness of these changes or why many developing states are now replicating the migration discourse and practices of the global north. Drawing on scholarship and data from a number of states in the region, including Tanzania, Kenya, Ghana, and South Africa, this paper argues that owing to the widespread implementation of neoliberal economic policies, these states are now subject to many of the same incentives and constraints that operate in the developed north. As a result, political parties and business elites have used national migration policy as an instrument for enhancing their political and economic positions. Insofar as neoliberal globalization continues to exacerbate inequality within the developing world, the harsh measures taken by governments of developing countries against their refugee and migrant populations are likely to increase. It is therefore important that scholars of migration and human rights begin to reassess the prevailing, nearly exclusive emphasis in many globalization studies on the dehumanizing policies and exploitation of southern migrants by states in the global north, as such an emphasis risks obscuring the emergence of more complex patterns of migration and anti-migrant practices in the developing world.

Introduction

For a number of decades now, scholars of globalization have taken the post-Cold War repartitioning of the globe along a north-south axis as a basic framework for understanding global movements of capital, commodities, and people. Much of their work has built on economic models that, beginning with dependency theory (Frank, 1967; Baran, 1975) and World-Systems Theory (Wallerstein, 2004) and continuing in the work of critics of neoliberal globalization such as Joseph Stiglitz (2003) and Naomi Klein (2008), emphasize the imbalance of power between the global north and the global south. In the field of migration studies, this framework supports an understanding of the world as divided between a migrant-generating south (comprising Latin America, Africa, and parts of South and South-East Asia) and a migrant-resisting post-industrial north (comprising Western and Southern Europe, the United States, and Australia). Because this model of neoliberal globalization entails the southward flow of money and the northward flow of people, much of the analysis of the exploitation and unequal treatment of refugees and migrants has been framed in terms of northern treatment of southern migrants (Chimni, 2000; Bacon, 2009; Solimano 2010).¹

However, the north-south framework simplifies a far more complicated global situation. In particular, it overlooks the extent to which states within the developing world, many of them victims of the anti-migration regimes of the global north, have come to replicate the North's policies and popular rhetoric at a regional level. In this respect, sub-Saharan Africa provides a particularly salient example. Over the last two decades, much more restrictive migration policies and practices have been adopted in many countries in the region. These policies and practices represent a shift from the relatively hospitable attitude shown by many African nations in the immediate post-colonial period (Milner, 2009). Prior to the 1980s, borders were rarely closed to large refugee influxes, and few serious cases of forced repatriation occurred (Westin, 1999; Dev, 2003). The more open attitude was codified in the 1969 Convention of the Organisation of African Unity, which included a definition of refugee that encompassed a broader range of involuntary migrants than the more restrictive UNHCR definition (Milner, 2009). While such tolerance was due, in part, to the limited capacity of states to control migration, it was also prompted by a governing philosophy of anti-colonial pan-Africanism that emphasized the 'brotherhood' of all Africans and the obligations they owed to one another. However, such attitudes and practices are rarely found in Africa today, raising the question of why the migration regimes of many African states, including Botswana, South Africa, Ghana, Tanzania, and Kenya, to name but five of the most prominent, are beginning to resemble those more commonly associated with Australia, the United States, and Europe.

While explanations on the domestic or local scale are important to understand these changed migration policies in the sub-continent, they do not adequately explain the uniformity or pervasiveness of this change. In order to understand such developments, it is necessary to view these local environments as situated within a global economic and political system that has affected many countries in both the developed and developing world in comparable, though uneven, ways. In seeking to advance their positions economically and politically, countries in sub-Saharan Africa find themselves subject to many of the same incentives and constraints that operate in the developed north as a result of the widespread implementation of neoliberal economic policies. Neoliberalism is a multifaceted phenomenon, but it may be succinctly defined as a "project to expand and universalize free-market social relations" (Harrison, 2005, p. 1306). The neoliberal project has reshaped the political and economic landscape of the region,

affecting states' attitudes towards border-security, labor supply, land use, urban demographics, development aid, and other factors that have impacted the lives of migrants and refugees.

Furthermore, while national responses to regional and global conditions provide part of the necessary analytical framework, this approach can be more finely honed, as it does not fully address the particular role of specific political and economic classes in promoting and enacting anti-migration policy. In his critical account of neoliberalism, David Harvey poses the question: "In whose particular interests is it that the state take a neoliberal stance, and in what ways have those interests used neoliberalism to benefit themselves, rather than, as is claimed, everyone, everywhere?" (2007, p. 24). This question applies also to the pursuit of neoliberal policies in the sub-Saharan context and, more specifically, to the advocacy of specific policies pertaining to migrants and refugees. Current migration policies of a number of African states cannot be understood apart from their relation to the particular interests of an elite class that has played the leading role in advocating for and implementing policies concerning the rights of migrants and refugees. When we consider migration in light of this approach, it becomes apparent that the fluid and competitive nature of neoliberal globalization greatly complicates the dominant image of a migrant-generating south and a migrant-resisting north. Indeed, a more dynamic and complicated picture is revealed, in which states of the global south, and specifically members of their political elite, use a variety of means to respond to the vicissitudes of neoliberal globalization, frequently replicating the policies of their northern counterparts, often at a cost to humane migration and asylum policies.

Neoliberal Globalization in Sub-Saharan Africa

For nation-states of the global north, neoliberalism has entailed a contraction of the welfare state and a restructuring of national economies to exploit the realities of global competition. However, whereas neoliberalism can be examined through the lens of nation-states competing in a global economy, it should be borne in mind that the impact of neoliberalism has had differential impacts on different classes, with business and political elites amassing greater wealth, and decreased standards of living accruing to the working and lower-middle classes in many of the states where such policies have been applied (Harvey, 2007). Indeed, it can be argued that neoliberalism has been driven in most of the world by an elite class intent on ensuring its continuing prosperity (Duménil & Lévy, 2011). As such, it is important to consider how specific classes, and not merely specific states, have benefited from global neoliberal policies.

While sub-Saharan Africa is beset by specific economic challenges that are different from those facing the post-industrial economies of the north, the region is part of the same global economy and is therefore subject to many of the same pressures and forces. The global economic shift towards neo-liberalism that has occurred since the late 1970s has impacted sub-Saharan Africa in two phases. The first phase is associated with the structural adjustment programs implemented across the continent during the 1980s and early 1990s. By 1989, eighty-four structural adjustment loans had been agreed between the World Bank and sub-Saharan African states (Harrison, 2005). These loans restructured emerging economies for insertion into the global market by scaling back public programs, reducing consumer subsidies and price controls, discouraging import substitution, and privatizing state industries (Akopari, 2006). The continuing impact of the structural adjustment programs is felt throughout Africa in the curtailment of state investment in the public sphere, and the replacement of public sector jobs by

jobs in export agriculture and manufacturing. These jobs have tended to lack the security or benefits that accompany employment in the public sector (Mohan, Brown, Milward, & Zack-Williams, 2000).

The second phase of neoliberal reforms, coinciding with increased economic globalization following the end of the Cold War, has been concerned primarily with building global systems and global capacity within nation states, as well as encouraging multi-party democracy and free elections on the continent. This has entailed the reorganization of the state as the facilitator and protector of private capital flows within a competitive global economy (Sassen, 2003). The last three decades have seen many African states jettison large-scale programs of modernization and industrialization in favor of courting international investment in commercial enterprises that have unpredictable life expectancies, resulting in increased economic instability throughout the region (Edi, 2006; Obi, 2010). Trade unions and workers' rights have been eroded through much of the sub-continent, and the destruction of tariffs or other trade barriers has been disastrous for a number of local agricultural industries (Schiller, 2009).

The changes wrought by neoliberal policies have had a significant impact on urban populations. A perceived urban bias that had accompanied the immediate post-colonial phase of nation-building was replaced in many structural adjustment programs by policies that attempted to reduce the economic power of the urban areas in favor of rural development. This led to dramatic rises in the costs of urban services and products, as state subsidies to urban areas and state support of the urban middle class were withdrawn (Campbell, 2005). The decline in purchasing power on the part of these urban middle-classes had a negative impact on local artisanal production, as small-scale producers could no longer find buyers for their products. With increasing emphasis on international trade and open markets, these local artisans were also confronted by cheaper imports of textiles, shoes, and utensils ((Roberts, 1989). So while the disappearance of public sector jobs and the instability of private sector employment have increased the role of the informal sector in most sub-Saharan economies, with a declining base of middle class earners to purchase their goods and services, the incomes of those in this sector have declined. It is therefore in the cities that middle and working class citizens have experienced most starkly the decline in wages and job security, while simultaneously witnessing the enrichment of political elites through their control of privatized state assets and their successful leverage of foreign investment (Francis, 2002).

These various transformations in the economies of sub-Saharan Africa have been exacerbated by changes in regional relations. Notwithstanding the various instance of regional cooperation such as the Southern African Development Community (SADC) and the New Partnership for Economic Development (NEPAD) that have been fostered in parts of the continent, the virtual disappearance of pan-Africanism, the non-aligned movement, and international Marxism as serious political projects has ensured that competition *within* the global economy now entails competition *between* African states. NEPAD has been driven by those states that see most advantage in opening the continent to investment, such as Senegal, South Africa, and Nigeria (Taylor, 2003). One of the most significant regional partnerships in sub-Saharan Africa, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), began as early as 1975 to establish pro-business and pro-trade policies that would enable the free movement of capital, goods, and people between the 15 participating states and has since agreed to act as the principle agent for the implementation of NEPAD in the region (Edi, 2006). With their importance as pawns and proxies in the Cold War diminished, and given the flexibility with which sought-after international investment can enter and exit a country, African

states now have strong incentives to leverage whatever political or economic advantages they may have to improve their relative positions within the global economy. The states of sub-Saharan Africa, particularly those with higher levels of development and a greater degree of integration into the global economic system, have proved eager to follow the example of leading industrial states and adopt the policies and discourses that improve their competitive positions in the international field, including their ability to influence the rules governing global trade. Ghana's Gateway Project, which aims at attracting foreign investment, and South Africa's GEAR (Growth, Employment and Redistribution) economic policy, are exemplary of this shift to competitive, investment focused policies (Essuman-Johnson, 2005; Iheduru, 2008).

However, given the mixed results of neoliberalism to improve the standard of living for most citizens, it is misleading to cast the policy choices of these states as functions of pure national interest. Throughout the sub-continent, these changes have been driven by an elite class, comprising an older generation of political leaders who were well positioned to benefit from the privatization of state entities, and a younger generation, educated in the west, who brought home the skills and international connections to facilitate and profit from the push for foreign investment. While multinational organizations have increasing power over developing economies, these political elites have been successful in establishing themselves as gatekeepers to international transactions and agreements, in many cases establishing themselves as major players in the global economy. In fact, in almost all of sub-Saharan Africa, access to political power now involves access to the powers of brokering trade and investment. Mirroring the position of political elites in the global north, these elites justify their endorsement of increased foreign investment and privatization in the region on the basis of the rewards that will flow to all citizens, even though the benefits of foreign investment have been unevenly distributed and have fostered growing income inequality across much of the continent. For example, the South African government's policy of Black Economic Empowerment (BEE) ties investor access to the country to the development and enrichment of a black capitalist class, with little measurable effect on the poverty of most South Africans (Iheduru, 2008).

Neoliberalism and Migration in Sub-Saharan Africa

The impact of neoliberalism on both the global north and the global south is experienced most directly in the economy, but its effects are felt farther afield, in areas such as migration policy. Such effects are well documented in the United States and in countries of Western and Southern Europe. Migrants and refugees have become convenient targets for citizens of these countries who have seen their economic security decline, jobs disappear, and welfare provisions decrease under the neoliberal policies that have been implemented in these countries since the 1980s (Harvey, 2007). While protectionist sentiments have contributed to the increasing reluctance of developed countries to admit and support migrants, countervailing economic pressures require the presence of such migrants in order to keep these economies competitive (Bacon, 2009). Faced with shifts from industrial to service economies and with the need to procure flexible and cheap workers to remain competitive with the offshore production and service provision economies of South America, China, and South Asia, the United States and Europe have become increasingly dependent on migrant labor in agriculture, domestic service, hotel and food services, and construction. The restructuring of major urban economies towards the financial, service, consumer, entertainment, and tourism industries has similarly relied on the flexible and largely un-unionized migrant workforce to keep costs low. Without legal status,

skilled individuals are categorized as unskilled and are therefore subject to wages appropriate to this status, creating a productive, but also flexible and low-wage workforce (Schiller, 2009). The vilification and criminalization of migrants increase their marginalized social status, which further helps to ensure their limited bargaining power when it comes to negotiating wage and labor conditions. Hence, both rhetorical and legislative measures taken against migrants have the economic benefit of increasing their utility as flexible labor. Douglas Guilfoyle neatly encapsulates this contradictory state of affairs, noting, "High- and medium-income States may become structurally dependent upon this externalized 'ghetto' of low-cost foreign [labor], thus profiting from irregular migration while denouncing it" (2010, p.1).

This pattern of balancing popular antagonism towards migrants with the interests of business elites in procuring cheap labor and extracting foreign aid and investment is now evident in the states of sub-Saharan Africa. The various transformations in the economies of these states, including the decline in public sector jobs, the growing insecurity of the urban middle class, and the rise of the informal economy have increased opposition towards migrants across the region. While a parochial distrust of foreigners is not new in African societies, this distrust has been transformed into a more insidious anti-migrant mentality characterized by the kind of rhetoric associated with attitudes in the global north. Surveys have found that citizens across the continent show increasingly high levels of xenophobia, characterized by grossly inflated perceptions of the number of foreigners in the country, and characterizations of foreigners as job stealers, criminals, and purveyors of disease, despite few of those surveyed having had personal contact with migrants (Crush & Pendleton, 2007). In Kenya, migrants' dominance in certain sectors of the informal economy has provoked resentment and even violence from established small business holders, who view them as a threat to their livelihoods (Campbell, 2005). And on the streets of Johannesburg, foreign street-traders have been repeatedly subject to verbal abuse and violence by local competitors (Landau, 2007). This heightened antagonism is in part understandable, as the retreat of the formal labor market through the liberalization and informalization of the economy since the 1990s has coincided with increasing movements of people across Africa's borders. As Campbell notes in regard to Kenya:

The rise of the service economy and the 'black' market, in which refugees are concentrated, do indeed threaten the 'formal' economy in which many Kenyans are employed. This is not however because of the influx of refugees but rather the consequences of economic globalization that has squeezed out well-paying, long-term 'formal' jobs in favor of short-term, temporary, low-paid work. (Campbell, 2005, p. 274)

Along similar lines, Morapedi notes that rising xenophobia in Botswana is connected to a declining economy increasingly focused on informal labor (2007). Such sentiments, widespread across the region, reflect a public response to continental economic changes prompted by decades of neoliberal policies, even if the effects of the changes are experienced at a local level.

Growing antagonism towards migrants in sub-Saharan Africa has been exploited by elite groups, who have an interest in maintaining pressure on migrant populations while doing relatively little to stem the steady stream of migrants crossing national borders. A number of states have passed legislation restricting the access of migrants and refugees to legal and particularly public sector work. Such policies do little to effectively exclude migrants from the workforce but are successful in weakening migrants' legal position. For example, although the ECOWAS protocols on free movement enable visa-free travel and the right to eventual residence and then establishment of all citizens, only the provision of visa-free travel has been implemented, though it is not widely understood by citizens, who frequently cross borders

without the correct documents. The protocols give participating countries almost complete discretion in refusing entry to non-citizens or expelling them when their presence is deemed contrary to national interest (Boulton, 2009). As Adepoju notes, most member countries of ECOWAS have retained or passed laws restricting the economic activity of migrants, including citizens of member states, and have freely deported migrants in periods of economic decline (2003).

The overlapping and sometimes contradictory laws and policies concerning the travel and domicile rights of ECOWAS citizens and the rights of refugees have given rise to what Alexander Betts calls 'strategic inconsistency': a situation in which "contradictory rules are created in a parallel [legal] regime with the intention of undermining a rule in another agreement" (2010, p.14). In Ghana, for instance, an official open door policy towards migrants and refugees under the terms of the ECOWAS Protocols on free movement and rights of domicile has not prevented the Ghanaian leadership from pursuing anti-migrant policies when this served its political or financial interests. Refugees have faced persistent difficulties in accessing the labor market and this, along with declining humanitarian aid, has meant that many camp refugees in Ghana have resorted to working "illegally" in the informal sector (Porter et. al., 2008). When protests erupted in 2007 and 2008 among Liberian refugees over these conditions, the Ghanaian government carried out mass arrests and detentions and forcibly repatriated thousands (Holzer, 2012). The fear and uncertainty generated by such inconsistencies in government practices and policies reduces the ability of migrants to compete with locals on an equal playing field, while nonetheless ensuring their status as a reserve and flexible labor force. Such conditions make migrants and refugees particularly valuable in the low-wage and short-term contract labor-market (Kweka, 2007).

One legal maneuver that sometimes contributes to migrants remaining in this state of legal limbo is the granting of 'prima facie' or 'ad hoc' refugee status, an increasingly common component of refugee legislation and practice in the subcontinent. The precise legal implications of 'prima facie' status are unclear, as the concept has not been defined in any international refugee treaties or in communiqués of the Executive Committee of the UNHCR. Greater clarity is emerging in recent scholarship about the repercussions of prima facie status designation, but the notion is still interpreted differently by different national governments and agencies (Albert, 2010). The designation of prima facie refugee is generally used to provide refugee status to large numbers of people without going through the formal individual status determination required by international refugee law, usually because the granting agency is unequipped to process individual applications in periods of large refugee influxes (Albert, 2010). While the status of prima facie refugee should arguably entitle designees to most of the same protections of regular refugee status, many governments argue that because this designation does not follow treaty procedure, countries granting such status are not bound to respect all parts of international refugee law, such as the rights of refugees to move freely. Those with prima facie refugee status frequently find themselves living with this status for many years and often without the documentation that would have been obtained through individual refugee status determination, a situation which contributes to their tenuous political status and, therefore, their weak economic bargaining position in the local labor market (Hyndman, 1999).

Another policy that contributes to the ambiguous legal and economic position of migrants is the increased use of camps. Both Tanzania and Kenya have adopted policies that officially confine all refugees to camps (Kweka, 2007; Schmidt, 2006). When drafting its new Refugee Act in 1998, the South African government seriously considered instituting such a system, only

to relent in the face of pressure from human rights groups (Smith, 2003). The increased use of camps is, in part, a response to increasing pressures on native rural populations as a consequence of neoliberal reforms. Much agriculture in sub-Saharan Africa depended on subsidies from the state in the form of seeds, fertilizers, and insecticides and through the provision of rural social services. As such, subsidies have largely disappeared, and rural life has become much more tenuous for native farmers. The privatization of rural land has further diminished the farmland available to poor farmers. This situation has been exacerbated by the return of urban dwellers to the rural areas, a process driven by the rise of unemployment in the urban areas and the decline in public services. All these factors have encouraged governments to confine refugees to camps provisioned largely by the UNHCR, where they can no longer compete with natives for farmland, government subsidies, and other dwindling rural resources.

While restricting refugees to camps appeases local rural population, it also benefits small-scale employers and local elites. Refugees confined to camps are usually forbidden to seek outside employment or to trade in neighboring village markets. Tanzania, Kenya, and Uganda all forbid or strongly discourage refugees from leaving camps for work in the cities, policies which in effect criminalize the presence of refugees in urban areas (Campbell, 2005; Schmidt, 2006). The prohibition on free movement, external employment, and trade, combined with declining food rations in the camp, compels many camp-dwellers to seek external employment as sharecroppers or informal laborers in surrounding villages, but to do so under conditions of illegality, which greatly advantage native employers. The Somali refugee camps in Kenya, for example, have boomed into bustling towns, providing cheap services and labor for the booming local village of Dadaab. The ineffective enforcement or under-enforcement of laws governing camp residents gives governments flexibility in the provision of cheap, exploitable labor as local demand fluctuates. As such, the segregation of refugees in camps reinforces their lower status in the competitive economy (Kibreab, 1996).

One other function of the camps is to supply the increasingly important market in graft and corruption. With the decline of the public sector that has accompanied neoliberal reforms throughout the sub-continent, many public sector employees have become reliant on other forms of informal income generation, including the use of bribery as a common means of supplementing diminishing salaries. A lucrative market has emerged in the illegal assistance and transportation of camp residents to urban areas, and in the provision of accommodation for refugees and illegal migrants in cities. Truckers, landlords, and obliging camp guards and police who facilitate the illegal movement of migrants to the cities in defiance of national law all benefit from the vulnerable legal position of these jobseekers. Among state employees, the Kenyan police forces have become notorious for the degree to which they rely on bribery as a form of income (Verdirame, 1999). Here refugees and migrants play an important role. An entire industry has arisen in which police, court officials, and municipal bureaucrats have come to depend on the bribes of refugees as they move through the asylum process, seek passage from camps to cities, apply for various permits, or attempt to avoid arbitrary imprisonment and deportation (Campbell, 2005). In South Africa, police and border guards have become similarly reliant on bribes by refugees to supplement their incomes (Landau, 2007). In West Africa, the ECOWAS protocols on free movement enabling visa-free travel have not prevented underpaid border guards and custom officials from profiting from bribes extracted from increased flows of migrants unsure of their rights (Boulton, 2009). Needless to say, the market in bribery is “greased” by the diminished legal status of refugees and migrants in most parts of the sub-continent, and by negative attitudes to foreigners that justifies extortion in the eyes of nationals.

Officials in a number of government departments, including city departments that issue building and business permits, or process residence or work permits, have also benefited from the bribes extracted from migrants, who often have no legal access to these services. While those benefiting from the informal market in bribes do not necessarily constitute the elite, they are usually members of state institutions run by political appointees whose position depends of maintaining conditions that benefit their employees.

Neoliberalism and the Plight of Urban Migrants

Just as neoliberal globalization has affected the demographic composition and economic life of North American and European cities, its impact on urban areas in sub-Saharan Africa has shaped relations between urban residents and migrants, and the policies of governments concerning migrants in urban areas. As is the case with most of the world, cities are now the main destination of migrants within sub-Saharan Africa, with major regional centers such as Gabarone, Johannesburg, Khartoum, Kampala, Nairobi, and Dakar becoming magnets for migrants from across the region. These migrants come both from rural and urban areas. Small scale farmers removed from their land by private appropriation or industrialized export agriculture frequently move to the cities, and this often involves crossing national borders (Akopari, 2006). Increasingly, however, migration in the subcontinent now takes the form of inter-urban, rather than rural-urban migration, often between neighboring states. The growth in this form of migration is exacerbated by the instability and fluidity of the labor market in African urban centers, leading to increased migration between cities as the economy of one urban center declines and another improves.

Migrants face particular difficulties in accessing the professional and formal labor markets in many African countries. They face legislation that forbids their working or residing in urban areas; the lack of recognition of certificates and qualifications; and social barriers, including xenophobia and lack of network connections (Kibreab, 1996; Campbell, 2005). As a consequence, foreigners are less successful than natives in seeking jobs in the formal and public sectors, a factor that forces them to accept informal employment at low wages or to attempt self-employment (Aregbeshola, 2010). As in the industrialized north, many migrants in the cities of sub-Saharan Africa provide labor in the service sector, such as in hotels and restaurants, or serve the higher income lifestyles of the professional and political elites, by performing domestic work, such as gardening, driving, or childcare. Many natives are therefore able to improve their living standards due to the availability of cheap domestic labor. Middle class urban citizens have also supplemented their declining standard of living by renting accommodation to migrants, frequently on exploitative terms to which “illegal” migrants have little redress (Campbell, 2005).

When not employed in low wage occupations, migrants frequently become entrepreneurs, in part because of the difficulty of obtaining jobs in the formal sector, and in part because urban areas provide greater security and anonymity than residence in rural locales (Aregbeshola, 2010). Migrants hence play a vital role in the informal economies of the region, utilizing their international connections and skills to establish small businesses or trading operations. In fact, international entrepreneurs are job creators, absorbing surplus labor in the local population. For example, the Eastleigh neighborhood in Nairobi, which has become the city’s center of informal businesses and is dominated by migrants, is described by residents as “the global capital of Nairobi” (Campbell, 2005, p. 144). The removal of the migrant population

from cities such as Nairobi would have a devastating effect on the informal market, on which Nairobi citizens have come to depend as their income and purchasing power decline.

Despite the contributions made by migrants to the economic life of African cities, the public perception of urban-dwellers across the sub-continent mirrors that of the perception held in Europe and the United States, where such migrants are increasingly viewed as a threat to jobs. Such attitudes have legitimated ambiguous policies whereby governments officially criminalize migrants' presence in cities while doing little to enforce these laws. The Kenyan government rarely prosecutes foreigners living "illegally" in Nairobi but gives free reign to local officials and police to harass and arrest foreigners with impunity (Campbell, 2005). In South Africa, the official policy of "community enforcement," which encouraged citizens to report irregular migrants in the workplace, led to very few workplace arrests and little cooperation from businesses in terms of identifying illegal laborers. The policy was successful, however, in keeping migrant workers in the shadows but not in preventing their being hired by businesses in search of cheap labor (Vigneswaran, 2008). They are also left vulnerable to exploitation by landlords, police arrest, and xenophobic violence on the part of the native population.

The growing inequality that has resulted from neoliberal policies has led to popular protests in many cities in Africa, particularly over jobs, housing, and service provision. In the face of this rising urban discontent, elites have mobilized anti-migrant sentiment and in many cases fueled xenophobia as a way of deflecting popular frustration over the declining standards of living and increasing inequality (Jacobsen, 2001). Namibia, South Africa, Botswana, and Kenya, countries that have witnessed increasing levels of xenophobia over the last few decades, as well the stoking of anti-migrant feeling by government officials, are frequently also listed among the most unequal societies in the world. The plethora of laws restricting migrants' movement to cities and their right to work, hence, has an additional function to that of creating an exploitable population for the informal labor market. By maintaining a public rejection of migrants' presence in cities, and restricting their right to work, governments and political elites can diminish the appearance of disregarding the concerns of native workers while fueling the redirection of popular anger towards these 'alien' populations. It is certainly not coincidental that some of the most extreme violence against refugees and migrants over the last decade has been seen in countries that have gone furthest in privatizing state industries and deregulating the economy. South Africa, the region's most urbanized country and the one that has gone furthest in retooling its economy and labor market according to the demands of neo-liberal global economics, has also witnessed some of the severest anti-migrant violence on the continent.

Refugees, Development, and Aid

For the governing elites of many African states, control of development aid provides leverage over local populations, and resources for the disbursement of jobs and contracts, which has become a powerful form of patronage within the new neoliberalism order. Not only has the amount of aid provided by developed countries declined over the last few decades, but remaining aid is targeted at a limited number of states that have reformed their economic practices and show investment potential (Crisp, 2010). These changed priorities are most apparent in the international agreements known as the Paris Declaration and Accra Agenda on Aid Effectiveness. These agreements were signed in 2005 and 2008 by governments of donor and developing countries and by participating international organizations, including the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank, the African Development Bank, the European Investment

Bank, and NEPAD (OECD, 2008). The Declaration and Agenda outline principles of aid effectiveness that include greater leadership by the governments of developing nations in identifying development goals and distributing aid; greater efficiency and transparency in the management of aid; and a commitment to a set of business and management principles that would, in the language of the Paris Declaration, “mobilize domestic resources, strengthen fiscal sustainability, and create an enabling environment for public and private investments” (OECD, 2008, II.25).

Under circumstances of declining international aid, the Paris Declaration and Accra Agenda offer the governments of developing countries access to substantial funds over which they have far greater control, albeit under conditions of greater transparency and accountability. For governments, there are clear political advantages to endorsing the language and business principles of neoliberal economic management that are contained in the Declaration and Agenda, and utilizing the rhetoric of neo-liberalism to gain access to these limited funds (Little, 2008). Tanzania has been especially active in this regard, taking the lead in promoting a framework for development according to the United Nations “Delivering as One” Program (DaO), a set of development principles that aim to “translate the Paris and Accra principles of aid effectiveness into practice” (UN Tanzania, 1). The achievements of the DaO, according to the UN, include greater transparency and increased reform of development practices by “deepening the harmonization of business practices and improving cost effectiveness.” (UN Tanzania, 2). Since 2007, donors have channelled over 90 million US dollars to Tanzania via the Delivering as One Program. The committee that oversees the disbursement of these funds is co-chaired by the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Finance and Economic Affairs, who helps to determine funding priorities.

A number of sub-Saharan African countries have adapted their refugee policies to take advantage of the increased aid and the control of aid that comes from aligning development policies with the Paris and Accra Accords. Within the context of the DaO Program, Tanzania has committed to locally integrating approximately 170, 000 Burundian refugees, who have been in the country for over three decades, although policies towards other groups of refugees remain quite hostile (Thomson, 2009). While the Tanzanian government’s magnanimity in integrating these refugees should not be doubted, the move also garners the goodwill of the international community and allows the government to solicit aid for this integration under the auspices of the DaO Program. Given that the program, as well as the Paris and Accra Accords all focus on reinforcing national government leadership in setting development goals, providing delivery infrastructure, and managing funds, the Tanzanian government has strong political and financial incentives to utilize this specific moment in international development and aid policy to resolve a prolonged refugee problem, and to do so in way that maximizes the governing elite’s control over infrastructure development and service provision for the duration of the project.

A few other African states have shown similar “magnanimity” towards the local integration or assisted resettlement of refugees when such programs coincided with extensive support from the international community. However, whereas countries like Tanzania have embraced government transparency and accountability as a means of gaining funds, other countries have used the refugee issue as a means of attracting foreign aid despite their failures in these areas of reform. Guinea, for instance, has arguably used refugee populations as “diplomatic currency” (Milner, 2009) to extract aid, despite the country’s failure to establish democratic and transparent government. As Milner argues, between 2003 and 2008, “Guinea tried to use the presence of refugees as leverage against the donor community.... [The country]

highlights its open asylum policy as a way of rebutting criticisms of its failures to combat corruption and promote good governance” (Milner, 2009). The country shifted from a policy of mass round-ups and forced expulsion of Liberian and Sierra-Leonean refugees, conducted in 2000, to support for a policy of integrating these refugees locally. Following the expulsions, Guinea received aid and debt-relief, including US\$800 million from the World Bank and IMF, in exchange for its continued support of refugees. Substantial aid has flowed to Guinea from the US State Department (US\$5 million), USAID (US\$7 million), and other organizations since its reversal of policy (Milner, 2009). Most recently, Guinea has benefited from the African Development Bank provision of about six million dollars to ECOWAS for the UNHCR- assisted repatriation or local integration of refugees (AllAfrica.com, 2012).

Conclusion

It is now clear that the emphasis by many theorists of globalization on the dehumanizing policies and exploitation of southern migrants by northern regimes risks obscuring the rise of similar attitudes and policies among developing nations. Where such changes have been noted in the countries of the global south, they have often been explained on the basis of local conditions. But just as the economic and political effects of neoliberal globalization transcend the situation of individual developed countries, leading to a uniformity in the new migration and refugee regimes that have emerged in the global north, so, too, can the pervasive effects of global neoliberalism be traced in an emerging pattern of laws and practices in many countries of the global south. These laws and practices diminish the legal status of refugees and migrants in the region and help to foster xenophobia among the populace. The result is a growing population perfectly suited to the needs of privatized global capital. At the same time, political and economic elites can continue to reap the rewards of an increasingly competitive and privatized economy by scapegoating migrants as the cause of the middle and working classes’ economic decline, or by exploiting the discourse of neoliberalism to gain control over the disbursement of aid for refugee integration or resettlement.

Insofar as neoliberal globalization continues to exacerbate inequality within the developing world, and as development aid becomes scarcer, the host of measures taken by governments of developing countries against their refugee and migrant populations are likely to increase. Given this possibility, and given the fact that the majority of the world’s refugees and migrants still live in the developing world, it is important that scholars of migration and human rights begin to reassess the popular image of the global north-south divide in the interests of exploring a more complex migration reality in which growing threats to the legal and social rights of refugees and migrants are arising in places far from the borders of the United States or Europe.

¹ I use the terms migrant and refugee more or less synonymously. Despite the important legal distinctions between the two, the difference has become less meaningful in both the European and African contexts, in part because popular rhetoric increasingly conflates the two, but also because in reality, many African

migrants are fleeing both political and economic insecurity and may well find themselves in the asylum process, whether or not they have a clear claim to be escaping political persecution under the terms of international refugee law.

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