

# Thought Leadership, Thought Liberation, and Critical Consciousness for Africa's Development and a Just World

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## INTRODUCTION

The African continent remains at crossroads. The world as a whole remains uncertain, volatile, dangerous and indeed unjust. This is an indictment to the global human society as a whole. To better the human condition, to further advance Africa's development, and to bring about a just world, we need (1) Thought leadership; (2) Thought liberation; and (3) Critical consciousness. A combination of these three ingredients, arguably, should make for a better world to live in – and indeed a better Africa to leave behind for the future generations. Thought leadership without critical consciousness is useless. Thought leadership without a liberated mind is futile. Higher levels of consciousness, based on comprehensive understanding of phenomena, make for a better thought leader. And, if that thought leader is also mentally liberated and psychosocially free, undoubtedly Africa shall be free and the world would, in time, be a great place to live in.

The central importance of thought leadership to Africa's renewal and development is unquestionable and compelling, especially in view of the low and peripheral position that the African continent occupies in the global political, social and economic order. The dominance of foreign thoughts in the conceptualisation and implementation of developmental and other policies, the inevitable abysmal failure of such thoughts to bring about the much needed transformation in Africa and the world at large, the entrapment of African leadership and citizenry by such thoughts make thought liberation an inescapable imperative. The low levels of (critical) consciousness ensure, sadly, that Africa and Africans remain in chains, hence the case for higher levels of critical consciousness. I will unpack the concepts that anchor this lecture as I go along. I should like to hope that we share at least broad meanings of what thought leadership is and what thought liberation implies. For critical consciousness, I draw on what a Brazilian educator and philosopher, Paulo Freire, termed *conscientização* – which refers to “learning to perceive social, political and economic contradictions and to take action against the oppressive elements of reality” (Freire, 1970:35).

## **INTERROGATING CONCEPTS AND IDEAS**

This lecture is anchored on three interrelated concepts which speak to the theme and the main arguments that I am advancing. Thought leadership connotes a leadership orientation underpinned by unconventional ideology, historically nuanced, culturally sensitive, influentially and contextually grounded. I would like to argue that thought leadership – far from and more critical than other forms of leadership – has to be about leadership that is based on progressive ideologies, beliefs, orientations with significant pragmatic and impact appeal. Although thought leadership has become one of the buzzwords used by the corporate elites to describe individuals who possess some form of authoritative knowledge and expertise in specialised areas<sup>i</sup>, its provenance stretches to the political realm.

It is obvious, I submit, that a thought leader is somebody who possesses the right kind of knowledge to challenge an existing paradigm in order to advance new thinking and inspire others as well as enhance deliverables to the people – a thought leader should, by definition, be also a good follower and a great listener. As for leadership in general, a standard definition implies that leadership involves a process whereby an individual influences a group of individuals to achieve a common goal<sup>ii</sup> – thought leaders have to do that and more. I also would like to distinguish a ‘thought leader’ from an ‘intellectual<sup>iii</sup>’ – see Mkandawire (2005) for a discussion of and by African intellectuals. Zine Magubane, an Associate Professor of the Sociology at Boston College in United States, addressing the Thabo Mbeki African Leadership Institute/Unisa International Women’s Day Roundtable ten days ago, had the following to say about thought leadership:

The most powerful definition of a thought leader is a person who is able to understand the larger historical scene in terms of its meaning for both the inner life and the life trajectory of a variety of individuals. This type of leader is able to grasp history and biography and the relations between the two. Those who recognise this task and its promise are the people that we honour with the title of ‘Thought Leaders’.

In essence, thought leaders are individuals who can decipher phenomena needing attention and have the capability to think through possible solutions to advance the

human condition. At the Thabo Mbeki African Leadership Institute, as most, if not all, of you know, our reason d'être is to produce – based on multidisciplinary and trans-disciplinary methodologies and across-disciplines – a new cadre of Africa thought leaders for the political, economic, social and cultural renewal of the African continent and its people. Our thought leadership training, for Africa's renewal, is influenced by Afrocentricity and African-centered epistemologies and methodologies. At the very least, we should increase critical consciousness through our (African) thought leadership training. At minimum, we should ensure that our students and graduates ask the right questions. To achieve our mission – which is to be a centre of excellence for African thought leadership for Africa's renewal – we partner with like-minded institutions and tap on a wide variety of Faculty across the continent and the Diaspora. Investing in thought leaders for Africa's renewal is too big a task to be undertaken by a single institution. The University of South Africa – where the Thabo Mbeki African Leadership Institute is located – prides itself to be an African university in the service of humanity.

Thought liberation is a complementary requirement for thought leaders, who are encumbered with the responsibilities of bringing about transformative changes in their environments. I must hasten to distinguish the notion of 'Thought leadership' from what some have termed 'Liberation thought'<sup>iv</sup>. Thought liberation, unlike 'Liberation thought', is a call for the rediscovery of *self* as an able and a capable being that can produce progressive thought, actions and achievements. There is no doubt that the various unpleasant experiences of slave trade, colonialism, imperialism and neo-colonialism have combined to condition the mind of Africans to feel inferior and seemingly incapable of creative endeavours. As Karl Polanyi (1944) argues, experiences of slavery dehumanise and disempower the victims, even to succeeding generations. Frantz Fanon, as we shall see later, has more to say about this.

Raising critical consciousness among Africans involve a deliberate effort to deconstruct and reconstruct their sense of being – away from political apathy, collusion with the domestic and transnational elites in perpetuating the current unequal and unjust order, satisfaction with mediocrity, gullibility to vague political promises and leaders fanning the ember of nationalism, ethnicity and xenophobia, dependency on the West or East

(lately) for development assistance, uncritical acceptance of exogenously scripted development strategies and general acquiescence-cum-susceptibility to neo-imperial designs.

### **HISTORY MATTERS: REMEMBERING THE GLORIOUS PAST**

Available historical, anthropological and scientific evidence shows that Africa is the cradle of civilisation (See Diop 1955, Diop 1999 and Asante 2012, among others). It is also incontrovertible that Africa has produced great political thinkers whose ideas provided the basis for the governance of powerful and influential pre-colonial kingdoms and empires. Pre-colonial African thinkers such as Ibn Khaldun, Al Bekri, Ibn Battuta and Leo Africanus, among others, and prominent Kings/Emperors later on such as Senzangakhona kaJama, Moshoeshoe, Haile Selassie I, among others, developed ideas that guided the governance of ancient kingdoms and empires such as (in) Egypt, Kush/Nubia, Axum, Lesotho, Ghana, Mali, KwaZulu, Songhai and Karnem-Borno<sup>v</sup>. There have also been many great thinkers in post-colonial Africa. These include (nationalist) leaders such as Edward Blyden, African Horton, Kwameh Nkrumah, Julius Nyerere, Nnamdi Azikiwe, Amilcar Cabral, Thabo Mbeki and many others. The list is by no means exhaustive. We also know (now) that most, if not all, of what we were misled to believe to be ancient Greek philosophy actually came from Africa (See, for instance, Molefi Kete Asante's insightful account of 'Herodotus on Egypt'<sup>vi</sup>).

We also know that in Walata and in Timbuktu<sup>vii</sup>, Africa had advanced knowledge production institutions far before the arrival of colonialists (who made all attempts to destroy our institutions and made it a point to erase our history<sup>viii</sup>) – Frantz Fanon (1961: 67) puts it well that “colonialism, by a kind of pervasive logic, it turns to the past of the oppressed people, and distorts it, disfigures and destroys it.” We also know that the pre-mercantilist African economy – as discussed by Samir Amin and Walter Rodney among others –functioned effectively and served our communities satisfactorily before it was interrupted and disrupted by colonialists as explained by Archie Mafeje. Similarly, the reading of the history of what we now know as Cape Town/Western Cape (what used to be called the Cape Coast) indicate that the most southern tip of the African continent had very advanced farming methods before getting interrupted by first the Portuguese, then the Dutch and later the English.<sup>ix</sup>

Caught between Capitalism, Marxism and Socialism, African intellectuals also developed various ideologies and philosophies through which they hoped to ensure that Africa reclaims her manifest destiny in the community of nations – the end of the Cold War, as some have argued, limited the scope for exploring alternative development paradigms for Africa. African intellectuals whose works have had profound effects on thought leadership on the continent include, but not limited, to Walter Rodney, Samir Amin, Cheik Anta Diop, of course Frantz Fanon, Joseph Ki-Zerbo, Chiweizu Ibekwe, Patricia McFadden, Claude Ake, Bade Onimode, Thandika Mkandawire, Adebayo Adedeji, Amina Mama, Mahmood Mamdani, Ngugi Wa Thiong’o, Ali Mazrui, among others. In view of a concerted effort of the West to deny the existence of genuine repertoire of knowledge in Africa, thought leaders on the continent have written in defence of the originality of thought that emanated and still emanate from the continent. Sometimes, as contexts dictate, they are confrontational in their attempts to prove the fundamental historical point about the ‘richness’ of the African continent prior to colonialism and imperialism. As Toyin Falola (2004: 17) contends,

Scholarship in Africa has been conditioned to respond to a reality and epistemology created for it by outsiders, a confrontation with imperialism, the power of capitalism, and the knowledge that others have constructed for Africa. The African intellectual does not write in a vacuum, but in a world saturated with others’ statements, usually negative about its members and their continent. Even when this intelligentsia seeks the means to intrude itself into the modern world, modernity has been defined for it and presented to it in a fragmented manner.

Despite the heroic efforts by African thought leaders, African scholars as well as intellectuals of African descent in general, to mediate the rough and intensely racialised terrain of knowledge production, the ‘imperial designs’<sup>x</sup> consistently act to undermine them. Several years of unequal relations between Africa and the rest of the world in the form of slavery, colonialism, apartheid, neo-colonialism, neo-imperialism and now coloniality, have created a system in which the existence of thought leadership in Africa has been denied, its reality and relevance perverted, its salience truncated and its essence destroyed.

The perversion of African thought system has been carried out through various stages. In their attempt to justify their so-called 'civilising mission'<sup>xi</sup>, the imperial powers sponsored various racist oriented archaeological studies which denied the existence of thought or knowledge in pre-colonial Africa – as WEB Du Bois proclaimed, in his 1903 ground breaking book, *The Souls of Black Folk*, “for the problem of the Twentieth Century is the problem of the colour-line”. Cornel West – in his 1993 book, *Race Matters* – agrees with Du Bois and argues that the question of race would remain with us in this century too<sup>xii</sup>.

Colonialism pursued an education policy that distorted African history, de-emphasised creativity, ossified critical thinking and thereby emasculating the consciousness of an African in identifying who he or she is, his/her intellectual acumen, cultural pedigree and capacity for good. A psychological warfare which reified the colonialists as superiors and better human beings was relentlessly waged against Africans, the result of which is the prevalence of a sense of inferiorisation in tastes, ideas, consumption and the general world view of an average African today. That systemic and psychological warfare was more pronounced in education and curricula.

Critiquing Bantu Education, in the case of South Africa, Isaac Bangani Tabata (1979: 35) explains that Bantu education was,

calculated to serve as an instrument for creating and ensuring the continuance of a voteless, rightless and ignorant community whose main purpose in life, apart from reproducing their kind (for there is not yet a specific law against that aspect of their life) is to minister to the Whites. The invoking of a dead tribalism and of Bantu Communities wherein 'education will find its expression' is cynical political claptrap. The plain fact is that Bantu Education is to rob the African of education, cut him off from the main stream of modern culture and shut him into a spiritual and intellectual ghetto.

It is therefore satisfying to read injunctions from scholars such as Shadrack Gutto (2006: 306) as they motivate for a standpoint,

which entails, among other things, focusing on confronting, with a view to correcting and departing from, hegemonic knowledge and knowledge systems that are predicated on racist paradigms that have deliberately and otherwise distorted, and continue to distort, the reality of who Africans really are.

Although colonialism might have officially ended in Africa, the imperial powers have more or less reproduced their own kind under a regime of what Frantz Fanon calls 'Black Skin, White Masks' (Fanon, 1986). These black people with 'white' minds have hidden under various nationalistic sentiments to unleash the worst cruel form of oppression, dictatorship, exploitation and destruction of the people that they purport to lead. Besides, Africa has been inserted into what Sabelo Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2013) calls the global matrix of power<sup>xiii</sup>. According to Ndlovu-Gatsheni, the assumption that colonialism has ended in Africa is a mere fluke. Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2013) contends that colonialism continues to this day in the form of knowledge, power and being, under which the Euro-American power structure continues to exert hegemony over Africa.

Although the poverty of thought leadership and the deficit in consciousness manifest in various areas and ways in contemporary Africa, my major concern, as someone who trained as an economist and policy analyst, is on economic thought and economic policies – I remain a student of History and African political economy though. Since the end of the Second World War, the world has come under the dominance of a virulent form of neo-liberal economic thought which prioritises private accumulation at the expense of societal progress and stability. This neoliberal brand of economics operates with a messianic zealotry, hegemonises ideas, obliterates alternative reasoning and compartmentalises itself against other disciplines. It is what Ben Fine (2009) calls *Zombie Economics*. The overarching influence of this economic thought on policy in Africa, its failure as well as micro and macro implications on the continent, warrant thought liberation and critical consciousness.

Economics is, arguably, one of the academic disciplines whose rethink is long overdue. Even the so-called leading economists such as Joseph Stiglitz have somersaulted of late,

discarding the neo-liberal dogma that they fed the world for decades; the neo-liberal dogma that finds the world we live in today a worse place than the place our grandparents before colonialism lived in – surely the worse place that our children and their children will live in if we are unable to change the status quo.

In the context of pan-Africanism and African renaissance<sup>xiv</sup>, education or knowledge production broadly, should be based on an Afrocentric paradigm<sup>xv</sup> – African thought leadership must be able to produce not only a critical but a conscious African citizenry that is grounded in pan-Africanist philosophies and driven to implement the African renaissance agenda. The curriculum, put differently, has to be shaped by the lived experiences of Africans. The content knowledge of the subject should among other things, arguably, take into account *African economic renaissance*<sup>xvi</sup>. The packaging and the delivery of content should be about raising critical consciousness and it should be forward looking<sup>xvii</sup>.

There is also need to rewrite economic theory or to come up with better application of economic theory in the context of Africa's development. Even though many leading economists, such as Amartya Sen, are aware of the constraints of economics as a social science not much has been done to rethink economics. It is therefore no surprise that we still predominantly use the outdated macroeconomic framework<sup>xviii</sup> – national income identity – which excludes many important variables for socio-economic development. It is disappointing that we have not come up with better mechanisms to manage inflation, for instance. For a social science as old as economics, probably, arguably, as old as human kind itself, we remain with a few levers to grow investments, to manage prices of currencies, to stabilise economies, to grow economies and to equitably share the benefits of economic growth. Income inequality continues to rise, globally, because economists have either misunderstood it or the science has not come up with better levers to reduce it. Economists quickly celebrate artificial economic growth, often based on premature middle classes, without interrogating the nature and consequences of such economic growth. Scholars of African political economy have a responsibility to change this.



Thought liberation in Africa requires critical and conscious citizens who are ready to engage in deep reflections on the best way forward for Africa's development – for the world at large, the global human society is in desperate need of a just world. In this lecture – in case some of you have not noticed – I am carrying forward an idea that I have been proposing over the past few years on the need to redefine and re-interpret economic thought in line with the pre-colonial economic principles, which helped put Africa at par, if not ahead, of/with Europe and other regions of the world five centuries ago (Nayyar, 2006). The economic principles we are talking about – as explained by Walter Rodney (1973) – are in consonance with the realities and cultural specificities of the African continent.

The next section is an intellectual excursion into the hegemony of neo-liberal economic thoughts, its ramifications, limitations and the need for an alternative socio-economic development paradigm for Africa. I then present an attempt to lay a foundation for a glorious future as it explicates on the imperatives of thought liberation and critical consciousness among Africans. I will argue in that section that unless one is aware that he/she has a problem, he/she may not take any conscious effort to address the problem. Before concluding, I lay out my thoughts on how Africa can extricate herself from the current forces that have held her in chains for the past five centuries, towards achieving a people oriented renaissance and development.

### **BEYOND THE HEGEMONY OF NEO-LIBERALISM**

Over the past half of a century the global economic system has been dominated by neo-liberal economic thoughts which were advanced by right wing economists who have shaped economic thinking and training effectively drawing inspiration from Adam Smith (1723-1790) – the so-called father of modern economics and a leading proponent of laissez-faire economic philosophy who propagated free enterprise dogma. Neo-liberalism, informed by classical economics, triumphed because of the economic crisis that resulted from the adoption of Keynesian economic model immediately after the Second World War – Keynesian economics is so named after John Maynard Keynes (1883-1946). Although the Keynesian model succeeded in achieving macro-economic stability through increases in aggregate demand and public sector led employment generation, this did not last. The oil crisis of the 1970s created economic shocks that

worsened the macro-economic positions of most countries both the global north and south – it may be worth highlighting that the global economy has experienced frequent numerous external shocks, under capitalism, almost all, if not all, sparked by the United States of America, hence the phrase that ‘when America sneezes the whole world cold’ – now they say ‘when American sneezes Europe gets pneumonia.’

The ascendance of conservative governments in Britain and United States of America led to the adoption of austerity measures and painful economic reforms (Harvey, 2007). Margaret Thatcher, the then Prime Minister of Britain adopted the cliché of ‘there is no alternative to the market’. Various market-oriented reforms such as privatisation of public enterprises, liberalisation of trade and finance, deregulation of labour and many others as per the Washington Consensus blueprint were adopted. The Republican Government under Ronald Reagan in the United States of America also adopted the same neo-liberal dogma. Although these measures helped to bring back some stability into the British and American economies, they also caused fundamental shifts in the structure of these economies as well as class relations in the various societies. For instance, one of the fallouts of those (neo-liberal) reforms was the preference of financialisation over manufacturing (Kotz, 2010). It also led to the massive reduction in the benefits of workers while at the same time increasing the benefits of company executives and shareholders.

Many countries in Africa faced severe economic difficulties in the 1980s as a result of the fall in demand for commodities. The resultant effects were that these countries resorted into borrowing from both private and government institutions in the global north. Inability to service the debt so incurred resulted in the debt crisis that still afflict some of the countries in Africa today. As a way out of these economic difficulties, the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank more or less directed African countries to adopt the same measures that the US and Britain adopted in the period of their crisis. Specifically, the Berg Report of 1981 claimed that the involvement of the state in the economic activities of African countries created distortions and inefficiencies (World Bank, 1981). Consequently, the Report laid the foundation for the introduction of the Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPs) in many of the African countries in the 1980s/90s. The SAPs recommended rolling back the state, opening up

of borders for the inflow of goods and capital from the advanced countries to African countries. In short, SAPs introduced a poisonous form of market economy to African countries, from which Africa is yet to recover. As scholars such as Thandika Mkandawire and Charles Soludo (1999) and Adebayo Olukoshi (1998) have argued, the structural adjustment programme was borne out of a faulty economic thought which failed to understand the history and the nature of African economies before making recommendations. The prevalence of poverty and inequality in most countries in Africa today bear their argument out.

Even though Africa is the focus of this lecture, it is important to state that the failure of the neo-liberal economic thought is not limited to the continent in its manifestation. Statistics from the World Bank and other development agencies show that poverty and inequality is equally rife in the so-called developed world such as the United States of America and Europe. Joseph Stiglitz (2012) has recently written a book lamenting the *price of inequality* in United States of America. Richard Wilkinson and Kate Pickett (2010) recently co-authored a book making a case *why equality is better for everyone*, in the case of the so-called advanced economies.

Indeed, neo-liberal economic thought has let the world down, not once, not twice but many a times. The recent and ongoing global economic crisis bears this argument out. The implication of this is that the market-oriented economic thought is informed, perpetuated and sustained by class interest. While the corporate elites are getting richer, the poor are getting poorer regardless of their location. This then calls for a thought leadership that can generate new ideas for inclusive development.

### **NEW FOUNDATIONS FOR A GLORIOUS FUTURE**

Without a doubt, Africa needs more thought leaders who will dig into the archives of history, explore the diverse and rich cultural landscapes of the continent before colonial intrusion and adapt with contemporary scholarship and ideas that have been championed by Africans to get the continent out of the current socio-economic doldrums as well as political quagmires. Such thought leaders must be able to combine theory with praxis of ideas that are contextually sensitive and environmentally adaptable and relevant. The challenges confronting Africa are of high magnitude, which

require not just an inspirational or transformational leadership, as many have suggested, but critically conscious and mentally free thought leaders. I must hasten to say that the demand for thought leaders is not only for Africa. The entire world is in a mess that it is in currently because of the dearth of not only critical consciousness but also thought leadership deficits.

For Africa, the need for thought leadership becomes ever more imperative in view of the failure of the post-colonial leaders to understand and grapple with the key and fundamental issues that are confronting Africa. For most part of the post-independence period, African leaders have adopted cosmetic approach to addressing the problems that the continent faces – the fundamental developmental challenge is yet to be tackled for Africa. Rather than taking fundamental decisions that can alter the balance of power in favour of the peoples of the continent, post-colonial African leaders, with very few exceptions, have not only betrayed the hopes and aspirations of the people but played to the gallery of foreign powers, who have no other interest in Africa than exploitation, subjugation and peripherilisation of our continent and our people. It is therefore not surprising that the post-colonial and the post-apartheid development experiences have so far been disappointing to say the least.

Another important task for African thought leaders is to better understand the history of the evolution of Africa as a continent where great thinkers have existed, whose thoughts have produced outstanding results in terms of heroic resistance to imperial advances such as the Ethiopian *Adwa* Victory that we celebrated two weeks ago, the 1510 Victory by the Khoi resistance against Portuguese colonialists in the most southern tip of Africa, *Impi yaseSandlwana* Victory and many other victories. Clearly, there were thought leaders in Africa that ensured that handful Africans who were poorly armed, compared to the Europeans, resisted occupation. Thought leaders in pre-colonial Africa were also responsible for the various innovations on agriculture and farming. If such innovations and similar ones in the various fields of human endeavour were recorded in the global north, its media would have broadcast them as scientific breakthroughs.

The thought leaders in pre-colonial Africa also ensured that the continent administered an economy that was robust and very advanced before the imperial intrusion and colonialists' distortions (Rodney, 1973, Ake, 1981, Mafeje 2003). Africans also had a way of life and philosophy that shaped the African economy and social interactions before colonialism interfered with it. While such ways of life were not perfect (as no society had ever been a perfect one), Africa was not the 'heart of darkness' that racists such as John Conrad portrayed in their books (Mpofu, 2013). As I mentioned in the introduction, large and successful kingdoms existed in Africa before the colonial intrusion. These kingdoms related with one another on cordial terms, conducted foreign relations peacefully, developed infrastructures and economic systems that ensured prosperity for the generality of the people. The pre-colonial African thought leaders also advanced proverbs, mores, folklores, taboos and principles that ensured societal harmony, dignity, mutual trust, mutual care and the general wellbeing of the people (Polanyi, 1944).

Colonialists were hell-bent to destroy and distort all of this – they also brought their barbarism to Africa and systematically implanted barbarism and backwardness in the minds and ways of Africans. Without equivocation, it can be argued that the inter-tribal wars, conflicts and confrontations that ensued in Africa from the fifteen century onwards were direct results of the slave economy which the Arabs and the Europeans introduced to the continent. As Samir Amin (1972) explains, it is a myth that Africa was not integrated in the so-called global markets. Rather, Africa was wrongly integrated to the global economy, first through slave trade and later through colonialism and imperialism. Imperialism, colonialism and coloniality built on the experience of internecine wars and conflicts to stagnate the development of Africa. Consequently, the report card of the post fifteen century Africa, as presented by the colonial anthropologists and some missionaries, depicting Africa as a dark continent was a mischievous distortion of history borne out of a desperate desire to justify the so-called 'civilising mission'. It is also important to make a point that colonialism also left a legacy of authoritarianism in post-independence African leaders. This is because the colonial state was first and foremost a violent state. As the post-colonial states in Africa were borne out of this violence, African leaders continue to replicate autocracy, dominance and oppression in what can be characterised as neo-colonial states in Africa. Claude

Ake, Achille Mbembe and Kwesi Prah, among others, better capture the violent character of the colonial and apartheid states – Kwesi Kwaa Prah, in a must read *The African Nation* (2006), graphically and vividly narrates the atrocities Europeans committed in our continent during colonialism.

While the above chronicle may sound to some as romanticisation of history, I argue that it is perfectly in order to be conscious of one's past in order to confront present challenges – we have to go back, way back, before we can move forward<sup>xix</sup>. It is precisely on this score that thought leaders are needed today who will not only bask in the glory of the past but commit themselves into learning from the thoughts of past African heroes and heroines such that they can lead Africa on the true path of renaissance and complete liberation<sup>xx</sup> from external influence and domination in its various forms and guises.

With regard to thought liberation, I have in mind a process and an outcome of a deliberate programme of action to *unlearn, relearn, unthink* and *rethink* dominant thought patterns which Africans and their leaders have acquired in the process of their encounters with the imperial powers over the last five hundred years or so. In being critical and thinking about the mode and type of development the African continent needs, we should start by unlearning what we think we know – I refer to this process or form of analysis as '*Thought Liberation*'.

In the case of Africa and Africans, there is yet to be someone as thorough as Frantz Fanon in the treatment of what colonialism, imperialism and neo-colonialism have done to the psyche of Africans. Allow me to quote one of those stinging paragraphs in Frantz Fanon's timeless book – *The Wretched of the Earth* –when Fanon (1963: 117) was talking about the 'trials and tribulations of national consciousness':

In these poor, underdeveloped countries where, according to the rule, enormous wealth rubs shoulders with abject poverty, the army and the police force form the pillars of the regime; both of which, in accordance with another rule, are advised by foreign experts. The national bourgeoisie sells itself increasingly openly to the major foreign companies. Foreigners grab concessions through kickbacks, scandals abound, ministers get rich, their wives become floozies,

members of the legislature line their pockets, and everybody, down to police officers and customs officials, join hands in this huge caravan of corruption

It is as if Frantz Fanon is talking about our modern day Africa though he wrote *The Wretched of the Earth* over fifty years ago and his case study was Algeria. Let me invite you think further about what he means by 'underdevelopment'. As Walter Rodney (1973: 24) put it, "at all times, therefore, one of the ideas behind underdevelopment is a *comparative* one. It is possible to compare the economic conditions at two different periods for the same country and determine whether or not it had developed; and (more importantly) it is possible to compare the economies of any two countries or sets of countries at any given period in time."

The continued involvement of the former colonial masters in manipulating and derailing African development processes through the application of divide and rule tactics, close circuit monitoring and micro-management of African leaders suggests to me that they want Africans to forever look up to them as the ideal and standard of anything good, while losing confidence in themselves and their ability to transform the continent (to paraphrase Adebayo Adedeji, 2012). I argue that among several indications of wrong thought patterns which Africans have acquired from their contacts with the imperial powers is the tendency towards primitive accumulation, use of the state apparatus to silence voices of dissent, attacks on members of different ethnic groups in the same country, widespread violence, preference for mediocrity at the expense of merit; hero worship, looting and plunder, senseless extravagance and conspicuous consumption and certain tendencies toward celebrations and leisure at the expense of productive activities – and of course, politics of patronage. In the economic sphere, thought liberation is needed to wean African leaders of their penchant to depend on imported theories and ideas on what constitute development. There is no doubt that African thought processes need to be deconstructed from the influence of wrong or inappropriate education that the imperial powers bestowed on the continent.

As many African scholars have argued, the colonial and apartheid educational policies, in terms of subjects taught and schools established as well as enrolment and sponsorship, were not geared towards building human capacity for African

development nor did those policies help to raise critical consciousness of Africans. Victor Xulu (2004: 99), in the case of South Africa, puts it aptly that “the colonial/apartheid education had over the years, stressed a civilised or a changed African outer-image to the extent that their inner-image had followed suit”.

Clearly, the various colonial and apartheid policies were centred on building cadres and officers that could serve as clerks to colonial officers or at best to produce an elite cadre whose orientations were/are directed towards the satisfaction of the departing colonial masters, rather than the people (Falola, 2004). The colonial education tried as much as possible to erase any sense of African history, thus privileging European history as the authentic one. The colonialists left a legacy of imposition of foreign language as a means of communication on Africa. This means one has to think first in his/her indigenous language before communicating in the imposed language. This affects our thought processes as Africans. Again, we have to go back, way back, in order to move further forward – Africans need to reconsider a single indigenous language for the continent as a whole.

Colonial heritage on culture is visible in such things as failed marriages, tastes and consumption patterns, and even dress. An average African middle class, for instance, prefers imported items to locally made ones because they have been conditioned to prefer that as the better alternative. The colonial policy on education also feeds into the psychology of an average African. The legacy of colonialism at this level is worse as it made many Africans feel inferior to the white counterpart, thus necessitating various attempt to look, speak and act European. At the policy level, the psychological legacy manifests in the infantile deference of African leaders to so-called experts from the West on various issues that concern the continent even today.

### **CITIZENSHIP AND CRITICAL CONSCIOUSNESS**

Raising critical consciousness involves sensitisation of the citizens to be self-aware of the rights that nature and the constitution confer on them as free born citizens. As the saying goes, a people deserve the kind of leaders that they have. For too long, African citizens have been the victim of power-play and unholy alliance between the indigenous comprador bourgeoisie and their international counterparts. They have been passive



bystanders in the game of interest and accumulation under the direction of what Robinson (2004) calls the Transnational Capitalist Class (TCC), involving the state, multinational corporations, the 'unholy trinity' made up of the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund and the World Trade Organisation as Richard Peet would call these institutions. If left unchallenged, the TCC will continue to increase the volume of their wealth, taste and influence over the poor of the continent.

The failure of the elites in Africa to advance the interests of the people has resulted in massive poverty and high rate of inequality across the breadth and length of the continent. The maintenance of the current status quo will be in the interest of these elites. We know, however, and signs are abound, that such elite domination and exclusion is not sustainable over the long-run. The unequal order and structure must be (and it is being) resisted by the citizens, such that a new order, which guarantees inclusiveness rather than exclusiveness will be established in the African society.

Discourse on development has been hijacked and hegemonised under what Adebayo Adedeji (2002) calls the Development Merchant System (DMS), in which the advanced countries acting through agencies such as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund dictate the development strategies that developing countries *must* adopt. The Development Merchant System is based on the logic of the market, with the result that it privileges capital and private accumulation over equitable and sustainable development. Adedeji (2002) laments that in the few times that African leaders have mustered the necessary courage to develop alternative development models to the ones dictated by the DMS, development models such as the Lagos Plan of Action for Accelerated Development, or Africa Alternative to the Structural Adjustment Programme, or the New Partnership for Africa's Development, the DMS has always frustrated such moves.

The limitation of the dominant paradigm on development is enough justification for rejecting it and proffering alternative paradigms for inclusive development in Africa<sup>xxi</sup>. This requires the efforts of leaders whose thoughts are liberated and citizens who are conscious of their rights and are alive to their responsibilities.

Samir Amin (1997: 95-96) told us a while back that;

Contemporary society is manifestly in crisis, if we define crisis as a situation in which the expectations of the majority cannot be satisfied by the logic of the [capitalist] system...capitalism and crisis are not incompatible: far from it, because the logic of capital necessarily generates crisis. The solution implies a modification of the rules of the game...an alternative social project.

It is against the backdrop of the injustices of the past such as the forceful dispossession of lands, the scramble for and the partitioning of Africa (which formed the basis of the current micro-states that continue to depend on the colonial masters for handouts), the continued exploitation of minerals, the use of multilateral institutions to further certain interests and the increasing militarisation of the continent under various guises that the consciousness of Africans must be raised to reject, oppose, and pursue an alternative path to complete liberation of the continent. This consciousness must underpin a new commitment towards pan-Africanism and African renaissance.

At this juncture, as indicated above, I must also mention that critical consciousness must be raised to redirect the attention of progressive forces in Africa to reclaim the lost glory of the continent<sup>xxii</sup>. There is no doubt that in virtually all the countries in Africa, Frantz Fanon's prescient warnings to national liberation movements have been neglected. As John Saul has argued in his various works, the liberation project is incomplete. The idea that political freedom would translate to total emancipation and progress for the people has become a mere illusion as foreign powers and their representatives still hold the lever of the state in terms of economic domination. In other words, liberation movements in Africa have failed to transform themselves into vibrant political parties that are capable of pursuing autonomous development paths. Put differently, liberation movements exhaust themselves because they pursue a wrong project of bourgeois societies instead of true emancipation. It is in this context that other forms of ideological struggles, such as African feminism, could be an answer to the post-colonial development project in contemporary Africa – the neo-colonial state has failed. Some Latin American countries like Cuba, Brazil and Venezuela are increasingly showing us in Africa that a critically conscious elite and citizenry can chart an alternative path to development, even in the face of stiff opposition and sabotage from

the global hegemons. Zimbabwe, arguably, also provides the continent with an example which shows that it is possible to make change against all odds<sup>xxiii</sup>.

More than fifty years after gaining political independence, it is now very clear that Africa can no longer rely on imported economic development models to attain her developmental goals. It is therefore circumspect for thought leaders on the continent to look inward for appropriate models of development. As I mentioned in the earlier part of this lecture, pre-colonial Africa operated on a particular economic model, which brought about some level of development. This model is (was) communalism, whose origin is not limited to capacity for accumulation through productivity but shared community interest, collectivisation and neighbourliness. The pre-mercantilist African economy – to borrow from Samir Amin – functioned along the lines of what scholars have termed communalism. Walter Rodney (1973: 12) defines communalism as a system where “property [is] collectively owned, work done in common and goods shared equally”. This is, clearly, in sharp contrast to capitalism, which came with colonialism, which, according to Rodney, resulted to “concentration in a few hands of ownership of the means of producing wealth and by unequal distribution of the products of human labour” (p12).

Communalism also resonates with the concept of Ubuntu or Ujamaa or Harambee and many similar humane principles, which epitomise the cultural identity of the various peoples of Africa, which define their concern for the welfare of their neighbours. It is my contention that a recrystallisation of such precepts into the policy domain in Africa will bring about a revolution in the way we think, conceive socio-economic programmes, perform public responsibilities and relate with our fellow Africans. I argue that we need to better understand the pre-colonial African economy in order to see what modern day Africa could learn from it. It is about time that Africa discards concepts and theories that are not applicable to our context. In this instance, I venture to argue that even Marxism or Socialism are not applicable to our societies – Communalism, perhaps a refined form of communalism, could be a better socio-economic development paradigm for the African continent. As argued by some of our leading economists, such as Samir Amin, it might very well be that Africa should delink from the rest of the world while we get our

house in order, then reconnect with the global economy on our own terms than we did through slave trade and colonialism.

Against the backdrop of the influence of the West on the balkanisation of Africa into various micro-states, many of which can barely succeed without dependence on foreign aid as indicated earlier, the new economic model that is based on communalism will seek to facilitate the integration of African countries into one single geo-political entity. Let me emphasise that the delay in the integration agenda of Africa has been due essentially to two factors. On one hand, the externally oriented and subservient minds of African leaders to the dictates of the West have been a constraint. As Adedeji (2012) argues, countries like France and Britain have been doing their best to ensure that Africa remains fragmented. The sinister activities of these imperial powers have been carried forward by African leaders whose thoughts are caged by neo-imperial designs. The second factor is the desire of the African leaders to maintain their power and influence at the country level.

However, when the citizenry becomes more conscious, as I have advocated in this lecture, and the leaders become less self-serving within the context of liberated minds, there will be proactive and resilient resistance against foreign influences and there will be massive support for the actualisation of the continental integration of Africa, which thought leaders like Kwame Nkrumah championed more than six decades ago. The African Union's agenda of the United States of Africa by 2063 – the centenary of the formation of the predecessor, the Organisation of African Unity – is a worthy agenda to which all Africans must devote passion, attention and resources. Similarly, the ongoing initiatives associated with the pan-African congresses should be given a boost – the most recent of the congresses took place earlier this year and made profound recommendations<sup>xxiv</sup>.

## **CONCLUDING REMARKS**

The debate about Africa's development continues unabated. There are many who argue that Africa suffers from weak or lack of institutions. Some contend that the continent is constrained by weak or poor leadership. Some, including myself, argue that policy is the binding constraint to Africa's development.<sup>xxv</sup>

There are many other issues that literature and public discourse emphasise as factors constraining Africa's development. This lecture has argued for thought leadership, thought liberation and critical consciousness in order to further advance Africa's development (and to bring about a just world).

Thought leadership, thought liberation and critical consciousness should ensure that we robustly address whatever constraints that limit Africa's progress. Thought leadership, thought liberation and critical consciousness are the necessary ingredients to take the African continent forward because, as I have argued and many have argued, the fundamental *African development challenge*<sup>xxvi</sup> has to do with the historical experience of colonialism as well as the skewed global socio-political and economic order.

Realistically, it is going to take time to restructure global power relations. In the meantime, in the context of communalism as a philosophical approach to socio-economic development in Africa, we should pursue a different socio-economic development paradigm/model. I have proposed that the following should be the main aspects of a new model: robust social policies, effective industrial policies, entrepreneurship, state ownership and (lastly) intra-African trade.<sup>xxvii</sup> Among the key issues regarding Africa's development is to go beyond the restructuring of the African economy, but ensure that there is a *vision* for the economy that Africa and Africans want. For instance, it could be better that we create an economy that can use the skills that we have instead of lamenting that the economy wants different skills than the skills that our unemployed graduates have. The fundamental and practical starting point should be to reconfigure the state-market relations to be in favour of Africa's development.

Also, in recognition that Africa might have already missed the 21<sup>st</sup> century – for the 21<sup>st</sup> century would be, socioeconomically, remembered as one that firmly established the ascent of the Asian subcontinent and economies like the People's Republic of China, Republic of Korea, the Socialist Republic of Vietnam and also, secondarily, the rise of South American and Latin nations (e.g. Federative Republic of Brazil, Republic of Chile and United Mexican States) – some of us argue that we should be putting in place a firm foundation to ensure that Africa indeed captures the 22<sup>nd</sup> century.

There are three pillars, in my view, that should ascertain that Africa captures the 22<sup>nd</sup> century as *the* African century. First, Africa needs strong institutions of higher learning – we have a history of strong and effective higher education institutions in the continent but we have allowed such institutions to diminish. As we rebuild and strengthen Africa’s education sector, we should be guided by Paulo Freire’s theory of liberating education as a framework for the kind of education that can build critical consciousness.

As indicated earlier, conscientisation (i.e. *conscientização*), according to Freire (1970) involves the cultivation of critical consciousness and conscience, it not only provides a stimulus for better understanding of the root causes of human suffering and dehumanisation or the loss of humanity but also brings full effect to humanisation, an effective approach to addressing dehumanisation problems. The second pillar of what should constitute the 22<sup>nd</sup> century African agenda is resuscitating African agency – this moves the discussion on socio-economic development on the continent away from relying on its resources and firmly challenges us as citizens to actively engage in the policy process or advance one where such a processes don’t exist. The third pillar that should characterise Africa’s push towards claiming the forthcoming century is regional integration, especially economic and educational where possible.

At a global level, as indicated in my opening sentences to this lecture, the world as a whole remains uncertain, volatile, dangerous and indeed unjust. The world is in desperate need for a better guiding framework. I think the notion of *Global Civics*, a concept that emerged during my stint at Yale University during our debates at the Yale World Fellows Programme in 2009, might just be what the world needs. As Hakan Altınay (2011: 5) explains, Global Civics can be viewed as a “system of conscious responsibilities that we [humanity] are ready to assume after due deliberation and corresponding rights that we are ready to claim.” In other words, we need a moral compass, at a global level, which can guide major decisions that are taken, either by countries, communities, individuals or by supranational bodies such as the United Nations.

In concluding this lecture, I want to reiterate that Africa needs thought leaders both at the level of theory and praxis. Such thought leaders should cover all aspects of our societies, such as culture, education, economy, politics, aesthetics and so on and so forth.

In view of the need to rediscover the dignity of the citizens, a programme of action must be put in place to raise critical consciousness of African citizenry. We also need to vigorously pursue 'common political citizenship' (as Mahmood Mamdani has been arguing).

Let me also reiterate that apart from securing our liberation from the influence of external forces, as Africans, we must liberate ourselves from the following destructive thought patterns:

- Overindulgence in ceremonies of various kinds (this varies across cultures)
- Penchant for seeking paid employment at the expense of seeking to create jobs
- Lack of willingness to accept correction or criticism from people that occupy 'lower echelons' and even from electorates
- Pride of position, which leads to alienation of others
- Lack of team spirit
- Unnecessary envy and jealousy
- Preference for everything foreign
- Hero worship
- Preference for mediocrity as against meritocracy
- Fear and lack of courage to 'speak truth to power'
- Telling lies and claiming easy victories (to heed Amilcar Cabral)

Indeed, there is a particular *African* that our continent yearns for. An African I am talking about is an *African* who, fundamentally, understands the history of our continent; an African who is fully aware of factors that have shaped the history and developments on our continent, an African who is conscious that the historical experience of colonialism and other forms enslavement inform his or her point of departure. For lack of a better formulation, I am imagining an *African* who can shape the destiny of the continent and contribute, however little, in the attainment of that destiny. Therefore, an African I dream of, is a proactive agent for change (and not just an intellectual in the academy). I appeal that emerging Africanist scholars should take forward the ideas covered in this lecture and be the Africans I dream of, in the service of our continent.

Allow me to end with Frantz Fanon – and I hope you share my sentiments and those of many, including our budding Africanist intellectuals like Tendayi Sithole, about the permanent and timeless relevance of this giant intellectual.

As Fanon (1963: 311) put it:

“We must shake off the heavy darkness in which we were plunged, and leave it behind. The new day which is already at hand must find us firm, prudent, and resolute...”

*Izandla ziyagezana!*

*Thank you for your attention.*



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<sup>i</sup> Bading and Alexander (2013), in the context of the corporate sector, argue that thought leaders advance the market place of ideas by positing actionable, commercially relevant and research backed new points of view. Thought leaders, in the corporate context, engage in what Bading and Alexander call 'blue ocean strategy'; thinking on behalf of themselves and their clients as opposed to simply churning out product-focused, brand centric white papers or curated content that shares or mimics views of others (Bading and Alexander, 2013)

<sup>ii</sup> For a thorough discussion on leadership and ethics, my favorite is Northouse, P. G. (2007) *Leadership: Theory and Practise*, 4<sup>th</sup> Edition. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications

<sup>iii</sup> The most insightful definition of an intellectual, for me, is by Ali Mazrui (2005: 56) that an intellectual is "a person who has the capacity to be fascinated by ideas and has acquired the skill to handle many of them effectively".

<sup>iv</sup> See, for instance, Owusu RW (2005), Kwame Nkrumah's Liberation Thought: A Paradigm for Religious Advocacy in Contemporary Ghana, Trenton, New Jersey: Africa World Press

<sup>v</sup> See some of the accounts of Africa's glorious history in Martin, G. (2012), *African Political Thought*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan

<sup>vi</sup> Refer to Asante, M (2012), *Herodotus On Egypt*, Philadelphia: Ramses Publishers

<sup>vii</sup> See, for instance, Cleaveland, T (2008), "Timbuktu and Walata: Lineages and Higher Education," In Jeppie, S and Diagne, SB (Eds) (2008), *The Meanings of Timbuktu*, Dakar: Codesria

<sup>viii</sup> Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, the 18<sup>th</sup>/19<sup>th</sup> German philosopher, in '*The Philosophy of History*' (published in 1956 but originally given as lectures at the University of Berlin between 1821 and 1831), along with other 'intellectuals' of his time, espoused ideas that undermined African thought and further influenced other Western intellectuals and governments in thinking of Africa as having no history of its own. Frantz Fanon (1961: 67) has the most befitting response to this racist ignorance that "colonialism, by a kind of pervasive logic, it turns to the past of the oppressed people, and distorts it, disfigures and destroys it."

<sup>ix</sup> See, for instance, Leonard Thompson, (2001), *A History of South Africa*, New Haven: Yale University Press

<sup>x</sup> For a thorough account on the notion of 'imperial designs', read Ndlovu-Gatsheni, S (2013), *Coloniality of Power in Postcolonial Africa: Myths of Decolonization* Dakar: CODESRIA

<sup>xi</sup> See, for instance, Mehmet, O (1995), *Westernising the Third World: The Eurocentricity of Economic Development Theories*. London and New York: Routledge

<sup>xii</sup> Some scholars, in the case of South Africa, might take an issue with the emphasis on race – My views might be seen as tantamounting to "racial-nationalistic excesses" (See, for instance, Glaser. D 2011, The new black/African racial nationalism in SA: towards a liberal-egalitarian critique, *Transformation* 76, pp. 67-94)

<sup>xiii</sup> Decolonial thought scholars talk of colonial or global matrixes of power in the context of coloniality – Coloniality essentially refers to the colonisers' suppression of African cultures, languages, worldviews (beliefs and value systems), the production of indigenous knowledge and meaning; painting them as inferior and primitive. On the other hand, presenting those of the colonisers as superior and rational and imposing them on the oppressed (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2013)

<sup>xiv</sup> Pan-Africanism is essentially a mobilising agenda; an ideology premised on solidarity of Africans worldwide – it came about through the Caribbean movement, and later through African American intellectuals, before Africa adapted it. Modern pan-Africanism began around the beginning of the twentieth century. African Renaissance, on the other hand, is a philosophy and a programmatic agenda aimed at the rebirth of the African continent. The African Renaissance concept was first articulated by Cheik Anta Diop in the middle of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and it has been popularized by Thabo Mbeki during the 21<sup>st</sup> century. For a detail account on these concepts and their applications refer to my recent publication: Gumede, V (2013), African Economic Renaissance as a Paradigm for Africa's Socio-Economic Development, In Kondlo, K (Ed), *Perspectives in Thought Leadership for Africa's Renewal*, Pretoria: AISA Press. Pp 484-507. For an insightful historical perspective on African renaissance, see Magubane, BM (1999), In In Makgoba, MW (Ed) (1999), African Renaissance, Cape Town: Tafelberg Publishers Limited Also see Mazrui, A (2005), Pan-Africanism and the Intellectuals: Rise, Decline and Revival, In Mkandawire, T. (Ed) (2005), African Intellectuals: Rethinking Politics, Language, Gender and Development, Dakar: Codesria

<sup>xv</sup> Molefi Kete Asante (2007) defines Afrocentricity as a consciousness, quality of thought, mode of analysis, and actionable perspective where Africans seek, from agency, to assert subject place within the context of African history.

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<sup>xvi</sup> African economic renaissance implies that Africans should decide on the African economy and or the socio-economic system that works for them. The point of departure is that Africans have had, priori to colonialism and imperialism, an economy and an economic system that worked well for them. For more, see Gumede, V (2013), African Economic Renaissance as a Paradigm for Africa's Socio-Economic Development. In Kondlo, K (Ed), *Perspectives in Thought Leadership for Africa's Renewal*, Pretoria: AISA Press. Pp 484-507

<sup>xvii</sup> The Thabo Mbeki African Leadership Institute has some of its emerging scholars looking into this issue – they (i.e. Asanda Fotoyi and Akhona Nkenkana), under the tutelage of one of our lecturers, Dr Roseline Achieng', have just finished papers on the relevant issues and the papers are being reviewed.

<sup>xviii</sup> The macroeconomic framework, which is essentially, an account of what makes up an economy considers a few variables: consumption, investments, expenditure and net trade.

<sup>xix</sup> For instance, Africans should revisit, if not undo, the artificial borders drawn up by a handful of European countries in 1884/5 – what came to be known as the Berlin Conference – because the territories created are causing endless problems for the Sahel region in particular.

<sup>xx</sup> See the works of John Saul for a detailed explanation of 'incomplete liberation' and its consequences, at least in the context of South and Southern Africa.

<sup>xxi</sup> It is important to note that Africa has tried on the various occasions to come up with alternative socio-economic development approaches. See, for instance, Tomori, S. (1995), Evolving a New Development Paradigm for Africa. In Onimode, B and Synge, R. 1995 (eds.), *Issues in African Development: Essays in Honour of Adebayo Adedeji* at 65. Heinemann Educational Books: Nigeria

<sup>xxii</sup> His Excellency, former South African president, Thabo Mbeki, has been repeatedly making this point. See, for instance, his article in *The Thinker: Pan-African Quarterly for Thought Leaders*, 2014, Quarter 1, Volume 59, *The Task of the African Progressive Movement*, pp12-20

<sup>xxiii</sup> See, among other publications on Zimbabwe, Gumede V (2014) – I have a paper that compares land reform processes in Zimbabwe and South Africa in the *International Journal of African Renaissance Studies* (9,1, 2014)

<sup>xxiv</sup> The documentation and outcomes of the recent, which was the 8<sup>th</sup> one, pan-African congress can be gleaned at [www.8thpac.com](http://www.8thpac.com)

<sup>xxv</sup> See, for instance, Gumede, V. 2011. "The Role of Public Policies and Policy Makers in Africa: Responding to Global Economic Crises," In Lee, DR and Ndulo, M, *The Food and Financial Crises in Sub-Saharan Africa: Origins, Impacts and Policy Implications*. CABI International

<sup>xxvi</sup> I talk of a 'fundamental African developmental challenge' in the context that Africa continues to perform poorly in many cases. Take for instance human development – a measure that takes into account levels of education and healthcare as well as standard of living – the 2013 Human Development Report – entitled *The Rise of the South: Human Progress in a Diverse World* – indicates that the average HDI value, for Sub-Saharan Africa, is 0.475 (which is the lowest of any region, although the pace of improvement is rising). Between 2000 and 2012, Sub-Saharan Africa registered average annual growth of 1.34 percent in HDI value, placing it second only to South Asia, with Sierra Leone (3.4%) and Ethiopia (3.1%) achieving the fastest HDI growth – this is against a backdrop of pedestrian GDP growth rates, averaging 5%. I have argued against the euphoria characterising Africa's GDP growth rates - the observed ecstasy is misplaced. There is nothing to celebrate, even the so-called expanding African middle class, which I have argued is an empty or premature middle class.

<sup>xxvii</sup> For detailed explanation of the socio-economic development model I have proposed, see Gumede, V (2013), African Economic Renaissance as a Paradigm for Africa's Socio-Economic Development. In Kondlo, K (Ed), *Perspectives in Thought Leadership for Africa's Renewal*, Pretoria: AISA Press. Pp 484-507. There is ongoing work to elaborate the proposed model with a focus on the 22<sup>nd</sup> century because some of us think that Africa has missed the 21<sup>st</sup> century. We in fact argue that as the 21<sup>st</sup> century slowly draws to a close it will, socioeconomically, be remembered as one that firmly established the ascent of the Asian subcontinent and economies like the People Republic of China, Republic of Korea, the Socialist Republic of Vietnam and also the secondary rise of South American and Latin nations (e.g. Federative Republic of Brazil, Republic of Chile, United Mexico States). If African citizens and institutions are to own the 22<sup>nd</sup> century we need to start considering matters like **(1) what role should governments play (2) what type of education is relevant (3) where is science and technology currently excelling on the continent and can it be expanded to the rest of the continent and finally (4) how can African states practically advance regional economic and educational integration.**

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