



Social Policy for Inclusive Development in Africa: Revisiting Development Discourse

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Abstract

The paper revisits the discourse on development in Africa, following on footsteps of leading development thinkers in Africa – IssaShivji (2006), FantuCheru (2009) and ThandikaMkandawire (2001; 2015), among others, have specifically and directly discussed development discourse in or pertaining Africa. Twenty years ago, Claude Ake (1996) extensively dealt with the question of development (or lack thereof) in Africa. Ake's important book was published same year as Arturo Escobar's *Encountering Development*. Indeed, the debate about development – inclusive development to be specific – has continued unabated. Escobar (1996) essentially argued that the narrative of development had been problematic as it had not taken into account how the Third World was *encountering development*. Then there is Amartya Sen (1999) who views *development as freedom*. Concern with or about development in Africa, much earlier, was about underdevelopment as Walter Rodney's timeless book (*How Europe Underdeveloped Africa*) and Frantz Fanon's works (especially in *The Wretched of the Earth*), among others, demonstrated. With the exception of Ake (1996) and the various works of Samir Amin, most works have not sufficiently problematized development and in particular not many proposals have been advanced towards ensuring that development is inclusive in Africa. The paper, as it revisits the discourse on development in Africa, examines the role of social policy for inclusive development with the aim of proposing how, from the perspective of social policy, could development be more inclusive in Africa.

Keywords

Social policy Inclusive development Developmental states Development discourse

Introduction

The debate about development in Africa continues unabated. Claude Ake (1996) argued that development in post-independent Africa actually never took place. ThandikaMkandawire(2001; 2010) and IssaShivji (2006), among others, argue that development was a primary preoccupation of leaders in post-independent Africa. Others, George Ayittey (2005) for instance, are of the view that Africa has followed an inappropriate development model. FantuCheru (2009), on the other hand, argues that the post-1945 global order is the fundamental constraint to Africa's development. Acknowledging the skewed socio-economic and political order and the historical experience of various forms of enslavements that Africa has had to endure, Gumede (2011;

2013; 2015) argues that development in Africa is fundamentally constrained by inappropriate policies

In a conference in honour of Thandika Mkandawire in Lilongwe (11-13 April 2016) many issues pertaining to development in Africa were debated. Among the main issues extensively discussed relates to the role of social policy in development. The point of departure is that development in Africa remains elusive. This paper is an attempt to consolidate main issues regarding development in Africa, with a focus on social policy. Essentially, the paper deals with the political economy of development in Africa. However, the paper does not deal with issues of leadership that many lament as major weaknesses of the African continent. I have addressed such issues elsewhere (see for instance Gumede, 2015).

There is significant amount of literature on development in Africa, particularly starting with Claude Ake in the 1990s – in *Democracy and Development in Africa* in particular. Many studies sought to ‘assess’ development in Africa or in various African countries. Also, there is literature that has gone a step further, also engaging with how to make development effective in Africa. And, there are some scholars – and Samir Amin stands out – that have been arguing for an alternative approach to development globally, and not just in Africa alone.

When the US African Studies Association (ASA) convened a discussion on Africa’s development – thinking and approaches – as part of its 50th anniversary, some of the questions addressed, as Elizabeth Schmidt and James Mittelman (2009: 273) summarize, entailed: ‘has development thinking in Africa reached an impasse? Has it failed to inform policy? Are there promising new initiatives? With the rise of globalisation, what is the mix of constraints and opportunities on the ground? What is the extent of policy space? What are the best practices in development in Africa?’ Issa Shivji (2006) Shivji periodizes development discourse into (1) age of developmentalism (1960s and 1970s), (2) Africa’s lost decade (1980s) and (3) ‘age of globalisation’ (ongoing). In the age of developmentalism, development was a process of class struggle. During Africa’s lost decade, the ‘neo-liberal package’ (i.e. SAPs) reigned supreme. The ‘age of globalisation’ was accompanied by pan-Africanist resistance and the discourse sees no role for the (developmental) state. Fantu Cheru (2009: 275) argues that ‘the post-independence development model resembled the colonial development model, which stifled peasant autonomy and production. Development became something to be organised from above and from outside instead of a process of unleashing people’s energies for their self-improvement from below.’

The next section discusses development in Africa, largely from the perspective of Mkandawire and also to support his central arguments regarding economic development in Africa. Then follows a section on social policy in the context of development, and that is followed by a section discussing the role of social policy in creating or strengthening developmental states. I then revisit development in Africa, with the aim of highlighting what could be done to ensure inclusive development in Africa, then I problematise social policy in the context of ensuring inclusive development in Africa. The last section concludes.

Development in Africa

As many have argued, there are many factors that have played a role in limiting inclusive development in Africa. To start with, this paper draws inspiration from the 1955 Bandung Conference (Declaration) when it comes to what development means or should be – Mkandawire uses Bandung also to craft his conception of ‘development’. In his 2011 paper (*Running While Others Walk: Knowledge and the Challenge of Africa’s Development*), Mkandawire views

development as a ‘liberatory human aspiration to attain freedom from political, economic, ideological, epistemological, and social domination...’ (Ndlovu-Gatheni, 2012: 2). Arguably, even when it comes to economic development Mkandawire conceives of development as a ‘liberatory human aspiration’. And Bandung, fittingly, demanded such and understandably Mkandawire is influenced by that ideological orientation. It is most likely in this context that Mkandawire, for an economist, has been very preoccupied with social policy. Also, as a permanent student of history – even in his 70s – Mkandawire has insisted that we need to better understand the ‘nationalist developmentalist framework’ than just dismissing it. IssaShivji and a few others have made a similar point.

There are other conceptions of development that can be distilled in Mkandawire’s archive. For instance, when Mkandawire talks about developmental states, inclusive development is at the center. It is not surprising – actually it is to be expected – that Mkandawire laments that: the developmental state literature has ignored social policy as constitutive of such states. It is also to be understood that Mkandawire’s conception of development is similar or has been influenced by his peers such as Samir Amin and the late Claude Ake. Claude Ake (1996: 125), in particular, viewed development as ‘the process by which people create and recreate themselves and their life circumstances to realise higher levels of civilisation in accordance with their own choices and values – development is something that people must do for themselves’. Three years later, in 1999, Amartya Sen published *Development as Freedom*, which conceptualised development as Ake had viewed it.

Broadly, weak inclusive development in Africa largely has to do with, from a political economy perspective, with poor economic development which results from lack of appropriate policies/reforms, overreliance on natural resources, absence of an original economic development model, poor implementation etcetera. Then there are numerous social problems (i.e. unnecessary civil wars, poor educational outcomes, xenophobia etc.) that make development intractable. Then there is a challenge of political and institutional weaknesses (which allow negative external influences and interference, weak leadership, corruption etc.). Mkandawire is of the view that we have not fully understood what has constrained development, and particularly economic development in Africa. For the record, Mkandawire argues that attributing slow economic performance of African economies to neopatrimonialism as an example is problematic. As Mkandawire puts it, ‘while neopatrimonialism can be used to describe different styles of exercising authority, idiosyncratic mannerisms of certain individual leaders, and social practices within states, the concept offers little analytical content and has no predictive value with respect to economic policy and performance’ (Mkandawire 2015: 2). Mkandawire describes ‘neopatrimonialism [as] a marriage of tradition and modernity with an offspring whose hybridity generates a logic that has had devastating effects on African economies’ (Mkandawire 2015: 3) and that it is factually incorrect that the African economy has not performed well as the neopatrimonialism logic suggests.

Indeed, the performance of economies in Africa has not been as dismal as the Neopatrimonialism School (and others) suggest. Table 1 indicates that Developing Economies in Africa have performed better than the World average during 1970-1980. Mkandawire has shown that per capita income growth in Africa grew much faster during the first 20 years or so of the post-independence period, hence the narrative of ‘Africa rising’ is questionable because Africa is returning to levels of growth that it was at before Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPs) or currently growth rates are returning to levels of growth before the 2007/8 global economic

recession. Table 1 deliberately presents figures before the global economic crisis. Of late, Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth rates are averaging at about 5% annually. (See Table 1)

As Mkandawire has argued, particularly in Mkandawire (2015), the economies in Africa have performed relatively well – this does not mean that they have done well per se. I have argued that the African economies, though they have done relatively well, have performed below par given their potential (see Gumede, 2011a). Table 1 supports the argument that Mkandawire has been making: the averages, for instance, for growth in GDP for 1980-1990, 1990-2000 and especially 2000-2005 have been respectable. In fact, African economies – developing economies in particular – have done well until 2008 or so, before the global financial and economic crisis impacted negatively on the economies in Africa.

At issue should be why economic development has not been fast enough. The related question is: why has economic development not resulted to effective human development. As argued and shown in Gumede (2013), human development in Africa remains very low. Looking at the period from 1980 to 2010, as an example, sub-Saharan Africa's Human Development Index (HDI) has remained comparatively too low, even compared to South Asia. Comparing sub-Saharan Africa and Latin America and the Caribbean, the point made above – that Africa remains behind other regions – is glaring. (See Table 2)

As discussed in Gumede (2013), again, the 2013 Human Development Report indicates that the average Human Development Index (HDI) value for sub-Saharan Africa is 0.475 (which is the lowest of any region, although, granted, 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. Although the index itself is debatable, as to what it exactly means or measures, the HDI gives a sense of overall general wellbeing of a society or a region. The low the HDI, by implication, the low is the quality of life because the HDI takes into account levels of educational attainment, access to healthcare and the levels of per capita incomes.

Social Policy in Development

To start with, the World Bank, in the *Concept Note: Rethinking Social Policy* for the World Bank conference in Arusha Tanzania (12-15 December 2005), viewed social policy as 'a series of public policies designed to promote social development...' Hall and Midgley (2004: 3) make a point, however, that 'defining social policy is not a straightforward task...the term [social policy] is fraught with potential ambiguities and confusion.' Adesina (2009: 38) defines social policy as 'collective public efforts aimed at affecting and protecting the social wellbeing of people within a given territory.' Interestingly, Mkandawire (2001a: 12) views 'social policy as an instrument for ensuring a sense of citizenship is an important instrument for conflict management, which is in turn a prerequisite for sustained economic development...' Social policy, as Mkandawire has been arguing and demonstrating, is critical for development. For instance, Mkandawire (2009: 141) makes a point that 'social policy [is] important in the nation-building project.' Hall and Midgley (2004: 6) explain that there are different conceptions of social policy: aspects concerned with 'social and welfare services or safety nets to alleviate immediate crises...[and] social policy as encompassing any planned or concerted action that affects people's lives and livelihoods.' This later view of social policy was expressed by Mkandawire (2001a: 1) when he defined social policy as 'collective interventions directly affecting transformations in social welfare, social institutions and social relations... [And] access to adequate and secure livelihoods and income.'

It is important to note that Mkandawire does not just talk of social policy; he talks of *transformative social policy* – transformative social policy has to do with processes for transformation, as in transforming social relations and institutions. Also, Mkandawire (2009) explains that social policy has three important roles (1) productive functions (i.e. producing human capital), (2) redistributive and (3) protective roles. With regard to transformative social policy, Adesina (2015: 112) explains that ‘the *transformative* role of social policy stretches from the economy to social relations and social institutions.’ Furthermore, according to Adesina (2015: 113-114), ‘transformative social policy involves a wide range of instruments to raise human well-being, transform social institutions, social relations and the economy...The transformative role of social policy is not simply in relation to the economy but social institutions, social relations, and human capability and functioning.’

Of critical importance – an overarching theme in Mkandawire’s works – is that there should be a link between social and economic policies. He makes a point that ‘social policy [should] work in tandem with economic policy to lead to socioeconomic development’ (Mkandawire (2009:22). Also, like other policies, social policy is sensitive to politics. As Mkandawire (2001a: 25) puts it: ‘Social policy is a highly political process, touching upon power relations, access to resources and ideological predilections about the role of state and markets.’ Gumede (2008) discusses literature that have demonstrated how policy and politics interact and how that evolved in the policy making landscape in South Africa during the first decade of democracy. YzckelDror (2006:81), for instance, makes a point that policy and politics ‘closely interact, often overlap, and in part cannot be separated even analytically.’ It is indeed plausible that social policy is more political than other policies because, as Adesina and Mkandawire have argued, social policy involves transformation of institutions and social relations as well as it is an instrument for citizenship, touching on both the social and national questions.

A theoretically sound and an important practical question of the role of social policy in development has not been taken serious, something that Mkandawire’s work laments. Development, as in advancing wellbeing, is not feasible without social policy. It also follows that inclusive development is not possible without transformative social policy. In most of Mkandawire’s works, it is shown how social policy – particularly in relation to education – drives development. With regard to transformative social policy in particular, through transforming social relations and institutions, inclusive development and economic growth becomes a reality.

Social Policy for Developmental States

It is important to start this section with Mkandawire’s view of what a developmental state is or should be. Broadly, Mkandawire views a developmental state as the state that is able to set developmental goals and is willing to create and sustain a policy climate and an institutional structure that promotes development (Mkandawire, 2001b). It is in this context that Mkandawire emphasises that, distilling from literature, there are two aspects that determine or are critical for a developmental state: ideology and structure. Mkandawire’s conception of developmental states covers all the critical aspects of what a developmental state is or could be: developmental ideology (i.e. developmentalism etc) and institutional capacity (i.e. capacity to implement policies etc).

Also of critical importance is that Mkandawire argues for *democratic* developmental states, not just any developmental state. It is in that context that I have defined a developmental state as ‘a state that is active in pursuing its developmental agenda, maintains strategic relations with

stakeholders, and has the capacity and is appropriately organized for its predetermined developmental objectives' (Gumede 2011b: 180). As this definition suggests, the long term development agenda is critical for development, and it is even more important to ensure what Peter Evans (1995) calls 'embedded autonomy' – the state needs to work with different partners in society, but it must be able to distance itself and take decisions independently.

Among fundamental points that come out of Mkandawire's works is that social policy is critical for developmental states too – not just development broadly. Most of literature on developmental states emphasises economic growth (and not even economic development). This is problematic because economic growth, also economic development to some extent, is not a good measure of socio-economic progress. Mkandawire (2001) argues that any definition of a developmental state that is drawn deductively from the performance of the economy 'runs the risk of being tautological' (p. 290). It is indeed problematic that literature on developmental states mainly sees a role for economic policy and not social policy. As indicated earlier, transformative social policy that Thandika Mkandawire and Jimi Adesina argue for in particular has a significant role in development. Mkandawire (2016) makes a point that social policy should have a link with economic policy, and he explains that even during the Golden Age social policy worked in tandem with economic policy.

As hinted above, linked to the role of social policy are: the national question and the social question. Social and national questions are important for most, if not all, of African countries and they should be addressed. As Mkandawire (2009) has argued, the intersection between race and class as well as horizontal and vertical inequalities make attention on social and national questions in Africa critical. For development to be effective and or inclusive, it is no gainsaying to argue that both the social question and the national question should be addressed. As indicated earlier, social policy has a critical role to play in development and as Mkandawire (2009: 141) argues 'social policy is important in the nation-building project.' Through nation building both the social question and the national question can be resolved if social policy is robust and or transformative.

Revisiting Development in Africa

As indicated earlier, Mkandawire (2001; 2015) demonstrates that one of the major preoccupations of post-colonial African leaders has been the desire to achieve development, so is Issa Shivji (2006) and others. Various strategies have been geared toward the actualisation of development both at the national and continental levels. In fact, in this desperate search for development, Africa has become a sort of laboratory in which various development experiments are performed. While Africa has had home-grown strategies at the continental level (strategies such as the Lagos Plan of Action for Accelerated Development in Africa, African Alternative to the Structural Adjustment Programme, Abuja Treaty and the New Partnership for Africa's Development), most of the strategies for achieving socioeconomic development in Africa have been externally devised, conceived, dictated and enforced on the continent by what Adebayo Adedeji (2002) calls the *Development Merchant System (DMS)*.

So-called development strategies such as Structural Adjustment Programmes, Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers, Highly Indebted Poor Countries Initiative, Blair Commission on Africa, New Millennium Challenge Account under Bush Administration, African Growth and Opportunity Act under Clinton administration and Power Africa of the Obama administration and hordes of others have been designed by external interlocutors, which continue to see Africa in Hegelian termsⁱ of being the pupil, nay, undeveloped, hidden and dark continent of the world that are in

need of parenting, tutelage and salvation. For Africa, development is like the precious bride for which an eligible bachelor will do everything, including his dignity to have, yet it has remained largely elusive to the continent.

If development is such a desirable end for both African leaders and their so-called partners, why has it become so elusive and tedious to achieve? There are no easy answers. Arguably, the starting point should be to problematize the word development. What is this development? In whose interest is it being pursued, and by who as well as how? Are there alternatives to the dominant paradigm of what is generally accepted as development? Are there alternative routes to this desired end? These probing questions should inform the rethinking of development in Africa.

The crisis of development in Africa is underpinned by the ideological and epistemological confusion and imposition that define the pursuit of development, justice and freedom. The pursuit of development has generally followed a pattern defined by the West, in which a unilinear process is deemed sacrosanct. Following Walt Whitman (WW) Rostow's stages of economic growth, development planning efforts in Africa were geared towards the path of a sequential change, progress and transformation on the continent. Also, a Western conception of development ensures that it is seen as high rate of accumulation and industrialisation. Development is also understood as steady high rate of economic growth and change in the productive system, both domestically and in relations to the international economy as Manuel Castells, cited in Mkandawire (2001), put it. The current dominant idea of development is anchored on a comparative pedestal in which the performance of African countries is measured against the so-called developed or advanced democracies.

As a project grounded in nationalism, African countries are expected to 'catch up' or achieve 'convergence' with so-called developed countries (as Mkandawire has put it). This version of understanding development feeds into what Mkandawire (2011), cited in Sabelo Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2012: 2) calls the 'Truman Version of Developmentalism' where development is interpreted as the Euro-American missionary task of developing the global south in general and Africa in particular. An uncritical acceptance of this definition of development has resulted in the subservience of the political elites in Africa to subordination of 'politics to economics'. The demonisation of the state as incapable agent of transformation gave way to the hegemony of market as the more effective agent for the allocation of resources. The ascendance of neo-liberal thought in development discourse has led to emphasis on depoliticisation of development strategies, thus giving way to technocratic governance.

Discourse on development has been hijacked and hegemonised under what Adebayo Adedeji (2002) calls the Development Merchant System (DMS), as indicated above, in which the so-called advanced economies, acting through agencies such as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, dictate the development strategies that developing countries *must* adopt. The DMS is based on the logic of the market, with the result that it privileges capital and private accumulation over equitable and sustainable development – essentially, what Noam Chomsky called 'profit over people'. Although the adoption of market-induced strategies have led to some economic growth in some cases, it is growth without development, in which only owners of capital and their cronies in government and the private sector have benefited, while the majority of the people remains largely poor.

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 the Africa Alternative to the Structural Adjustment Programme or the New Partnership for Africa's Development, the DMS has always frustrated such initiatives. It is no gainsaying that the limitation of the dominant paradigm on development is enough justification for rejecting it and proffering alternative paradigms for inclusive development in Africaⁱⁱ. 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.

As indicated earlier, any meaningful conception of development that is relevant to the African condition must take its root from the 1955 Bandung (conference) declaration when developing countries sought to reclaim their identity, dignity and prestige. The Bandung conception of development, as captured by Mkandawire (2011), as indicated earlier, is that development is a 'liberatory human aspiration to attain freedom from political, economic, ideological, epistemological, and social domination that was installed by colonialism and coloniality.' (Ndlovu-Gatheni, 2012:2) Further interrogation of this conceptualisation of development shows that 'development entailed overcoming those major obstacles to human happiness and attainment of material welfare, civil and political liberties, social peace, and human security, which can be named as colonialism and coloniality' (Ndlovu-Gatheni, 2012:2). This goes beyond the current grains of fetishism of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) as a measure of economic performance. Even some leading economists, including Joseph Stiglitz who has recently somersaulted after feeding the world neoliberal dogma or *Zombie economics* as Ben Fine describes it, have recognised this fact: GDP is a poor measure of socio-economic progress (as indicated earlier).

As argued in Gumede (2015), critical consciousness must be raised to redirect the attention of progressive forces in Africa to reclaim the lost glory and recover stolen legacy of the African continent. 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 many have argued, 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 others 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 society 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. Indeed, as FantuCheru (2009: 277) has argued, Africa urgently needs a ‘transformative and emancipatory national project that will create the necessary policy space...central to an emancipatory national project is the development of a strong, democratic and activist state that would assert its development role within the context of a common national vision.’

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. It would seem that before Africa was rudely interrupted by various forms of enslavements, pre-colonial Africa operated on a particular socio-economic development approach, which brought about some level of development. This model is (was) communalism, as Walter Rodney and TiyaambeZeze have characterised it, whose provenance is not limited to capacity for accumulation through productivity but shared community interest, collectivism and neighbourliness. The pre-mercantilist African economy – to borrow from Samir Amin – functioned along the lines of what scholars have termed communalism. Walter Rodney (1972: 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 refer to 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 recrystallization 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 have argued that we need to better understand the pre-colonial African economy in order to see what modern day Africa could learn from it (see Gumede, 2013). 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 as ChinweizuAyiKweiArmah and Valentine Mudimbe argue – 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, the new/different socio-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 keep advocating, 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.

Lastly, the failure of the dominant economic paradigms, theories and praxis necessitate a concerted effort towards rethinking and reclaiming development in Africa. A genuine effort towards achieving this will necessarily include an epistemological reconstruction of what development is all about. This will also require changes in the consciousness of African leaders, who have always received the Western notion of development in an uncritical manner. The development that Africa needs is not the development of the market or the one that is dictated from outside. Africa needs development that ensures and assures mental, social, political and economic liberties.

The idea of development sketched in this section, from an Africanist perspective, should also include claiming the policy space, which have been lost since the colonial intrusion and worsened by the Structural Adjustment Programmes – Mkandawire (2014: 176) argues that ‘countries need space not only to craft policies that are appropriate to their circumstances, but also for experimentation.’ And the timing is ideal given the ongoing global economic crisis. As Mkandawire (2016) puts it: The current crisis of ‘neoliberalism’ provides us with the opportunity to seriously rethink the world order and the limits it imposes on nation states to pursue progressive and socially inclusive economic and social policies.

The rethinking and revisiting of development should also involve *agency* – the state (and its institutions) must play more active roles in formulating socio-economic development and transformation policies. Mkandawire (2015) emphasises the issue of human agency and ideas, also the training of development scholars. The aspect of agency that is fundamental, from the perspectives of Afrocentricity and Africanity, has to do with *African agency*. It is important that Africans, informed by their historical experience, determine their own destiny in the pursuit of African renaissance and shaped by pan-Africanism.

The idea of development I am arguing for should be informed by (1) thought leadership, (2) thought liberation and (3) critical consciousness (of both the political elites and the citizens) (see Gumede, 2015). For African economies to be better transformed, Africans should transform their thinking and orientation so that Africa can be free from dependent and subservient tendencies, especially to the so-called partners from the West. Africa needs no validation of her internally devised strategies of development from anyone – Africa must follow any path that is considered ideal for Africa’s development. The African intelligentsia is critical for this.

Rethinking Social Policy for Inclusive Development

Social policy, as indicated above, has a very important role to play in development. And transformative social policy plays a critical role in bringing about inclusive development. Among the main areas that Adesina (2009) mentions as needing urgent attention as far as social policy is concerned is: the need to rethink social policy in its social cohesion and nation building dimensions. I suggest that social policy naturally improves social cohesion and strengthens nation building. If ‘nation building is a process aimed at ensuring cohesion among different peoples in a particular nation-state’ (Gumede (2008: 9), it implies that the very existence of social policy should strengthen nation building and thereby improve social cohesion – social

cohesion understood as the extent to which a society is functional, united and coherent as well as ensuring a space for citizens to making choices that they value. At issue, therefore, is not necessarily ‘the need to rethink social policy in its social cohesion and nation building dimensions’ – the issue is bringing social policy back.

The issue that needs a lot of attention is how social policy should ensure inclusive development. Besides the need of social policy to address the national question, it should also address the social question – the question arises as to which aspects of social policy can jointly address the national and social questions in a particular country. Mkandawire (2009: 132) indicates that the social question has to do with ‘how to secure economic progress in light of the political and moral threat posed by the condition of the working class.’ The related issue, and perhaps more fundamentally, pertains to how social policy interfaces with economic policy. Mkandawire (2001a: 22) made a point that ‘social policy [should] work in tandem with economic policy to lead to socioeconomic development’ and he opined that ‘social policy links education and training to economic performance by determining levels of school enrolment and accessibility to various institutions of training; and providing incentives to firms and individuals to acquire skills...’ Recently, Adesina (2015: 112) suggests that ‘the link between social policy and economic policy is not simply the consumption side or demand side, but a supply side involving social investment in areas ranging from education to health, social funds accumulation (e.g., social pension fund or marketing board surplus), child maintenance, family policy, etc. Rather than simply the expenditure side of public finance, social policy outlay is best understood as social investment even in areas traditionally seen as quintessentially the protection tasking of social policy.’

Although this might sound rhetorical or mechanical, the question of the ideal mechanism for the practical linkages between economic and social policies (to bring about inclusive development) needs further thinking. Although it is taken for granted that social policy and economic policy should interface for socio-economic development, the link between economic and social policies that would ensure inclusive development cannot be taken for granted. For instance, countries have long lists of ‘policies’ (often these are just wish lists). The fundamental issue is the designing of those policies so they can address the objective pursued, the concern has to do with how can an ideal interface between economic and social policies be ensured. For an example, how can land reform and affirmative action as aspects of social policy inform economic development to bring about inclusive development? Another way to think about this issue is: social policy has (1) intrinsic (normative) and (2) instrumental functions. So, as social policy pursues, say, the nation building agenda, how could it interface better with economic policy to ensure inclusive development.

It would seem that there is further important work that needs to be done in thinking through the various mechanisms through which the linkages between social and economic policies can ensure inclusive development in Africa. It might very well be that more country case studies would assist in addressing this issue, and we can learn more from the difference experiences in the global South. In the global North, according to Adesina (2009: 38), social policy has been based on ‘guaranteeing a minimum level of social wellbeing through social insurance, unemployment insurance, old-age pension, or pro-natalist social provisioning.’ The study of labour markets in Africa, better to understand the extent to which social insurance etc. can be pursued, might assist in an effort to rethinking social policy – and its interface with economic policy – for inclusive development. The labour market, as one of critical institutions that can be

shaped by social policy, might provide insights on the interface between economic and social policies because education and healthcare (the two key aspects of social policy) in particular inform the kind of the labour market that a country can have.

Conclusion

In conclusion, it is important to note that Africa has tried on the various occasions to come up with alternative socio-economic development approaches as this paper discusses. However, Africa has not succeeded in crafting a development programme that is able to ensure inclusive and sustainable development. There still needs to be more thinking regarding a socio-economic development approach that could bring about inclusive and sustainable development in Africa.

Over and above addressing other development challenges facing Africa, Africa must get policies right. The paper supports the view that social policy – transformative social policy – is critical for development. Similarly, democratic developmental states cannot happen without social policies, so is inclusive development. Another main point that the paper makes is that economic transformation is not enough to fully advance wellbeing in Africa (and probably the world at large). By restructuring economies in Africa not much would be achieved though some gains would be made. Similarly, democratic developmental states would not achieve much. Therefore, what is at issue is changing the entire development model.

In the meantime, however, further attention should be given to what aspects of social policy can bring about inclusive development. More importantly, the ideal mechanism for the practical linkages between economic and social policies (to bring about inclusive development) needs further thinking. Although it is taken for granted that social policy and economic policy should interface for socio-economic development, the link between economic and social policies that would ensure inclusive development cannot be taken for granted.

Table 1: Annual Average GDP Growth Rates, by Regions

Real Gross Domestic Product by Regions (Percentage)								
	1970-1980	1980-1990	1990-2000	2000-2005	2005	2006	2007	2008
World	3.8	3.2	2.8	2.8	3.4	4	3.8	2.1
Developing Economies	5.8	3.9	5	5.4	6.7	7.1	7.3	5.5
Economies in Transition	4.9	1.2	-4.8	5.4	6.1	7.2	8.2	5.4
Developed Economies	3.4	3.2	2.5	1.9	2.3	2.8	2.5	0.8
Developing Economies in Africa	4.5	2.3	2.8	4.8	5.7	5.6	5.9	4.9
Developing Economies in America	5.8	1.7	3.2	2.7	4.7	5.4	5.7	4.4
Developing Economies in Asia	6.2	5.7	6.3	6.5	7.5	7.9	8.1	5.9

Source: Gumede (2013: 487)

Table 2: Human Development, by Regions

	1980	1990	2000	2005	2009	2010	2011
Very high human development	0.766	0.81	0.858	0.876	0.885	0.888	0.889
High human development	0.614	0.648	0.687	0.716	0.734	0.739	0.741
Medium human development	0.42	0.48	0.548	0.587	0.618	0.625	0.63
Low human development	0.316	0.347	0.383	0.422	0.448	0.453	0.456
Arab States	0.444	0.516	0.578	0.609	0.634	0.639	0.641
East Asia and the Pacific	0.428	0.498	0.581	0.622	0.658	0.666	0.671
Europe and Central Asia	0.644	0.68	0.68	0.695	0.728	0.744	0.731
Latin America & the Caribbean	0.582	0.624	0.68	0.703	0.722	0.728	0.731
South Asia	0.356	0.418	0.468	0.51	0.538	0.545	0.548
Sub-Saharan Africa	0.365	0.383	0.401	0.431	0.456	0.46	0.463

Source: Gumedé (2013: 490)

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