



Exploring the Role of Thought Leadership, Thought Liberation and Critical Consciousness for Africa's Development

Vusi Gumede, University of South Africa*

Abstract

It is argued that any discussion of Africa's social and economic development has to take into account the three critical issues that remain pressing constraints for the further advancement of wellbeing in Africa: thought leadership, thought liberation and critical consciousness. These three 'ingredients' should anchor the aspects of the socio-economic development model presented in Gumede (2011). As discussed in Gumede (2013), the 21st century would most likely be remembered as the Asian century fundamentally and secondarily as a South American century – Africa will most likely miss the 21st century as its own and that Africa should be putting in place what is needed to ensure that Africa indeed captures the 22nd century. It is in this context that this paper argues that thought leadership, thought liberation and critical consciousness should ensure that Africa robustly addresses whatever constraints that limit Africa's progress. The three 'instruments' should be pursued concurrently, for 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. It is also argued that 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. To do this and to successfully pursue other relevant proposals, Africa should build on its glorious past.

Introduction

This paper contends that the much vaunted socio-economic transformation of certain African states will not be able to monumentally move the continent forward. Essentially, the socioeconomic development that the African continent needs should be informed by *thought leadership*, *thought liberation*, and *critical consciousness*. The three 'instruments' (i.e. thought leadership, thought liberation and critical consciousness) should be pursued jointly, for thought leadership without critical consciousness is not helpful.

The central importance of thought leadership to Africa's renewal and development is compelling, arguably, 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.

Thought leadership connotes a leadership orientation underpinned by unconventional ideology, historically nuanced, culturally sensitive and contextually grounded. 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. To be sure, thought leadership is different or encompasses intellectualism. Ali Mazrui (2005: 56) defined an intellectual as "a person who has the capacity to be fascinated by ideas and has acquired the skill to handle many of them effectively".

Thought liberation, on the other hand, I argue, is a complementary requirement for thought leaders, who are encumbered with the responsibilities of bringing about transformative changes in their environments. 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. For critical consciousness, I draw on what the Brazilian educator and philosopher, Paulo Freire, termed *conscientização* – referring to "learning to perceive social, political and economic contradictions and to take action against the oppressive elements of reality" (Freire, 1970:35).

Conceptual Reflection

There is no doubt that the various unpleasant experiences of slave trade, colonialism, imperialism and neo-colonialism – and coloniality of late – have combined to condition the minds 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 (1961) has more to say about this and the various works of Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o, among others, address this issue. Walter Rodney (1973), on the other hand, explained how Africa was systematically underdeveloped through colonialism and imperialism. As Molefi Kete Asante, among others, has argued, the totality of the historical experience of the African continent and peoples of African descent should be taken into account when dealing with the challenges and solutions pertaining to the further renewal of the African continent and for the advancement of the wellbeing of Africans wherever they are.

Raising critical consciousness among Africans involves 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.

Various scholars have argued that experiences of slave trade, colonialism and contemporary patterns of relations of Africa with the West have been informed by the notion that the continent is a dark continent in need of civilisation, enlightenment and assistance (see for instance, Mpofu, 2013). Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2013:388) argues that "the idea of race was deployed to justify such inimical processes as slave trade, mercantilism, imperialism, colonialism, apartheid as well as authoritarian and brutal colonial governance systems and styles". It is in this context that thought leadership, thought liberation and critical consciousness are critical for the further renewal of the African continent.

The dominant approach has been the neo-liberal (economic) doctrine in which socio-economic development is defined by the West and in western terms. By following this paradigm, Africa has failed to grasp the salience of ideological dominance, historical trajectories of the political economies of the dependent and colonially created 'micro-states' that make up the continent and the reality of power relations that continue to define the way in which the West relates with the African continent.

It should also be noted that, as various scholars have argued, the historical processes of state formation in Africa are different from that of the West, especially those of Europe. Differences manifest in the capacity or lack of capacity of the state to bring about the development of endogenous capitalism and its transformative effects on the society (See for instance, Robinson, 2004 and Ake, 1981). Differences also manifest in the ability of the state to mobilise capital through the development of its productive capacity. In the main, the states in Africa were created for extractive purposes, domination, exploitation and violence, as many have argued. To a very significant extent, states in Africa have been 'successful' in serving the interest of the metropole and not the peoples of Africa.

Also, post-independence African leaders have surreptitiously and possibly also inadvertently formed alliances with global capital in what William Robinson (2004) calls the transnational capitalist class. Susan Strange (1994) talks of internationalisation of production networks as an inevitable outcome of global capitalism in which corporations seek outlets for cheap labours, higher returns on investments, freer regime of trade, investment and capital. Adebayo Adedeji (2002) talks of the *Global Merchant System* – a deliberate design by the global capitalist order to perpetuate a socioeconomic and political system that advances interests of the West and maintains the peripheralisation of the African continent. It is not by chance that Africa finds itself in the shackles it is in and there is always an external agenda that interferes with what Africa pursues in the interest of the further renewal of the African continent.

It is in this context that the development process in Africa cannot make sense until there is a conscious effort to decolonise the process itself, among many aspects of Africa that need complete liberation. The envisaged decolonisation process must involve deconstruction of the mentality of the African leaders, despatialisation of the arbitrary and artificial boundaries that the colonialists bequeathed on Africa and intellectual redirection of the orientation of the citizens from waiting to act by holding the government accountable at all levels. The political leadership in Africa, however, cannot be exonerated from its glaring failures. As George Ayittey (2005: 91-92) puts it:

The nationalist leaders, with few exceptions, adopted the wrong political systems, the wrong economic system, the wrong ideology and took the wrong path. Equally grievous, perhaps, was the low calibre of leadership...the leadership lacked basic understanding of the development process.

With regards to a decolonial epistemic perspective, in a nutshell, the decolonial epistemic perspective, ...aims to critique and possibly overcome the epistemic injustices put in place by imperial global designs, and questions and challenges the long standing claims of Euro-American epistemology to be universal, neutral, objective, disembodied, as well as being the only mode of knowing. It is 'an-other thought' that seeks to inaugurate 'an-other language,' and 'an-other thinking' that has the potential to liberate ex-colonised people's minds from Euro-American hegemony (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2013:396, Riberio, 2011, Grosfoguel, 2007).

Unlike other theories which seek to interpret the African conditions within the superstructure created by the colonialists, decolonial epistemic theory offers a profound interrogation of these conditions, their causative

elements in form of structures and institutions, human agency and importantly, the continuity of colonial legacies and the inherent contradictions in this system that obscure any possibility for transformation and development in its current form. Scholars of decolonial epistemic perspective have located the theory around four main pillars or concepts *vis-à-vis* the past and present relations of Africa with the West. These concepts are: coloniality of power, coloniality of knowledge, coloniality of being and coloniality of nature.

As alluded to earlier, the decolonial epistemic perspective finds currency in Susan Strange's idea of 'the internationalisation of production networks'. Also, in tandem with Robinson's idea of transnational capitalist class, the notion of coloniality of power enables us to further understand the power dimension of the relations of the West with Africa in respect of the continuing domination, exploitation, exploitation and neo-imperial control of the supposedly independent states. With this understanding then, comes the challenge for progressive forces in Africa to seek to reclaim the pursuit of Africa's development through another perspective – African renaissance and Pan-Africanism, reconceptualised and made practical.

Political Leadership

It is important to indicate that I am not discussing (African) political leadership, as a concept that operates as a 'top down approach'. Rather the notion of African political leadership that I am concerned with is one that ultimately shepherds citizen's socioeconomic interests, through governmental structures and nuanced socioeconomic and policies/laws. This complex and challenging responsibility, has not always been executed in the manner required by the African political leadership. 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 peripheralisation of our continent and our people.

It is for this reason that I argue for a new breed of Africa political leadership to be formed and encouraged to come to the fore. While I acknowledge past and present African political leaders I contend that the need has arrived for a new generation of African political leadership, to vigorously advance a new African agenda for the 22nd century and steer the requisite socioeconomic discourses needed to transform the socioeconomic and material conditions of the majority of African citizens. However, this new agenda cannot flourish or fully come to the fore under the current paradigm of thinking and operation.

This paper talks of the need for the continent to claim to the 22nd century, taking forward the argument made in Gumede and Pooe (2014), not out of chance but rather a realisation that the 21st century is slowly drawing to a close (about eighty years away). The current and subsequent African political leadership needs to start planning for the subsequent century. Africa might have already missed the 21st century – for the 21st 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).

Therefore, the African political leadership along with local communities and citizens need to engage and where possible explore means to transform policy structures and institutions that benefit society. While it is acknowledged that certain problems plaguing the continent need long term solutions, the first step towards achieving lasting solutions entails a deliberate programme of action to unlearn, relearn, un-think 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. The new African development narrative needs to occur within a firm framework that acknowledges that African political leadership much like African society has suffered from learning and thinking incorrectly concerning firstly itself and secondly socioeconomic development.

It is further argued that through being able to achieve the unlearning and the unthinking the African continent would be able to more constructively deal with the already highlighted problems of orthodox economic planning and development. 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.

Therefore, in arguing for the process of unlearning and unthinking this paper is highlighting the fact that African political leadership needs to firstly understand what its historical mission is and secondly be courageous enough to lead a new form of socioeconomic narrative for development. The argument of utilising history to shape the development and the future of Africa has been discussed by others. Thandika Mkandawire (2011: 13), for instance, argues that

The idea of 'catching up' entails learning not only about ideas from abroad but also about one's capacities and weaknesses. 'Catching up' requires that countries know themselves and their own history that has set the 'initial conditions' for any future progress. They need a deep understanding of their culture, not only for self-

reaffirmation, but in order to capture the strong points of their culture and institutions that will see their societies through rapid social change.

Thought Leadership

As indicated earlier, thought leadership is of paramount importance in the pursuit of Africa's development. Part of the challenge that Africa faces, as reflected above, has to do with an inability to fully appreciate the underlying or fundamental causes for Africa's continued underdevelopment. To be clear, when I talk of development, I have in mind the definition of development by Claude Ake (1996): 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..." (p125). And with regards to underdevelopment, I am guided by Walter Rodney's conceptualisation of underdevelopment. As Walter Rodney (1973) 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"

In the context of thought leadership, it would be incorrect to lay the blame of Africa's underdevelopment solely at the hands of Western imperialist forces. There is need for deep introspection and learning from the mistakes committed by African leaders, particularly since political independence. The African political leadership has to deal with its shortcomings (e.g. lack of willingness to accept correction or criticism from people that occupy 'lower echelons' and even from electorates and pride of position which leads to alienation of others). While these vices are not unique to African societies and political leadership (Higgott and Nesadurai 2002), at a policy and institutional levels such vices and other human failure have held back the continent's socioeconomic progress and development (Edigheji 2004). Indeed, for most part of the post-independence period, African leaders have adopted cosmetic approach to addressing the problems that the continent faces. 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.

The lack of vision and short-sighted approaches to development have resulted in African economies not being able to fully progress and more worryingly created an unhealthy dependency on foreign products and assistance (Jerven 2010). As indicated above, the predicament the continent finds itself in is not thus solely due to foreign forces who only exploit African weaknesses and lack of planning (Gumede 2014), but is also the fault of African political leadership itself (as George Ayittey, among others, has argued).

Further compounding the leadership question is the precarious situation the global economy finds itself in. As Joseph Stiglitz et al (2013: 6) puts it

It took the 2008 Great Recession to bring about a wider understanding of the deficiencies in the conventional wisdom and in the standard models upon which they rested. Those models failed, by all the most important tests of scientific theory. They did not predict that the financial crisis would happen; and when it did, they understated its effects. Monetary authorities allowed bubbles to grow and focused on keeping inflation low, partly because the standard models suggested that low inflation was necessary and almost sufficient for efficiency, growth, and prosperity

At a more practical level, perhaps, there is need to utilise and engage with thought leadership. It did not have to take the global recession, or Joseph Stiglitz and his disciples, for that matter for Africa to realise that a different socio-economic development paradigm was necessary. Essentially, we require praxis of ideas that are contextually sensitive and environmentally adaptable and relevant... not just an inspirational or transformational leadership, as many have suggested, but critically conscious and mentally free. It is this approach to African leadership that is a critical first step towards not only dealing with the numerous continental socioeconomic failures such as poverty, poor resource management and the like but also the poverty ideas emanating from neo-liberal dogma.

In the pursuit of thought leadership, we need to tap on the yet unmined riches of Africa's past leadership experiences and glorious past such as the victories of the Ethiopian Adwa, Khoi resistance against Portuguese colonialists, Impi yaseSandlwana and many others, which prove African societies long engaged with the process of thought leadership during trying times (see for instance, Mafeje 2003). However, as indicated at the very onset, thought leadership alone is not enough; it needs to be aided by *thought liberation* and *critical consciousness*.

Thought Liberation

Indeed, thought leadership is intertwined with thought liberation. Thought leadership, in the main, has to do with better understanding of the fundamental challenges confronting humanity. For Africa, it involves understanding the socio-political and economic issues and possibilities or options for the further advancement of the human condition in Africa. Essentially, thought leaders are change agents who rigorously advance intellectualism for a better Africa, in our context.

The process of thought liberation, similarly, involves the very process of unlearning, relearning, unthinking and rethinking 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. Thought liberation should assist the rest of the world, too, to come to an understanding that socioeconomic development cannot be left to market alone. Recently, Mkandawire (2011) and Nzau (2010), among others, have made this point. The many works of Samir Amin and of Claude Ake discuss the trouble that market fundamentalism causes in Africa, and the world at large. Amin (1997:95), for instance, argued 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'. Amin goes on to say that '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."

Of late, Joseph Stiglitz et al (2013:7) reiterate what many African economists and political scientists have been saying, that "the global financial and economic crisis has also brought to light the fact that market forces do not exist in a vacuum, and that they are all shaped by laws, rules, and regulations, each of which is never truly neutral, as it explicitly or implicitly favours or discourages particular industries, sectors, firms, and social players." Over and above, merely wanting African governments and political leaders to move beyond believing in the global financial and economic of neo-liberalism, thought liberation should help Africans (and those of African descent) deal with the long running negative psychological effects of colonialism and apartheid rule. The ramifications of colonialism makes many Africans feel inferior to the white counterpart, thus necessitating various attempts 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. As Issa Shivji (2009) has demonstrated, among others, colonialism and imperialism were very significant in Africa and not comparable to any other region. It is therefore imperative that we deal with the challenge of 'mental slavery', as Biko (1978), among others, argued.

Critical Consciousness

As and when thought leadership occurs and thought liberation plays the necessary role, critical consciousness must be prioritised in order to manifest and reshape the socio-political and economic trajectory of the new African agenda for the 22nd century. It is through critical consciousness that the leaders in Africa can truly serve the citizenry and the people can hold leaders accountable. 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.

Through having an African citizenry that is imbued with critical consciousness, the questions about why neo-liberal policies and agendas will come to be understood and stopped where necessary by not only African political leaders but the citizens. This most perplexing situation where African interests are held ransom by foreign interest (Adedeji 2002) through an unthoughtful leadership and unliberated thought class of African political leaders will come to an end.

Knowledge Production

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.

The various colonial 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. In addition, colonialists left a legacy of imposition of foreign language as a means of communication on Africa. Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o, among others, have wrestled with this issue.

Although the poverty of thought leadership and the deficit in consciousness manifest in various areas and ways in contemporary Africa, one major concern relates to economic thought and economic policies. 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* and Samir Amin calls it *Vulgar 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, education or knowledge production broadly, should be based on an Afrocentric paradigm – 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*. The packaging and the delivery of content should be about raising critical consciousness and it should be forward looking.

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 – national income identity – which excludes many important variables for socio-economic development. As Lansana Keita (2014: 93) puts it, "in its present dominant configuration as 'neoclassical economics', it presents itself as a species of engineering thereby ignoring its evolutionary history." Economics, as a field, indeed needs to be rescued.

Foundations for a Glorious Future

Essentially, 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 significant and historical, which require not just an inspirational or transformational leadership, as many have suggested, but critically conscious and mentally free thought leaders.

Another important task for African thought leaders is to better understand the history of the evolution of Africa as a continent where human kind originates and where great thinkers have existed [see, for instance, Cheik Anta Diop (1955)]. There were thought leaders in Africa, for instance, that ensured that handful Africans who were poorly armed, compared to the Europeans, resisted occupation. In addition, the thought leaders in pre-colonial Africa also ensured that the continent administered an economy that was robust and advanced before the imperial intrusion and colonialists' distortions as Walter Rodney (1973) and others have written. Africans also had a way of life and philosophy that shaped the African economy and social interactions before colonialism interfered with it as captured in Walter Rodney (1973) and Samir Amin (1972) among others.

It is also worth highlighting that 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). Similarly, it should be remembered that in Walata and in Timbuktu, Africa had advanced knowledge production institutions far before the arrival of colonialists.

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. 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 from external influence and domination in its various forms and guises.

Conclusion

The paper has, rather briefly though, argued for three ingredients for taking the African continent further forward: Thought leadership, thought liberation and critical consciousness. These three critical necessities for the further renewal of the African continent – and the advancement of the human condition globally – would ensure that an appropriate socio-economic development approach is adopted and that a proper narrative of Africa's development is authored. For instance, the socio-economic development approach based on neo-liberal dogma would be replaced by a contextually relevant and applicable approach. Gumedé (2011) proposes that such an approach, for Africa, could be anchored on communalism. And, as Gumedé (2013) argues, the 'Africa rising' narrative is not the correct narrative for Africa's development path. Thought leadership, thought liberation and critical consciousness should therefore be vigorously and rigorously pursued.

The paper briefly revisits Africa's glorious past and it makes a case that African thought leaders can make Africa's glorious past a foundation, as part of endeavours for thought leadership, thought liberation and critical

consciousness. Lastly, the paper emphasises the importance of knowledge production. Essentially, the education system that was created for and imposed on Africa needs to be changed if thought leadership is to be effective, thought liberation efficient and critical consciousness sufficient.

Endnotes and References

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

Freire, P. 1970. *The Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, New York: Continuum International Publishing Group

Nelson Maldonado-Torres (2007), cited in Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2013: 332), explains coloniality as “different from colonialism. Colonialism denotes a political and economic relation in which the sovereignty of a nation or a people rests on the power of another nation, which makes such a nation an empire. Coloniality, instead, refers to longstanding patterns of power that emerged as a result of colonialism, but that define culture, labour, intersubjectivity relations, and knowledge production well beyond the strict limits of colonial administrations. Thus, coloniality survives colonialism. It is maintained in books, in the criteria for academic performance, in cultural patterns, in common sense, in the self-image of peoples, in aspirations of self, and so many other aspects of our modern experience. In a way, as modern subjects we breathe coloniality all the time and every day”

Polanyi, K. 1944. *The Great Transformation: The Political and Economic Origin of Our Time*. Boston, Beacon Press

Fanon, F. 1961. *The Wretched of the Earth*. New York, Grove Press

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.”

Wa Thiong'o, N. 1986. *Decolonising the Mind: The Politics of Language in African Literature*. Oxford: James Currey

In the context of literature, for instance, Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o (1986: 93) argues that “African children who encountered literature in colonial schools and universities were thus experiencing the world as defined and reflected in the European experience of history.”

Rodney, W. 1973. *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa*. Tanzanian Publishing House, Dar-Es-Salaam

See for instance, Asante, M 2007. *An Afrocentric Manifesto: Toward an African Renaissance*. Cambridge, Polity Press

Mpofu, W. 2013. Coloniality in the Scramble for African Knowledge: A Decolonial Political Perspective. *Africanus: Journal of Development Studies*. Vol. 43. No. 2. 105-117.

Ndlovu-Gatsheni, S 2013. *Coloniality of Power in Postcolonial Africa: Myths of Decolonization*. Dakar, CODESRIA

Robinson, W. 2004. *A Theory of Global Capitalism: Production, Class and State in a Transnational World*. Baltimore and London, John Hopkins University Press

Ake, C. 1981. *A Political Economy of Africa*. London, Longman

Op.cit.

Strange, S. 1994. *States and the Markets*. London, Bloomsbury

Adejeji, A 2002. From the Lagos Plan of Action to the New Partnership for Africa's Development and from the Final Act of Lagos to the Constitutive Act: Wither Africa? Keynote address to the African Forum for Envisioning Africa, Nairobi, Kenya, 26-29 April 2002

Ayittey, G. 2005. *Africa Unchained: The Blueprint for Africa's Future*. New York, Palgrave Macmillan

Op.cit, p 396

Ribeiro, G. 2011. Why (Post)colonialism and (De)coloniality Are Not Enough: A Post-Imperialist Perspective. *Postcolonial Studies*, Vol. 14 No. 3, pp. 285-297

Grosfoguel, R. 2007. The Epistemic Decolonial Turn: Beyond Political Economy Paradigms. *Cultural Studies*. Vol. No. 21, pp. 211-213

See Gumede (2013) for historical exposition of African renaissance and Pan-Africanism

Gumede, V and Pooe TK. 2014. Foreign Direct Investment and Intra-Africa Trade: The Role of African Governments in the Context of African Renaissance. In Muchie, M, Gumede, V, Lukhele-Olorunju, P and Demissie, H (eds.) (2014), *Unite or Perish: Africa Fifty Years After the Founding of the OAU*, Pretoria: AISA Press

Mkandawire, T. 2011. 'Running While Others Walked: Knowledge and the Challenge of Africa's Development'. *Africa Development*, XXXVI (2)

Ake, C. 1996. *Democracy and Development in Africa*. Maryland, Brookings Institution.

Edigheji, O. 2004. The African State and Socio-Economic Development: An Institutional Perspective. *African Journal of Political Science*, Vol. 9, No.1, pp. 84-103

Jerven, M. 2010, African Growth Recurring: An Economic History Perspective on African Growth Episodes: 1690-2010. *Simons Papers in Security and Development* No. 4/2010/June

Op.cit.

Mafeje, A. 2003. The agrarian question, access to land, and peasant responses in sub-Saharan Africa. Geneva: UNSRID Civil Society and Social Movements Programme Paper No 6.

Nzau, M. 2010, Africa's Industrialization Debate: A Critical Analysis. *The Journal of Language, Technology & Entrepreneurship in Africa*, Vol. 2. No.1. ISSN 1998-1279

Amin, S. 1997. *Capitalism in the Age of Globalisation: The Management of Contemporary Society*. Cape Town, Zed Books

Shivji, I 2009. *Accumulation in an African Periphery: A Theoretical Framework*. Dar es Salaam, Mkuki na Nyota Publishers

Biko, S. 1978. *I Write What I Like: Selected Writings*. Heinemann Publishers, Sandton

Falola, T. 2004. *Nationalism and African Intellectuals*, New York, University of Rochester Press

Fine, B. (2009), Development as Zombie Economics in the Age of Neo-liberalism. *Third World Quarterly*, Vol. 30, No. 5. pp. 885-904

Amin, S. 1990. *Maldevelopment: Anatomy of a Global Failure*. London: Zed Books

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 20th century and it has been popularized by Thabo Mbeki during the 21st 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

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".

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

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

Keita, L. 2014. On the Problematic State of Economic 'Science'. In *Africa Development*, Volume XXXIX, No. 1, 2014, pp. 93-124

Diop, A. 1955. *The African Origin of Civilisation: Myth or Reality*, Paris, Presence Africaine

Op. cit

Amin, S. 1972. Underdevelopment and Dependence in Black Africa: Historical Origin. *Journal of Peace Research*, Vol. 9, No. 2, pp. 105-120

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

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.

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

Walter Rodney (1973:12) defines communalism as a system where “property [is] collectively owned, work done in common and goods shared equally”. This is 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.”

Gumede, V 2013, African Economic Renaissance as a Paradigm for Africa's Socio-Economic Development. In Kondlo, K (2013), *Perspectives in Thought Leadership for Africa's Renewal*, Pretoria: AISA Press