

# Development as an Intellectual Process

## The Role and Significance of African Intellectuals in Rethinking African Politics

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### Abstract

This article contributes to rethinking African politics by viewing the continent's development as an intellectual process in which resources are created for the satisfaction of human needs. Central to this process is the primacy of production of resources over their distribution and consumption. Therefore, development as an intellectual process in which society's resources are created to ensure a better life for its citizens is a central task. The best, most effective and progressive way to do justice to this task is to put the people at the centre of development in advocacy, debate and policy. The dominant and yet incorrect view that Africa's economic sectors such as mining and agriculture are drivers of its economy and development should be replaced with the indispensable role of its human capital under the leadership of intellectuals in its economy and development. This role should be recognised in theory and practice. The point is that economic sectors derive their importance to economy and development from human beings using their knowledge, skills and determination in deploying their resources to achieve tactical and strategic objectives. Therefore, African intellectuals, creators of leaders and institutions and organisations, producers and disseminators of knowledge, producers and providers of evidence and forces dominating the possession and utilisation of human capital without whose organic input no organisation or social force can achieve and sustain its strategic objectives, are indispensable to a rethinking of African politics of development they must lead. Their weapons in this role are their leadership of and role in institutions and organisations and individual knowledge and talents as proud continental assets through the mediation of parties under their leadership in deploying Africa's natural resources, mainly mineral and agricultural resources, in putting the continent and its people first in terms of development.

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### The political, economic, and ideological justification for rethinking African politics

In rethinking African politics, African scholars should seriously and critically consider Claude Ake's position that, with few exceptions, it is a fallacy to analyse development in Africa in terms of a failure to achieve it. The point is that "the problem is not so much that development has failed as that it was never really on the agenda in the first place" of the decisive majority of African political leaders. On their agenda has been their struggle to prolong their stay in power. With the "struggle for power" being "so absorbing ... everything else, including development, was marginalised" (Ake, 1996, p. 5). In three decades of political independence, the rule of the majority of African leaders has been "notable for oppression, corruption, social disorganisation, the demise of the development project, and growing poverty". Their leadership has been serving to reinforce the view of Africa as the continent enmeshed in "a vicious circle of negativity and diminishing self-esteem" (Ake, 1996, p. 141). The status quo has remained. The decisive majority of African leaders have increasingly made Africa and its people more vulnerable to external actors and powers. This is what they have inherited from their predecessors from the 1960s and to Africa of multiparty elections, which have not led to new power relations. This status quo in African politics and development is characterised by:

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(a) the dominance in the national economy of foreign ownership of the means of production, distribution and exchange; (b) the consequent foreign exploitation of indigenous resources; (c) various forms of socio-cultural and political dependence which sustains these ownership and exploitative relations; (d) the external orientations of the national economy; (e) the confinement of national participation in the international division of labour to primary production for export and the importation of manufactured goods; (f) confidence in the beneficial nature of external conditions; (g) high hope of benefits from foreign relations; and (h) appeals to the humanitarian sentiments of the advanced [capitalist] countries, as the primary means of international influence [and national development.]. (Nnoli, 1971, p. 7)

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The consequence of their confidence that external forces, not African people, are primary actors in the strategic area of African development is that “political conditions in Africa are the greatest impediment to development” (Ake, 1996, p. 1). To be honest and sincere in rethinking African politics of development is to admit that one being for truth cannot seriously expect the majority of African leaders to “legitimately exercise power and authority over the control and management of the country’s affairs in the interest of the people and accordance with the principles of justice, equity, accountability and transparency” (Moyo, 1997, p. 65).

These are some of the challenges constituting problems that have earned Africa and its people a status as objects of compassion and contempt, and marginalisation globally. Central to this status is the issue of feeling pity for Africa for its future and how its countries trade with other countries outside itself, receive aid and debt relief and govern themselves by individuals and organisations throughout the world. Oxfam articulated this view of Africa and its people by some individuals and organisations across the globe in its Make Trade Fair Campaign in 2002 when it maintained that the “future of Africa, more than that of any other continent, hinges on the collective global action” and that “how Africa trades, receives aid and debt relief and governs itself is not the responsibility of Africans alone; these issues are the responsibility of decision-makers and global citizens everywhere” in the world (Oxfam, 2002, p. 22).

Rethinking African politics is also to confront and defeat the hegemony of the populist thesis that we Africans are all in the same boat in the world by raising and answering the strategic question as to who are enemies and allies of the masses of the African people among Africans. By blunting the edges of the struggle against Africans who are enemies of Africa and its people and institutions and organisations supporting it, this thesis serves the status quo. This task is

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to advance a politics of the truth; to avoid easy compromises; to address the immediate and long-term needs of the mass of the population and of those who suffer the most severe forms of oppression; to search for the common ground of that oppression; to resist ideological claims that ‘we are all in the same boat’ in this society; to reject what [C. Wright] Mills called the ‘crackpot realism’ that makes the status quo into a kind of inescapable second nature and closes off the future; to fight market fetishism. In short, to avoid making what Raymond Williams called ‘long-term adjustments to short-term problems. (Foster, 1990, p. 286)

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### Rethinking African politics as the primary ask of African organic thinkers

African intellectuals are the dominant social forces in the production of knowledge vital to the development of Africa and its people. They are leaders in the production of knowledge the continent requires to concretely understand its problems and the opportunities it is enjoying in its struggle for sustainable development. The task of the production of knowledge is not purely an academic task. It is a task specified by practice in organising and utilising knowledge for developmental purposes as

problems are confronted either for their solution or maintenance. By producing knowledge vital to the continent's development, intellectuals enjoy enormous opportunities to provide the continent with the understanding that knowledge is power when organised to achieve strategic objectives. Only African intellectuals play an indispensable role in representing all the African people, not only members of their ethnicity, language, gender, religion, clan, and other related socio-historical affiliations in the strategic area of development. They execute this task through presentations of their papers at conferences, symposiums, seminars, workshops and other forums, their books, journal articles, monographs, policy briefs, interviews, and lecturing at the learning institutions. They dominate the possession and utilisation of human capital, speaking on behalf of those their works structurally represent. Their structural commitment to speak on behalf of particular social forces through their careers is central in their indispensable role that no social force or organisation can achieve and sustain its strategic objectives without organic input of intellectuals.

Rethinking African politics is first and foremost to reconsider the role and significance of Africa's organic thinkers in African politics from their perspective as producers and disseminators of knowledge and as creators of leaders, experts, and institutions and organisations. Intellectuals have "enormous power" through "research and creative thinking" to "change the world". They can achieve this objective by "sharing their ideas and knowledge" not only with their peers but also, of grave import, with "the broader public". Education, "a critical tool for grappling with the major challenges facing the world", is their asset in "reaching out" to the public (Heleta, 2020, p. 27). The central role of knowledge in development is such that development is knowledge. Knowledge-based development is through the effective use of knowledge in ensuring sustainable socio-economic security.

In rethinking African politics as thinkers and actors, African intellectuals should produce and disseminate knowledge tangibly on what it means to be true Pan-Africanists. This theoretical and political task is to protect the role and significance of Pan-Africanism primarily from Africans who have made it more of a political, economic, and ideological fashion and transformed it into a state-centric theoretical weapon, especially by declaring that South Africa and Nigeria are leaders of the Pan-African cause of Africa's structural transformation and development. Central to Pan-Africanism, contrary to this state-centric perspective, are the African people as social agents of the transformation and development of Africa and its people and Africa as the basis of the independence of the African people of the world. It has never been that it should be led by countries and their heads of state and government. This position should be defended. True Pan-Africanists operationalise Pan-Africanism in their countries through active participation in the resolution of problems faced by their people. True Pan-Africanists are those who put Pan-Africanism into practice in the service of the African people by wielding the knife of theoretical and practical criticism of the socio-political and economic problems and their structures. To be a true Pan-Africanist should be like what Mikhail Gorbachev maintains should be critical factors characterising true Marxists, which

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means not being afraid of what is new, reject obedience to any dogma, thinking independently, submitting one's thoughts and plans of action to the test of morality and, through political step, help the working people realise their hopes and aspirations and live up to their abilities. (Gorbachev, 1990, p. 17)

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It "means, first of all, to be consistently democratic and ... put universal human values above everything else" and be "able to identify with the vital interests of the people and understand the importance of the international and global issues that define mankind's common destiny" (Gorbachev, 1990, p. 17). Detesting lies should be characterised by "rigorous respect for the truth" and resent "anyone who makes one-sided judgments and pretends to have absolute knowledge about what is going to happen and what should be done" (Gorbachev, 1990, p. 17). It is through

substantiating these principles in practice in their countries that African intellectuals working in alliance with other national forces who are for socio-political and economic justice that will end the political, ideological and organisational hegemony of the decisive majority of the African Union heads of state and government have established over the African people. The transformation of the African Union from being “a concentrated microcosm of Africa and its ills” into an organisational expression of the democratic will of the African people whose operations represent their socio-political and economic needs and interests is through the fundamental restructuring of African societies in their interest. The point is that:

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The danger is of an organisation being cut off from its membership. The beautiful, or glorious, new headquarters of the AU – built by the Chinese and complete with the golden statue of Nkrumah – is an example of isolation. The headquarters is not just a vast conference chamber and offices. It is an entire complex, a luxury hotel for African presidents arriving in Addis Ababa for summits. From the airport to the headquarters and back again, one need never step outside a limousine or the walled compound of the AU; one need not speak to any ordinary Ethiopian, and one need not learn anything of an average person’s problems. If complaints of the privileged positions of Eurocrats are one of the factors leading the EU into crisis, the Afrocrats – from presidents to staff members – lead lives that are unrelated to Africa as a whole. (Chan, 2016, p. 44)

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It is common practice in theoretical and political forums and circles to hear some Africans declaring that they are revolutionaries, socialists and communists. As legitimate and appropriate this declaration maybe, as a person concerned with the task of substantiating one’s political, economic and ideological position on development and democracy issues, processes and developments in practice not in theory, of what relevance is this declaration to the state of Africa’s development and misfortunes confronted by the decisive majority of its people and the benefits enjoyed by its decisive minority? What will be the response of Africans who like to make this declaration publicly if some of those daily facing misfortunes ask them the question, you are revolutionaries, socialists and communists, so what? The point is that:

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It is not enough to be a revolutionary and an adherent of socialism or a Communist in general. You must be able at each particular moment to find the specific link in the chain, which you must grasp with all your might to hold the whole chain and to prepare firmly for the transition to the following link; the order of the links, their form, how they are linked together, the way they differ from each other in the historical chain of events, is not as simple and not as meaningless as those in an ordinary chain made by a smith. (Lenin, 1984, p. 595-96)

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The most reasonable way to advance the struggle for the equality of the material conditions and rights of the African people is to know how best and most effective to seize and exploit any potential or actual situation to change the course of events. This is what is required of any organic thinker and actor in providing leadership and guidance in any decisive moment when the people, in response to issues, processes and developments relating to the status quo of their misfortunes, act decisively without being led by them through political formations in their efforts to end the material conditions of their suffering. The point is that:

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Every question “runs in a vicious circle” because political life as a whole is an endless chain consisting of an infinite number of links. The whole art of politics lies in finding and taking as firm a grip as we can on the link that is least likely to be struck from our hands, the one that is most important at the given moment, the one that most of all guarantees its possessor the possession of the whole chain. (Lenin, 1977, p.502)

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What is needed in successfully effecting the restructuring of African societies is not only their concrete understanding of the key issue being to change them for the better but also the readiness, quickness and energy with which one as a theoretician and practitioner should take the unexpected chances offered to do what is the best for them and their people.

### Rethinking problems faced by Zimbabwe and Nigeria by African intellectuals

African intellectuals should critically rethink the profound unprecedented problems faced by Zimbabwe and Nigeria. Are their problems only national and internal to them? Are they also regional and continental? This theoretical task is directly related to their rethinking of African politics.

History does not repeat itself. It does not deal with whatever might have happened in the sense that what happened has happened and what has not happened has not happened. This reality does not prevent us from questioning what should have happened if particular developments did not occur. Rethinking the politics of Zimbabwe and Nigeria within this framework, it is permissible to maintain that the fact remains that if Zimbabwe and Nigeria did not face problems they continue encountering, Southern Africa, West Africa and Africa should have been different, particularly in terms of their development. Causes and consequences of problems of Zimbabwe and Nigeria are developments that impact their relationship with Southern Africa, West Africa and Africa. Their relationship with their respective regions and the continent should have been different if they did not face their problems. African countries such as South Africa should have been structurally compelled to relate to Zimbabwe and Nigeria, their respective regions and continents differently. The rest of the world should have been structurally compelled to deal with Southern Africa, West Africa and Africa differently. The contribution of Zimbabwe and Nigeria towards the regional and continental integration and transformation should also have been different. Given this reality, problems faced by Zimbabwe and Nigeria are a setback in the regional and continental integration and change and, broadly, in African affairs. They are Africa's problems, not only Zimbabwe and Nigeria.

### The role and significance of African intellectuals in transforming extraction, trading, and public service content of the African economy

The economy of African countries is extraction, trading and public service in content. It is an extractive economy characterised by extracting its strategic raw materials by transnational corporations. It is a trading economy exporting its mineral resources to countries outside the continent in natural form and importing finished products. Trade is concentrated between them and these countries. While primary products they export to these countries are relatively cheap, manufactured products they import are rather expensive. These primary products are converted into finished products and imported back to them, buying them at a relatively high price. The consequence is that the terms of trade between them and these countries are in favour of their main trade partners. In the process, African countries export in raw forms as their primary products, but these countries and their people first and themselves and their people last in terms of development. This reality supports the position articulated by Nahas Angula: "Today the wealth of nations is built on knowledge and less on raw materials" (2011, p. 7).

The economy of African countries is public service in content in that the majority of their citizens work for the public sector. Foreign companies dominate the private sector of almost all of them. Their national companies are directly interlinked with foreign companies to which they are subordinated as junior partners. Given that their economy is extractive, trading and public service in nature, while the transformation of their economy in terms of the means of production, distribution and exchange is critical, its transformation from a resource-based economy into a knowledge-based



economy is of long-term strategic importance for the utilisation of its natural resources for the popular national sustainable development.

South Africa is Africa's qualitatively largest and strongest diversified economy. Its capital accumulation process is characterised by mining, manufacturing and agricultural economic sectors with a long-standing and well-entrenched external expansion regionally and continentally since the 1960s. Some of its mining companies have been operating in the centre of capitalism and other countries outside Africa before the 1960s. It has relative international strength and large African continental and Southern African regional strength. Despite these factors characterising its national economy, it is fundamentally or in essence not different from problems faced by other African countries in the utilisation of their natural resources for their developmental needs and demands. Its unemployment, poverty and inequality problems are linked in part to the systematic bulk exploitation of its natural resources. Its sustainable development depends on resolving this problem in the link between unemployment, poverty and inequality levels and the exploitation of its natural resources. This is one of the critical problems it confronts in its national development plan. Jean-Marie Jullienne articulates this reality tangibly when he maintains that:

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It is ... becoming abundantly clear that the future depends on our ability to establish joint ventures in processing our resources. For example, South African iron ore is converted into pig iron billets and further processed into rods, bars and sheets. This same process should be applied to diamonds, coal, chrome, manganese, gold and platinum. South Africa produces 75% of the world's platinum but fewer than 15% of the world's catalytic converters.

A simple product like granite is being shipped in bulk to Italy before being offloaded onto trucks taking it to factories in Carrara and Verona to be cut and polished by Italian labour before being shipped again to the rest of the world.

This is absurd when seen in the light of a world held to ransom by oil cartels, yet nothing of the sort exists regarding mineral resources. If established here, we could ensure that local labour is not taken advantage of and paid in a currency subject to devaluation. Foreign companies reporting profits in foreign currencies are always keen to devalue the Rand, thereby reducing labour costs and maximising profits in their currencies.

It is interesting to note that as soon as South African democracy was born, several large mining houses moved their holding companies offshore. The concept of a devalued Rand based on our inability to compete in specific industries associated with developing nations, such as textiles, ignores the industries in which we have the most significant advantages, those based on the country's natural resources.

Countries trade on their strengths, so focusing on a resource in abundance can make us strong and competitive, provided with beneficiation. Therefore, it is very encouraging to see that at the last ANC National General Council meeting, a resolution was taken to increase the beneficiation of our products from 10% to 50% by 2030. This is the sensible road to prosperity, job creation and a solid and equal partnership with growing powers like India and China, whose appetite for our natural resources is unquenchable in the foreseeable future. (Jullienne, 2011, p. 13)

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He continues:

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A small island nation like Japan, with the world's third-largest economy despite an almost total lack of natural resources, imports everything it needs and utilises its strengths to produce end products.

Imagine the joint ventures South Africa could embark on with countries like Japan. As a nation, we must take stock of what we have been blessed with in natural resources and set out how best to utilise these to maximise the benefit for the people of South Africa.

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This must be a dispassionate decision based on realistic assessments of South African realities. We can only succeed if we place our nation as the primary beneficiary of the system and not be concerned with the international conglomerates' need to show profits in international currencies. (Jullienne, 2011, p. 13)

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The essence of the problem faced by South Africa in the exploitation of its natural resources raised by Jullienne was articulated by Ben Turok in speaking during hearings on the industrial policy action plan before the National Assembly Trade and Industry Portfolio Committee in November 2012. Pointing out that the continued "separation" of the roles of the mining sector from those of the manufacturing sector of the South African economy has resulted in the de-industrialisation of the country, he told Members of Parliament that the beneficiation strategy document, A Beneficiation Strategy for the Minerals Industry of South Africa, published in June 2011 by the Department of Mineral Resources is "seriously inadequate" in solving this structural problem. Central to its serious inadequacy is the fact that it does not produce a vision on how South Africa should use its mineral resources even in cases where it "enjoys a monopoly" to "maximum benefit" of the economy (Turok, 2012, p. 1). He concluded that the country is faced with "a curious anomaly" in that it exports its resources in raw form to be "beneficiated and fabricated elsewhere and the final product is imported back ... with most of the value-added abroad". According to him, "the result" of the fact that even inputs into its mining sector such as machinery are largely imported" is "de-industrialisation" of the country (Turok, 2012, p. 1).

As a result of the relationship of disarticulation or incoherence or lack of forwarding and backward linkages in production between the mining and manufacturing sectors of its economy, South Africa, like other African countries, exports its mineral resources to its main trade partners in raw form in relatively low prices. They are converted externally into finished products and imported back to where they are bought at a relatively high price compared to their export. It contributes to creating and providing employment and wealth opportunities and reducing poverty and inequalities in countries where raw materials are converted into finished products. Briefly, it contributes primarily towards their development and secondly to its national development.

The solution to the problems faced by South Africa and its African Union partners in the utilisation of their natural resources for their development needs and demands is the structural and fundamental need for them to have an articulated or coherent economy with sectoral complementarity and reciprocity of exchanges between their mining, manufacturing and agricultural sectors of their economy. This task requires investment into research and development to have requisite technological, information, management, marketing and transportation techniques or advanced science-based production methods. The point is that the production process of their economy needs these methods for its operation to put them and their people first, especially in terms of development. This task requires them to be determined to acquire the capacity to leverage and adopt or adapt technology to their existing technology. The point is that some African countries have technology appropriate to their particular conditions and situations, which is relatively cheaper in their development efforts. Instead of using it, they use expensive technology from external countries that is not relevant to their conditions and situations. The consequence is that they are not successful in their development efforts.

For African countries to be successful in their development efforts, their development theoreticians and practitioners should take seriously the proposed solution provided by Nahas Angula, former Prime Minister and Minister of Science and Technology of Namibia, to the problem faced by Namibia in the utilisation of its natural resources for its development needs and demands. He maintains that technological readiness, business sophistication and innovation are critical missing links in Namibia's economy for its development growth and potential to materialise as the reality (Angula,

2011, p. 7). His position is that Namibia has technologies to convert its raw products into manufactured products. However, what is “missing” to execute his development task is “a system of leveraging and adopting or adapting existing technologies”. Therefore, to solve this “lack of technological readiness”, it has to acquire the capacity to “leverage and adapt existing technologies”. This means investing in research and development to have the requisite quality scientific research institutions producing “a human resource capable of knowledge production and diffusion” (Angula, 2011, p. 7).

Angula’s proposed solution is supported by Joseph Ramos and Osvaldo Sunkel in answering the question critical and required in achieving development as the intellectual process of the creation of resources for the satisfaction of human needs. Their answer is that:

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It is not demand and markets that are critical. The heart of development lies in the supply side: quality, flexibility, the efficient combination and utilisation of productive resources, the adoption of technological developments, an innovative spirit, creativity, the capacity for organisation and social discipline, personal and public austerity, an emphasis on savings, and the development of skills to compete internationally. In short, independent efforts are undertaken from within to achieve self-sustained development. (Ramos & Sunkel, 1993, pp. 8-9)

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The struggle for ‘self-sustained development’ is achieved through primarily satisfying popular internal needs and interests. What Olayinka Akanle is saying about the people of Nigeria applies to citizens of all other African countries. In his words:

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The government’s industrialisation policy must be necessitated by national expediency against the quest to satisfy globalisation. The industrialisation that leans heavily on global dictates is bound to expose Nigerians to danger. This does not imply that the nation must not align with global realities. The point is that local needs and local content must be central in terms of thoughts, social capital, workforce, and technology. (Akanle, 2011, p. 13)

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Central to Akanle’s point is the progressive inward industrial development process that provides people with foodstuffs, water, housing, health care, energy, security, transportation and employment opportunities. As a result, their material conditions and rights are constantly improved for the better.

African countries should transform their economies through industrialisation and beneficiation to fulfil the requirements of putting their people first. They should move away from a natural resource-based economy to a knowledge-based economy whose key component is a greater reliance on intellectual capabilities or knowledge-intensive activities than on natural resources. The role of their intellectuals who are experts committed to realising their sustainable development through their natural resources is indispensable in this task.

Their mineral, sands and agricultural endowments are enormous and attractive for investment. They are catalysts of their development. Their experts in various fields should best and most effectively use their knowledge and skills as proud national and continental assets through the mediation of the governing parties in working together with the general public, the private sector and civil society to advance and achieve the development satisfying needs and interests of the people. Without this human endeavour under the leadership of intellectuals, African countries will not achieve their development objectives.

The popular and yet incorrect view that Africa’s economic sectors such as mining and agriculture are drivers of its economy and development should be replaced with the indispensable role of its



human capital under the leadership of intellectuals. The point is that economic sectors derive their importance to economy and development from human beings using their knowledge, skills and determination in deploying their resources to achieve tactical and strategic objectives. Therefore, African intellectuals, creators of leaders, experts, and institutions and organisations, producers and disseminators of knowledge and social forces dominating the possession and utilisation of human capital without whose organic input no organisation or social power can achieve and sustain its strategic objectives, are indispensable to rethinking of African politics of development they must lead theoretically and practically. Their weapons in this role are their leadership of and role in institutions and organisations and individual knowledge, skills and experience as proud continental assets through the mediation of political parties under their leadership in deploying Africa's natural resources, mainly mineral and agricultural resources in putting the continent and its people first in the area of development.

It is not only Africa's mining sector which, through its resources vital to the operations of high-technology industries, particularly in aeronautics, nuclear energy, and national defence of advanced capitalist countries and some dependent capitalist countries, that is of strategic importance to their further development. Its agricultural sector is also of strategic importance to their further development. The strategic importance of their agricultural industry for their long-term food and energy security has made the land a more attractive asset to be bought or acquired by the state, agribusiness, energy corporations and other financial forces. This socio-historical development and the role of African nationals, particularly state actors serving as intermediaries or partners in facilitating foreign investors' access to, acquisition of, or control over land (Cotula, 2013, p. 54) have led to a global situation in which to "a very considerable extent ... any discussion of the landrace is a discussion of Africa" (Klare, 2012, p. 196). In the same vein, the discussion of the eastern part of the Democratic Republic of the Congo should also be the discussion of its governance and security problems and the looting of its wealth – mostly mineral resources by the alliance of the transnational corporations and Africans. These corporations and Africans have vested interests in the governance and security problems of the country (Zizek, 2015, pp. 22-23).

The best and most effective way to invest in the security of African countries is to satisfy the needs and interests of their people. Through the execution of this task, they can successfully determine and control their programmes of action and limitations in foreign policy. To achieve this objective, they should have a concrete understanding of the strategic perspective that foreign policy starts at home. Its success is made possible by its operation based on the people being its first line of defence. Their understanding of this perspective should be implemented through the unquestionable service to the majority of their people.

This perspective points not only to the African people in general but also to the African working class, a social force central to the operation of the social fabric of African countries placed at the heart of their socio-economic life in the most fundamental ways, as the first line of achievement and defence of a structural change of African societies. They are indispensable to the successful resolution of the national question of African countries. Without them as an alternative historical bloc structurally opposed to the continental status quo, only a change in signboards, a rearrangement at the top of African societies will continue being an essential characteristic of African politics and development.

Without African organic intellectuals using their knowledge, skills and experience as proud, treasured national assets through the mediation of the political parties under their leadership committed to the development, extraction, trading, and public service content of the economy of African countries cannot be transformed. Through these political formations as collective intellectuals, their members can be turned into experts and specialists and assume and exercise leadership roles in critical areas of their societies.

It is through the role of intellectuals in the production of knowledge and creation of leaders, experts, specialists or skilled individuals as indispensable in the society's progress that development as an intellectual process of production or creation of resources for development can best be understood, highly appreciated and treasured especially in the urgent need to transform African countries from natural resource-based societies into knowledge-based social formations.

The political parties led by Africans with unassailable leadership qualities constituting a radical rupture with the continental status quo on governance, democracy and development issues, processes and developments are required for this task. Some of these qualities are:

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Practical and flexible organisation; ability to generate resources for its operations; a viable alternative program for overall reconstruction and rehabilitation; an effective foreign policy; legitimate and visionary leadership; a solid internal and public education program to challenge the established world view; a transparently democratic and accountable structure; and in-depth knowledge of existing political (even theoretical) debates, blueprints, developments in other nations, and of the local political economy. Such a movement must cultivate and retain the support of alternative constituencies; its politics must be seen as different from the discredited past; the leadership must be principled, consistent in its philosophy, and above board morally. Finally, the administration and movement must distinguish between rhetoric and practical politics and must consistently strive to stay and operate above primordial and opportunistic considerations. (Ihonvbere, 1997, p. 127)

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### Conclusion and Recommendations

Political changes in most African countries from the 1960s to today have been developments assuring external actors of the future security of their strategic interests and safe fields for their investments. Their future was determined by how colonial rule was ended. In the global political economy language of racism, these countries are viewed as fields of action embarked upon by the alliance of the external political and financial rulers for their interests and the national exigencies of their countries. Within this political economy linguistic framework, Africans are regarded as not their own or with no movement of their own, but extensions of other people. In terms of rivalry, ambition and contest among external powers competing over its wealth, Africa, like Asia, is "an elegant table laid out for a banquet". With sharpened weapons picking at what they want for their internal exigencies, they are fighting over the banquet to be secure at the head of the table (Hawksley, 2018, pp. 13-14).

African intellectuals should recognise the strategic importance of mobilising for political, economic and ideological hegemony in theory and practice and provide a transformative theoretical and practical alternative to the governing political parties. Their approach and training must reflect the link between knowledge and power. The masses of the African people should view themselves as historical subjects with emphasis not only to restructure their societies but also, most importantly, as the foundation against subversion of structures of their power. Accordingly, they should avoid being in danger of being reduced to the practice of exerting pressure upon their national heads of state and government and regional economic communities and countries for policy changes and victories which will not be sufficient for them to achieve new political power relations.

They should revive the political culture popular during the struggle against the colonial rule of the African people that they are their liberators and do not need anyone else to liberate themselves. An integral part of this process is that if limitations and weaknesses characterise them, it is their task to reduce and eliminate them. They should travel the journey together with the African people in

general and the African working class in particular with whom linguistically, culturally, and other life aspects such as race, ethnicity, clan, and intangible cultural heritage are interlinked.

African intellectuals should ensure that they are increasingly active actors and leaders in the operational fields of African politics. Without political parties under their leadership, they cannot best and most effectively organise for their societies' socio-political, economic and ideological restructuring. They cannot move their theory and analysis to practice through mobilisation and concrete action to achieve this restructuring.

Mobilisation for political, economic and ideological hegemony and provision for comprehensive and transformative theoretical and practical alternatives to the governing political parties are critical as prerequisites for the erosion and defeat of the political domination of those who talk Africa but walk the dominant axes of global socio-economic order. The restructuring of African societies will not happen while power remains with people who speak Africa but look to those who lead global injustice to solve their problems. They should use their deft analytical skills studying "the rich and the powerful" or global political and financial rulers and their organic intellectuals, recognising that as their "tactics become more subtle and their public pronouncements more guarded, the need for better spade-work becomes crucial" and that "the best" they "can do is to give" the masses of the people including the poor "a clearer idea of how their oppressors are working now and can be expected to work in the future" (George, 2010: 82). Briefly, they should put their ability to argue and develop positions at the service of eroding and defeating the political rule of those who are inimical to Africa's popular development.

African intellectuals should use their resources, speaking truth to power or being in control, irreversibly committed to integrity, justice, self-discipline, hard work, resourcefulness, efficiency, responsibility, credibility, transparency, and accountability in the continent's service and its people.

The role and significance of African intellectuals in rethinking African politics of revolutionary change are aptly articulated by Haidar Abdel-Shafi when he maintains that:

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The critical issue is transforming our society. All else is inconsequential ... We must decide to use all our strength and resources to develop our collective leadership and the democratic institutions that will achieve our goals and guide us in the future. The important thing is for us to take care of our internal situation, organise our society, and correct those negative aspects from which it has been suffering for generations, which is the main reason for our losses against our foes. (Abdel-Shafi, 1997, p.15)

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