

## CRITICAL QUEST FOR INTEGRAL AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT: RETRO- PROACTIVE DIMENSION

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### **Abstract**

*Beginning from the pre-colonial era through colonial to the postcolonial eon, critical quest for authentic and inclusive African development has been the foremost intent of some avant-gardes of African liberation. One cannot isolate the contemporary epoch from this scheme. The quest is more today given the phenomenon of globalization. It challenges African thinkers more than ever to proffer solutions that can enhance Africa's status vis-à-vis that of the other nations of the world. To this effect, this work adopts a retro-proactive approach. Retro-Proactive is a combination of two words: retroactive and proactive. Retroactive measure underscores the need to undertake approaches that predate the current struggle for integral African development. Conversely, proactive measure salvages and elevates Africa from mere passive deliberation on the ills inflicted and perpetrated by colonialism to the actual pursuit of agendas aimed at authentic and inclusive African development. Taking retroactive measure alone equals 'assuming the initial point - petitio principii', - and ipso facto, dwelling in the past. Likewise, sticking solely to proactive measures leaves the African development agenda void of historical and ontological foundation. Thus, com-penetration of retro-activism and pro-activism, a synergy between retroactive measures and proactive measures, is imperative.*

**Keywords:** Integral Development, Retroactive, Proactive, Human Endowments, Dignity.

### **Introduction**

For five hundred years, most African intellectuals were actively engaged in the 'mission to liberate Africa from the colonial imperialistic rule.' From 1957, this much sought for independence was gradually trickling in. Unfortunately, fifty years after independence, Africa is still battling to square up with other nations of the world, especially in the area of fiscal development. The matter is all the more disheartening considering the enormous human and natural resources as well as the historical developmental antecedents of Africa. For instance, Africa can proudly boast of many historical figures, be it in the pre-colonial, colonial, and post-colonial era. These include St Augustine of Hippo, Tertullian, Origen,

Hypatia, Wilhelm Anton Amo, Frantz Fanon, Nnamdi Azikiwe, Julius Nyerere, Kenneth Kaunda, Kwame Nkrumah, Nelson Mandela, Blessed Michael Iwene Tansi, Philip Emeagwali, Cardinal Francis Arinze, Theophilus Okere, Wole Soyinka, just to name but a few. Africa is, likewise, endowed with abundant natural resources like petroleum oil and natural gas (found in Nigeria, Angola, Democratic Republic of Congo, Ghana, and Liberia), gold (mined in South Africa, Tanzania, Ghana, Burkina Faso, Mali, Guinea, and others), diamond (mined in Sierra Leone, Tanzania, Botswana and the Democratic Republic of Congo), coal (mined in South Africa, Egypt, Mozambique, Botswana, Malawi, Niger, Swaziland, Zimbabwe, Zambia, and Tanzania), platinum (extracted in South Africa, Zimbabwe, and others), uranium (one of the chief products of South Africa, Niger, and Namibia), aluminum (found in South Africa, Mozambique, Egypt, Cameroon, and Ghana), bauxite (produced in Guinea), iron and steel (produced in South Africa, Egypt, Algeria, and Libya). Besides, Africa has limestone, salt, bronze, clement climate, fertile soil, to name but a few. She also possessed advanced knowledge in artwork and the use of different metals. Igbukwu artifacts, Benin bronzes, Nok civilization, Egyptian pyramid are cases in point. Geometry, astronomy, mathematics, medical sciences, and philosophy are highly indebted to the Egyptian educational system. Of course, the history of the world education is fundamentally deficient without the inclusion of the school of Alexandria in Egypt. The same applies to the history of world development in general, which recognizes Egypt as the cradle of civilization.

This work, while appreciating the advancements above, argues that Africa is yet to attain integral development. Thus, this research sets out to adduce some measures which are necessary for this integral African development. Two approaches are adopted here under the title "retro-proactive dimension." This title is an amalgam of two words: retroactive and proactive. Retroactive measures deal with those measures which entail going back to the issues which predate the development schema at issue. It suggests that any measure employed to tackle the phenomena of integral African development must have recourse to the antecedent of the development agenda in focus. It achieves this through a critical and constructive historical survey of the past development issues of Africa. The intent here is the discovery of the anti-development indicators which hampered the African development. It equally focuses on the area or issues which had strengthened African development, enabling it to reach the stage and status it is currently enjoying.

Alternatively, the proactive dimension concentrates on proffering measures that can help to arrest or promote specific development agendas in advance. To rescue African development from the passivity of having to dwell on retroactive measures alone, the proactive dimension of African development is imperative. Some of the proactive measures to be considered here include harnessing of *aku si na chi* - natural and human endowments; pursuit of humanistic development with an emphasis on the dignity of man; and enactment and endorsement of a development-friendly policy. Before consideration of the above dimensions, it is pertinent to undertake a brief analysis of the basic concepts to be used in this research.

## Conceptual Clarification

### 1. Development

Development is an essential trend in the life of any nation; consequently, the search for it constitutes one of the fundamental aspirations of every nation. The French term that designates development is *développer*, which originates from both old and middle French word *desvelope*. In this sense, development is a combination of *des-* (undo) and *voloper, veloper, vloper* (to wrap, wrap up). Thus, from a literal perspective, development means to unfold, undo, unwrap, unfurl, uncover, divulge, disclose, reveal the meaning of, explain, and so on. Hence, Iroegbu (1994) defines development as "... the progressive unfolding of the inner potentialities of a given reality. It is to de-envelop, that is, to bring out to light: existential, functional, and epistemic, what was enveloped, folded or hidden" (p.81). This unfolding nature of development is apparent from the hermeneutics of the term from the Igbo language perspective. The Igbo concept "that denotes development is *imepe/mmepe*. Connotatively, *mmepe* can be used in five senses as in *imepe* (about to develop), *omepewala* (developing), *omepela* (is developed), *Omepechala* (it has developed), *omepere/imepere/mepere gawa* (continuous development)" (Nnaemedo 2017, p.293). These nuances in the concept development from the Igbo perspective show that development entails a transition from potentiality to actuality, the progression from 'yet' to 'not-yet,' from 'an-already' to 'the- expected.'

Development involves bringing into light, various aspects of a thing's life. In relation to man, it is a critical and responsible contextualization (downloading) and uploading of all human values for the integral well-being of a given society. It involves not just the natural endowments (values requiring upload) of the said society, acquired values (values borrowed from elsewhere or values in need of contextualization or

download) are involved. This creates room for the possibility of reciprocal or symbiotic relationship among societies (Nnaemedo 2017, p.296)

So, development is "...the integration of the various givens: natural, physical, acquired and human, of a people towards the full working out, permanently and cumulatively, of their being as persons, of their community, and ...their real productivity" (Iroegbu 1994, p.81). The content that de-envelops is the basis required to keep and to lubricate the entire system of a given set-up. A country is as developed as the degree of the manifestation (*apophantikos*) of the contents of her development agenda. Before the content becomes manifest, first they exist in potency to the actual expectation of the given system or country (Nnaemedo 2017, p.296)

Development is said to be integral when one considers it from a holistic purview. Integral development takes into consideration all aspects of human welfare. It attempts to create a congenial atmosphere for the entire factors that are necessary for the total well being of man as a member of the society. It visualizes human being as a composite of intrinsic or ontological unity. As well, it resists and rejects any attempt to dichotomize man and to restructure and interpret development from just a perspective. To this effect, economic affluence is an insufficient criterion of development. It is something short of integrality.

## 2. Retro-Proactive

The coinage retro-proactive is an amalgam of two English words: retroactive and proactive. The term that translates retroactive in French is *retroactif*. In Latin, it is rendered as *retroactus*; which is the past participle of *retroagere* signifying to 'drive back.' Webster Dictionary defines it in legal parlance. It conceives retroactive as a law "extending in scope or effect to a prior time or to conditions that existed or originated in the past; *especially*: made effective as of a date prior to enactment, promulgation, or imposition" (<http://www.merriam-webster.com/>). In psychology, retroactive refers to "descriptive of any event or stimulus or process that has an effect on the effects of events or stimuli or process that occurred previously" (<http://www.merriam-webster.com/>). Retroactive deals with events whose effects predate the time of its occurrence. It can also refer to laws whose application and effects predate the period of its formulation and promulgation. Then, the retroactive dimension, as used in this context, refers to measures of containing underdevelopment and promoting development, whose effects stem from a distant past before the time of the development issue under consideration.

The purpose of adopting such a measure is to deal with the developmental problems from the root in the manner of *sanatio in radice* - healing from the root. Such retroactive measures would date back into the past of the problem at issue, and through this historical excursus arrives at a more sustainable basis or foundation of the problem at stake.

Conversely, proactive refers to any occurrence or stimulus or procedure whose effects are consequently felt on future events or stimuli or processes. It is the opposite of retroactive. Under the proactive dimension, measures taken are supposed to have prohibitive effects on future events or processes or stimuli. The objective of a proactive dimension is to prevent the occurrence of conditions that may likely affect the expected upshot of a particular agenda. Therefore, proactive dimension, as indicated in this work, applies to measures whose effects gear towards protecting the set objective from the pitfalls of the previous schemes. Furthermore, as applied to integral African development, which constitutes the object of consideration in this context, proactive measures deal with approaches that are capable of safeguarding African development from all the crises that inform her present development status quo. The proactive dimension sets the goal towards which a given development schema pursues. Like a plumb line of its operation, a proactive dimension always endeavours to establish itself on firm foundations without which its regulatory role becomes a farce.

For African development to be integral, there has to be an integration of the retroactive measures and proactive measures. The resolution of any development crisis ought, to begin with, some distant past before the problem. Retro-proactive propounds and propagates the agenda and doctrine of curbing from the root. The present constitutes the fulcrum around which the entire train of retroactivity and proactively revolves. It implies that both are at the service of the present, which represents the development agenda at issue, and in this case, the much needed integral African development. The suitability of the retro-proactive dimension lies in its ability to harness both the past and future for the present. With the past, it ensures the establishment of a given development agenda on a pedestal of a solid foundation. Besides, with the future, it acts as a caveat against derailment into the developmental impasse of the past, thereby mortgaging the future of the humans for which developmental project is designed to be of service. Below is a critical exposition of some of these retro-proactive measures.

### **Detection of Development and Anti-Development Indicators of African Development**

The first aperture towards any authentic and integral African development is the identification of areas of strength and weakness of the previous development roadmap. It requires a historical survey of the agenda in question. Understandably, resort to historical inquest could be regarded by uninformed minds as an exercise in antiquated lumber of the chamber of history. Because such investigation unveils a repertoire of littered developmental plans abandoned and un-reconciled, resultantly, the objection to historical survey gathers more momentum. Nevertheless, while accepting the veracity of the position mentioned above, it is crucial to admit with Hartmann (1909) that "errors are always instructive" (p.119). Critical reflection on past errors helps in a better understanding of the present circumstances. They serve as a caution for future actions and inactions.

The concept of history plays a fundamental role in human thought. It invokes notions of human agency, change, the role of material circumstances in human affairs, and the putative meaning of historical events. It raises the possibility of "learning from history." And it suggests the possibility of better understanding ourselves in the present, by understanding the forces, choices, and circumstances that brought us to our current situation (Little, <<http://plato.stanford.edu>>).

Historical inquiry into the development schema of the past shields the development strategists from nose-diving into blind alleys with its attendant replication of the mistakes of their predecessors: a situation in which historical investigation would have saved the researcher. However, the investigation at issue is not a mere concatenation of un-coordinated and isolated previous development plans. It involves continuity and connection, action and reaction, thesis, and anti-thesis. A proper appreciation of any development plan is only within the historical context of the given schema; in relation to the development systems in vogue before it.

Through history, one gains "access to the full wealth of human experience" (Berdine 2013, No.7), or what Stearns calls "a storehouse of information about how people and societies behave...the laboratory of human experience" (<http://www.dpcdsb.org>). Unarguably, "a nation that forgets its past has no future" (Winston Churchill in Dominique 2001, p.146).

Our ignorance of the past is not the result of a lack of information, but of indifference ... it has been said that he who controls the past controls the future. Our view of history shapes the way we view the present, and therefore it dictates what answers we offer for existing problems .... If we will listen to what history has to say, we can come to a sound understanding of the past that will tell us much about the problems we now face. If we refuse to listen to history, we will find ourselves fabricating a past that reinforces our understanding of current problems (Crabtree, <http://msc.gutenberg.edu>).

History helps in understanding

the meaning and dynamics of the relationship between cause and effect in the overall development of human societies...for the diverse and rich social foundations of life, whether language, material culture, national identity, or the organization of work and politics, are the palpable inheritance of a resilient human past, and if humanity is to plot a realizable future, we need to understand through history how it has achieved its present (Nasson, <http://www.eolss.net>).

Summarily put historical survey is crucial as

It provides basic factual information about the background of our political institutions and about the values and problems that affect our social well-being. It also contributes to our capacity to use evidence, assess interpretations, and analyze change and continuities (Stearns, <http://www.dpcdsb.org>).

Of course, Nunn noted a good number of works of literature that deal with empirical analysis of the relationship between historical events and economic development today. These comprise Engerman & Sokoloff (1997 & 2002) - the significance of factor endowments and colonial rule for the subsequent fiscal development of colonies within the Americas; Acemoglu et al. (2001 & 2002) developed a research agenda that sought to understand better the historical origins of current institutions and their importance for long-term economic development; La Porta et al. (1997 & 1998); Banerjee & Iyer (2005) show the importance of colonial land revenue systems within India, and Nunn's (2008a) analysis showing that Africa's slave trade adversely affected subsequent development. The central fact established in this literature is that history matters (Nunn, [scholar.harvard.edu/](http://scholar.harvard.edu/)).

The impact of the historical survey is even better understood when one views history in the Hegelian sense. Hegel (1830) identified three kinds of history: "original history, reflective history and philosophical history" (p.537). He conceived the later as the thoughtful consideration of history (p.543). In this perspective, Hegel is concerned exclusively with the idea of spirit and regards the history of the world as the various manifestations of this absolute spirit. Hence he writes:

We have, in traversing the past ... only to do with what is present; for philosophy, as occupying itself with the True, has to do with the eternally present. Nothing in the past is lost for it, for the idea is ever-present; Spirit is immortal; with it, there is no past, no future, but an essential now (Hegel 1830, p.608).

The historical survey conceived in Hegelian logic is, all the more, a significant retro-proactive measure, as it endorses the teleological concept of history. Every aspect of history is necessary for a better insight into the development issues of African countries. When one looks at it from Hegelian binocular, the present developmental schema is only a manifestation of the past one and so looks towards it for direction and vice versa.

Through a historical survey, the inquirer can detect the causes, the stimuli, and the effects of the plan at issue. It is necessary to decode the cause in order to discover whether it persists and dovetails into the present development issues. The causative agents are not limited to proximate causes; it includes remote causes as well. Also, one can view causes from the perspective of human and non-human causes. Under human causes come the activities of colonial masters in their imperial quest to colonize and subdue Africa. If one effectively succeeded in subduing the causes by the measures applied in the past, then from these approaches, an investigator is better disposed and equipped to tackle the present issue, adopting the already available method. Granted that there may be variation in the efficiency of the method, perhaps due to some other factors either present or absent as at the time of the other developmental issue, still, the fact that there is an already certified solution is an added advantage. From this given, one can easily transcend to the desired developmental objective. However, where an identifiable cause of a particular developmental quagmire defies every possible method that was applied in the past, the investigator is dispensed from wasting his precious resources, embarking on the same issue through the

application of the failed approaches. Such makes room for the adoption of alternative measures that would subsequently ensure accelerated resolution of the development problems, and this saves the investigator from engaging in wild goose chase. The implication is that integral African development is not only resolved but, at the same time, swiftly achieved.

Besides, it is not enough to trace the cause of underdevelopment; the detection of anti-development stimuli is equally vital. The development inhibitors can, at times, play a similar role, just as the causes of underdevelopment, to the extent that they are often mistaken for causes of underdevelopment. Complication emanating from the problem caused by the mistaken identity of 'causes' for 'stimuli' at times makes a resolution of development issues difficult. Thus, for Africa to achieve integral development, there has to be a critical investigation into the various factors which set-induced varying development crisis in the past. The inquiry also involves isolation of the possible past anti-stimulants applied to annul the effect. Whereby it defies resolution in the past and persists in the present, such inquiry enables African development experts to know the best or alternative measure to adopt and apply to arrest the situation. Hence, armed with the criteria of stimuli for African underdevelopment, one observes that part of what stimulated African underdevelopment in the past was the issue of the various gift items offered by the white to some Africans. The present integral development agenda must of necessity deal with such tendencies in all manners of their subtle appearances: whether in the form of lone or aid packages from the World Bank, International Monetary Fund (I.M.F), Multinational machinations or the likes of Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP).

Worldview is another essential factor to consider in connection with the development and anti-development indicators of African development. "A people's worldview has been described as the complex of their beliefs and attitudes concerning the origin, the nature, structure, organization, and interaction of beings in the universe with particular reference to man" (Metu 1999, p.50). Their worldview heavily influences the relationship network of the people in a given society: both the way they interact with each other and the manner they relate with the cosmos. Worldview is the foundation of interaction in society because it contains the basic ideas that regulate various activities in a given community implicitly or explicitly. The ideas inform their actions and inactions in society and enable them to cope with life. It is also a factor in appreciating the culture, the social, political and even psychological problems of

a given society. In sum, people's worldview helps to understand their developmental schema in all aspects of their life. To understand a people's worldview "is to understand how they evaluate life, and a people's evaluation of life both temporal and non-temporal provides them with a charter for action, a guide to behaviour" (Uchendu 1965, p.11). Worldview also comprises the philosophy and the logic that binds the people together. Worldview is dynamic. It also possesses an individual character by the fact that each individual has his worldview. "It offers the individual basis for behaviour, thought, and conjectures. It is the ground and the justification for his actions..." (Nnaemedo 2013, p.123). However, an individual's worldview is informed by that of the community.

The individual finds the possibility of his being as an individual, not in himself but his community. The community is the cradle that gives him life and all that life entails. The community is the dynamic organism that provides an all-embracing stimulus for every citizen (Ebo 2004, pp.67-68).

In the development issues, a worldview can function as a causative agent, a stimulant, or an inhibitor to development. Worldview functions as a causative agent when it is fundamentally the reason for the developmental issues in a given set up. Most often, societies are developed alongside their worldview. Their development plan is always seen as an interplay of their various worldviews. In this connection, they esteem the developmental strides their worldview regards as noble and downplays the ones it views with contempt. So, the worldview, as a causative agent of development, serves as the foundation upon which the development schema of a given society is based. Nevertheless, when the worldview performs the role of a catalyst, it is said to be a stimulant to development. Similarly, in a situation where it impedes development, it is referred to as an inhibitor.

As a vital index of development, the previous worldview of African society should be taken into serious consideration to achieving any meaningful development of African countries. It implies that the African development strategists should focus on those aspects of African worldview that constitute a problem to African development and develop measures to overcome them. The aspects that promote African development ought also to be noted: together with those which inhibit it. As a retro-proactive measure, worldview looks beyond the past to the present and future. To achieve any significant and integral development, African development planners ought to retrospectively look at the

African worldviews yesterday and today to ascertain the extent it has either caused African underdevelopment/development or functions as stimulant/inhibitor.

Another issue that justifies historical inquiry is the need to ascertain the effects of previous development plans. To engage in any development strategy towards integral African development the development expert must consider the resultant effect a previous plan had in the past. The past success of a part schema is required to ascertain its legitimacy or illegitimacy. There is no need for adopting and applying an approach that is failure-bound. Such amounts to a waste of time and unnecessary circumlocution. In the past, specific plans were opted for and implemented. Some worked where others failed. To avoid repetition of the mistake of the past, an inquiry into a past developmental pattern is not only necessary but imperative. Specific developmental plans are of perennial value. They possess in themselves inherent values that are undiminished by the number of years that have elapsed between the time of their proposition and the contemporary epoch. They worked in the past and will equally succeed in the present and indeed in the future.

### **Harnessing and Diversification of *Aku si na Chi* - Natural and Human Endowments-**

The phrase "*aku si na chi*" is the Igbo designation for all human and natural endowments. The phrase is chosen in this context to illustrate that man's endowments are not limited to natural resources. The clarification is even more critical against the backdrop of the often under-emphasis of the concept to the detriment of human resources. This work contends that if Africa must cruise in the splendor of integral development, attention must be focused on the integral evaluation of all-natural and human endowments of the continent. Integral development requires holistic harnessing, galvanization and diversification of all the endowments of the African continent. The corresponding efforts made to hunt for, discover, and explore natural resources ought to be extended to investigation, discovery, and development of all human resources. "People are the real wealth of nations" (U N Human Development Report, 1). No development worth the name integral, where only an aspect of the nation's resources are harnessed and underscored.

Africa, as a continent, is richly blessed with abundant natural and human resources. There is hardly any African country that is not distinguished with one

natural resource or the other. Some even have multiple natural resources. The right attitude to adopt in such a situation is a careful and concerted effort to make effective use of the said resources for the betterment of the citizenry. The efficient application of these resources embodies responsible management of the resources so that they can benefit not just the present generation but also generations ahead. The wealth of any nation is not the sacred reserve of any particular epoch. It is a treasure bestowed on all generations of human beings in that country. Thus, it equals intergenerational injustice to appropriate and misuse a given resource to the detriment of subsequent generations. *Ipsa facto*, nations in harnessing their natural resources are to endeavour to accommodate future generations in their scheme of things. It calls for the need for diversification of the resources in order to preserve them for posterity.

Africa is thereby called not just to export these resources but to try to process them as well. The unemployment problem prevalent in Africa today is traceable to her inability to make the maximum use of these available resources. One ridiculous situation is where a nation that is ranked as one of the highest oil-producing nations lacks the very product for which she is highly rated. All these are due to the non-availability of the mechanisms for processing these resources. Now instead of engaging in "blame-game," it is high time Africa stopped and took a proactive measure by engaging in the act of refining these natural resources themselves. By so doing, she will not only export the unrefined aspect of the resources but the processed aspect as well. Correspondingly, the economic development of Africa is influenced positively.

Africa cannot, of course, properly embark on the production above process except at the instance and availability of a trained workforce. It implies that the harnessing of human endowments is equally essential. It so happens that the rush for specific natural resources blinds most people's eyes in this direction. Until Africa learns, to a great extent, to manage her natural resources through her human resources, she remains under-developed. "Human development implies that people must influence the process that shapes their lives" (U N Human Development Report, 2). What others can give Africa is just a part of their human resources; there are certain aspects that they cannot share. So it is left for Africa to engage in these aspects, and even more. The implication is that efforts ought to be made to train a workforce that will, in turn, run the various operations in the continent.

The highest resource a nation can invest in is human resources. AL-Qudah et al. (2014) also identify it as "the greatest resource of an organization" (p.84). The strength of a nation's economy is dependent on the availability of enhanced human resources. Besides, the quality of human resources is also the right index of the development of any nation; and this requires planning. Effective "planning attracts the right quality and quantity of people, develops the knowledge, skills, and abilities of employees, and retains employees within the organization" (AL-Qudah et al. 2014, p.84). A nation may be very rich in natural resources yet very poor and undeveloped in all ramifications due to a lack of necessary human resources. The availability of enhanced human resources is a guarantee of the possibility of authentic and integral human development. All countries that are considered advanced are so thanks to the quality of their human resources. Human resources constitute the think-tank and live-engine of every nation. Every sector of a nation's life requires one form of these resources or the other. The harmonious integration of these various aspects of human resources gives birth to integral development, and this requires human resources management which "is a crucial factor in the success of all organizations" (Rotich 2015, p.71).

The African continent remains underdeveloped until she learns to emphasize human resource development. The harnessing of human resources requires hunting and identification of various talents based on the principle of equality of all citizens devoid of selfishness, ethnicity, religion, nepotism and political affiliation. In training these talented citizens for practical use, the evaluation of talent takes cognizance of the uniqueness of all talents. Emphasis is placed not on the area of superiority or more economic advantage of a particular talent; instead, all talents are equally crucial for the life of a country. The integral development constitutes the nucleus of every talent development. It is the focal point of every other development agency of any nation that revolves. With harnessed human resources, a nation can easily transcend the portal of available resources to researching other alternatives. Variety is the spice of life. The various natural and human resources today can be put into other uses. Even what is considered as waste today can be put into alternative use, and the possibility of the above lies in well trained human resources. Procreative powers characterize human beings. One can fabricate from available resources and can re-fabricate from the already fabricated. Thus, the growth and development of the African economy and other aspects of development are dependent on human resources. The quest for African independence made possible through the actions of many pre-colonial African liberationists illustrates this fact. Africa remained a

victim of the colonial powers until the emergence of these liberationists, who, having been equipped to a considerable extent, challenged and wrestled with the West to obtain independence for African countries.

### **The Pursuit of Human Dignity**

The pursuit of human dignity is the *terminus a quo* (the point of departure) and the *terminus ad quem* (the point of arrival) of every developmental skill. Everyone man is an end in himself, and so a subject of respect and honour. Kant (1785) captures this idea thus: "Man and generally any rational being exists as an end in himself, not merely as a means to be arbitrarily used by this or that will, but in all his actions, whether they concern himself or other rational beings, must be always regarded at the same time as an end" (4:428, 185). He went further to advocate this as a paradigm for all human attitudes to one another thus: "so act as to treat humanity, whether in their person or in that of any other, in every case as an end withal, never as means only" (Kant 1785, 4:429, 185). This Kantian recommendation implies that no one should consider any human being as an object, particularly as a means to an end. Thus, "upholding 'human dignity' or the 'dignity of the species' without upholding the dignity of each one and of all is not to uphold dignity in its universal significance." (Iglesias 2001, p.13)

It is crucial to make a distinction between inherent dignity and moral dignity. Whereas the former is intrinsic, the later is extrinsic to the person's nature. "Moral dignity does not relate to the existence itself of persons, but to their behaviour and stems from their ability to freely choose good and to contribute beneficially to their own lives and the lives of others" (Andorno 2009, p.231). Conversely, the "dignity in which all humans are said to be equal is a characteristic that belongs permanently and inherently to every human as such" (Gewirth 1982, pp.27-28). So, "respect for human dignity flows from the recognition that all persons have unconditional worth, each having the capacity to determine his or her... moral destiny. Showing disrespect to human dignity could lead to the instrumentalization of the human person..." (<http://unesdoc.unesco.org>). The goal of development is to ensure that this dignity is protected and promoted, and all factors non-conducive to its existence disregarded and discarded. For any development agenda of Africa to be integral, it is proper to evaluate it vis-à-vis the index of human dignity. No matter how promising a developmental agenda might be, once it fails the litmus test of human dignity, one can regard it as a project not worth embracing. So, to promote human dignity, a developmental agenda should accommodate all

factors that make for integral human development. The agenda in question exists as a reconcilable part of a whole. There has to exist between it and other parts a centripetal, not centrifugal force, intrinsic not extrinsic unity, a mutual attraction.

Most often, a particular developmental agenda turns out to be counterfeit products due to the initial neglect of the index of human dignity as a measure of any development agenda. Certain implements produced by man, which today turned out to be an instrument of human destruction, are so because of the neglect of the necessity of human dignity as a criterion for evaluating development programs. As a result, "the interest and welfare of the human person prevail over the sole interest of science or society" (<http://unesdoc.unesco.org>).

Consideration of human dignity is not limited to the immediate need of a given society. The human development strategists should as well introspectively meander into a distant future to ascertain the possible significant implication of the project upon which they wish to embark. Resorting to such a dimension is justified by the need for human preservation. Human being's instinct for self-preservation is not limited to his/her existence here and now, somewhat to his/her continuous existence. To this effect, everybody endeavours to preserve not only oneself but one's species to avoid degenerating into extinction. It means that human being is culpable of intergenerational indifference whereby one fails in the function of preservation of humankind. Every development schedule to worth the name human development ought to be for life protection, nourishment, and prolongation. In this context, it is congruous to assert that human dignity is a fundamental criterion of all developments.

Dignity under consideration is not perceptual. What is at issue is the entire human person, comprising body and soul. Any development that tends to be integral and yet de-emphasizes any aspect of the human person is not worth the name. It involves the human person in its entirety. It must emphasize the well being of both the body and soul. Any of the aspects isolated from the other does not constitute a human person. In a situation where one emphasizes an aspect to the detriment of the other, the resultant effect is the emergence of a lopsided personality. Anybody who falls prey to this kind of development agenda is prone to have a distorted perception of reality. Often, such a person finds it difficult to strike a balance between the spiritual and temporal, physical, and

metaphysical. Thus, such a one is enmeshed in human dignity that is devoid of ontological foundation.

### **Enactment and Endorsement of Development-Friendly Policy**

A human being is a rational animal. Rationality distinguishes him/her from other animals. Reason enables one to enact rules that govern one's actions. In the words of Hayek (1998):

Man is as much a rule-following animal as a purpose-seeking one. And he is successful not because he knows why he ought to observe the rules which he does observe, or is even capable of stating all these rules in words, but because his thinking and acting are governed by rules which have by process of selection been evolved in the society in which he lives, and which are thus the product of the experience of generations... The problem of conducting himself successfully in a world only partially known to man was thus solved by adhering to rules which had served him well but which he did not and could not know to be right in the Cartesian sense (pp.11&18).

Without rules, human beings may derail and even behave worse than brutes. "For man, when perfected, is the best of animals, but, when separated from law and justice, he is the worst of all" (Aristotle's *Politics*, Book I, 1253a.31, 1130). When the rules are ethical, they direct man towards a good life; where they are obnoxious, they direct man wrongly. Consequently, the survival of any developmental template requires the enactment and endorsement of specific development-friendly policies by the government or the power that be. For Lynam (2006),

Policy is a statement of values, aims, and objectives that a government wishes to realise, together with strategies and instruments for achieving them. Public policy is commonly understood as the combination of basic decisions, laws, regulatory measures, commitments, courses of action, and funding priorities that are made, in the 'public's name, by those who hold or affect government positions of authority ([www.combatpoverty](http://www.combatpoverty)).

Therefore, to subsist as a viable instrument of integral development, the policy ought to be development- friendly. Such policy admits and sustains integral development as a proclivity for such development characterizes it.

Policymaking is crucial to creating the framework for developing the nation's wealth, employment creation, maintaining economic growth and

tax revenues (economic policy), either controlling inflation or stimulating growth by increasing or decreasing spending or taxes (fiscal policy), ensuring good health, education opportunities, equality, welfare for the population (social policy), governing, international relations (foreign policy) (Lynam 2006, *www.combatpoverty*).

Development flourishes amidst favourable government development policy. Good government policy is investor-friendly and considers the common good of the citizenry as the determinant factor. It seeks to develop all aspects of a human person, as it considers a human being as an entity distinguished by ontological unity. It supports a given developmental plan in its tripartite dimensions: past, present, and future perspectives. It looks at the past both as corrective of the past as well as for nourishment by its sound developmental heritages. Likewise, it embraces the present as its most proximate developmental locus. With the past and the present as rostrums, it thrusts itself into the future for further development, as development is a continuum. Integral African development is not possible amidst a government's development-friendly policy. Bad government policy dispels local and foreign investors and, as well, subjects the African continent to the trauma of brain-drain. It is no longer news that most of the best brains Africa has are now working in many parts of Europe.

### **Conclusion**

The quest for authentic African development is a genuine one. Various strategies employed in this direction are also laudable. Nevertheless, this work insists that they are not sufficient. Hence it advocates a retro-proactive measure as an alternative. Retro-pro-activity involves retrospection and introspection. It looks to the past to avoid its mistakes. Through its critical appraisal of what went before, this new development template guarantees African advancement strategists, a reliable developmental basis. It further rescues them from the pitiable and cumbersome web of perceiving discourse on African development as an exercise in lamentation: a sheer dirge on the ills of colonialism, a mere inquest into the domain of regret, bitterness, and rancor. Instead, the past constitutes a matrix for a better future. It is looked at optimistically, as a guide for a profound future. One then sees the errors of the past, no longer as stumbling blocks but rather as a stepping stone for a renascent and transformed Africa. Thus, a critical quest for integral African development is now conceived as a rational and conscious effort to deconstruct the past for a better constructed and reconstructed African continent. The entire rational superstructure is

founded on the principle of dignity of man, exploration and effective utilization of *aku si na chi* (human and natural resources), and enactment and endorsement of government's development-friendly policy.

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