



LESSONS FROM WAKANDA: Pan-Africanism as the antidote to robotisation

By Horace G. Campbell



In May 2013, the African Union launched Agenda 2063, a blueprint for an integrated, emancipated, prosperous and peaceful Africa. There was a renewed commitment to work for the full unification of Africa, with a common currency from one common bank of issue, a continental communication system, a common foreign policy and a common defence system featuring the African high command.

Five years later, Hollywood came out with a fictional story of a bountiful, independent African state called Wakanda in the film *Black Panther*. Wakanda was described as the most scientifically and technologically advanced civilisation in the world — not to mention the wealthiest.

It is not a coincidence that there is a straight line between the aspirations of the Global African Family, as expressed in Agenda 2063, and the depiction of a technologically advanced Africa. From the era of the writings of C. L. R James on the majesty of the Haitian Revolution to the current struggle for the dignity of black lives, the liberation and unification of Africa has always been presented as the basis for Pan-Africanism.

Examining the meaning of Pan-Africanism in the current context of massive technological change requires a new language and a new orientation - an orientation that breaks away from the stultifying

concepts embraced by a class of leaders who have no loyalty to Africa and who seek to turn citizens into tribal nanobots without a spiritual core.

We are reminded that in this era of artificial intelligence (AI) the future of humanity is the struggle between humans that control machines and machines that control humans. The late Stephen Hawkins observed that artificial intelligence can be the worst event in the history of civilisation. He [remarked](#) that “unless we learn how to prepare for, and avoid, the potential risks, AI could be the worst event in the history of our civilisation. It brings dangers, like powerful autonomous weapons, or new ways for the few to oppress the many. It could bring great disruption to our economy.”

Examining the meaning of Pan-Africanism in the current context of massive technological change requires a new language and a new orientation – an orientation that breaks away from the stultifying concepts embraced by a class of leaders who have no loyalty to Africa and who seek to turn citizens into tribal nanobots without a spiritual core.

The exact meaning of life and the future of life forms are now new issues for humans in the era of synthetic life and [technological singularity](#). In 2010, the human genome scientist J. Craig Venter [reported](#) that he had taken another step in his quest to create synthetic life, by synthesising an entire bacterial genome and using it to take over a cell. Scientists called this breakthrough a defining moment in the history of biology and biotechnology but the bioethical questions about who will have control over life brings back the debates on technological singularity when concerned citizens objected to those scientists who believed that they could play God. Pan-Africanist and those who want peace throughout the world have genuine reasons for paying attention to these scientific breakthroughs.

In this essay, I am reaching out to the youth of Africa to turn Wakanda from fiction to reality. Ta-Nehisi Coates, who wrote the book *Between the World and Me* for his son, has gone on to be one of the writers for the comic strip *The Black Panther*. In this way he was seeking to inspire his son that there was a future beyond the prison-military-financial-information complex and the hacking of the human brain by the technology corporations. This is important for all youth, but especially youth in East Africa, where the psychological warfare thrust of Empire has intensified efforts to shape the thoughts, feelings and actions of people. For example, we now know from the recent hearings in the US Congress and from the [global activities of Cambridge Analytica](#), that there are technology firms that are programming people, literally hacking into the brains of the youth. Empire and its local allies are seeking to formalise this brain hacking in Africa into a university town in Kenya called Konza Technological City. Was it an accident that Mark Zuckerberg of Facebook visited Kenya and Nigeria?

Early phase of Pan-Africanism and opposition to being treated like robots

The first Pan-Africanists were opposed to the robotics of yesterday when the forms of enslavement on the plantations in the Americas treated Africans like “machines to make money”. The book by Edward Baptist, *The Half Has Never Been Told: Slavery and the Making of American Capitalism*, has documented this phase of the dehumanisation of the African person. This book elaborated on how Africans were treated like machines to enable American society to accumulate immense amounts of wealth to become the preeminent industrial power that it is today. The availability of cheap land and the shortage of labour led to a ruthless system of exploitation called the “pushing system” that enslaved people and which Baptist aptly describes as “innovation in violence”.

It was the vibrant Pan-Africanism at the grassroots that precipitated the rebellions against that form of robotisation. Bonds had been forged on the slave ships where that conception of freedom transcended the individual. It was then that the consciousness was cemented that no black person could be free until Africa was liberated. Herein lay the origins of the modern Pan-African movement. In the throes of the independence struggles, Kwame Nkrumah understood that the liberation of individual states was not enough; Africa had to be united to escape external economic domination.

Africa had been partitioned at the 1885 Berlin Conference on the grounds that Africans could not rule themselves and that they were heathens who needed to be civilised. Walter Rodney, in his book *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa*, argued that technological changes were turned to imperial purposes. Whether it was transportation technology, communications technology, military technology or the latest digital advances, human inventions changed the world and transformed life on Earth while at the same time transforming the power relations between societies. From partitioning, colonial plunder, apartheid and occupation, there were many borders instituted in Africa, including racial, ethnic, religious, territorial and sexual borders.

This partitioning and domination was executed through superior military technology (especially the Maxim gun) and by creating divisions. The small intelligentsia in the Global African Family were the main spokespersons for the ideas of African dignity and self-determination. At the popular level, the opposition to domination took cultural and religious forms, such as the rise of the Rastafari and Kimbango movements, Mourides and other social movements, such as the Garvey movement. African Scholars such as W.E. B DuBois convened international meetings that were called Pan-African Congresses that sought to bring together those with the agenda to liberate Africa from colonialism and to end [lynching and segregation in the United States](#). There were five congresses between 1900 and 1945. The 1945 meeting brought together leaders such as Kwame Nkrumah, Amy Jacques Garvey, George Padmore, W.E.B. Dubois, Jomo Kenyatta and Ras Makonnen.

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Pan-Africanism from below was manifest in the consciousness of the ordinary Africans on both sides of the Atlantic. This brand of Pan-Africanism inspired the largest mass movement of the century on both sides of the Atlantic in the form of the Universal Negro Improvement Association (UNIA). Garveyism took root in the United States where the ideas of African vindication and redemption found a fertile base in a society that was struggling against the Ku Klux Klan and those extremist groups that made lynching a Saturday night outing. The UNIA had branches in all parts of the world, with its newspaper, the *Negro World*, acting as the voice of the Pan-African movement in the period of the Harlem Renaissance. The ambitious projects for the liberation of Africa excited ordinary workers and sufferers and branches of the UNIA were to be found in the USA, the Caribbean, South America, Europe and Africa. At its height, the UNIA had more than two million members. Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana was among the most prominent Pan-African activist thinkers and leaders who called on Africans to unite so that they could be free.

In the current period when white racism is growing in Europe and North America, especially with the election of Donald Trump in the USA and the emergence of racist and neo-Nazi groups all across Europe, it is worth remembering that the present currency wars, trade wars and actual interventions of the last Depression had also paved the way for the global imperialist 1939-1945 war. The rise of

fascism internationally, (in particular, the coming to power of General Franco, Benito Mussolini, Antonio Salazar and Adolph Hitler) and the idea of white superiority posed a major challenge for all of humanity.

The Italian invasion of Abyssinia in 1935 was another moment when the Pan-African consciousness of Africans rose to become a force in international politics. The failure of the League of Nations to respond to the military atrocities of the Italians had led Africans to warn of the dangers of fascism and world war. In this sense, the global Pan-African movement was a major inspiration for those fighting against fascism in Spain, Portugal, Germany and Italy.

The idea of Ethiopianism, a variant of Pan-Africanism, had been widely held among Christianised Africans during the 19th century. Taking the biblical references to Ethiopia to be the basis for the rallying point around the independence of Africa, Ethiopianism represented a manifestation of spiritual and cultural autonomy for Pan-Africanists. In this period of fascism and war, Pan-African scholars, such as W.E B DuBois, George Padmore, C.L. R. James and Aime Cesaire, articulated the ideas of liberation and redemption. In the French-speaking territories, the idea of Negritude was another variant of Pan-Africanism.

The goals of liberation and emancipation at that moment were associated with the capture of state power and ending colonial rule. However, at the end of apartheid, the question of emancipation was understood to mean much more than seeking the “political kingdom”. African women from the grassroots are acting as a force to assert the humanity of African peoples and to redefine the culture of emancipation and liberation. It is, therefore, not by accident that transgender women are at the forefront of the struggles for black lives while the more backward men seek to kidnap African women and return them to enslavement à la Boko Haram.

Women at the grassroots are calling on intellectuals to grasp the fact that the culture of capitalism is wrapped in the attendant class and gendered structures along with racial and sexual oppression. Long before the prominence of the #Me Too Movement, black women were at the forefront of the fight for the integrity of the body. They had demanded that they will No Longer Be Controlled, Manipulated, or Abused

More significantly, these women are transcending the individualistic, racial and masculinist conceptions of Pan-Africanism and African unity. It is for this reason that the Pan-African revolutionary Micere Mugo proclaimed that Pan-Africanism was about the lived experience of the grassroots. She observed that “though not cited in intellectual discourses that have so far come to be the literary cannon on Pan-Africanism, in their activism, as well as participation, women were and have always been the heart of Pan-Africanism’s essence, or if you like, substance. Ordinary people, or the masses, including the majority of African women, have been the key keepers or carriers of this essence.”

Ubuntu confronts individualism, ethnic manipulation and private accumulation

The current convergence of multiple crises (economic, religious, environmental, technological and political) coincides with an increasing politicisation of ethnicity and regionalism. Liberal philosophies of governance have created the neoliberal nightmare where oligarchs and dynasties maintain political and economic power while dividing the mass of producers into “tribal”, regional and religious groups.

The philosophical basis for Pan-African liberation challenges the “[ideology of tribalism](#)” and the materialistic conception of life, along with the masculinisation of the political spaces. In South Africa, for instance, the process of enrichment of a few has been accompanied by the politicisation of

ethnicity. Leaders who benefitted from Pan-African solidarity during the struggle against apartheid are now promoting ethnic identification while supporting xenophobia against other Africans.

Currently, the yardstick of profit has become the only viable measure of the good life, while the commitment to Pan-African solidarity and opposition to imperialism are viewed by many politicians and their publics as either a hindrance to the goals of a market-driven society or alibis for gross theft and corresponding conspicuous consumption. Leaders beg for aid while stealing billions and lodging the loot in foreign bank accounts. They starve schools and hospitals of laboratories while purchasing outdated military equipment. At the level of communications technology and computer security, they are completely reliant on the enemies of Africa.

The crude materialism of Western “modernity” emanated from an understanding of the world where “rational” man was entrusted with the divine mission to rule non-whites because of the “will of God”. War and conquest were justified in linear terms of progress, from savagery to civilisation. Material goods, industrialisation, technological innovation and factories were presented as manifestations of God’s blessings for Europe and North America. Hence the spectacle of the religious spaces becoming the meeting place for deals and political campaigns.

The definition of human was determined by the extent to which these humans believed that human worth was based on accumulation of material wealth, wealth that was the basis for “progress”. Humans who did not internalise this understanding of the accumulation of wealth (a form of accumulation that took perverse forms when it matured into the capitalist mode of production) were considered backward and primitive. On the eugenic scale of Western modernity, Africans are still considered backward and primitive.

Western European approaches to life were considered “scientific” and hence objective and neutral. Classical liberalism emerged in a period when new forms of property in Europe replaced feudal ideas of privilege. Enlightenment thinking about property rights, the oppression of women, domination over nature, domination over non-whites and the universal right to domination became the legitimating idea for modes of economic organisation that engendered a tremendous boost in the production of goods. This unprecedented production of goods was worshipped to the point where commodity fetishism was like a new religion. It was in the spirit of this religion that religious institutions participated in the slave trade and the accumulation of vast amounts of wealth and military power. Today, commodity fetishism is exhibited by so-called “prosperity churches” whose evangelical mission is to make people believe that becoming rich is the Christian thing to do, and that material things are a blessing from Jesus. This religion also guides the new digital companies that are involved in psychological warfare against humans.

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Spirituality and commodities [were conflated](#) to lay the basis for a robotic society where cloning and bioengineered creatures (cyborgs) are the promise of the future. This is the future of the bioeconomy where synthetic life will be engineered in laboratories and scientists assign themselves the right to patent life forms. AI is now being refined in Silicon Valley to ensure the dominance of

white supremacists in the international political system

According to a study by the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) more than a decade ago, in the bioeconomy industrial production moves from the use of fossil and mineral resources (coal, petroleum and natural gas) toward living biological raw materials, primarily biomass plant matter, such as woodchips, agricultural plants and algae. The bioeconomy is associated with wider application of modern biotechnologies in areas such as agriculture, medicine and industry. It was the late Calestous Juma who argued that African progressive scientists hold the key to ensuring that Africa leapfrogs the old forms of industrialisation in this the era of the digital revolution. Juma had noted that it is not necessary to build new paths of industrialisation in the bioeconomy based on past production of primary products; as the bioeconomy matures, the convergence of nanotechnology, information technology, biotechnology, robotics and cognitive sciences will provide a new basis for the post-industrial society.

African languages hold some of the key signposts of the refinement of cognitive technologies that are part of the assemblage of converging technologies (nanotechnology, information technology, biotechnology and robotics). For a short moment, the National Science Foundation of the USA and its scientists in California had mooted a project called the Human Cognome project to harness the understanding of cognitive psychology. According to the scientists who were promoting this enterprise, the [Human Cognome Project](#) had planned to span various scientific fields, including neuroscience, cognitive science, artificial intelligence and psychology. Africa as the fountain of homo sapiens was a key area of interest as were the early African languages.

In conjunction with this project was the Human Genographic project. Sponsored by the IBM Corporation and the National Geographic Society, its [stated objective](#) was to analyse more than 100,000 DNA samples collected from indigenous peoples. Given that the African peoples of East Africa count as the most original peoples of the human species, the peoples of East Africa were of particular interest for this Human Genographic project. Bioanthropologists were deployed to tap into the African knowledge of the oldest peoples of the planet who are still alive in East Africa.

There is now an effort to reverse-engineer the human brain by studying both its structure and function in order to fully understand mental processes, also known as cognition. The Human Genographic project has many parallels to [the Human Genome Project](#). A better understanding of the cognome can illuminate how the brain perceives and responds to the environment, thereby augmenting artificial intelligence technology. It also has many important implications for the study of disease progression by observing changes in cognition to localised damage. A map of the cognome promises to increase mechanistic understandings of the brain. To further this research, bioanthropologists have tapped into the cell lines of the Hadza, the Iraqw, the Maasai, the Samburu, Sandawe, Shilook, Nuer, Turkana Dinka and San Peoples. These peoples are being studied to learn how to maximise AI capabilities to programme robots.

Pan-African unity and the quantum leap

The integration between the cognitive skills of Africans and the new thrust for a different kind of economic organisation will form the foundation for the qualitative leap in the new mode of economic organisation that will envelop Africa in the short and medium terms.

The world has changed dramatically during the past fifty years of the Pan-African project, presenting more complex possibilities for social and economic transformation. Wakanda gave one indication of what is possible when African knowledge systems, along with the principles of social collectivism, are unleashed for the good of society. One could see that the Wakanda people's understanding of their links to their ancestors and to their totems prevented the complete robotisation of their society.

One can also see this in the movie trilogy *The Matrix*, where African oracles were able to separate real humans from cyborgs. It was less than twenty years ago when these science fiction images from Hollywood promised a future where information technologies would reign supreme and shape the lives and affairs of societies, including the lives and the very existence of individuals. Neoliberal futurists, such as Ray Kurzweil, who wrote the book [The Singularity is Near](#), saw this as the era when humans would transcend biology. Kurzweil actually gave the date of 2045 when this new era of singularity would begin.

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Bill Joy, in his now famous article in *Wired* magazine, "[Why the Future Doesn't Need Us](#)", warned of the dangers of the converging technologies. He argued that the new computer technologies provide a much greater danger to humanity than any technology before has ever presented. Stephen Hawkins sounded the same warning when he noted that the era of artificial intelligence could be "[the worst event in the history of civilisation.](#)"

The African spirit, [cognitive skills and ideation system](#) provide a powerful antidote to the projections of the era of singularity. Organised within a transformed educational system where [fractal mathematics are taught with fractal optimism](#), the transformation of Africa would break the distinction between the fiction and reality of Wakanda.

Students in the struggle for the decolonisation of knowledge are at the forefront of the Pan-African project to use African languages in higher education. The Kenyan writers Micere Mugo and Ngugi wa Thiong'o have been at the forefront of the promotion of the decolonisation of the medium of education. Ngugi has been resolute in his assertion that the decolonisation of the mind is the contemporary form of Pan-Africanism and the future relies on Africans empowering themselves with African culture, language and knowledge. This author has not only endorsed the importance of African languages, but also the tremendous possibilities that await technological change when African institutions of higher learning embrace fractal geometry and seek to link this knowledge of African fractals to the curriculum.

Few political pundits took seriously the comment made by Mark Zuckerberg of Facebook in 2016 that "Africa will build the future". The efforts of Zuckerberg and Facebook to launch a special satellite for Third World countries designed to bring web connectivity to areas of the world with limited Internet access may seem altruistic, but forward planners in Silicon Valley already understand the dynamic socio-economic changes that will occur when African innovators move to new ventures beyond mobile money. Chris Msando, the computer expert and electoral official who was murdered prior to the Kenya's elections last year, pointed to a future where computer savvy Africans would work to ensure real democratic processes. The same infrastructure of Cambridge Analytica that is now known for brain hacking collaborated in Africa with the same forces that eliminated Msando.

In this changing socio-economic environment of the digital present, where information is controlled to shape perceptions, the African people at home and abroad are faced with new powerful economic forces that are reshaping the global landscape, reconfiguring existing organisations/ institutions and creating new ones. In the midst of this change, the institutions of the US military and finance, along with the other NATO powers, promote worn-out ideas that label African people and societies as

failing and failed societies. The US President exceeded this academic discourse by labelling African states as “shithole” countries at a time when the US Africa Command was extending its operations in Africa in the so-called War on Terror. In order not to be displaced by the USA, the government of France has intensified its activities in Africa, especially now that the Sahel has been involved in a duplicitous war against terrorists even while manipulating groups such as the Tuaregs after the [NATO invasion and destruction of Libya](#).

It is in countries such as Niger and Mali where there is the explicit elaboration of US and French military operations to counter what is deemed to be Chinese influence in Africa. The removal of Mamadou Tandja from the presidency of Niger in 2010 was directly linked to his overtures to China. The emergence of the Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa (BRICS) formation has intensified the mischief of France and the European Union, complicating the old rivalries between North America and Europe in Africa. As recent as 2013, the Senate of France outlined a 500-page document to spell out France’s military strategy in the area that was determined to be “Europe’s neighbourhood”, which includes the zone “from the Sahel to Mauritania to the Horn of Africa and other regions in Africa”.

President Sarkozy had been most explicit in the need to topple the Libyan leader Muammar Gaddafi in order to promote the military influence of France in Africa. The destruction of Libya and the psychological warfare against Africans in the form of the war against terror are new aspects of the military management of the international system. It was not by accident that NATO intervened in Libya because that country had committed itself to anchoring an African currency. But as the mythical Wakanda state alerted many, there are umbilical cords that link the youth in Africa to the youth in Brazil, the USA and Europe.

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African unification, peace and investments in humans

What has been downplayed in the forecasts and projections about international realignments has been the role of militarism and warfare in the re-division of the world. Wars and rumours of war in the Persian Gulf and in the Korean peninsula now dominate the international news. War speeds up the processes of transformation and regression.

In the past, such re-divisions have been violent. From 1885 to the present the militarisation of society, there has been a negative integration of Africa into the international system. The promise of the era of using artificial intelligence for mass surveillance and US drone warfare has now become a reality. Africans will have to be vigilant to ensure that the present warfare in Yemen and Syria, along with the tussles between Saudi Arabia and Iran, does not engulf Africa and Africans.

Forward planning by Western military strategists for a confrontation with China in Africa brings to the fore the preoccupation with peace and reconstruction as one of the central pillars of African unification. For this reason, the African Union has called for the silencing of guns by 2020. It should also have added the demilitarisation of digital technologies.

It was fifty years ago when the late Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. admonished peace activists to rise

above robotisation. In the speech "[Beyond Vietnam](#)" he said, "I'm convinced that if we are to get on the right side of the world revolution, we as a nation must undergo a radical revolution of values. We must rapidly begin the shift from a thing-oriented society to a person-oriented society. When machines and computers, profit motives and property rights are considered more important than people, the giant triplets of racism, militarism and economic exploitation are incapable of being conquered... A nation that continues year after year to spend more money on military defence than on programs of social uplift is approaching spiritual death."

Ubuntu reparative justice and the escape from spiritual death

Currently the African people are caught in a revolutionary moment, a moment when political institutions and the law are all caught in the tumult. Kenya, Ethiopia and Egypt are examples of societies that exhibit manifestations of this tumult, witnessed by massive social resistance from below, seismic shifts in economic relations, political alliances and military relations and transitional power swings.

Old formulas for political legitimation no longer suborn the mass of sufferers. Instead the people are seeking to unearth a radical Pan-African vision of the future, and that is a vision of a shared humanity where all the citizens of the planet are able to live in peace. This vision is grounded in the moral ethic of sharing and social collectivism that is enshrined in the philosophy of Ubuntu.

This philosophy is one of the antidotes to spiritual death. It is the revolutionary philosophy that celebrates reparations, forgiveness, love and reconciliation. The Caribbean Pan-Africanists are reminding the youth in Africa that there can be no struggle for Pan-African freedom without reparative justice.

Currently, the policy makers at the African Union are designating those in the Global African Family (called diaspora) outside of the continent as constituting a sixth region. However, they envisage collaboration in the form of capturing billions of dollars in remittances. Yet African leaders are silent when African-American youth, such as Trayvon Martin, are shot to death, but these leaders will travel to Paris to march with French leaders when a few French citizens die in extremist attacks.

The Caribbean Reparations Commission, as a frontline Pan-African formation, is calling on African youth to understand the demands of reparations so that there is an end to the constant babble on sustainable development goals (SDGs). Imperial institutions fear the Agenda 2063, so every week there are meetings so that African policy makers are focused on 2030 instead of working to realise the long-term goals of Pan-African collaboration.

As far back as the period of the struggles for independence, the peoples of Africa called on Africa to speak with one voice. In the book [Africa Must Unite](#), Nkrumah wrote: "A United States of Africa must strengthen our influence on the international scene, as all Africa will speak with one voice... We must stand firmly together against the imperialist forces... We need the strength of our combined numbers and resources to protect ourselves from the very positive dangers of returning colonialism in disguised forms." Nkrumah saw that even in the moment of independence, freedom could not be guaranteed unless the African people were united.

As they remind themselves about the struggles against robotisation in the 21st century, Pan-Africanists are also conscious of the reality that the goal of decolonisation is not complete. There are still the outstanding issues of Western Sahara, Diego Garcia, sections of the Comoros, the islands of Puerto Rico, Martinique, Guadeloupe as well as the other colonial outposts in the Caribbean. The discussions on Pan-Africanism and liberation are seeking to bring back that energy and spirit in a moment of crisis so that the technological revolution and the solar revolution can be harnessed for

the well-being of the majority and a changed world economy instead of for the profitability of companies such as Space X, Facebook, Google and Amazon.

The revitalisation of Africans at home and abroad

The revitalisation of Pan-African confidence has been underlined by four interconnected processes:

1. The military defeat of the apartheid army at Cuito Cuanavale in 1988
2. The release of Nelson Mandela, unbanning of the liberation movements and the independence of Namibia.
3. The holding of the World Conference against Racism in Durban in 2001 and the declaration that slavery constituted a crime against humanity.
4. The formation of the African Union and the elaboration of the plans for Agenda 2063.

The major limitation of this revitalisation process is the fact that those intellectuals schooled in Eurocentric ideas are still at the helm of political power. Youth rose up in Egypt and Tunisia to make a break with their repressive leaders, but imperialism supported the militarists while those who constituted the majority at the African Union refused to pay their dues and proposed Western neoliberal views of development in the so called New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD).

Global warming, the drying up of Lake Chad, Ebola and Western cyber control over Africa dictate that our youth must think beyond petty differences based on nationality, ethnicity, religion, race or sexual orientation. Aspiring politicians exploit the insecurities generated by structural adjustment to create the scare of millions of illegal immigrants moving across borders. Even while making declarations at the African Union and energetically supporting NEPAD, politicians in many parts of Africa (especially South Africa) whip up xenophobia and hinder the free movement of persons by creating restrictive immigration policies and immigration procedures that violate the basic human rights of those Africans who believe that Africa is for the Africans. Thus, even at the moment when the [Continental Free Trade Area treaty](#) was signed in March 2018 to create the world's largest single market, the leadership continue to ship their money to foreign bank accounts and hinder the creation of a common currency in Africa. This is why the talk about Pan-African economic relations lags behind the reality that forty years ago there was a common currency in East Africa.

We need to clarify the differences between the project of unity as inscribed within the present political leadership and the thoroughgoing push for freedom from those who crave a new vision of citizenship. We will agree with Nkrumah that Africa needs a new kind of citizen. Our task is to draw from the positive memories while outlining the challenges in the present period.

This author has identified key areas of transformation with a focus on the democratisation of access to water resources and the re-engineering of the African landscape to unify the African people. It is a transformation where the working people "who have eyes and ears" will choose to look back in order to look forward. Looking back draws on the memories of transformative moments of African liberation and draws inspiration from these moments. The moment of Haiti's independence as well as the rapid decolonisation period between 1956 and 1965 were two such moments when the explosive spread of the culture of independence temporarily silenced those who wanted to colonise Africa for another one hundred years. Kwame Nkrumah was the leader of Ghana at that transformative moment. We need to clarify the differences between the project of unity as inscribed within the present political leadership and the thoroughgoing push for freedom from those who

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Bob Marley, the cultural leader, was a notable Pan-African spokesperson of 20th century who wanted to transcend racial divisions with a universal message of African unity, love, peace and human emancipation. His call for emancipation from mental slavery remains a message to the youth who are now exposed to the brain-hacking of the digital companies controlled by billionaire Africans and non-Africans alike.

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