

African Renaissance

1.7. African Renaissance

Following Thabo Mbeki's speech in 1996, a few African strategists and intellectuals held consultations with a view to formulating pragmatic operational strategies for mobilizing and networking Africa's human resources in terms of intellectual wealth and enterprise for an Africa Renaissance in the third millennium. Having encountered European Renaissance, how much had Africans learn, copy or duplicate from it. No doubt, there is a strong yearning for change in Africa. To give this yearning for change a chance requires the construction of a real foundation in the African societies that will show why a change is not only possible but necessary.

Africans need to develop a moral sense of value. Security and the wellbeing of her citizens are a moral value that the people and governments of the United States of America are not prepared to toy with. The US is prepared to mobilize the entire resources of the country to rescue just one American citizen whose life is endangered or in jeopardy in any part of the world. In this way, the value and the dignity of every American citizen continued to rise when compared with other nations of the world. Similarly, and using the Islamic religion as a rallying point, the people and governments of the Middle East and the Asian world consider any attack against any Muslim as an affront against Islam as a religion. Africans, as Africans, need to develop a rallying strategy, something like "Africa, the Future Land of Peace."

The history of Africa in the last 200 years will reveal that through slavery, military conquests, and foreign occupation, diseases and moral rectitude, the African citizen hardly possess much dignity as a human being. The African citizen has been used and misused, captured and recaptured, and the status of the average African though pathetic 200 years ago, is now worst than it used to be. For Africans to emerge into a true people, its leadership must be prepared to forge a moral sense of value around which all Africans could be rallied. I know one such rallying point. It is "Africa, the Future Land of Peace."

a. Rationale

The first question to ask ourselves is

- "Is an African Renaissance possible?"
- What is the role that national governments, regional governments, religious movements, institutions of learning, politicians, the senior citizens, and most importantly, the youth of Africa prepared to play in bringing about an African Renaissance?
- The youth of Africa, for which this course is being designed need to know that no matter how much foreign civilization is presented to them; Africa has to develop her own civilization.
- The grayed haired Africans are fighting for political positions and

are killing and wasting the youth in the process. The youth of Africa should learn to liberate itself otherwise he would be crushed and destroyed.

b. Aim

The aim of this course is to prepare the youth of Africa to face challenges of change. Inspirations for this change will be found mostly from the struggle for independence that occupied the minds of young Africans in the first and second quarters of the 20th century; however the efforts will be directed at liberating Africa from itself and lifting her out of the decadence inflicted upon it by tribal hatred, civil wars, diseases and decay.

c. Objectives

- Describe the theory of change that could be understood and embraced by the youth. The students will be encouraged to define what they understand by change and how they hope to achieve it.

- Forge a moral sense of value and encourage the youth to embrace it and internalize it as the rallying point for all future endeavors.

- Investigate the deplorable conditions of children of the continent of Africa. Since the students themselves are just few years away from childhood, memories of their childhood difficulties will still be fresh, and since they would soon become parents in a few years time, the course will bring the reality of the issues home to the students and serve as a catalyst for the change of attitude toward the plight of African children.

- Examine the plight of the youth in Africa, by investigating the past, the present and the future of young Africans. The course will reflect on youth and militarism in contemporary Africa, examine the problems and aspirations of the youth and evaluate the effect that HIV/AIDS is having on the youth population in Africa.

- Discuss the positive and negative attitudes of the youth towards government established and constituted orders and authorities. Encourage the African youth to make his voice heard through several youth movements, religion, vocations and non-violence.

- Emphasis will be placed on factors that could promote the African Renaissance as recommended by Okumu as follows:
 - Political, economic, and social inclusion
 - Health in the positive sense of well-being in body, mind, and spirit, and with sound nutritional status
 - Equal opportunity to education, healthcare, participation in political and economic decision making

- Justice that not only redresses but rebuilds broken relationships
 - Freedom from fear of domination, oppression, repression, discrimination, hunger and malnutrition
 - Fairness in the distribution of property and in access to jobs in both the public and private sectors
 - Cultural expression through which the African societies will demonstrate their tribal values through literature, music, art, and drama.
- Introduction to environmental peace by encouraging Africans of all sorts of life to treat the environment with more respect. Environmental degradation could have adverse psychological effect on the peace of mind and health of the people. An environment that is ecologically peaceful and clean of all forms of pollutions, natural, human and industrial, is more likely to enhance the peace of the people.

d. Audience

By design, this is a 400 level course. It is expected to be one of the functional knowledge with which the student of Africa Peace will arm himself or herself for impact-making in the community wherever they serve.

e. Teaching Approach

Though this course will be impromptu and brain storming in nature, the motive would not just be to speculate or generate abstract thoughts. True case studies about events of day-to-day experiences relating to political, economic, education and the civil societies will be brought to the classrooms. Each class session will be journalized and outcomes of deliberation documented as communiqués with a view to making them own these as their original thoughts and theories.

f. Learning Resources

To obtain sufficient learning resources for this course, both faculty and students will have to work together. Some contemporary books will be recommended, a tentative list of which is shown below. Links will be made to other institution of learning for learning resources, notably, the Institute of African Renaissance in South Africa. If possible course materials will be obtained directly from that institution.