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Towards a Rational Kingdom in Africa: Knowledge, Critical Rationality and Development in a Twenty-First Century African Cultural Context

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Abstract: This paper seeks to locate the kind of knowledge that is relevant for African development in the twenty-first century African cultural context and to propose the paradigm for achieving such knowledge. To do this, it advances the view that the concept of twenty-first century in an African context must be located with the colonial and post-colonial challenges of the African world and applied to serve the African demand. Anchored on this position, the paper outlines and critiques the wrong assumption on which modern state project was anchored in post-colonial Africa and its development dividend to suggest that this is an outcome of a wrong knowledge design that is foundational to the state project and which the project did not address. It proposes a shift in the knowledge paradigm in Africa and suggests critical self-consciousness as a more desirable knowledge design for Africa. It applies the term ‘rational kingdom’ (defined as a community of reason marked by critical conceptual self-awareness driven by innovation and constructivism) to suggest this paradigm. ‘Innovation’ is meant as the application of reason with an enlarged capacity to anticipate and address problems with fresh options and ‘constructivism’ is meant as the disposition to sustain innovation by advancing an alternative but more reliable worldview that can meet the exigencies of modernity in an African cultural context. The paper then proceeds to outline the nature of the rational kingdom and its anticipated gains and outcomes. It applies the method of inductive reasoning to advance its position. To do this it invokes selected but crucial areas of African life to locate how the developmental demands of these aspects of life suggest a critical turn in African rationality.

Keywords: critical rationality; development; Africa; kingdom

1. Introduction

At the beginning of the African quest for independence, Kwame Nkrumah, the Ghanaian president widely known as the father of modern African political freedom project, is credited with having made a popular assertion: “seek ye first the political kingdom and all other things will be added unto you.”¹ This position is a strong expression of faith in the future of the African state. However, more than half a century after Nkrumah made this significant statement there is doubt on the merit of what has been added to Africa in terms of development, which to a large extent questions the validity of the assumption. This position is strongly justified especially given that another Ghanaian scholar and intellectual Kwesi Prah recently said, “little has been achieved in the 50 years of Africa’s independence which can be seriously described as developmental” (Prah 2011, p. 156). This paper applies this position to interrogating the knowledge paradigm in Africa and to suggest a shift to what it calls the

¹ Nkrumah’s famous position is cited in a number of works including Kwame Nkrumah (1957), *The Autobiography of Kwame Nkrumah*; Ama Biney (2011) *The Political and Social Thought of Kwame Nkrumah (USA: Palgrave Macmillan)*.

rational kingdom, defined as knowledge devoted to conceptual critical self-awareness driven by the vision to make innovation and constructivism a norm and a force in African social and intellectual life.

The paper is divided into three parts. I shall (i) articulate the idea of a rational kingdom by pointing out what it means, the reason and justification for its demand, the desired “kings” and “subjects” of this kingdom; the “constitutions” and “institutions” that should define this kingdom and the distinct mark of relevance that makes it urgent. Thereafter, I shall (ii) discuss the developmental imperatives of a rational kingdom and demonstrate how this justifies the need for a rational kingdom. I shall then (iii) discuss the place and role of culture in achieving this kingdom and the cultural gains of achieving this kingdom. To do this I shall discuss the various roles that culture plays in human society and how culture can be made developmental so as to play this role and how this can lead to the institution of a rational kingdom. I shall then (iv) conclude by rehearsing my claims and itemizing the implications of my positions.

I shall apply the method of inductive reasoning to advance my views. To do this, I will invoke selected but crucial areas of African life and how these demand a critical turn in African rationality. Through some critical considerations of these and how the nature of human reasoning could be said to re-enforce this need, I shall demonstrate how the idea of a rational kingdom fits into these demands. I shall rely on the views of a number of scholars in the area of culture, knowledge and development in the African context to demonstrate my claims, hoping that, as Isaac Newton once said, by “standing on the shoulders of these giants I shall see far” and probably say something desirably deeper and better.

2. The Idea of a Rational Kingdom

By rational kingdom I simply mean a cohesive self-constructed rational community where rationality would be marked by critical self-awareness in Africa along with self-invented and innovative options. Thus, the idea of a rational kingdom amounts to a rational community that admits or rejects forms of knowledge based on how far it supports the ethics of self-invention through conceptual and critical self-awareness and self-understanding. It is not a particular form of knowledge but a paradigm for sociology of knowledge and an ethics of knowledge and a knowledge process that directs the efforts and aspirations of a given community. Rather, it is one where rationality marked by constructivism and innovation assumes the center stage of African life and thought; where anti-rational or irrational forms of social interaction are to give way to a fresh paradigm that seeks to advance the best forms of rational expression desirable in Africa. My desired rational kingdom is one where different demands of reasoning will be realized in a complimentary manner as against one where a strand or an aspect of reasoning will function to dominate and destroy others; where productive rational ethics will enable Africans to move beyond the current state of thinking which amounts to rational medievalism to one where critical but resourceful culture of modernity marked by innovative rationality define Africa’s rational ethics. A rational kingdom desirable in the African instance, in my view, is one where, by drawing from an array of social experiences that has defined social interaction between the African world and other geo-rational blocks of humankind, Africans are able to apply more relevant rational principles marked by innovation and creativity to their developmental needs to abstract from these and reduce the dependence of Africans on other blocks of humanity which leads to the subordination of the African will. Such a more critical and rationally grounded society will give a fresh but more forceful and impactful status to rationality in the African worldview and lead to what can be called a self-liberating religion of reason; one where what is most relevant and innovative becomes the most reasonable and desirable. By so doing, full freedom and autonomy which are twin cardinal demands of development will assume a dominant social ethics of life.

At the beginning of the African quest for independence, Kwame Nkrumah, the Ghanaian president widely known as the father of modern African political freedom project, is cited to have said “seek ye first the political kingdom and all other things will be added unto you.” Regrettably, however, more than half a century after Nkrumah made this significant statement there is doubt on the merit of what has been added to Africa where many scholars would argue that “little has been achieved in the 50 years

of Africa's independence which can be seriously described as developmental." (Prah 2011, p. 156). Many African states are nearly witnessing over sixty years of independence and the story is still the same. The poverty or outright failure of the development project in Africa is also strongly corroborated by the following strong claims of an African social scientist that;

at the beginning of the new millennium, Africa was the poorest, most technology-backward, most politically unstable, most crisis-ridden, most-indebted, and most foreign-dominated and exploited as well as the most marginal continent in the world. Foreign debt represents up to 80% of GDP in net present value terms in most countries, inflation rates average between 12 and 45%, unemployment rates (excluding the informal sector) ranges between 12 and 25%, while the savings rate in Africa is the lowest in the world. As well, 15 of the world's 20 most impoverished nations are in Africa, with over 3 million refugees and 18 million internally displaced persons. It is estimated by international agencies that over 250 million Africans lack access to portable water, while over 200 million have no opportunities to access basic health services. More than 2 million children die before the first year, over 150 million youth are illiterate, and almost half of rural females do not attend formal schools. (Ihonvbere 2011).

I apply these positions to suggest that there is development failure in Africa and that the development failure in Africa has a deep cause which has not been seriously looked into—the failure of reason or the failure of the rational culture of Africans. I therefore allude to these claims and to Nkrumah's wisdom but in a reverse manner by saying that political kingdom is not even possible without the rational kingdom because the concept of polity or the state finds its root in the rational kingdom. So, I seek to institute another paradigm for an African future: "seek ye first the rational kingdom and all other things will be added unto you."

The desire for a rational kingdom in Africa does not in any way allude to contestation of the positive qualities, capability and potentials of African rational culture as can be found in many racist texts such as those of Hegel (1956), Levy-Bruhl (1923, 1926, 1975), Westermann (1934), Carothers (1972), etc. It rather amounts to the need to advance Africa's rational culture by way of locating and balancing the deficiencies in this rational culture in order to seek the best forms of reasoning that will secure the African future among the competing forces of rationality in the world today.

This desire finds strong corroboration and justification in the theory of difference held by the socio-political theorist Samuel Huntington. In his influential work, *The Clash of Civilizations*, Samuel Huntington presents an important theory of difference in which he argues that human civilizations are basically different and that the differences are justifiable, reliable and legitimate because they are born out of a conception of life. For this reason, they assume the stature of beliefs and articles of faith among diverse peoples of the world. According to Huntington (1993, p. 25):

Civilizations are differentiated from each other by history, language, custom, tradition, and most important, religion. The people of different civilizations have different views on the relations between God and man, the individual and the group, the citizens and the state, parents and children, husband and wife, as well as differing ways on the relative importance of rights and responsibilities, liberty and authority, equality and hierarchy.

On the strength of the above claims, Huntington recognized eight major civilizations of the world, namely: Western, Islamic, Orthodox, Latin America, Indic, Japanese and African. A possible interpretation of the claims of Huntington that deserves to inform our project of rationality is that there are different concepts that define the core principles that drive human society and that these lead to different values that are found cogent and reliable within different cultures. The other implication is that any assumption of life and value that is not grounded on critical rationality is weak, false and dubious and it is only a matter of time before it presents these as the outcome. This is because critical rationality is necessary to sustain and strengthen social values especially among different competing

social paradigms that present themselves as options for social growth. Huntington provides another view that supports the conceptual and rational foundations of human beliefs, ethics and civilizations when he argues against the very notion that there could be “universal civilization” (ibid., p. 41). He argues that this is basically a western assumption and argues that “western concepts differ from those prevalent in other civilizations” (ibid., p. 40). Another position that can be derived from Huntington is the need to question whether Africans should take Huntington seriously by protecting the gains of their civilizations and defending the values it promotes.

When Nkrumah theorized on the need for a political kingdom in what can now be called weak states, he had a false assumption of the kind of challenge implied by this because he thought that African self-rule would attract the consent of African elites on the agreeable intellectual paradigm to run the state and the best way to manage the project of freedom implied. As a result of this, he proceeded by drafting ideologies that would lead to this in what Nnamdi Azikiwe, his Nigerian counterpart, has called “renascent Africa.” But ideologies are not the first and best paradigm to advance human reasoning because ideologies do not often harbor an inborn potential to meet the vagaries of change which is an aspect of life. Kwasi Wiredu (1980, p. 66) and Archie Mafeje (cited in Nabudere 2011) have done some significant work to point out the dangers of applying ideology as the sure route to proper development. This position does not need to be repeated here; it suffices to know that ideology amounts to preparing a ready-made answer for problems, many of which will be (re)defined by the future and this is strongly exemplified by the critical turn (rather than ideological option) that African thinkers have shown in a number of their works. This critical turn is well illustrated in the number of philosophers who have jettisoned the ideological orientation in favor of critical rationalism in the practice of their profession numbering from pioneers such as Kwasi Wiredu, Peter Bodunrin, Kwame Gyekye to several others too numerous to mention here.

As arising from the failure of rationality the very gain of African freedom is lacking. This is because freedom is not an asset unless and until the terms and goals of its operation are spelt out through a critical and constructive rational process. Nkrumah probably forgot that the principles and values that the new African states are meant to defend are considerably different from those of the states that find their origin in the African endogenous world and this would mean a whole task of self-definition in rational terms without which political kingdom will suffer grievously. This has nearly become the case at least from the social lens of the post-independent sub-Saharan Africa where the people’s quality of life does not match that of their counterparts in other parts of the world. Although all states claim to function for the common good of their citizens, the political goods and the framework through which they are meant to be realized are considerably different and this means that no state anywhere is desirable without first articulating these terms and the role to be assigned to the state in their socio-historical context. But this rational self-invention has been neglected as a result of which duties are entrusted to states that have not been properly constructed. Although Nkrumah made some proposals in this regard by his ideology of ‘consciencism,’ the problem is that the ideology is basically a social ideology with no strong implication for the epistemological ordering of the African mind.

Paradoxically, it is almost as if what has been wrongly done in the political sphere is what is taking place in the intellectual sphere illustrated by the weakness of the African academy and the failure of the African intellectual industry to invent, theorize, and insist on a paradigm shift in the intellectual governance of African minds through the ideas, policies and practices that should direct the African academy or at least the impact of these policies in the African intellectual industry. It is almost as if the case in Africa has been: set up universities and academic institutions and your knowledge will become powerful. But how powerful the African academy has been can now be seen from the enormity of challenges confronting African universities where a sizeable number of the intellectuals have left their universities in what is now known as brain drain. These self-exiled academics are often inspired by the conducive spaces in other parts of the world to explore and exploit their talent more than anything else. Because of the challenges of the African academy, many of which lack funds for basic research, it is almost as if Africa is at the moment so dependent that African peoples import even how to laugh, as

they seem to lack the confidence to accept and advance their aesthetics of laughter, owing to nothing but the rational culture directing these institutions.

A host of African scholars such as [Chinweizu \(1978, 2010\)](#), [Ngugi wa Thiongo \(1980, 1981\)](#), [J. M. Ela \(1994\)](#), [F. B. Nyamnjoh \(2004, 2012\)](#), [A. Rwomire \(1992\)](#), [P. T. Zeleza \(1997\)](#), [P. Hountondji \(1995\)](#) and [T. Mkandawire \(2005\)](#) have highlighted this point and pointed out the need to critically re-think the kind of knowledge which the state project through the academy in Africa is promoting as option for African humanities. Against the blurring forces of globalism, these scholars remind us that Africans should urgently think for themselves so that they do not become mere robots or pawns at the hands of those who think for themselves and insist on thinking for Africans without encouraging Africans to think for themselves. The reminder and lesson from these scholars is that in the same manner of Nkrumah's proposed political kingdom, the African academy if not properly directed might also lead the African intellectual world the wrong way as the African state is doing at the moment by manufacturing poverty both of the mind and of the body. Thus, a rational kingdom in an African contest would also mean not just one in which the rule or law of reason becomes dominant but one where ideas, ideals and values are favorable to the demands of African modernity by way of enabling the African worldview to generate and provide the basis for intellectual and social and political belonging. This task—that is, the need to re-arm the modern African with significant tools for national and international social belonging by generating the forms of knowledge that make Africans accountable agents of change for themselves, their nations and the international human community—cannot be ignored. Thus, it must cause a critical turn in the manner of knowledge generated and distributed in the African knowledge academy. The respected African thinker [Achille Mbembe \(2001\)](#) has raised relevant issues in favor of this position in his well-known book on the Post-Colony where he addresses a number of issues including Africa's pattern of self-narrative.

To demonstrate the need for a rational kingdom let me invoke at the least two positions to demonstrate my claim. The first is the philosophical position that defines man basically as a rational animal. The second is the psycho-philosophical position that holds that the manifestation of human intellect, regarded as intelligence, differs in different areas of life and from one person to the other. I wish to advance this position further by arguing that the manifestation of human reasoning differs from one social and cultural community to the other because of the social forces and challenges that define their societies. The implications of this is that reason can only be found valid when it is held to be a social project directed by the other or at least accountable to the other. The American philosopher Donald Davidson has applied this to argue that rationality is a form of co-existential project which cannot be held to have been so done without the co-operation of the other. I further apply this to urge a critical re-think of the rational culture of Africans in different aspects of life.

The view that man is a rational animal owes its formal adoption, at least in written form, to ancient Greek philosophers such as Aristotle. Philosophy—the peculiar love of wisdom and indeed the pursuit of how best to apply reason—has worked on this assumption that the faculty of human reasoning can be cultivated, refined and developed to serve the cause of humanity better. But while the human is a rational animal, what reason amounts to and the fundamental measure of reason has remained contentious. When Descartes, the French philosopher, provided his influential theory of reason with the view that rationality is the very basis for a claim to existence, he defined reason broadly as all of what we do—emotion, feeling, reasoning, etc. The implication is that thinking is basically all of what we do even when we do not know. This definition of thinking puts a crucial question mark on the specific mark of reasoning. Indeed, it was Edmund Husserl who later advanced this theory of rationality by saying that thinking must amount to thinking something. So, reason and its nature is about the person and the form. It might not be cogent to elaborate these claims further but it is urgent to submit that what man makes of reason has much to do with a fundamental disposition to this idea than the idea itself and that reason is basically a self-demanding project. What I mean by this is that rationality or “reasonability” is only a potentiality which can be validated by the outcome of its application. Thus, while human beings everywhere are fundamentally rational animals and reasoning

can be applied to suite any desired project found to fall within the demand of human nature, human beings must deliberately seek to develop the “science of reason” (Ugwuanyi 2010, p. 8) to construct some desirable ends within the social demand of their world without which the faculty of reason that unites the human community will serve any poor, narrow, or dangerous end. In the African context, this makes it relevant to deliberately seek to apply the project of reason to produce the kind of human beings desirable within the demands of our world and to re-locate the African society from a society of conflicting ideals and values to one that is properly ordered and directed through a deliberate rational project. This, in essence, is what the idea of a rational kingdom is all about.

The second reason for a rational kingdom is the psycho-philosophical position which arises from what I call the peculiar demand of reason in the African world. Here I defend the view that, while all people are capable of same kind of intellection and while all social groups are capable of the same kind of reasoning, the results of rational engagements differ because they need different factors to manifest themselves. Among these factors are the psycho-social disposition of people and the form of knowledge desirable within a given community, the value that can be attached to knowledge (gained) at the exclusion of others, and to the individual or group that possess them. For instance, a society with strong disposition to traditional beliefs will not achieve a strong scientific culture unless science itself assumes a form of that tradition for the people. This is because of the rigors of scientific reasoning and the non-rigorous demand of belief ethic. This position can be better understood by inferring from the theory of multiple intelligence credited to Howard Gardner. Gardner (1983) identifies nine different forms of intelligences, namely;

naturalist intelligence defined as “the human ability to discriminate among living things (plants, animals) as well as sensitivity to other features of the natural world (clouds, rock configurations)”; *musical-rhythmic intelligence*—“the capacity to discern pitch, rhythm, timbre, and tone . . . ”; *logical-mathematical intelligence*—“the ability to calculate, quantify, consider propositions and hypotheses, and carry out complete mathematical operations . . . to perceive relationships and connections and to use abstract, symbolic thought; sequential reasoning skills; and inductive and deductive thinking patterns”; *existential intelligence* defined as “Sensitivity and capacity to tackle deep questions about human existence, such as the meaning of life . . . ” *interpersonal intelligence*—the ability to understand and interact effectively with others. . . . *bodily—kinesthetic intelligence*—“the capacity to manipulate objects and use a variety of physical skills . . . ”; *verbal-linguistic intelligence*—the ability to think in words and to use language to express and appreciate complex meanings . . . ; *intrapersonal intelligence*—the capacity to understand oneself and one’s thoughts and feelings . . . ; and *spatial intelligence*—the ability to think in three dimensions.

I find Gardner’s thesis attractive and would wish to apply it in locating the failure or perhaps challenges of rational creative freedom in Africa. This is anchored on my belief that intelligence summarily amounts to applied rationality. However, the view I hold is that several of the intelligences identified by Gardner could be united by the singular term *creative intelligence or innovative intelligence and artistic intelligence*. The position implied here is that not only are intelligences different among human beings but that social and environmental conditioning also gives rise to *different intellectual histories and hierarchies* (defined as valued different expressions of reason) which inform and influence the direction of the growth of the intellect. Thus, the social disposition of a society to an application of reason differs, perhaps as encouraged or discouraged by a particular cultural belief. Thus, just as the manifestation of human intelligence differs in different areas of life from one person to the other, this is also the case with a human community and this is based on different intellectual histories and hierarchies. What is desired of a particular community is to attempt to locate where it can be held that the manifestation of reason is deficient among them and seek to advance reason in that direction by deliberately creating values that promote rational growth in this direction.

It is in the light of this that I intend to locate the need for a rational kingdom that will address the failure or weakness of creative intelligence in Africa at the moment. Such creative intelligence

(defined as applied reason) should be rooted in a notion of reason that is self-critical enough to amount to creative rationalism. By creative rationalism I mean the enlarged capacity of reason to adjust and respond to the demands of re-ordering the African world with the kind of ideas that can address the immense developmental crises of the society in all aspects of life as Africa interacts with the wider world some of which have had longer histories and cultures as well as formal and installed knowledge production and consumption. Thus, for me, the array of problems and crisis in Africa today is nothing but an indication of the failure of innovation and creativity in making Africa through thinking and in particular creative intelligence. Here, I do not limit creativity to literal creativity but broadly to intellectual creativity that locates the limits of what is held to be problems in Africa through desirable alternatives and solutions. The view suggested here, therefore, is that reason should innovate by locating the gaps in the existing ethics and science of reason so that creative intelligence will expand to address these needs and desires.

There is often the urge to look at Africans as people who are negatively special in the world, as a result of which the least problem in the continent is held to be caused by non-Africans against Africans. This ideology of victimhood is held in a vast literature on African studies. But these positions often ignore the fact that what is special about Africa is the positively special—that is, the fact that Africans naturally inhabit the best part of the earth and the most conducive positions of the world and the comfort of these zones have negatively affected their disposition to creative (and perhaps aggressive) intelligence as a social group. Thus, given the forceful nature of environmental and social conditioning to resourceful and creative thinking, it is doubtful the extent to which Africa would have been otherwise and developed such values as are different from what she has today. However, some of the values of African life no longer serve the cause of securing their world and there is again the need to begin to re-think these values and to seek the best ways to institute a whole process of rational re-ordering of the African world because the force of living in a global world means that Africans cannot survive without discarding these values through creative understanding. Thus, my view is that a form of *creative and critical rationalism* is demanded by the African society but is lacking and this makes urgent the desire for a rational culture where reasoning that will promote constructive rationalism should be promoted.

3. The Nature of a Rational Kingdom

To attempt to capture the nature of the rational kingdom desired for Africa, I shall appropriate the ideas of Plato as found in *The Republic*. Plato, it should be recalled, proposed a state where citizens were to be categorized into three—the auxiliaries, the soldiers and “philosopher-kings” and held that justice in the state could come by each of the three playing its role. In a similar vein, I hold that the rational kingdom desired in Africa should amount to a society dominated by reason and moderated by three categories of “rational citizens”—the kingmakers; the kings themselves and the subjects.

Let me begin with the subject (citizens) of the kingdom. The subject of the proposed rational kingdom desirable for Africa is everybody. This is because every member of the African society suffers the effect of the uncritical mass that dominates our society and the deficient African self-understanding at the moment. So, the kingdom in question is where everybody is rationally ruled by everybody—that is, the social governance of reason or a dominating ethics of critical reasoning. It is as if everybody were to say to everybody—‘we have decided to advance our rational culture in a manner that will strengthen our society and give us a worthier place in human history by making us much more critical and constructive as individuals and as a society. We shall now seek to make all we do reasonable enough to be so done or rejected and attempt to do this by locating the foreseeable outcome of our actions in the far future. To do this, then, we shall eliminate such outstanding enemies of reason, especially those that human nature promotes such as emotion, prejudice and narcissistic application of force and unenlightened self-interest.’

The justification of the egalitarian desire for a rational society in Africa stems from what has been identified to be strong characteristics of reason in Africa but which do not favor the ethics of

constructive and creative reasoning. The first is the authoritarianism of African society and its over reliance on tradition which discourages rational justification of beliefs. Kwasi Wiredu (1980) has done much to capture the traditionalism of African thought culture and the need to shift the paradigm from the ethics of belief to the ethics of critical reasoning. The desire of Wiredu, which falls in line with my view here, is that there is the need to advance the society from traditional authoritarianism to rational authoritarianism with stronger appeal to reason in African life.

The second position comes from the Senegalese philosopher Leopold Sedar Senghor. In his theory of negritude, Senghor characterizes reason in Africa as one directed by emotion or what again can be characterized as emotive rationalism. Senghor's position is that the African manner of thinking is dominated or significantly influenced by emotion. Senghor suggests that that the African principle of reasoning is reasoning by touch. For him;

It is not reasoning eye of Europe, it is the reason of touch, better still, *the reason of the embrace*, the sympathetic reason, more clearly related to the Greek *logos* than to the Latin *ratio*.

Senghor goes further to argue that while the European views the object at a distance, analyses, and domesticates it in order to use it, the African gets wedded into the object and gets assimilated into it to know it more deeply (cited in Abanuka 2011, p. 83). At the surface, it might look as if Senghor has denigrated the African and indeed there are reasons to hold that he is often held to have done so. For instance, he routes thinking to the time "when animals and plants and even elements of nature were interwoven with man's life and were familiar to him in an environment which is imprisoned in memories." The thesis here is, if reasoning has such universal genealogy as implied by this claim, then why would the manifestation of reason become different in the African instance? I would not wish to further this debate here, but it is important to note that human geographical and environmental conditioning has significant influence on the manifestation of human reason and that the notion of reason that Senghor attributed to the African shares the same features with Aristotle's idea of wonder as the defining principles of wisdom. The Greek *logos* which he likened to a mode of reasoning is clearly a deepening ethics of wonder which leads more to engaging and appreciative wisdom than the Latin *ratio* which leads to interpretative wisdom. However, it is in the act of interrogating or understanding nature herself as an act of judgement that the social advancement that Africa needs at the moment lies. I apply this to argue that there is need to institute a more critically disposed society that understands the world "instrumentally" than one that understands the world admirably.

The third position that captures the need for an egalitarian project of reason is one that locates the African theory of thinking as a desire to acquire vital force. This theory is found in the influential book of Placide Tempels, entitled *Bantu Philosophy* (Tempels 1959). According to this theory, Africans perceive reality in terms of force; "force is even more than a necessary attribute of beings: force is the nature of being, force is being, and being is force." (ibid., p. 35) Thus, in the light of this, all the African does is "to acquire life, strength or vital force . . ." (ibid.) This theory of vital force finds its justification and collaboration in the patriarchal nature of the African society and in the fact that the "gods of African traditional religions were often gods of bravery, hence, the warrior values of Africa—courage, endurance, manhood and even purposeful ruthlessness." (Mazrui 1979–1980, p. 52) These views, properly interpreted, imply that a forceful impact on the society has more value than a rational impact. But a forceful ethics of social engagement does not make for the flowering of the human mind, especially in the light of the different potentials of intelligences we have identified.

Drawing from the positions identified above, it can be seen that the African world significantly needs an egalitarian or an all-citizen social ethics of reason in a rational kingdom because neither the force of tradition, the lure of emotion or the compulsion implied by force can make a people productively rational, given the fact that analytical and deductive principles should direct productive rationality. Although it could be debated whether the idea of kingdom can promote the emergence of an egalitarian society it should be borne in mind that the idea of kingdom implied here rules against raw force or power in favor of cooperative ethics of reason. These positions therefore suggest the need for a critical and constructive in-put into the project of reasoning. Thus, a certain disposition

becomes urgent for a form of rationality that will meet the demand of resourceful and creative life in modern Africa.

After the attempt to demonstrate the subject of our proposal, let me proceed to locate who the kingmakers of this kingdom are and why. The kingmaker of this kingdom is *Reason*. By reason, I mean the effort towards an evidence-based exercise of brains with a fundamental disposition to justification and accountability. Reason as the king-maker of rational kingdom is defined as evidence based, justifiable and applicable thought; one that connects thoughts to ends and filters wrong assumptions to make way for cogency and reliability ion acceptance of positions. Furthermore, I find it cogent to anchor the power to make and direct the desired rational kingdom in Africa on applied reason because most human institutions are anchored on a form of authority (defined as certainty or the force of certainty). Virtually, all of what is considered as legitimate human conduct are those that are anchored on a form of authority defined as the right to act or the right to carry out a certain action with a reciprocal right of an action to be carried out but this agent must be given or at the least deduced from somewhere. Thus, the right to authority often comes from necessity and it is right to hold that, to a large extent, there was the force of necessity in what we consider to be the forces affecting African modernity. Even the minutest social legacy in Africa, from within or without was prompted by reason. Thus, it is important to filter the same through a form of rationality. Secondly; it is important to note that the idea of rational kingdom suggested is motivated by challenges affecting Africa which to a large extent has to do with a shift from a culture of belief to a culture of evidence based rationality. Reason as king-maker in a rational kingdom should be one that functions based on respect for principles; one that should function against solipsism and extend the culture of reason to a synthetic evaluation of the social self. It should also be one that avoids the internal contradictions that affect weak rational cultures by ensuring that the exercise of reason leads to measured worth and meaning and minimizes the conflict of values that arise from false and wrong claims to logic and reason.

Finally, let me attempt to locate those who are desired to be kings of my proposed rational kingdom. Here I adopt Plato's view to argue that the desired kings of the dream rational kingdom in Africa are the academic intellectuals in Africa. By academic intellectuals I mean those who seek to produce knowledge that do not just account for state of things but who by doing this apply a certain vision to direct their project. Giroux (2014) has argued that "while academics plough through a narrow disciplinary concern . . . (and) are merely interested in ideas, intellectuals seek to bring ideas to an entire culture." Intellectuals often theorize by way of questioning the knowledge produced and how relevant it could be and if it should not be produced in another way. Thus, given the corporate demand of my dream rational kingdom in Africa, it becomes necessary to argue that the form of leadership desirable in Africa would amount to how one can connect an array of issues in Africa by way of demonstrating how their disconnection stands at the root of the poor quality of social organization and rational ordering in Africa. Such broad insight into issues and the ability to produce a desired link between them can best be expected of intellectuals who are also academics, not mere academics. Such academics will extend their creativity to formulating concepts that match the demands of the African world. Such intellectuals will realize that the desires of intellectual production in Africa should amount to a form of conceptual Africanization. By conceptual Africanization, I mean the re-negotiation of concepts through modern African experience—the effort to apply modern African experience to interpret, formulate or reformulate concepts, especially those that have the capacity to produce significant impact on African life and thought; the attempt to give ideas a distinct African interpretation and seek to forge and empower concepts to carry the weight of African experience; a sort of scientific knowledge of concepts that demands their social accountability within the African world to ensure that their desired relevance in the African world could be felt. This demands the questioning of concepts from within and the need to apply the minor differences in the African worldview as the basis to empower and enlarge and develop concepts for their adoption and use.

After the effort to illustrate the meaning and implication of rational kingdom let me next proceed to articulate the development demands of this proposal. This is because knowledge fundamentally

amounts to a form of developmental humanism, thus, it is urgent to demonstrate how it can be held that this proposal has a developmental promise and effect.

4. Developmental Imperatives of a Rational Kingdom

One of the significant indices for a proper exercise of reason is the quality of development that can be attributed to a person or society. But the theory or notion of development must be reliably and rationally grounded for it to be relevant and developmental enough. If this is not the case it will only amount to movement without growth or what can be called development of underdevelopment. It does much seem that this is the case in several development literatures which have been applied in Africa. Development, to define it, amounts to “the qualitative improvement in the nature of an object or change in the status or state of a person, organ or body marked by advancement or improvement over some primitive status” (McGurk, cited in (Ikpe 1999)); or “... any change which has continuous direction in the qualitatively new ... a directional cumulative change that either terminates in an event marked off by a recognized qualitative novelty or which exhibits in its cause a perceptible pattern of growth” (Sidney Hook, cited in (Ikpe 1999)); or, again as the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations (1962) defined it, “growth plus change.” But the patterns of change and growth must be determined for development to serve as a proper end.

Development, in the human context, can be individual, collective or social. It can be applied to structures, human beings and institutions, etc. Individual development is the growth in the biological, emotional and rational features of a person, the proper expression of the germ of life embedded in the chromosome of the individual or the practical nurturing of skills and talents embedded in the individual. In the social context development is the advancement of different dimensions of social life—societal, economic, political, etc. In economic terms, development is the ability of an individual or group to provide or create wealth and resources to provide their basic needs and basic necessities of life and to address all desires that relate to their economic well-being. Political development amounts to the improvement in the quality of rights and gains of state belonging while social development refers to the quality of social control, social security and social services available within a social group, the advancement of strong and reliable norms, values and policies that a social group demands and needs to function as a human community. These aspects imply qualitative development in the idea of right and wrong that operate in a society because it is how the ethics of the society responds to the demand of right and wrong that could lead to happiness, which high minds like Aristotle have defined as the goal of the ethical life (for details see Aristotle’s *Nichomachen Ethics*).

However, notwithstanding these diverse aspects of development, all development is aimed at the improvement of a people’s life and should be judged by how it affects the people. Ade Ajayi (1999) puts it that, “development is about people,” just as Julius Nyerere, former president of Tanzania and a foremost African thinker, provides strong positions that suggest this view. According to Nyerere:

Roads, buildings and increase of the crop output, and other things of this nature, are not development: they are tools of development. A new road extends a man’s freedom if he travels upon it. An increase in the number of school buildings is development only if those buildings can be, and are used, to develop the minds and the understanding of the people. An increase in the output of wheat, maize or beans is only development if it leads to the better nutrition of the people. An expansion of the cotton, coffee or sisal crop is development only if these things improve the health, comfort and understanding of the people. Development which is not development of the people may be of interest to historians in the year 3000: it is irrelevant to the future which is being created. (Nyerere, cited in (Oladipo 2006, p. 96)).

But there is a distinct challenge of development in Africa which spells out the gains of a rational kingdom. This can be located in the models through which development has been conceived in Africa. Christopher J. Koroneos and Dimitri Rokos (Koroneos and Rokos 2012) submit that “the historical model of industrialized societies in the 19th and 20th centuries served as the central notion

of what constitutes development in both the cost-effectiveness and equity perspectives.” This model of development, I submit, has been applied in Africa, but has affected other demanding areas of development as a result of which development in its contemporary demands is narrowed almost exclusively to imply and apply to economic development. When emphasis is narrowed to one aspect of development to the detriment of others then a fundamental harm is being done because of the complimentary quality of the human nature and society. Similarly, when development is so conceived that it creates a crisis of self-worth and personality then a fundamental damage is already done to the person for whom development is conceived. For instance, when we apply the term human resource development there is tendency to make the human being a reliable commodity for economic ends only not in the wide sense of resources or value. While a people might assume that they are developing and attempt to justify their claim by the length of period spent in their chosen direction they might just be developing underdevelopment because their development paradigm is in a wrong way.

Although the development discourse is now gradually recognizing a more encompassing notion of development to include wellbeing, it is important to note that the idea of wellbeing is still seen in the light of physical wellbeing or in terms of meeting the material needs of man more than the spiritual and mental needs. For example, when the idea of sustainable development captures such concerns as economic development, social development, and environmental protection the issue arises as to why moral development is not emphasized even as the idea of morality determines how these could and should be valued. This problem and others implied illustrates the need to allow the notion of development to benefit from a paradigm shift through the idea of a rational kingdom. This shift can be achieved in three ways. The first (i) is to achieve a notion of development favorable to the African worldview; one that would advance the potentials of this worldview without undermining the capacity of Africans to participate in development gains elsewhere. The second (ii) is to seek to determine the specific areas of African life that are developed and re-enforce the gains and values achieved here. The third (iii) is to see how this idea of development can influence the entire development paradigm globally. By doing these it would be seen that a deliberate effort has been made to involve and apply reason to appropriate the idea of development to an African advantage in its modern demands.

Let me proceed to elaborate on these positions beginning with the first (i). The first demand of the rational kingdom in relation to development paradigm is to seek to achieve a notion of development that is favorable to the provisions of the African worldview. At the moment, the development discourse in Africa is marked by “the dominance of foreign thoughts in the conceptualization and implementation of development . . . ” and the penchant for Africa leaders “ . . . to depend on imported theories and ideas on what constitutes development” (Gumede 2014). This importation is often from the Western world; notwithstanding the fact that for nearly half a century development strategists and social scientists of the developing world have detected a fault with the Western paradigm for development, which is largely exogenous to the non-western world (Yogesh Atal cited in Sang-Bok Han (2009, p. 1)). This has led to a growing interest in endogenous development². But while the idea of endogenous development is gradually gaining root, at least in Africa as evident in a growing literature on endogenous knowledge and studies, there are reasons to believe that those who have embraced the idea and are applying alternative models of development are countries outside Africa. Furthermore, there are still noticeable deficiencies in the application of these terms in that they do also suffer the north-bound gaze on development in terms of narrowing development to the economic aspect while neglecting other corporate demands of development in relation to the human person and society. These are strong bases for demanding for a deliberately constructed rational process in Africa as implied by the idea of a rational kingdom. Such a kingdom will lead to a specific articulation of the

² Current literature on the subject include the following: (Apusigah and Millar 2010; Haverkort 2008; Haverkort and Reinjntjes 2006; Haverkort and Rist 2007; Haverkort et al. 2002; Hountondji 1997; Millar et al. 2006a, 2006b; Mariana Lafuente 2014; Han 1997).

concept of endogenous development as it should be upheld through the African worldview and seek to apply the term to capture various aspects of development.

It is in the light of this that the need arises to locate specific areas of African life that are developed and re-enforce them as implied by (ii). To do this we shall now turn to locate these aspects of African life. There is often the assumption that Africa has lacked quality growth and development but the meaning of this term has not achieved a desirable African gain by way of locating the specific areas that is captured by this term. The charge that Africa is un/under/de-developed ignores the fact that there are certain specific aspects of life where the African world has (deliberately or not) advanced qualitatively and reliably. One of this is in the area of human relations and the social gains implied. There is a strong basis to hold that the African worldview harbors very strong potentials to provide the basis for interaction that would foster the good life in the total demand of the term because it lays strong emphasis on fostering same values for others as basis for realizing that for the agent. Pedro Tabensky (2002) provides a valuable link between happiness, person and the human community in such a manner that it would be seen that it can be validly upheld that these are interlinked as it obtains in the African worldview. This is a strong indicator that the African world harbors much potentials in developing the human person in the spiritual demands of the term given that happiness is significantly a spiritual principle. This is also evident given the fact that cases of suicide are less in Africa than in other parts of the world can be attributed to the virtue of empathy that significantly shapes African social life. Although the rarity of suicide is not necessarily the strongest indicator of a happy life, it nevertheless provides some reliable indices in that direction.

Latest discourse on development shows that efforts are made to develop what Koroneos and Rokos (2012) has called “worth-living integrated development” as a more desirable notion of development and this will demand an account of how values such as peace and solidarity have been inserted into the development discourse. This is also validated by the view that what should matter to a people is not just Gross Domestic Product (GDP) but Gross Domestic Happiness (GDH); because while GDP might delineate a higher productivity among a people, it is doubtful the extent to which it can represent what amounts to proper and valuable development among a people in terms of their total wellbeing. Indeed, the implication for my claim here is that economic development, however significant, cannot suffice for the totality of all that development means and that when this is applied as the sole measure of development danger stands knocking. If a rational kingdom is achieved in Africa, it will be discovered that the singular economic gaze on development through which Africa has been vilified all this while is not correct and that an aspect of development has been upheld by the African worldview; one which insists that the quality of human belonging should be characterized as development.

The effort to locate the distinct mark of development that is implied and upheld by the African worldview and the need to apply endogenous African perspective on development to influence development literature globally and serve as Africa’s own contribution to global modernity is what I consider to be the third desirable gain for a rational kingdom in Africa. Indeed, I tend to think that, given the organic nature of human beings who constitute the human society, it is doubtful the extent to which a narrow view of development that lays emphasis on structures at the expense of persons and relegates corporate wellbeing of individuals (interpreted to mean mental and spiritual well-being and the availability of such values that will promote the social, moral and psychological capital of a person or group) will be upheld in a rational kingdom that aligns development to whole human ends. Thus, in view of the potentials of the concepts available in African thought in constructing a viable alternative to development for the larger portion of humanity, a rational kingdom is desirable in the African context. Such rational kingdom should seek to interrogate concepts such as freedom, responsibility and rights which are strong virtues that drive development. By critically evaluating and applying ideas and values like freedom, it will be seen that the cooperative and communal principle of African world should re-enforce each other and that principles like freedom should be applied to re-enforce the ethics of responsibility and accountability. In Africa, a rational kingdom with an

emphasis on critical rationality would locate the fact that, in an African context, it is not acceptable to deliberately aim at creating wealth by undermining the contributory principle and capacity of other members of the society whose social and economic well-being help to foster peace and cooperate communalism. Such a position as this adds to emphasize the developmental imperatives of rational kingdom and its demand in Africa.

5. The Cultural Imperatives of a Rational Kingdom

In the effort to institute a rational kingdom in Africa, this work will next invoke the idea of culture and illustrate how the idea of culture re-enforces this demand. By this is implied the gains of the idea of the rational kingdom in cultural advancement. This is because, as part of what served to define, determine and yet undermine human civilizations generally, there is no better way to achieve a worthier future for Africa than by critically re-instating, refining and advancing culture in its modern African demands. In social discourse, no concept has commanded more attention than culture and development. This, perhaps, is because all thinking, including thinking about culture, “occurs in cultural and socio-cultural context” (Mafeje in Nabudere 2011, p. 74). J. H. Bodley (cited in (Ukpokolo 2004, p. 20)) holds that culture carries a wide range of meanings and definitions—“typical, historical, behavioral, normative, functional, mental, structural and symbolic,” just as Clyde Kluckhohn provides the following wide range of meanings that can be applied to culture:

- “the total way of life of a people”
- “the social legacy the individual acquires from this group”
- “a way of thinking, feeling and believing”
- “an abstraction from behavior”
- “a theory on the part of the anthropologist about the way in which a group of people in fact behave”
- “a storehouse of pooled learning”
- “a set of standardized orientations to recurrent problems”
- “learned behavior”
- “a mechanism for the normative regulation of behavior”
- “a set of techniques for adjusting both to external environment and to other men”
- “a precipitate of history”
- “a behavioral map, sieve, or matrix”. (for details, see (Ukpokolo 2004, pp. 18–19)).

The wider and broader implication of these is that culture amounts broadly to a second nature in terms of and through which one adapts oneself in the world and negotiates his or her presence in the world. In the light of this, it becomes necessary to look at how culture influences human lives individually and socially so as to appraise its import and significance in the African context from which we can map out how it could be better influenced through a fresh rational culture implied by the desire for a rational kingdom.

The Ghanaian philosopher, Abraham (2015, pp. 16–21) identifies four main functions of culture each of which points to culture “as an integrative instrument” (ibid.). According to Abraham, society demands sufferance and co-operation and “culture is an instrument for making such sufferance and co-operation natural” (ibid., p. 19). Secondly, “it creates the basis of the formulation of a common destiny and co-operation in pursuing it” (ibid.). “A third use of culture is to make events intelligible and significant (ibid., p. 20). “A fourth aspect of culture is to control change” (ibid., p. 21). Similarly, Ali Mazrui (1979–1980, p. 47) enumerates seven functions of culture. According to Mazrui, culture (i) provides a worldview for a people; (ii) provides standards of evaluation; (iii) conditions motivation;

(iv) is a medium of communication; (v) is the basis for stratification in the society; (vi) is the agent that determines the production pattern of a people; and (vii) defines the identity of a people.

If we examine the African culture in the light of these functions, we shall find out that the African culture has not been able to perform these functions properly and that it is questionable the extent to which African culture has functioned to secure the social demands of life in the contemporary terms. A cursory look at the modern African society reveals a predominant feature of instability and weakness. This state of affairs is clearly evident in the dependent nature of African society (Ugwuanyi 2003), the poor quality of life and social services, and the general state of insecurity in Africa results arguably from the absence of a strong and reliable cultural pattern to meet the many challenges of cultural development of the contemporary African. By strong cultural pattern, I mean a cultural pattern “that provides a coherent framework within which norms and behaviors are articulated” (Serageldin 1992, p. 19) and by a reliable cultural pattern I mean one that allows for the “incorporation of new elements” (ibid.). The absence of these two significant qualities, which constitute an important item in cultural development, has given rise to a certain crisis, which can be adequately characterized as the crisis of cultural identity in Africa. For instance, in Africa, we notice a prevalent culture of disorder, absence of harmony, and inability to manage change as well as make significant use of African experience of modernity. To illustrate this position, it should be noted that, given the fact that Africans have suffered the worst form of brutality in human history, it is curious to see how they treat each other with the same principle at the moment and to wonder whether they have gained anything from that experience. A strong view held to account for this is the disastrous ethics of violence through which modernity was introduced to Africa (slavery, imperialisms, colonialism).but the charge is why Africa has not negotiated herself from this inhuman culture. Thus, the need arises to determine the current state of culture in determining social interaction and whether it should be held that African problems are normal and usual enough as held by Patrick Chabal and Jean-Pascal Daloz (Chabal and Daloz 1999), in their infamous book *Africa Works* (Chabal and Daloz 1999). I do not accept Chabal’s thesis but hold that it would be useful to measure the quality of pain that the African condition has attracted to Africans, those who truly feel the pains and why, how or whether African culture has defined and defended the African experience meaningfully, and critically motivated the quest for a worthier alternative.

In the light of the above positions the idea of rational kingdom promises a more relevant and productive role to cultural advancement in Africa. This role is twofold. The first is to create a social atmosphere where significant aspects of African life that are weak will be strengthened through a form of culture engineering. The second is to foster rational ideals that will serve as the defining mark of African modernity so as to promote the quest for a distinct version of modernity in Africa. Let me further attempt to elaborate on these recommendations and by so doing further illustrate the gains of rational kingdom in Africa in relation to cultural growth.

To do this, I submit that there are specific aspects of life that deserve crucial attention in African cultural industries and formations. By cultural industries I mean the domain of African arts where culture is produced and by cultural formations I mean the institutions that promote and foster desires and values for the society. An aspect of this is in the area of production and consumption. There is urgent need to apply the cultural industries of Africa to institute a consumption pattern that benefits from the productive capacity of Africans and limits the dependency of Africa on other regions of the world. These dependencies range from food, music, clothing to modes of communication such as language, transportation, etc. In these areas, the importance of culture is being under-applied in Africa and this undermines the desired confidence and autonomy of the people. For instance, much of what Africans consume at the moment is not produced by Africans, the implication of which is that a culture of dependency is being perpetuated among the people and this affects the emergence of self-willed development. Africa’s maximum dependence on the non-Africans at the moment ridiculously undermines African self-worth and pride and a relevant culture of production needed to urgently address and reverse this trend. This deepening dependence, especially in the area of economic need, has served in strong ways to moderate the emergence of autonomous self-will on the part of

Africans. For instance, in 2014, Uganda had her economic aid cut by the United States of America when the country enacted a law outlawing same-sex relationships. This measure which disregards the gains of social autonomy which the USA may ironically be exercising has another implication; this is, that Uganda's autonomy as a nation of people with values that bind them was being questioned and that the Ugandan people are being sanctioned for refusing to abandon certain values that make them one and cohesive.

But there is also another curious challenge implied by this and this is the gain in developing strong rational ethics as suggested by the idea of a rational kingdom. It is that of questioning the productive capacity of Ugandans and why they should remain dependent on aids and how long they intend to run their country on international aids. This is a crucial worry given the popular saying that a beggar has no choice. It is that of asking the Ugandans to work out how to live within their means and to administer their society so as to produce what they can consume and consume what they can produce.

This need is what I think is being emphasized, in a dubious and ironic manner, by the attempts of foreign and aid-giving countries when they try to enforce certain laws and customs onto African countries in furtherance of these foreign countries' own morals, ethics, and of course markets.

Africa's dependence on non-African or alien forms of thought is not just on economic matters. They span through political, moral and, aesthetic aspects of life. In politics, the dependence on the Western pattern of majoritarian democracy, and 'the winner takes it all' syndrome that is inherent in this mode of democracy, has caused the continent enormous harm given the industrial hate, acrimony, and bitterness that arise from this method of democracy. Yet the maximum loss in social capital which arises from this has not generated enough concern or caused a significant shift in political ethics and paradigm. In aesthetics, notions of beauty and taste significantly alien to African cultures has made it such that the African notion of beauty is gradually being eroded and that much of African wealth is spent shoring up foreign wealth in the effort to 'buy' beauty. These are crucial areas of cultural concern that a rational kingdom can address. They urge for a creative expansion of culture and the need to apply the potentials and provisions of African cultural capital to address these needs. This does not mean that Africans can manufacture machines overnight but that they can eliminate those wants that are deliberately created by the productive machines of non-Africans that seek to expand the African taste and desire for what they are not yet in a position to produce at the moment. It is about how not to want what is not available; except it is a necessity and how to use what is available within the cultural provisions of a given world to seek what is desirable but is not available within this world.

The second gain of cultural advancement which emphasizes the need for a rational kingdom is the need to institute a distinct version of modernity in Africa, one which will foster the desire of a distinct modern worldview significantly applied to some instruments of modernity that are desirably human. Many of these instruments of modernity have been achieved through scientific thinking and technological innovation which are inspired by alien cultures but while these achievements were propelled and produced through a particular culture of thinking, it does not mean that their application and the human value that should be attached to them should emanate from the same culture through which they were produced. For instance, if guns have been found to be desirable weapons to arm the security agencies and protect the society at large, there is no need for guns to be made a desirable item of social value such that toy guns are marketed to children. This is because the implication of this is that a whole worldview of violence is being inspired and constructed for the future. In essence, the second cultural gain of a rational kingdom in Africa is that it has the potential to lead to the humanization of science and technology in Africa by way of ensuring that science and technology are made to lead to a worthier human community in Africa. To do this it should seek to infuse and foster these ideals through the instrumentality of cultural institutions in Africa.

6. Conclusions

In this paper, I have to interrogate the demands of development in the African cultural con. I did this with the assumption that the very beginnings of western modernity in Africa did provide not a rational culture that will favor development. I did not criticize development or reject development as a concept because there is obviously what amounts to the natural origins of the concepts at least abstracting from the nature of human biology where the human nature functions better and worthier when it advances from one state or state to the other. I therefore chose to focus on advancing the idea of development by problematizing development in the African context. My effort in this direction is what have led to a proposal on the idea of a rational kingdom as a desirable alternative. I articulated the idea of the rational kingdom by pointing out what it means, the reason and justification for its demand and the distinct mark of relevance that makes it urgent. From a theoretical engagement with the idea of rational kingdom I attempted to articulate its practical gains. I discussed the gains of the kingdom in relation to development and culture. This proposal has vast disciplinary implications for the humanities in Africa. It has enormous demands for the arts, culture, heritage and commerce in Africa. It implies the need to critically re-articulate the knowledge desired by these disciplines—that is, the distinct desires of African people in relation to these disciplines and how by the knowledge gained in these areas the desire and need to be African in its modern demands are promoted and protected. For the historian, linguist, the writer or literary theoretician, it demands a deliberate attempt to produce knowledge in the areas, the type that by consuming it the force and cogency of reason will be felt, inspired and achieved. For the scholar of African religion, it demands interrogating the modern philosophy of religion in Africa and the forms of religious thought desirable at the moment; that is, how to ensure that demands of African rational re-awakening are not overrun by religious ideals that abhor or detest a rational ethics. All these should be able to lead to sustainable development which in the African context demands the application of reason to articulate, advance and secure worthy human ends which should lead to the development of the human person. In practical terms, this means promoting a culture of development that can sustain the developmental values of African ethics; that is, the form of development which while addressing the demands of socio-economic and political growth will defend the idea of a distinct African worth and value.

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