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The Curriculum needed for sustainable quality and functional education in Africa

A people without knowledge of their past history, origin and culture is like a tree without roots. Marcus Garvey

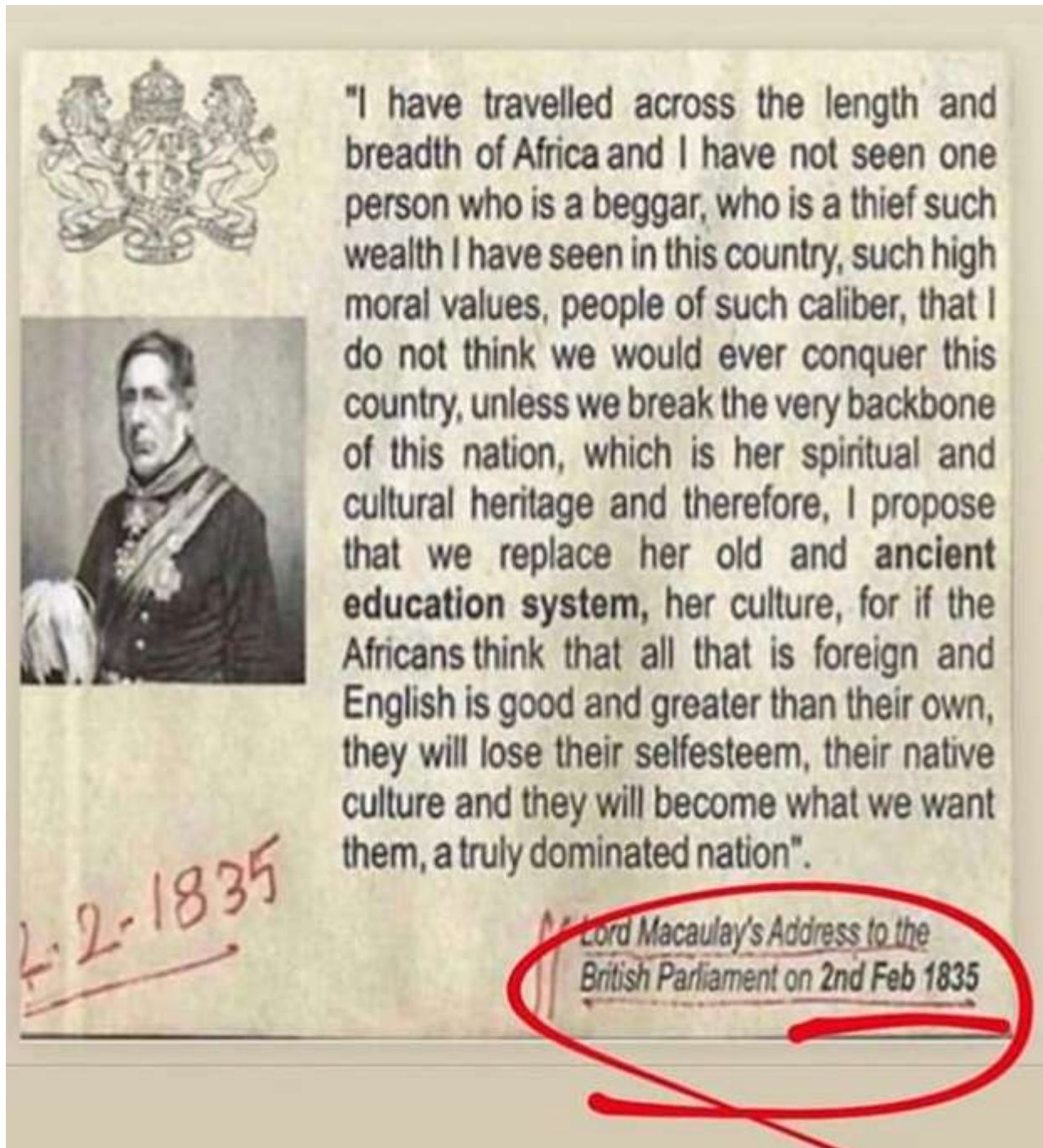
Greetings my fellow Africans, brothers and sisters in Nigeria and globally as we celebrate the theme of *The Role of 21st Century Professional Authors in Functional Education Advocacy and Delivery*. My name is Cecile Johnson and I am the CEO/Founder of African Development Plan, an Illinois, USA based nonprofit whose vision is the Creation of a 50 year Development Plan for Africa and her Diaspora through the creation of next generation leaders and the creation of an African Centered Curriculum.

Today my topic is **“The Curriculum needed for sustainable quality and functional education in Africa.”**

Malcolm X once said *“Education is the passport to the future, for tomorrow belongs to those who prepare for it today.”* And C.K, Chesterton says *“Education is simply the soul of a society as it passes from one generation to another.”*¹ My question then is how are we preparing our next generation for our future?

We must remember that what has happened to us is a war strategy laid out in this quote attributed to Lord Macauleys as he addressed the British Parliament on 2nd Feb 1835. He is quoted as saying

¹ G.K. Chesterton The Observer, “Saying of the Week”, 6 July 1924



The greatest mistake colonized nations made at securing "Independence" was to continue the same colonial systems that oppressed them as it related to their education. This continued the colonization process without them being aware of the harm they were doing to themselves and delayed development.

An education system which made us look outwards to the West for answers rather than inwards to ourselves and our indigenous knowledge systems. It has us use English, French, Portuguese and Spanish curriculum and values as our guideline, and so created a Eurocentric mindset and people who can't wait to leave the continent when an opportunity is presented.

What are we teaching our children?

Today, the stories our children learn are of other people, and childhood Mother Goose nursery rhymes that are not only nonsensical but reinforce values that have nothing to do with our African heritage or values. Rhymes that stay with us all of our lives and take up precious real estate in our heads when those foundational years should have had Aesop's fables and African folk tales and nursery rhymes sung in our mother tongues and born of our ancient wisdom systems.

We forget that **Education is indoctrination** and that our children are **forced to regurgitate their facts and their figures**, from the way we see the world and the maps used which made North America and European nations larger than they really were, to the correct version of the world as seen in the **Peters Map** which shows the true size and scope of Africa. When we look at all the countries that can fit into Africa, such as the USA, India, China, Europe, Argentina, New Zealand etc, we see that Africa is HUGE and must stop thinking of itself with a small mindset deliberately created at the Berlin Conference in 1885, which created political boundaries based on European interest and had no Africans sitting at the table deciding their future.

That African people must instead prepare itself for its future and its **2030 Sustainable Development Goals** and its **2063 Vision**. A vision that must usher in the African Renaissance and fulfill the prophecy that we have come into our time and that Africa will rise again for that time is now!

What happens to a people who know not who they are? People devoid of their true history and identity and assimilated into another people's culture which actively works to destroy their own? Can they take their rightful place in the world without this knowledge? And what does not knowing who they are do to their sense of self and identity? Whose job is it

to teach us our history? And what happens when we discover that a great travesty has occurred and the institutions created to assist us, are controlled by those who continue to harm us, while pretending to be non-aligned. How do we correct this?

The Three world communities

Dr. Anderson Thompson from the *Jacob Carruthers Center for Inner City Studies*, in Chicago says “The issue of the 21st Century for the African is the ISSUE of IDENTITY.” They have taken on the ways of the colonizer, their religion, their dress, their food, and their thoughts. They have forgotten what it is to be an African.² Dr. Thompson speaks of the Three World Communities and how the world is structured and its relevance to our future.

THE 3 WORLD COMMUNITIES			
Communities	African	Asian	Caucasian
DATA	1.5 Billion People 12 Million Square Miles 55 nations, A Continent	3 billion People 17 Million Square Miles China (3 Billion) India /Korea 1.5 Billion	1 Billion or less 3.5 Million Square Miles A Peninsula. Not a Continent
CHALLENGES “CRISIS” for each community	Identity Crisis. They have taken on the ways of the colonizer, religion, dress, food, thoughts.	Land. They need more space for their growing population. Coming to Africa will solve this.	Civilization. Had everyone believing Europe brought civilization to the world
HOW THEY EXIST IN TODAY'S WORLD	Consumer or commodity	Commercial	Collecting the rent, Control how we think. Have the Power

Crisis is that point in which the outcome has not been determined.

What are the 3 world communities?

It is a way of looking at the world based on order of civilization.

² Dr Anderson Thompson

First World - Africa

In the first world there is Africa. With 1.5 Billion people, 12 million square miles and 55 nations. It's a Continent and it's people numbers increase when you add its often forgotten Global Diaspora.

Its major challenge which is a crisis for each community, is the issue of Identity. African people globally have taken on the ways of the colonizers, their religion, dress, food, thoughts and values. This is seen in how they exist in the world today as **consumers or commodity.**

The Second World - Asia

The 2nd world community is the Asian world, 17 million square miles and encompasses China and India with its 1.4 Billion people each and other Asian countries bringing them to about 3 billion people. **Their issue is land and they need more space for their growing population.** To the Chinese coming to Africa will solve their land problem and you see this in the deals they make which give them access to African land because of foolish decisions made by poorly trained African leaders.

They exist in the world today as commercial entities. We see them everywhere their shops and products. They control the lifeblood of our nations through commerce and they tie all the commerce back to their motherland so that their people build an economic base which is the first rung of true power.

The Third World - Europe

The 3rd world community is the baby on the block when it comes to civilization. However their influence these last 500 years has been monumental through the use of guns, germs and steel and today's media and well thought out strategies to keep disproportionate control even as they pretend that you are free and independent. **They are about 1 billion people and represent less than 10% of the world's population and occupy 3.5 million square miles which is less than 7% of the land mass which they have convinced you is a continent, but is not.** They have over 25% of the nations in the UN, disproportionate to their size and population, for clearly they understand the concept of self-determination even while denying the developing world the same.

Their challenge is civilization. They had everyone convinced they brought civilization to the world, so we constantly refer back to them and the Greeks, (who we forget came and learnt from the Africans), again through our colonized education which was a Trojan Horse, left amongst us which did more harm the first 60 years of independence than the colonial period before that had done.

Their gift to the world is war, chaos, confusion and genocide for aboriginal people globally. They exist in the world today as the **thought leaders** as we mimic their institutions and ways of being and wonder why we have such a crisis. **Warlike people cannot teach us peace.** And capitalistic models which see us as prey cannot free our economies.³

They still have control of the resources of so called independent nations and still collect the rent.⁴ We see this in our continuing their influence by belonging to organizations created at independence to continue their influence like the British Commonwealth and French colonial systems. They control how we think through the colonial education system and the economic, political and legal systems they constructed for us at so called independence which continued to make them center of our world and distance us from our ancestral way of doing things, and from thinking for ourselves. They created institutions like the UN and international organizations like the World Bank and IMF which give them more power than their size would normally allow and reinforce their power globally.^{5 6}

The role of the three world communities paradigm

Dr. Thompson says “The use of the three world communities paradigm attempts to rescue Africa from the Eurocentric racist categories of black inferiority, Third Worldism, and marginalization by conceptually and truthfully placing Africa as first and at the center of the world-past, present and future. **This configuration is based on the order in which each community entered civilization. This gives us an African worldview that allows for rendering an international perspective on race, culture,**

³ Perkins, John. *Confessions of an Economic Hit Man*

⁴ Rodney, Walter. *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa*.

⁵ Moyo, Dambisa. *Dead Aid: Why Aid is not working and how there is another way for Africa*.

⁶ Kline, Naomi. *Shock Doctrine*.

nationality, and ethnicity from an African stance which has been for so long dishonestly fed to us by our enemies.”⁷

What is an AFRICAN CENTERED CURRICULUM?

The African World History Project reminds us that “Africa was OLD before Europe was born.” UNESCO reminds us that there are 8 volumes of African History created in the 1980’s by African scholars and still waiting to be utilized. We need an African Centered curriculum that will explain historically what has happened to people of African descent and the impact that 500 years of colonialism and neo colonialism has had on us. A curriculum that will explain the intellectual reasoning behind the current historical models used to educate us which left out our history prior to colonialism. It is a curriculum which will encourage the student to become more knowledgeable about Africa, its people and its history in order to address the mis-education of slavery and colonialism.

A curriculum which RECONNECTS AFRICAN PEOPLE WITH THEIR AFRICAN IDENTITY and this is not just those on the continent but those of us in the African Diaspora globally, from the newly restored Aborigine Americans to the Dravidians in India and others in Asia, and to the people of Australia and New Zealand and Micronesia and all the countries where we historically have existed and had our history and people subjugated out of history as white Europeans depopulated us and ethnically cleansed us from our true homelands and political power. We will then see the whole ancient world was African.

Your IDENTITY and how you feel about yourself, shapes the decisions you make about your future. When you are unsure of your identity you make the decisions you see now which have put us in this substandard position globally and led us to not be able to utilize our resources for our own upliftment.

The results of a European Worldview has been the failure of African people to be on a path of self-determination. It has created a people unable to provide for themselves as their economies are based on the old capitalist model which fed the Colonial Empire and benefited a few

⁷ Dr. Anderson Thompson

countries at the expense of the mass of the people in the world.⁸ **To address these challenges Africans on the Continent and in the Diaspora will need to have an AFRICAN CENTERED CURRICULUM to help them focus INWARD, putting AFRICAN People’s interest at the CENTER of all we do. Not just learning our history, but gaining a full understanding of ourselves.** Only then will we be able to solve our numerous challenges. **So OURSTORY needs to be told, because HIS STORY glorifies him and denies us knowledge of ourselves to facilitate further colonization and domination.**

Our curriculum must brand what it is to be an African as effectively as the elaborate mini-series called *Roots*^{9, 10} affirmed the story that Black people in the United States ancestors had all started out as enslaved people from Africa who came to the Americas after 1492. A theory Ivan Van Sertima had refuted decades before in his book *“They came before Columbus,”* and more recently had been expanded on in Sufia Giza’s book *“Moundbuilders of Ancient America: A Legacy Reclaimed”*; and Andoni Castillo Perez book *“The insurrectional Resistance of the Garifuna Revolution: The Chosen Ones of Yourumein”* and through the masterful research of a YouTuber named Kurimeo Ahau who documents the hijack of the identity of the original copper coloured people of the Americas. All used the archives of the colonizers (British, French, Spanish, American etc.) to show that these European explorers had documented their encounters with dark skinned peoples present in the Americas at their arrival, and this included people who we will now label as “Aborigine Americans”, and indigenous, the people who were of African Descent who came before the European Colonizers. This is critical because it helps the African to see her significance globally.

⁸ Rodney, Walter. *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa*

⁹ [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Roots_\(1977_miniseries\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Roots_(1977_miniseries))

¹⁰ The miniseries was watched by an estimated 130 million^{[22][23][24]} and 140 million^{[25][26]} viewers total (more than half of the U.S. 1977 population of 221 million—the largest viewership ever attracted by any type of television series in US history as tallied by Nielsen Media Research) and averaged a 44.9 rating^[25] and 66% to 80% viewer share^[25] of the audience. The final episode was watched by 100 million viewers and an average of 80 million viewers watched each of the last seven episodes.^[8] Eighty-five percent of all television homes saw all or part of the miniseries.^[8] All episodes rank within the top 100 rated TV shows of all time.^{[27][28]}

Today I am here to affirm my identity as an indigenous person born in the Americas of African Mende heritage and of a line that includes people who set sail in the 1300's and arrived in the Americas and made it their home. These people inhabited the land of the Americas and mixed with the aborigine people there, Arawaks, Caribs, and many other tribes commonly referred to as "Indians" because we were lead to believe Columbus thought he had arrived in the Indies; where he would then go on to murder and destroy those he met as he laid the foundation for the mayhem and genocide called colonialism in the Americas today. One which included ethnic cleansing and identity theft and left the Diaspora with the same identity crisis as the African on the continent. **What would happen if all these people, over 2 billion globally suddenly AWOKE?** Real Change would occur.

Our curriculum must understand the series of Papal Bulls that asserted the rights of Spain and Portugal to colonize, convert and enslave. It also justified the enslavement of Africans.¹¹ That this was a spiritual war and religion was used to unleash genocide upon the aborigine people of the world. A people who continue to feel the consequences of these actions through **the calculated actions of the Colonizers continued influence in religion and creating underdevelopment and genocidal conditions in many of the areas in which they now live by still treating them as dependents, source of raw materials and people to work in their industries while actively starving their homelands of the capital^{12 13}, technology, and best practices needed to develop themselves.**

My ancestry also includes descendants of enslaved Africans from Nigeria. One may ask, why is knowledge of my identity and history important to me as an African in the Diaspora? My restoring my identity allows me to now explore history in a different way. To look at the land of my ancestors and question why the Queen still owns land in Jamaica if we are truly independent? And opens many opportunities for me to now explore what the ramifications of being mislabeled by colonizers systems even as we moved into what was incorrectly called "**Independence**" with **Constitutions created in Europe that deliberately left out the**

¹¹ www.nlm.nih.gov AD 1494 The Pope asserts rights to colonize, convert and enslave.

¹² Failure of the developed world to contribute to the MDG's as agreed upon in 2000.

¹³ Moyo, Dambisa *Dead Aid* and Naomi Klein *Shock Doctrine* and John Perkins *Confessions of an Economic Hit Man*
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knowledge of the aborigine and indigenous people of the land, thus hiding our identities and allowing the old colonial empires to still lay claim to our land and resources and institute western style institutions which continued to perpetuate colonialism even as we claimed we were now free and independent¹⁴. What a con!

All of the people who look like me did not come through enslavement nor are they all mixtures of African and European, but admixtures created from African and aborigine people who we were told had all died in the early years of colonialism from being murdered or from hard work or European diseases of which they had no resistance to. These ancestors indigenous status is now being documented in Jamaica, Puerto Rico, Haiti, the Virgin Islands, St Vincent and other places in the Americas where the Arawak Indian still lives now labeled as *Taino* and her descendants were mislabeled as having European mixture when they were just Aborigine and African.

People the Colonizers chose to leave out of their modern history books and mislabel as descendants of slaves when they were really descendants of native people whose African ancestors include those who came in the 1300's¹⁵ and who had been here thousands of years before as new evidence suggest that even that history of outward migration to the Americas may also be incomplete as the original inhabitants of the America's true history is being discovered by many archeological finds and hidden documents stored in the colonizers institutions. Documents which show outward migration from the United States during colonialism as it sort to ethnically cleanse the land and displace its dark and copper colored "Indian" really aborigine population to the Caribbean and Sierra Leone and Liberia in Africa as it encouraged immigrants from Europe in an attempt to

¹⁴ Jamaica is a constitutional monarchy with The Queen as Sovereign. The Queen is represented on the island by a Governor-General appointed on the advice of the Jamaican Prime Minister. She technically owns the land of any commonwealth she reigns over, which includes Australia and Canada, along with several Caribbean islands. ... **As of 2021, there are 15 Commonwealth realms:** Antigua and Barbuda, Australia, The Bahamas, Belize, Canada, Grenada, Jamaica, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, the Solomon Islands, Tuvalu, and the United Kingdom.

<https://theflatbkny.com/caribbean/does-the-queen-still-own-land-in-jamaica/>

¹⁵ Andoni Castillo Perez book *"The insurrectional Resistance of the Garifuna Revolution: The Chosen Ones of Yourumein"*

whiten the country and steal the land.¹⁶ A policy still existing today when you look at US immigration policy and its discriminatory nature to people of color and of African Descent.

Today I am here to affirm that what is needed for African and Indigenous, and Aborigine people is a whole restructuring of their minds through an exposure to books and ideas that clarify their identity and history so that they are able to unlearn what has been taught to them in an inherited colonized educational system which made sure that true independence would never really take place. That instead what would happen would be neo-colonialism and a miniature version of the colonizers worldview and institutions replicated and put in place and the same functions of colonization would continue under the auspices of independence and independent nations and traditional aborigine institutions would be forever lost and/or circumvented through colonial institutions which include continuing to speak their language as your national language, picking up their names, imitating their culture and ways they practice religion; while abandoning the traditional ways of your ancestors and now labeling it as something negative and primitive.

Your education and institutions reinforce that what is indigenous to you, is somehow less than and in need of outside influence to correct. The media reinforces a hatred of self through a worshipping of those lighter and more Europeanized in their features when historically these features now attributed to others are yours also for we are the cradle of civilization and every variation of humanity looks like us.¹⁷ So skin bleachers become common place and the continued poisoning of your body to create an image of something that you are not. Fake hair and weaves, to look like someone else. Imported old clothes replace your traditional clothing industry and we pretend that our ancestors were not self sustaining or that the beautiful designs of our traditional cloth are not high math and sacred geometry. It is as if we have lost our minds! And in many ways we have for we have forgotten who we are and that Africa was old long before Europe was even born. We have failed to honor ourselves and our righteous

¹⁶ Kurimeo Ahau. YOUTUBE *Part 1 From Indigenous American to African American* (This is an educational series with over 20 parts.

¹⁷ Just look at the diversity on the African continent to the diversity in the Diaspora including the Pacific inhabitants.

ancestors! We must now regain ourselves and learn how to love ourselves again.

My own early education in the British West Indies taught me nonsensical nursery rhymes, framed my history as that from the time of the colonizer and focused on the conquest of my people, and used history and literature from England as my frame of reference and worldview. I learnt more about the geography of the United States than I did my own country and when I graduated high school at 15 and immigrated to the US, I easily assimilated and became American because all of my early education and social structures had prepared me to fit into their culture while not knowing my own. My education had not prepared me to help my own country or community, and to be my best me. Learning about my own history in College and reading books by Black authors and learning of the Black experience did that for me. Learning more each day continues to feed that journey.

As we observe what one currently sees in the continued underdevelopment of Africa, a continent which has all the natural resources it needs to develop but which because of miseducation and Eurocentric thinking have been brainwashed to see opportunity as existing outside of themselves and progress as only what is defined by European and Americans and now the Chinese. Africa, where these others rush in while our youth seeing no opportunity rush out of. Whose educational system utilizes old books and information that do not match the needs of the continent today thus ill preparing the youth who are our future, and reinforcing that such knowledge can only be gained abroad from a western institution and not cultivated at home in Africa, the cradle of civilization. Builders of the first universities and pyramids still standing after thousands of years; yet seemingly not capable of preparing its youth for the 21st century.

A continent whose aspirations and foundation were poised for great progress in the late 50s and 60's,¹⁸ yet sixty years later still has not developed as it should have because of faulty thinking created by the Trojan Horse of miseducation and utilization of books and methods created

¹⁸ Geldof, Bob: Commission for Africa; *Our Common Interest : An Argument*

to continue colonization rather than books and methods created to create innovation, critical thinkers and ultimately true Self-Determination.

We will need Education that reinforces that we are the original people of our land and that that phrase *Aborigine* applies to you also; as others migrate to your lands and begin to call themselves members of your country in time you will forget that as Aborigines you have rights. You are the original people of the land yet when you look at your country's you see foreigners having more wealth and rights than the original inhabitants of the land. You see convoluted leadership structures which mimic European systems and continue to separate you from Traditional leadership structures which are more egalitarian than these Westminster and French models of hypocrisy we now have.

We have been misled and must now embrace our identity and Our Story. We must invest in capturing the thousands of years of history that our ancestors had and incorporating their practices and ways of life into our very being. We must end the many forms of mental trauma as aboriginal people (you the original people of the land) try to fit into European systems within your own African society and find you replicate the confusion and cruelty we see in so called developed nations in their treatment of the so called minorities (your own people) and in your case on the continent, through tribalism, class and caste systems, and the way you now treat the poor.

Remember Lord Macaulays words to the British Parliament in 1835 “ *I have not seen one person who is a beggar, who is a thief, such wealth I have seen in this country, such high moral values, people of such caliber, that I do not think we would ever conquer this country unless we break the backbone of this nation, which is her spiritual and cultural heritage...*”

We must restore our spiritual and cultural heritage. We must look within and bring that African creativity to find indigenous solutions to solve the complex challenges created by post independence neo-colonialism. Our curriculum must create sustainable quality and functional education in Africa.

In closing, I asked when I started how are we preparing our next generation for our future? It is here that Professional Authors will play a

critical role in the research needed and the books written to begin to tell OurStory. To begin to unpack the eight volumes of African History already created by UNESCO and the work of numerous Diaspora and African Scholars already done. Through the creation of novels of our past, present and future which will shape the values and the world we wish to see

By creating curriculum in our schools which uplifts our youth and give them the skills they need, and engages them to see the value of an education to them and the role it must play in Nation Building and Self Determination. Our youth must be empowered to see themselves as leaders, change agents, problem solvers, critical thinkers, and inter-generational connectors, so that we begin to learn from each other and become whole again. For this is the African way!

It becomes critical for there to be a transformation of how we think and a deliberate attempt to re-introduce our own story researched and written by us. To *connect the dots* to overstand what has delayed our progress and what must now be our solutions. To stake our claim in our right to be, for we are brilliant people who are quite capable of saving ourselves.

It is time for African People to wake up and claim what is theirs. The future belongs to us, it is our destiny, and the actions we now take will create that future where all of our people live a life of purpose that uplifts all people globally and we usher in the peace and stability needed to create a sustainable future for all. Where our children's natural genius is cultivated, and the values we share are prized. *"The best way to predict the future is to create it."* WE are the ones we have been waiting for who will do such a thing. WE are in our time.

I thank you for giving me this opportunity to speak here in Nigeria and look forward to reading the works of my fellow Professional Authors as we shape the minds of the world and create the future we wish to see. Ase.

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