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L'Afrique et les défis du XXIème siècle
Africa and the Challenges of the Twenty First Century
A África e os desafios do Século XXI

إفريقيا وتحديات القرن الواحد والعشرين

Africa; Running but not Reaching¹? Notes on Self Reflexivity

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Africa; Running but not Reaching¹? Notes on Self Reflexivity

Abstract

The proposed paper is concerned with stocktaking for the purpose of reinventing the future. It is a reflective exercise taking its cue from the 50th anniversary of the Silver Jubilee of the Casablanca Conference. As its backcloth the paper asks: on the road traveled so far, where are we? Who have we become? What are we? How are we moving forward?

In light of the theme at hand, the paper factors in van Walraven's provocative piece that provides a short but sharp trans-historical analysis of the OAU to suggest that first and foremost in the stock taking and reflective exercise, we have to listen to what others say about us. In challenge to or support of van Walraven's analysis, the paper will single out some case studies that show the road traveled so far. The case that the paper will put forth is that as we are contemplating entry into a century of institution building and where a new generation is taking on critical leadership positions, what is needed more than ever is a moral consciousness that we belong despite our differences. The thesis that will be advanced is that once we recognize that a sense of unity in diversity is crucial, this is the self reflective stance, then our actions and decisions will proceed with others in mind. In this manner, social transformation could be realized.

Key Words

Reflective, reinventing the future, moral consciousness, unity in diversity, social transformation

¹ I got inspiration for this title from Thandika Mkandawire's inaugural lecture at the London School of Economics titled running while others walk