

THEOLOGY OF INDUSTRIALIZATION AND THE MENACE OF PROSPERITY GOSPEL IN AFRICA: RETHINKING CAPUMANUISM FOR AFRICA'S ECONOMIC EMANCIPATION

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Abstract

The debate about whether faith communities should accept industrialization is outdated, as the faith community greatly benefits from industrialization. The focus now should be on how theology can promote and regulate industrialization. However, there has been a divergence manifested in prosperity theology or gospel, which preaches prosperity without productivity. This goes against the spirit of industrialization, which relies on utilizing human abilities for production to meet human needs. This theological approach presents a challenge to Africans who see wealth without accompanying production. This paper aims to address the impact of prosperity theology on the African mindset by utilizing the theology of industrialization. To achieve this, mental recalibration is necessary, which can be facilitated by the philosophy of Capumanuism. Capumanuism is an educational philosophy that aims to develop the whole individual in Africa for increased productivity. This paper will argue, through qualitative research and textual analysis that by promoting a theology of industrialization grounded in Capumanuism Africans can recalibrate their mindset for economic liberation. This research contributes to the discussion on African theology and philosophy, emphasizing the importance of African scholars reclaiming their heritage and developing specific theological and philosophical frameworks to tackle Africa's unique challenges.

Keywords: Theology, Philosophy, Industrialization, Capumanuism, Africa, & Economic

Introduction

In the last four decades, the gospel of prosperity has received a significant boost due to the dwindling economic fortunes of Africans and the quest to seek the intervention of the sacred in their conditions. The question of seeking the intervention of the sacred in everydayness is very ingrained in the psyche of Africans. This is why John Mbiti opines that Africans are notoriously religious as religion permeates every facet of their lives.¹ In the wake of the 1980s, Africa witnessed the rise of self-style and self-proclaimed prosperity preachers, popular among Pentecostal cycle, promising material prosperity to Africans if only they could give generously to the work of God. This brand of Pentecostalism quickly became mainstream as it thrived on the greed of humans to have

¹J. Mbiti, *African Philosophy and Religion* (London: Heinemann, 1970) p. 5

the good things of life without working for them. Its mantra was “Just give to God and all your needs will be met by Him” as he will prosper you in body and soul. It interpreted sacred scriptures along a materialistic lens and reduced the gospel message to earthly pursuit at the relegation of eternal values such as the eternal salvation of the human soul.

While this brand of Pentecostalism is gaining attraction, it has grown to become a real menace to Africans in the quest to better their condition and improve their lives. The prosperity gospel is not only a distortion of the real gospel of Christ, it fosters individual prosperity and overlooks far-reaching social issues like poverty, inequality and social injustice that characterise the society. These are the issues that the gospel message acting in the prophetic mandate, seeks to address and transform. This is where the prosperity gospel is lacking. It only preaches unrealistic hopes and momentary motivation to calm the agitated. This brand of the gospel lacks the philosophical and theological vision to transform Africans economically and inspires the drive towards industrialisation. This is because industrialising Africa can create the abundance needed for economic development. Therefore, the prosperity gospel cannot address these collective challenges. There is a need to replace the prosperity gospel with a more philosophically nuanced theology that inspires creativity, frugality, and productivity.

This paper aims to propose a theology of industrialization rooted in the philosophy of Capuamanuism as the basis for promoting mental recalibration, thus enabling the drive for productivity in Africa. This paper shall look at the menace of the prosperity gospel and suggest a mental recalibration of the African psyche. While the paper argues for a theology of industrialisation that balanced material development through industries, at the same time, it supports the infusion of African communal values in the innovations that will address African concerns. It proposes the Capuamanuism as the philosophical framework that can unleash the African drive for industrial progress.

Conceptual Clarification

Theology

The etymology of the word 'Theology' is derived from an ancient Greek word *Theos* meaning “god” or “divine being”; and, *Logos* meaning “reason”, or “word” or “discourse”, or “study”. In combination, *theology* means “the study of God” or “discourse about the divine or the sacred.” Theology is an academic discipline and a science² that studies the nature of God. It systematically studies the nature of the divine, religious beliefs, and the relationships between humans and the sacred.

Faith Community

Faith Community refers to a group of people who share a common spiritual belief, practice, or tradition, and support one another in their faith journey.³ As a community, it provides a sense of belonging, connection, and shared purpose among its members.

²T.D. Adidi & G. Asuquo, “Relevance of Philosophy (Reason) and Theology (Faith) in the 21st Century: Gotanism and Matters Arising” (Eds) Kanu Ikechukwu Anthony, Pwakim Gideon & Igboechesi E. Stanley, In *Theology, Philosophy and Education in the 21st Century: Festschrift in Honour of a Distinguished Emeritus Professor The Rt. Rev. Msgr. Cletus Taminu Gotan* (Jos: Jos University Press, 2022) p. 336

³A. Dinham, What is a 'Faith Community'? In *Community Development Journal*, Vol. 46. No. 4 (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011) p. 526

Industrialisation

Industrialisation is the period of social and economic change that transforms a human group from an agrarian society into an industrial society. This involves an extensive reorganisation of the economy for manufacturing⁴ or mass production. In the context of this paper, industrialisation is the process of pursuing economic growth, urban development, and up scaling of the manufacturing sector towards the total fulfilment or redemption of the human condition.

Capuamanuism

Etymologically, it is a coinage of two Latin words 'Capua' and 'Manu'. 'Capua' means head and 'Manu' means hand.⁵ Although it is a Latin neologism, its philosophical underpinnings are not exclusively Latin or Western. We first introduced it into African discourse in our earlier work. However, as a philosophy, it is rooted in African philosophical traditions that see interconnectedness and interdependence of entities, concepts and beings. It seeks to functionally harmonise the imperatives of the idealistic philosophy of education and the essentialist philosophy of education for the total development of the human person in body, soul and spirit. At the core of this philosophy is the idea that the training of the head (mind, soul, and spirit) which is the domain of academic education does not exclude or negate the training of the hand (body, or matter) which is the domain of vocational or entrepreneurial education.⁶ The complementarity or integration of the two in the learning process of a learner can open the versatility of human creativity and innovation for accelerating industrialisation in Africa.

The Menace of Prosperity Gospel in the Psychic of Africans

The prosperity gospel has become an oil mill for about four decades now, which is championed by the Pentecostal brand of Christianity and has remained on a steady rise and boom in Nigeria. These Pentecostal churches that preach this version of the gospel flourish as vibrant business enterprises – the founders and leaders – operate in the praxis of entrepreneurs⁷ or businesses build empires at the expense of gullible Nigerians who have come to believe that their wealth and economic breakthroughs are up in the sky. The prosperity gospel has gained significant traction in Africa; while it poses hope and prosperity, it also poses several menaces. The nature of the prosperity gospel in Africa calls for serious theological-philosophical reflection. The prosperity gospel can partly be considered as an erroneous gospel that reduces the soteriological elements of the gospel message, and at the same time overemphasises earthly or material concerns.

More so, its emphasis on material acquisition to the detriment of the spirituality of the human soul elevates material wealth and success as the only intrinsic values.

⁴A. O'Sullivan & S.M. Sheffrin, *Economics: Principles in Action* (Upper Saddle River, New Jersey: Pearson Prentice Hall, 2003) p. 472

⁵G. Asuquo and T.D. Adidi, "Obafemi Awolowo's Concept of Mental Magnitude and the Drive towards Entrepreneurial Oriented Education: A Case for 'Capuamanuism'". Anthony Ikechukwu Kanu, Timothy Dokpesi Adidi, Peter Kanyip Bakwaph, Martin Onukwuba, Catherine Chugo, Mike Bassa Boni (eds.) In *Economics, Higher Education and Sustainable Development in 21st Century Africa: A Festschrift In Honour Of Professor Ichoku Hyacinth Ementa*. Jos: Augustine Publication pp.389-390

⁶G. Asuquo and T.D. Adidi, "Obafemi Awolowo's Concept of Mental Magnitude and the Drive towards Entrepreneurial Oriented Education: A Case for 'Capuamanuism'" p. 389

⁷N.N. Iheanacho & C.A. Ughaerumbe, "The Rising Paradigm of Pentecostapreneurship in Nigeria: Impacts on National Development". In *Open Journal of Philosophy*, Vol. 6 No. 3 August, 2016

Consequently, fostering the culture of greed and consumerism. Most times, and if not all the times, these prosperity preachers often implore motivational tools to create false hope, leading to disappointment and disillusionment. Oftentimes members or victims of these unrealistic hopes resort to suicide tendencies. The overemphasis on material wealth and success can also breed individualism due to its focus on individual prosperity; and it can also divert attention from pressing social issues such as poverty, inequality, and injustice and the structures that enabled them.

The scripture is the platform for which the gospel message is passed to its adherents from one generation to another. Hence, for the gospel of prosperity to have a firm foundation it ought to conform to biblical standards and teachings. Unfortunately, and in most cases prosperity gospel teachings often contradict biblical principles, promoting a distorted view of Christianity. The gospel message provides its template for the purpose for which it was written and deviating from its original purpose, relevance and standards due to the African condition and context is unnecessary. The gospel message revealed in the scriptures is not meant to alleviate material poverty. However, the fruits of applying the principles of the scriptures can help address the burning issues of social justice which will contribute to the realisation of the common good for all. The sole purpose of studying theology and scriptures is not for material acquisition but to discover God. Osita T. Asogwa reflects on this reality and opines thus:

It is also true that Christianity is not a problem-solving religion, and the objective of theology is not to settle 'mundane' challenges. Yet, I strongly believe that proper philosophical and theological studies need to make people pro-active, critical, creative and knowledge-applicative to concrete situations. It is when the content and pedagogy of ecclesiastical studies are structured to take up this task that it would be better positioned to take the agents of evangelization and other Christian faithful to that 'heart of the Kerygma' which is its basic objective⁸

From the above it is evidently clear that the essence of the gospel message and the central theme of the Kerygma, representing the teachings of our Lord Jesus Christ, encapsulate the joyful tidings of deliverance and liberation from the ordinary aspects of the world. The pursuit of eternal things is in line with classical Western philosophy which originated in Plato idealism. Plato in his metaphysics directs our minds to the 'World of Forms'⁹ where the real things are and the objective of the gospel is to focus on eternal realities rather than more of what the material world gives. To this end, the mind of an average African who pursues the material world considers the gospel of prosperity suiting to their psychic craving rather than their spiritual upliftment. Hence, for the adherents of the prosperity gospel, Christianity has to necessarily translate into their economic condition rather than their spiritual needs. The sole task of evangelisation or the gospel message “involves the continuing conversion of heart, mind and soul and equipping agents of pastoral ministry with the requisite skills to carry out an effective ministry, in the service of God and his

⁸T.O. Asogwa, “Philosophy and Theology in Dialogue in an African Ecclesial Context: Lessons From Veritatis Gaudium” Stan Chu Ilo, Nora K. Nonterah, Ikenna U. Okafor, Justin C. Nabushawo & Idara Otu (Eds). In *Faith in Action: Reimagining the Mission of the Church in Education, Politics, and Servant Leadership in Africa* (Abuja: Paulines Publications, 2020) p. 179

⁹W.F. Lawhead, *The Voyage of Discovery: A Historical Introduction to Philosophy*, 2nd Edition (United Kingdom: Wadsworth Thomson Learning Publication, 2002) p. 52

people”.¹⁰ Prosperity gospels in Africa and its historical emergence is a shortfall of what constitutes the authentic gospel of Christianity.

Theology is a product of religion and religion is the product of the human search for what is beyond the explanation of the physical world. The search for material acquisition is the product of the economic search for the wants and needs of the human person. Emmanuel Ogheneochuko Arodovwe in the article *How Prosperity Gospel Ruined Christianity in Nigeria* raised concerns over the display of “opulence and extravagance as such material acquisition and possession is [seem as] an evidence of being in God's book and his favourite”¹¹ is a derailment of purpose of the search of eternal values that can guide society towards enduring coexistence and stability.

More so, the drive for material acquisition through preaching prosperity gospel has led most Africans to seek every medium as an instrument to reach God for protection, financial prosperity and every other thing that can satisfy the human cravings for economic benefits. There is a transactional dimension of this prosperity gospel in regards to making Christianity a give and take affair. This is especially seen in the area of tithing, first fruits and donations. In this case, the faith community are meant to believe that giving to God can translate into financial prosperity or some sort of protection against evil or forces of darkness. Most preachers of the prosperity gospel often target vulnerable groups, such as the poor, sick, and marginalised, exploiting their desperation. These dimensions have caused many in the faith community to become impoverished by their church leaders, who defraud them of their meagre earnings. Notwithstanding, it's crucial to emphasise that not all African churches or Christian leaders adhere to the prosperity gospel. Many advocate a more balanced, biblically-grounded message that prioritises spiritual growth, community development, and social justice.

Prosperity Gospel as a Derailment of African Quest for Industrialization

The rate of unemployment is very alarming in Africa. According to Adidi and Omenukwa, “African nations have been rated among the underdeveloped and poorest in the world due to poor economic policies that have neither attracted foreign investors nor improved unemployment”.¹² They recommended that Africans should evolve economic institutions or theories that would enhance and accelerate growth, and welfare and drastically reduce unemployment in Africa.¹³ Industrialisation is often seem as the pathway for Africa's development. However, the industrialisation of Africa is stagnated

¹⁰L. Katunge, “Formation of Pastoral Agents: The Dream of African Synods for the Poor and the Voiceless”. Stan Chu Ilo, Nora K. Nonterah, Ikenna U. Okafor, Justin C. Nabushawo & Idara Otu (Eds). In *Faith in Action: Reimagining the Mission of the Church in Education, Politics, and Servant Leadership in Africa* (Abuja: Paulines Publications, 2020) p. 211

¹¹E. O. Arodovwe, *How Prosperity Gospel Ruined Christianity in Nigeria*. In an unpublished work that was extracted from a whatsapp platform in the Association of Professional Philosophers of Nigeria (August, 16th 2024)

¹²T.D. Adidi & P.C. Omenukwa, “A Philosophical Appraisal of Igwebuikconomics in the Thought of Anthony Ikechukwu Kanu”. In OCHENDO: An African Journal of Innovative Studies, Vol 5. No.1, In a Publication of the Association for the Promotion of African Studies, 2024 p. 2

¹³T.D. Adidi & P.C. Omenukwa, “A Philosophical Appraisal of Igwebuikconomics in the Thought of Anthony Ikechukwu Kanu” p. 2

or limited due to myriad of challenges ranging from colonial legacies, corruption, inept political leaders, weak infrastructure and the absence of an overarching philosophy for national development.¹⁴

Despite the huge challenges affecting industrialisation in Africa, adherents of the prosperity gospel and their preachers seek solace in waiting for God to give them employment. Yet, while some of them could use their talent and resources to enhance and drive economic growth, they are praying in churches, waiting for miracle jobs that do not exist anywhere. While miracles are not disregarded or considered impossible, economic growth does not rely on miracles; but hard work and entrepreneurship skills.¹⁵ Hence, the prosperity gospel is a derailment and distraction to the African quest for industrialisation. Most of the industrialised nations in the world did not sleep in churches for prayer and fasting to achieve industrial success. Industrialised nations have made significant strides in achieving sustainable growth and development despite limited resources, all without the prevalence of churches as observed in Africa. In most cases, they are not even as religious as Africans; yet, they are much more industrialised and often innovative in using their talents and resources.

Industrialisation is a crucial step towards economic development and prosperity. Africa, with its vast natural resources and growing population, is poised for industrialisation just like China and Japan. Despite the huge challenges that affect industrialisation in Africa, Africans should move away from having unrealistic expectations in the sky, and be focused on fostering international cooperation and partnerships for technological transfer. Such international cooperation and partnerships can provide financing, technology, and expertise to support industrial development in Africa. Therefore, with the right policies, investments, and partnerships, Africa can leverage international financial capital to become a major player in the global economy through diverse innovations and skills. However, the next section shall explore this quest for economic development, which holds the promises of Africa's emancipation from poverty and socioeconomic backwardness.

African Quest for Economic Emancipation and the Theology of Industrialization

The arduous journey towards achieving economic freedom in Africa is intertwined with the concept of industrialisation, leading to a multifaceted narrative that is deeply influenced by historical, cultural, political, and religious factors. This narrative embodies the ongoing struggle for material prosperity, self-determination, and human dignity. In this section, we will delve into the significance of industrialisation as both a powerful tool and a theological imperative for the economic emancipation of Africa.

Africa's economic challenges are deeply rooted in its colonial history. Motivated by the desire to exploit Africa's resources, European powers imposed economic systems that favoured their interests. The extraction of raw materials forced labour, and the creation of

¹⁴P.D. Dahida, "The Crisis of Industrialization in Africa: A Focus on Nigeria". In an International Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities Reviews Vol.⁵ No.¹, February, ²⁰¹⁵, p.⁵² – ⁶⁶

¹⁵T. D. Adidi & P.C. Omenukwa, "A Philosophical Appraisal of Igwebuikconomics in the Thought of Anthony Ikechukwu Kanu". In OCHENDO: An African Journal of Innovative Studies, p. ⁹

economies dependent on exporting primary goods left African nations impoverished and underdeveloped. Walter Rodney reinforces this point in his seminal work *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa*, when he argues that colonialism systematically deindustrialised Africa, leaving it economically dependent and structurally weak. Rodney's thesis is that the economic structures imposed by colonial powers stunted Africa's industrial growth and made it difficult for the continent to transition to a modern industrial economy after independence.¹⁶ The deindustrialisation of Africa was a deliberate policy of the colonial project and structures in Africa.¹⁷

The post-colonial era has seen African nations grappling with the legacies of these structures. Despite political independence, economic independence has remained elusive for many African countries. The economic policies of the post-colonial governments often mirrored the colonial economic systems, focusing on the export of raw materials rather than developing domestic industries. This has perpetuated a cycle of dependency, where African economies are vulnerable to fluctuations in global commodity prices. There is consensus among development partners in Africa that Africa needs massive industrialisation to leapfrog its economies. The pathway for industrial development has remained problematic in Africa. In a bid to provide an impetus for African industrialisation, African theologians propose the concept of the theology of industrialisation.

The theology of industrialisation in Africa can be understood as the belief that industrial development is not just a means to economic prosperity but also a moral and spiritual imperative. Kwame Bediako an African theologian argues that Christianity in Africa must engage with the continent's socio-economic realities. In his view, the gospel message is not just about individual salvation but also about the transformation of society. Bediako emphasises that the church in Africa has a role to play in advocating for economic justice and industrial development as part of its mission to bring about the Kingdom of God on earth.¹⁸ More so, John Mbiti and Laurenti Magesa have also highlighted the importance of integrating African cultural and spiritual values into the continent's development agenda. They argue that industrialisation should not be seen as a purely Western concept but should be contextualised within African worldviews that emphasise community, sustainability, and the stewardship of resources.¹⁹ This approach challenges the dominant economic models that prioritise profit over people and the environment. Industrialisation, therefore, becomes a theological imperative for African Christians who see it as a way to fulfil the biblical mandate to “subdue the earth” (Genesis 1:28) and to promote justice and equity in society. The development of industries that provide jobs, enhance the quality of life, and promote the common good is seen as a manifestation of God's will for human flourishing.

¹⁶W. Rodney, “How Europe Underdeveloped Africa”. (London: Bogle-L'Ouverture Publications, 1973) p. 17

¹⁷O. Taiwo, *How Colonialism Pre-empted Modernity in Africa* (Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2010) pp.22-25

¹⁸K. Bediako, *Christianity in Africa: The Renewal of a Non-Western Religion* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1995), p. 59.

¹⁹See Laurenti Magesa, *African Religion: The Moral Traditions of Abundant Life*. (Michigan: Orbis Books, 1997)

Religious or faith communities have a great role to play in making the above happen in Africa. They can do this by shaping attitudes towards work, wealth, and economic development in Africa. Christianity and Islam, the two dominant religions on the continent, both have teachings that can support the quest for economic emancipation. For example, Christianity, with its emphasis on stewardship and the dignity of labour, encourages believers to see work as a form of service to God and humanity. The Protestant work ethic, which emphasises hard work, discipline, and frugality, has been credited with contributing to the economic development of Western societies.²⁰ In Africa, this ethic can be harnessed to promote industrialisation and economic growth.

Furthermore, Islam also has teachings that can support economic development. The concept of *Zakat*, one of the Five Pillars of Islam, requires Muslims to give a portion of their wealth to the poor. This encourages a sense of social responsibility and can be a powerful tool for poverty alleviation. Islamic finance, with its principles of risk-sharing and prohibition of interest, also offers alternative models of financing that can support industrialisation. No doubt, religious institutions in Africa have the potential to be powerful agents of change in the quest for economic emancipation. They can mobilise communities, advocate for justice, and promote values that support industrial development. However, for this to happen, religious leaders need to be actively engaged in the economic discourse and work in partnership with governments, businesses, and civil society. This can be enabled by a mind-set that balances the imperatives of spirituality and pragmatism towards the emancipation of the productivity drive of Africans. This mind-set can be nurtured through a philosophical disposition that sees the intrinsic interconnectedness of things. This paper proposes Capumanuism as a philosophical disposition that can make possible a mental recalibration for economic emancipation in the African quest for development.

Capuamanuism as a Philosophical Basis for Mental Recalibration

Capumanuism is a philosophical disposition that sees the interconnectedness and interdependence of mind and matter as the basis for socio-political and economic development. It is a philosophy of education that seeks to develop the total man in a multicultural context. While other philosophies of education like idealism, perennialism, essentialism, progressivism, Reconstructionism, existentialism, behaviourism, and constructivism are focused on one aspect of being at the exclusion or neglect of the other; Capuamanuism sees balance or harmony of mind and matter in the progressive reformation of a multicultural society. Rooted in the African philosophy of complementarity, holism, and integration; Capuamanuism maintains that to educate a fuller-and-ready human being there is a need to blend and integrate positive elements of idealism (education of the mind) and aspects of essentialism (education of the hand) into a coherent whole that can make the human being exact in the application of the intellect and entrepreneurial skills in meeting societal needs and for self-reliance. The imperative of educating the mind is to train an intellectually versatile individual who is full of knowledge, ideas and principles of things and their ultimate being but lacking in the progressive transformation of things to useful products or services that can address the

²⁰M. Weber, *Protestant Ethics and the Spirit of Capitalism*. Trans. Talcott Parsons and Anthony Giddens. (London & Boston: Unwin Hyman, 1930) p.52

immediate and future needs of society. This idealistic-oriented education only creates fuller human beings who often are not exact in the transformation of things, which is what developing society needs. This implies that idealistic-oriented education places a premium on mental development at the expense of practical or manual skills. Metaphorically, it is the education of the head.²¹

On the flip side is the education of the hand, which is geared towards entrepreneurial, vocational or skills acquisition. It sees the development of skills as sacrosanct in the flourishing of the individual. This means that the progressive transformation of objects in creating products, services and the systems that deliver them is the hallmark of this kind of education which is guided by essentialism. As a progressive-oriented education, it sees the development of individual skills as essential for students to be productive members of society. It seeks to only instil basic knowledge and skills that are crucial in making the learner a ready individual for the real world. Metaphorically, it is the education or training of the hand.²² Both the education of the head and hand are incomplete when implemented alone. However, the complementary relationship of the two within an individual holds promises of educating a complete human being who is fuller-and-ready to address societal needs and foster self-reliance. While education of the head can make one a fuller human being with knowledge, ideas and principles, on the other hand, education of the hand can make one a ready human being. Therefore, for Capuamanuism the goal of education is to make an individual learner full of academic or intellectual knowledge of the ultimate causes of things and ready for real-world situations through the acquisition of entrepreneurial or vocational skills to be exact in addressing real needs of society.²³

Currently, there is a drive towards entrepreneurial or vocational education which is sometimes referred to as Skills Acquisition. Scholars like Ali Ibrahim Pantami opine that “skills are better than degrees”.²⁴ Degrees are the product of academic or intellectual education; while skills acquisition is a product of vocational or entrepreneurial education. Pantami emphasises the importance of developing practical skills that are in high demand and align with industry needs. Pantami starts by addressing the mismatch between degrees and industry requirements. He points out that many graduates find themselves ill-prepared for the workforce, lacking the necessary skills to excel in their chosen fields.²⁵ Pantami's point is cogent because over the years the educational philosophy that guides the Nigerian educational system has been idealistic and intellectually driven. Therefore, in the age of advancement in technology, the emphasis is on skills and not the amount of 'bookish' knowledge one has. Nonetheless, what Pantami left out is that skills are one of the pillars of the human tripod and overemphasis on it alone is incomplete, which will

²¹G. Asuquo & T.D.Adidi, “Obafemi Awolowo's Concept of Mental Magnitude and the Drive towards Entrepreneurial Oriented Education: A Case for Capuamanuism”. Anthony Ikechukwu Kanu, Timothy Dokpesi Adidi, Peter Kanyip Bakwaph, Martin Onukwuba & Mike Bassa Boni (eds) *Economics, Higher Education and Sustainable Development In 21st Century Africa* In a Festschrift In Honour Of Professor Ichoku Hyacinth Ementa (Jos: Augustine Publication, 2023) pp.389-390

²²G. Asuquo & T.D.Adidi, “Obafemi Awolowo's Concept of Mental Magnitude and the Drive towards Entrepreneurial Oriented Education: A Case for Capuamanuism” p. 390

²³G. Asuquo & T.D.Adidi, “Obafemi Awolowo's Concept of Mental Magnitude and the Drive towards Entrepreneurial Oriented Education: A Case for Capuamanuism” p. 390

²⁴A.I. Pantami, *Skills Rather Than Just Degrees* (University Press, 2023) p.5

²⁵L. Doyle, *Study Guide: Skills Rather Than Just Degrees*. <https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/18469087-7-study-guide>

eventually run into the same problem that idealistic education presents to Nigerian society. The debate of whether degrees are better than skills is missing the points on the core objective of education from the prism of holistic development of the total human being in body, mind and soul. Therefore, both degrees and skills are missing links which need to complement each other for the development of a fuller-and-ready human being who is exact in addressing social needs. This debate is uncalled for because the individual as a bundle of possibilities is open to various influences at a time. Society through both the formal and informal institute of education needs to calibrate the mind to be attuned to both degrees and skills at the same time. This call for mental recalibration and Capuamanuism can provide the philosophical impetus to actualise this in a multicultural context. It does this through the accommodation and integration of all bodies of human knowledge. All knowledge so far as they are the product of human culture and interaction is useful either in the immediate or in the future. None should be relegated or marginalised, rather they should be recognised for human flourishing and development towards industrialisation.

The focus is the industrialisation of society and every piece of knowledge is needed in this regard and the human mind must be recalibrated to assimilate them. In history, the Industrial Revolution that heralded the new world was first mental before it became mechanical which needed skilled operators to update and operate the machines. While we are fascinated by inventions and the ways they make life worthwhile, they were originally ideas that have been deliberated on by scholars, critiqued and developed into prototypes that became the movers of the industrialisation of the Western world. Likewise, if Africans are interested in industrialisation both the development of the mind and the hand are essential for educating the total man. Therefore, the industrialisation of Africa must go beyond the trapping of secularity and be infused with theological imperatives which is the hallmark of the theology of industrialisation.

Capuamanuism as Basis for Theology of Industrialization in Africa

The notion of industrialisation as a theological issue emerged alongside the Industrial Revolution in Europe, where Christian theologians began to address the social and moral implications of rapid technological progress. For instance, Pope Leo XIII's encyclical *Rerum Novarum*, addressed the rights of workers in industrial societies, emphasising the need for justice, equity, and dignity in the face of industrial capitalism.²⁶ This early engagement laid the foundation for later theological reflections on industrialisation in other parts of the world, including Africa and Latin America.

In post-colonial Africa, the quest for economic development and industrialisation became intertwined with religious and moral discourses. Leaders such as Kwame Nkrumah and Julius Nyerere saw industrialisation not only as an economic necessity but also as a moral duty to restore African dignity after colonial exploitation. Nkrumah, for example, viewed industrial development as essential for true independence and saw it as part of a broader ideological and spiritual battle against neo-colonialism.²⁷

²⁶*RERUM NOVARUM* Encyclical of Pope Leo Xiii on Capital and Labor. Retrieve from https://www.vatican.va/content/leo-xiii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_l-xiii_enc_15051891_rerum-novarum.html

²⁷K. Nkrumah, *Neo-Colonialism: The Last Stage of Imperialism* (London: Thomas Nelson & Sons, 1965) p. 32

At the heart of the theology of industrialisation is the idea that economic development, particularly through industrialisation, is a moral imperative. This view is based on the belief that industrialisation can help alleviate poverty, create jobs, and improve the quality of life, aligning with religious teachings on justice, human dignity, and stewardship. In Christian theology, for instance, the biblical principle of *imago Dei* (the belief that humans are created in the image of God) supports the idea that humans have the responsibility to create and innovate as co-creators with God. Industrialisation, in this sense, is seen as part of the fulfilment of human potential and God's plan for human flourishing.²⁸ While the theology of industrialisation often supports the idea of economic development, it also includes critical perspectives on the potential dangers of unchecked industrial growth and industrial capitalism. Liberation theology, particularly in the Global South, has critiqued industrial capitalism for perpetuating systems of oppression and exploitation. Theologians such as Gustavo Gutiérrez have argued that industrialisation when driven solely by profit and greed, can lead to environmental degradation, social inequality, and the dehumanisation of workers.²⁹

In Africa, theologians have also warned against the uncritical adoption of Western models of industrialisation that prioritise profit over people. John Mbiti have called for an approach to industrialisation that is rooted in African communal values, emphasising the need for development that is inclusive, just, and respectful of cultural and environmental contexts.³⁰ This call by Mbiti resonates with the goal of Capuamanuism as the philosophy that can form the basis for the theology of industrialisation in Africa. This entails that industrialisation is at the service of the collective through shared prosperity and not the profitability of the few at the expense of the people. The individual still has its place in the use of his/her faculties for economic advantage but not irresponsibly. The individual bears the responsibility for the continuous existence of the community because it is through the harmonious prosperity of the community that individuals realises their full potential. This mind-set is antithetical to the rugged individualism that has infiltrated African Christianity whereby denominational founders and General Overseers see the faith community's resources as their personal property open for private aggrandizement instead of working for the common good. Capital is raised in faith communities to build projects without sustainable economic benefit beyond the needs of the individual founders. It is time faith communities dedicated part of their capital to massive productive ventures in partnership with gifted and knowledgeable members in their areas of needs or with established business conglomerates as shareholders. It is doing this that Capuamanuism becomes the basis for mental recalibration in Africa by fostering the synergy between private enterprise or property and communal survival and flourishing. The first step for actualising this philosophical framework is the recalibration of the African psyche.

Theology of Industrialization and Capuamanuism: Towards the Recalibration of the African Psyche for Economic Emancipation

The pursuit of economic emancipation in Africa has sparked intellectual and ideological debates surrounding the continent's pathway toward self-reliance. One such avenue of

²⁸G. Gustavo, *A Theology of Liberation: History, Politics, and Salvation* (Michigan: Orbis Books, 1973) p. 54

²⁹G. Gustavo, *A Theology of Liberation: History, Politics, and Salvation*, p. 12

³⁰J. Mbiti, *African Religions and Philosophy* (London: Heinemann, 1970) p. 17

discourse is the theology of industrialisation, which frames industrial progress as not just an economic endeavour but a moral and spiritual imperative for African nations. This industrial progress can first be enabled by psychological disposition that present holistic understanding of life. The philosophy and concept of Capuamanuism can facilitate it. The concept of Capumanuism³¹ seeks to integrate African indigenous values, philosophy, and spirituality into a holistic framework that can recalibrate the African psyche toward industrial and economic liberation. This section explores the intersection of the theology of industrialisation and Capuamanuism as it pertains to Africa's quest for economic emancipation.

The theology of industrialisation in Africa has its roots in the post-colonial struggle for self-determination and economic independence. At its core, is the idea that human beings as bearers of the image of God are endowed with the creative capacities to invent, innovate and create industrial technologies that can uplift the human condition, eradicate poverty, and promote justice, thereby aligning with theological notions of human dignity.³² This endowment is not only Western or colonial alone. It is universal to all humans. Therefore, it sees industrialization as part of humanity's divine mandate to be stewards of creation.

Capuamanuism, on the other hand, proposes a recalibration of the African mind-set towards self-reliance and industrial development through comprehensive education. This education encompasses intellectual development and practical skill training simultaneously within the same individual. Capumanuism demands the rejection of neo-colonial economic systems that perpetuate dependency and emphatically promotes a model of economic development firmly rooted in African values of communal ownership, social justice, and environmental stewardship. Central to Capuamanuism is the idea of re-centring African identity and spirituality in the economic and educational discourse. Where previous development models and philosophies of education have focused on adopting Western industrial frameworks, Capumanuism calls for an approach that is more aligned with African metaphysical realities and historical experiences. By doing so, it addresses the psychological dimension of economic emancipation, asserting that the African psyche has been damaged by centuries of colonial exploitation, prosperity gospel, and external economic domination. Capumanuism proposes a reawakening of the African spirit, whereby industrialisation is pursued not as a mere imitation of Western capitalism but as a spiritual and moral project that resonates with Africa's cultural heritage.

Therefore, the intersection of the theology of industrialisation and Capuamanuism offers a comprehensive framework for recalibrating the African psyche towards economic emancipation. This recalibration is necessary because, historically, the African economic experience has been shaped by exploitation and dependency, leading to psychological derailment and disempowerment that has affected how African societies approach

³¹See Gabriel Asuquo and Adidi Dokpesi Timothy, Obafemi Awolowo's Concept of Mental Magnitude and the Drive towards Entrepreneurial Oriented Education: A Case for 'Capuamanuism. In Kanu I. A, Adidi D.T (Eds.), *Economics, Higher Education and Sustainable Development in 21st Century Africa: A Festschrift in Honour of Professor Ichoku Hyacinth Ementa*. Jos: Augustine Publication pp.374-392

³²Gutiérrez Gustavo, *A Theology of Liberation: History, Politics, and Salvation*. Michigan: Orbis Books, 1973

industrialisation and economic development. Capuamanuism, coupled with the theology of industrialization, seeks to reclaim African agency and reorient the collective African mind-set towards self-sufficiency.

In practical terms, this recalibration entails fostering a spiritual and psychological shift that emphasizes collective responsibility, ethical industrial practices, and sustainable development. This shift is possible through a holistic education that instils both intellectual training with training in practical skills that align with the needs of industries. While academic schooling should be done in formal school settings for intellectual training, the acquisition of practical skills should be done either at the marketplace or the factory. Formal school is a theatre for re-orientation of the mind for critical thinking, inculcation of enduring values and ethos, and fostering of communal belonging. The marketplace or factory is the arena for deploying the mind for tangible production. The synergy of the school and the marketplace is the pathway for African industrialisation. Nevertheless, Capumanuism advocates for an industrialisation model that promotes communal ownership of resources, ethical entrepreneurship, and respect for nature. These principles resonate with both indigenous African spirituality and liberation theology.

Conclusion

This paper highlighted the mess of prosperity gospel on the psyche of Africans and the enthronement of greed, materialism and consumerism. This type of gospel emphasises accumulating wealth without working for it but encourages giving to God. This has resulted in enriching the self-proclaimed General Overseers or Founders who privatise the community's resources for their enrichment, leading to the impoverishment of many. This kind of gospel is an inauthentic gospel message. Hence, it needs to be discredited and abandoned for the economic emancipation of Africa because it is a derailment of the psyche of Africans. In its place, there should be an emphasis on the theology of industrialisation, which regards work, frugality, and social justice as the means to drive industrial progress and improve the human condition in Africa. This can be achieved through a philosophical framework that balances the imperatives of intellect and practical skills, unleashing the creative capacities of Africans to invent, innovate, and create systems that lead to massive productivity for economic development. This is far better than looking up to the sky for God to do for us what we can do for ourselves. Therefore, this paper asserts that the prosperity gospel has become irrelevant and should be replaced with a more proactive and productive theology, such as the theology of industrialisation enabled by the philosophy of Capuamanuism.

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