

## **Suggested Reading Materials for Young Africanists: Towards the victory of the African renaissance**

*To empower properly to act as conscious activists for the victory of the African Renaissance, the African youth must learn the habit and discipline of reading, asking questions and daring to challenge all supposedly "established truths". The proposed book list below should help in this regard.*

**Book [1]** below poses the challenge to us always to understand that history, even as an 'academic' discipline, is about the general (multi-disciplinary) development of human society. This means that we must constantly seek to understand human African and global society in all its elements.

### **[1] The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte by Karl Marx**

**Book [2]** tells an evocative story about land dispossession in Scotland, which parallels land dispossession in South Africa, (and representative of colonialism in general where such dispossession took place). This illustrates the inherent 'functioning' of capital, regardless of national boundaries. This emphasises the international/universal role of 'capital' as the central driver of the process of 'globalisation'.

### **[2] The Highland Clearances.**

**Book [3]** – about the 'African Diaspora' in Haiti – combines a definitive account about Africa's place in the then 'global political economy', the role and place of slavery in this regard, and, of great importance, the role and struggles of the Africans once they were integrated in the world economy, (through the African slaves), in helping to determine world history and the shape of human society. (NB: The majority of the slaves who rose in rebellion successfully to establish the very first Black Republic were first generation African slaves!)

**[3] The Black Jacobins: Toussaint L'Ouverture and the San Domingo Revolution** by *C.L.R. James*

**Book [4]** follows this account immediately, graphically to relate a contemporary story about Haiti. It tells the story that Haiti, given its historic place in the centuries-old 'globalisation' process, has, to this day, continued to pay a price for having served in the vanguard in the struggle to achieve genuine African liberation.

**[4] Damming the Flood: Haiti and the Politics of Containment** by *Peter Hallward*

The preceding books tell stories that principally relate to the rest of the world, outside of Africa. **Book [5]** brings us back to Africa. It tells a story both about the real meaning of the European colonisation of Africa and the related protracted struggles of the African people to defeat the effort to deprive them of their independence.

**[5] Frontiers: The Epic of South Africa's Creation and the Tragedy of the Xhosa People** by *Noel Mostert*

Among others, **Book [5]** tells an inspiring African story of resistance to colonialism. However, it also reports the African defeat in this regard. The historical drama contained in Book [6] presents a *creative-realistic* imagination of the continuation of the anti-colonial struggle detailed in **Book [5]**, in the context of the African society created in the aftermath of the victory of the colonial powers. It is an outstanding work of creative 'fictional realism'.

**[6] God's Bits of Wood** by *Ousmane Sembène*

**Book [7]** relates immediately to the above/foregoing. It tells both a particular and generic story about how the dominant world powers would act and have acted specifically to perpetuate African dependence, in their interest.

### **[7] In Search of Enemies: A CIA Story** by *John Stockwell*

It is important that Africans, victims of the machinations described in **Book [7]**, must understand how those who would deny us our independence operate. **Book [8]** provides a vivid example in this regard, which includes the confirmation of the constancy of the strategic objectives of the major Western powers, regardless of which political party is in power.

### **[8] PRICE OF POWER** by *Seymour Hersh*

All the preceding Books inevitably present us, the Africans, as 'victims' of history. This is based on an assertion that has informed European historiography for a long time that we are objects rather than makers of history. However, **Book [7]** presents a well-argued African case, advanced by the modern African intelligentsia, that as Africans we have been makers of history. It is important that as Africans we understand this reality.

### **[7] Civilization or Barbarism: An Authentic Anthropology** by *Cheikh Anta Diop, Yaa-Lengi Meema Ngemi* (Translation)

The scientific works carried out by the African intelligentsia as represented in **Book [7]** above has been confirmed by some among the European intelligentsia. **Book [8]** confirms the historically vital finding that African thought, etc, is a central contributor to the evolution of all human society, including inherited modern thought and practice.

Thus can we, the Africans, legitimately claim not only that Africa is the very (generic/genetic) origin of all humanity, but also that we played our own rightful role in terms of defining human behaviour in all its important elements.

**[8] Black Athena: The Afroasiatic Roots of Classical Civilization (The Fabrication of Ancient Greece 1785-1985, Volume 1) by Martin Bernal**

In the end, all our important studies, as reflected above, which seek to 'understand the world', must empower us to make a determination about how we must act to change this 'world', for our benefit as Africans. This means that we must understand ourselves and our own responsibility to ourselves, precisely as makers of history. **Book [9]** challenges us to undertake this task, acting honestly in this regard. Building on this, we have a duty further to expand our understanding of our reality, ourselves and our possibilities.

**[9] The Wretched of the Earth by Frantz Fanon**

The eminent Pan-Africanist, Kwame Nkrumah, speaking for his generation, made bold to present Africa with many strategic tasks. These are contained in **Book [10]** below, all of which we must examine closely. In this regard, relating to their relevance and practicality, we must make every effort to understand everything which would give us the possibility to achieve sustained success.

**[10] Africa Must Unite (New World Paperbacks) by Kwame Nkrumah**

Having understood everything we will, based on a study of all the preceding Books, we must answer and act on the question – what is to be done to advance the Renaissance of Africa?

Thabo Mbeki