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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

*Rethinking the Discourse of Development in the Context
of the National Question in Postcolonial Africa*

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5 - 9 / 12 / 2011

Rabat Maroc / Morocco

Abstract:

This paper seeks to contribute to the debates on the African national question from the angle of economic and social development. The struggle to achieve economic development has been one of the main concerns within debates on the African national question. What has not emerged clearly is a discourse of African development which takes into account the history of the continent, its indigenous values, and institutions. This lack of a well-thought-out African development perspective that is not informed by Western modernist ideas has culminated in the continuation of conceptions of development in Africa as taking the form of Westernization. What has not been opened to systematic and critical debate on African conceptions of development is that unless the discourse of development itself is not liberated from Eurocentrism it will continue to unfold as an alienating process that is resisted by some African communities as an imposition from outside and to elude the continent. This paper picks up the analysis of the development discourse from the perspective of critical decolonial perspective informed by the work of scholars like Walter D. Mignolo that privileges 'border thinking' and is predicated on the notions of 'I think from where I stand.' Its proposition is that there is need for decolonization and 'Africanization' of development discourse to reflect the core needs of the African peoples particularly the poor. The paper will start off with a critique of mainstream development discourse from a critical decolonial thinking and will proceed to make a case for a new African development discourse that takes into account African historical experiences and indigenous African thought. This new African development discourse will put the African people first and be constructed from their core values, needs and demands.