

9. Reuel J. Khoza (ed.), **Let Africa Lead: African Transformational Leadership for the 21st Century Business**, Vezubuntu Publishing Ltd, 2006: pages 285.

This is a book written by the former chairman of Eskom. It is a book about how African humanism encapsulated in the philosophy of Ubuntu is good to promote business in Africa. Reuel Khoza writes: "This is a book of ideas drawn from life experience and generally accessible literature, which I have tried to integrate in a single coherent explanation of Ubuntu in business." The Preface for the book was written by the Thabo Mbeki when he was still president. He said: "Reuel Khoza's Let Africa lead – puts forward the view that Africa has all that is necessary to advance itself within the community of mankind... Africans welcome the world and are poised to make their contribution felt in the 21st century-the African century." Nelson Mandela

endorsed both the author and the philosophy of Ubuntu in business by saying “humanness does not weaken business. It strengthens it. It cements the relationship upon which the teamwork and innovation must rest... Both teamwork and trust are seen as vital components of world-class entrepreneurs today. They embody the positive values of the so-called “triple bottom line” of business sustainability.”

Reuel Khosa is arguing to use Ubuntu to make this century an Africa 21 century. He quotes an African proverb: “Until lions have their own historians, all stories about hunting will glorify the hunter.” Africa must have leadership to restore Africa to itself. This can still be an African century, if Africans can draw from their moral strength by spreading and energising their value system of Ubuntu captured by the principle: *motho ke motho ka batho* means I am because you are.

You are, because we are. Humans are humans because of other humans and not simply themselves as individual empirical entities like Robin Crusoe. Interconnection as people comes first, not as atomised individuals pursuing selfishly pleasure with hedonistic abandon.

This deep philosophy of African humanism is central to get Africans out of their current misery. The philosophy of Ubuntu encapsulates African humanism at the deepest level combining, emotion, reason, wisdom, action and speech by connecting Africa’s moral and intellectual power to forge a shared human destiny. Former president Mandela used Ubuntu to create national reconciliation rather than revenge, and consensus and harmony rather than bitterness and settling scores. Ubuntu admonishes humanity that we cannot achieve much by sacrificing our connectedness to each other and nature by stressing our apartness. In the great circle of life, this means that the 1000 communities which the European anthropological gaze froze into separate units in Africa are first and foremost Africans tied by one garment of Ubuntu’s: you are because we are! With the philosophy of Ubuntu we can unite and our diversity can be an expression of our identity to foster our rock-firm solidarity and humanity in unity.

We will remain balkanised and divided as 53 states without much difference to the way we live if we fail to appreciate the value of Africa’s powerful philosophy of Ubuntu. We thus need Ubuntu to overcome balkanisation and realise full African unity.

We need Ubuntu to unite our diverse communities into one African-human unity. We need this African solidarity for Africa to help the world achieve a more enduring civilisation on a planetary scale. We need Ubuntu to improve African leadership by looking at tradition to build the new enterprise. This is the compelling message of this excellent work by Reuel Khoza. This is an important book that requires exposure so that more and more Africans know about its existence.