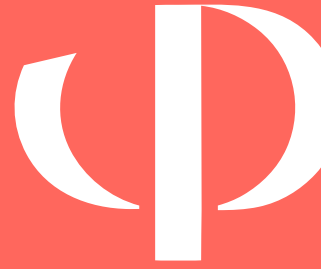


Philosophy and the Black Experience



FALL 2023

VOLUME 23 | NUMBER 1

FROM THE EDITORS

Anthony Sean Neal and Björn Freter

SUBMISSION GUIDELINES AND INFORMATION

ARTICLES

Frederick Ochieng'-Odhiambo

African Philosophy: A Brief Personal Experience and Contribution

Seth Oppong, Martin Odei Ajei, and Hasskei Mohammed Majeed

Nurturing the Nexus Between African Philosophy and African Psychology

BOOK REVIEW

Some Thoughts on Olúfẹ́mi Táíwò's Against Decolonisation

Reviewed by Björn Freter

MENTIONS

Books, Anthologies, and Papers

Björn Freter



APA STUDIES ON

Philosophy and the Black Experience

ANTHONY SEAN NEAL AND BJÖRN FRETER, CO-EDITORS

VOLUME 23 | NUMBER 1 | FALL 2023

FROM THE EDITORS

Anthony Sean Neal
MISSISSIPPI STATE UNIVERSITY

Björn Freter
GETTYSBURG COLLEGE

This issue of *APA Studies in Philosophy and the Black Experience* marks a transition in the editorial staff. The recent past editors, Drs. Stephen C. Ferguson and Dwayne A. Tunstall, were part of a long line of editors who desired to present the best version of writings authored by philosophers who had a focus on the Black experience. This transitory moment is not a step away from the tradition formed in the past. In many ways, this is a re-investment in the notion that gave rise to the significance of the initial publication of the *Newsletter on Philosophy and the Black Experience*.

Accordingly, Leonard Harris wrote the following:

The title "Newsletter on Philosophy and the Black Experience" is informed by W.E.B. Du Bois' *Black Folk: Then and Now* and St. Clair Drake's *Black Folk: Here and There*. "Black" is not definable by simple reference to biology, actual color or place of origin. It has to do with the way people, frequently African people, have been understood and identified through the aegis of biology, color, and origin. Crucial to that understanding and identity are individual and group cultural and material experiences that cover the range of possible human experiences, including subjugation, separation of people by race, and forms of resistance accompanying immiseration. Racial and ethnic forms of alterity, infused in the entrails of what it is to be a person, whether in Black Athena (Martin Bernal), post-colonial India, Yugoslavia, Brazil or America inform the concerns of NPBE.

If the history of racism and ethnocentricity worldwide were not so divisive and malignant, the need for a publication on the Black experience might be no greater than the need for a publication on the experiences of Croatians or tall people. The cutting edge of social reality, however, helps shape and reshape experiences that warrant attention. It is also attention to that edge that may offer a basis for universality, human bonding, and universal emancipation.

During our service as the new editors of *APA Studies in Philosophy and the Black Experience*, we hope to stay the course while allowing space for innovation. As a part of this innovation and along with the inclusion of the occasional book review, *APA Studies in Philosophy and the Black Experience* will have a section entitled *Mentions*, where we attempt to make mention of all new books by Black philosophers, or books about Black philosophers, or books about the Black experience. In order to accomplish this task, help is needed from the readership, or anyone interested in making sure that there exists an archival record for future scholars. We ask that you email your new titles, or titles of which you become aware, to apa.philbe.newsletter@gmail.com.

Thank you for your support in the past, and we hope to continue to be worthy of your support in the future.

SUBMISSION GUIDELINES AND INFORMATION

APA Studies on Philosophy and the Black Experience is published by the Committee on the Status of Black Philosophers. Authors are encouraged to submit original articles and book reviews on any topic in philosophy that makes a contribution to philosophy and the black experience broadly construed. The editors welcome submissions written from any philosophical tradition, as long as they make a contribution to philosophy and the black experience broadly construed. The editors especially welcome submissions dealing with philosophical issues and problems in African American and Africana philosophy.

All article submissions should be between ten and twenty pages (double spaced) in length, and book reviews should be between five and seven pages (double spaced) in length. All submissions must follow the APA guidelines for gender-neutral language and *The Chicago Manual of Style* formatting. All submissions should be accompanied by a short biography of the author. Please send submissions electronically to apa.philbe.newsletter@gmail.com.

DEADLINES

Fall issues: May 1

Spring issues: December 1

EDITOR

Anthony Sean Neal, apa.philbe.newsletter@gmail.com

FORMATTING GUIDELINES

- The *APA Studies* adhere to *The Chicago Manual of Style*.
- Use as little formatting as possible. Details like page numbers, headers, footers, and columns will be added later. Use tabs instead of multiple spaces for indenting. Use *italics* instead of underlining. Use an “em dash” (—) instead of a double hyphen (--).
- Use endnotes instead of footnotes. Examples of proper endnote style:

John Rawls, *A Theory of Justice* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1971), 90.

See Sally Haslanger, “Gender and Race: (What) Are They? (What) Do We Want Them To Be?” *Noûs* 34 (2000): 31–55.

ARTICLES

African Philosophy: A Brief Personal Experience and Contribution

Frederick Ochieng’-Odhiambo
THE UNIVERSITY OF THE WEST INDIES

INTRODUCTION: MY PATHWAY INTO AFRICAN PHILOSOPHY

My path into the discipline of philosophy generally and African philosophy in particular was unusual. This had to do with the fact that in my home country, Kenya, philosophy is not taught in primary and secondary schools. Neither is it taught in technical and vocational colleges. It is taught only in universities. Therefore, when I applied for admission to the University of Nairobi (UoN), since I was not familiar with the discipline of philosophy, I applied to undertake a BA degree in government (political science). This was a discipline I was acquainted with and was quite popular within the academy and among the populace also. When I gained admission in September 1979, I registered as a student in the Department of Government. However, unknown to me, students admitted to the then Faculty of Arts at the UoN were required to register in three Departments in the Faculty during their first year of study. For the sake of fulfilling that requirement, I went ahead and also enrolled in literature in English and philosophy, which were housed in the Departments of Literature and Philosophy, respectively.

However, during the course of my first year of study, my interest shifted from the discipline of government to philosophy. This was largely because of the nature and subject matter of philosophy. The unrestricted attribute of philosophy and the pertinent questions that it addresses stood out for me. Its concern with the nature of being and the human condition, and its focus on those questions we ask about life and how we should live, enthralled me. It then (also) dawned on me that political science, the

discipline I so much desired to pursue at the university, was actually a component of philosophy in the form of political philosophy. Because of the shift in interest, during my second year, I dropped both literature in English and political science and pursued philosophy. The other reason why I became attracted to philosophy had to do with the attitude of the philosophy lecturers toward their students. Whether by chance or design, they were down-to-earth and personable. Despite their levels of education, they were objective in their approach to issues and did not have or appear to have a know-it-all attitude. During tutorials, the lecturers more or less played the role of moderators and encouraged all to express their views. Just as a midwife does not give her own child to the expectant mother, they did not push their own ideas and views on the students. The philosophy lecturers seem to have adopted the famous Socratic metaphor where a philosopher is portrayed as a midwife of the intellect. I found this approach to be as unique as it was desirable.

During my three-year undergraduate studies, as much as I liked philosophy courses, courses in African philosophy appealed more to me. This was mainly because I came to realize that in mainstream philosophical discourses, the discipline was considered to be inherently occidental. The term “African philosophy” in this view constituted a self-contradiction; anything truly philosophical could not be African and anything genuinely African could not be philosophical. Despite my tender age in academia, that view in my considered opinion was prejudiced and misguided. What’s more, I had the benefit of two lecturers grounded in African philosophy who would guide me in my readings and research in African philosophy. These were Henry Odera Oruka and D. A. Masolo. During the long vacations, Odera Oruka would engage me and a couple of other students as research assistants in his “Sage Philosophy Project.” This actually marked the beginning of my engagement with African philosophic sagacity. I went on to undertake my master’s and doctoral studies at the UoN and wrote theses with Afrocentric groundings in the two programs both supervised by Odera Oruka. That then explains how I “strayed” into philosophy generally and African philosophy in particular.

Many of my publications are in the area of African philosophy with a focus on philosophic sagacity, though some are in the areas of logic as well as social and moral philosophy; areas that I consider core to philosophy. But even in these latter areas, I ground myself on issues pertaining to or relevant to Africa and its diaspora. This is because ideally philosophy and social milieu should not be separated. They constitute a continuum in that social milieu affects the content of philosophy and, on the other hand, the content of philosophy seeks to affect the social milieu, either by confirming it or opposing it.¹ Unfortunately, the manner in which the discipline of philosophy is taught at several universities—including those in Africa—seems to defy this connection. Currently, in most institutions of higher learning, philosophy programs are but exercises in Western philosophy producing students who are grounded in the history of Western philosophy; students with capabilities of quoting faithfully from Western philosophers of the ancient era to those in contemporary times. In other words,

a vast majority of degrees in philosophy are fundamentally degrees in Western philosophy. Even more unfortunate is the fact that a good number of universities in Africa with programs in philosophy also follow the same trend. It is incumbent on all African and Africanist philosophers teaching in universities to push for the inclusion of courses with African foundations and themes.

TRENDS IN AFRICAN PHILOSOPHY

One way of initiating students into the discipline of African philosophy is by introducing them to the trends. In his paper "Four Trends in Current African Philosophy," Odera Oruka identified four broad categories in African philosophy.² These four categories have been referred to variously. Some allude to them as approaches, whereas others call them schools of thought. Odera Oruka referred to them as trends. The four broad categories are ethno-philosophy, professional philosophy, philosophic sagacity, and nationalist-ideological philosophy. In his later work, he added two more categories, namely, literary/artistic trend and hermeneutic trend. These two, however, were never appropriately explained and developed fully.³

The ethno-philosophical approach identifies African philosophy with the totality of customs and common beliefs of a people. African philosophy is construed as impersonal in that it is not identified with any particular individual(s). It is the philosophy of everybody; it is understood and accepted by everyone. In a way, therefore, it is a philosophy without philosophers. In this approach, communality is the essential attribute of African philosophy as opposed to European philosophy, which is construed to be individualistic—as consisting of a body of thoughts produced or formulated by various individual thinkers.

In contradistinction, the professional approach holds the view that African philosophy should be critical and individual. The approach grants the existence of African philosophy in the academic/professional sense. The thinking in this approach is that what passes as philosophy proper must be a thought that is critical, systematic, rigorous, and independent. The thought must be engrained with argument and criticism since "philosophy as a theoretical discipline is devoted to detailed and complicated argument."⁴ Bodunrin aptly summarizes philosophy as "a conscious creation. One cannot be said to have a philosophy in the strict sense of the word until one has consciously reflected on one's beliefs."⁵ Proponents of the professional approach, therefore, argued for the destruction of the use of "African philosophy" where "philosophy" is understood in the idiosyncratic sense.

While I have always been sympathetic to the position of the professional approach, I believe that there is some sense in the ethno-philosophical standpoint. The view by the professional approach that philosophy must always operate at a higher rarefied level and with deep abstractions is not always true even in Western philosophy. For example, Descartes, often referred to as the father of modern Western philosophy, writes very simply and like an ordinary commonsense thinker. Philosophy can in many ways be expressed very simply with no metaphysical mysteries or epistemological banality. Some very good philosophers are

not as abstract as some people would wish them to be. Philosophy, in my opinion, is two-dimensional: there is the academic facet and the popular slant. While the academic sense of philosophy emphasizes the critical and analytical aspect of thought, the popular sense equates philosophy with an individual's or group's general outlook on life or some aspects of it. While the professional philosophers tend to lean towards the academic sense of philosophy, the ethno-philosophers are inclined to the popular sense. The problem in the debate between the professional philosophers and the ethno-philosophers was that the debate proceeded as if it was an "either . . . or . . ." affair in the exclusive sense; yet the appropriate position was that the disjunction should have been understood in the inclusive sense.

The philosophic sagacity approach, as formulated and championed by Odera Oruka, stipulates that there exists African philosophy in the professional second-order sense. It maintains that African philosophy does not begin and end in communal folk thought and, more importantly, that Africans even without outside influences are not innocent of logical and dialectical mode of inquiry. Some critics of Tempels had challenged him that he identify at least one African philosopher to strengthen his hypothesis regarding the existence of African philosophy. Philosophic sagacity seems to have come to Tempels's rescue in this regard by identifying individual Africans in the traditional setup who are thinkers in the second-order sense—philosophic sages. Philosophic sagacity, therefore, marries the dominant elements in the ethno-philosophical and professional approaches, that is, it reflects the professionalism in the latter and Africanness in the former.⁶

In the nationalist-ideological philosophy approach, the position is that in the modern world, African philosophy can only be revived if and when the African society is truly free and independent. The apparent belief is that the exact nature of African philosophy would remain elusive until and unless African society disengages itself from the yoke of colonialism, neo-colonialism, and imperialism. It is necessary that it reverts to some of its former cardinal principles of indigenous Africa. Since this approach is basically concerned with the question of emancipation of African nation-states and hence with the political and ideological thoughts and strategies that would lead to the same, its sphere of operation is fairly broad in comparison to the other schools of thought. It includes the thoughts and writings of leading African statesmen (former and current) and those scholars whose bent of minds and writings are of political nature. The subject matter of this approach has to do with Africa's social, cultural, political, and economic problems in traditional, colonial, and postcolonial periods.

The starting point of the hermeneutical trend is its reverence for African traditions, which should, however, be followed by critical analysis. It is a trend that is radically open and susceptible to that which is preserved in Africa's own cultural heritage. At the same time, it is critical of tradition to the extent that the cultural elements that have been preserved in it have ossified and are a hindrance to the requirements of contemporary existence. This fruitful tension between esteem and criticism, when properly

cultivated, constitutes the critical cutting edge of African philosophical hermeneutics.⁷ Literary/artistic trend is both the explicit philosophical reflections volunteered by the creative spirits of contemporary Africa, and the philosophies implicit in these works, be they poems, novels, plays, and so on. This trend focuses on African thinkers who through their literary or artistic works made reflections that are philosophical.

SOME PRACTICAL RELEVANCE OF PHILOSOPHIC SAGACITY

Most of my writings reflect the practical significance of philosophic sagacity, but in this article, I highlight only five of the essays.

In “Philosophic Sagacity: A Classical Comprehension and Relevance to Post-colonial Social Spaces in Africa,”⁸ I trace and discuss the origins of philosophic sagacity to two research projects that were initiated by Odera Orika, titled “Thoughts of Traditional Kenyan Sages” and “The Philosophical Roots of Culture in Kenya,” in 1974 and 1976, respectively. While the aim of the first project was largely theoretical, it is in the second project that one explicitly notices the practical significance of philosophic sagacity to the social-political spaces in African countries in general. In that research project, he argued that if the thoughts of the sages were granted more intellectual and social spaces in modern Africa, then that would enable African cultures to withstand invasion by foreign ideas and values, especially those that are objectionable. Any culture has both practical and theoretical aspects. Things such as music, dance, and fashion constitute the practical aspect. The theoretical aspect is formed by the philosophy which justifies such activities. A culture without a clear philosophy is actually incomplete and vulnerable to foreign values and isms, no matter how distasteful they may be. This is the reality that various African cultures have to grapple with today. One sure way to avoid the invasion is for the people to advance and articulate the philosophy of their culture and this it can do through philosophic sagacity. Herein lies a practical significance of African philosophic sagacity.

“Philosophic Sagacity: Aims and Functions” (2009) is an essay in which I outline three aims and functions of philosophic sagacity. I refer to these as the academic, cultural-nationalist, and epistemic functions. While the academic function is explicitly intellectual and theoretical, the other two point to the practical significance of the approach. Concerning the cultural-nationalist function, African scholars and cultural conservationists are challenged to investigate and unearth the principles upon which African customs and traditions are anchored. This, it is argued, is necessary both for posterity and for the development of a national culture. This investigation or research should be a part of the national program in every African state. The practical epistemic function of sages is illustrated using Odera Orika’s exposition in “Sagacity in Development.”⁹ In that essay, it is argued and demonstrated that if sages are used as sources of information, then their explanations can go a long way in shedding some light on the socio-cultural factors (problems) that affect change and development in their societies. Government and non-governmental

organization officials in African countries who are concerned with development strategies and plans should therefore consult and utilize the thoughts of sages if they sincerely wish to attain any meaningful degree of success in their development endeavors. Within the epistemic function, philosophic sagacity is considered to be a source as well as a storehouse of knowledge. The interest in this function of sagacity is that philosophic discussions and discourses should focus on various features and themes that emanate from indigenous African societies. These could be cultural, religious, linguistic, etc. The basic difference between the epistemic function and the cultural-nationalist one is that, whereas in the latter the aim is primarily to unearth the fundamental principles of culture with a view to creating a national culture leading to harmonious co-existence, in the former, the aim is to generate and sustain philosophical discussions with African themes.

In “The Tripartite in Philosophic Sagacity,”¹⁰ I go further to show some relationship between the three functions of philosophic sagacity—academic, cultural-nationalist, and epistemic—with the corresponding three approaches to African philosophy—professional philosophy, nationalist-ideological philosophy, and ethno-philosophy—respectively. I demonstrate that the academic function corresponds to the professional school, the cultural nationalist function to the nationalist-ideological philosophy trend, and the epistemic function to ethno-philosophy. In the essay, I also distinguish three shades of philosophic sagacity as represented by myself, North American researcher Gail Presbey, and the renowned Kenyan philosopher D. A. Masolo. Despite the differences in terms of approach and varying epistemological values, it is shown that the efforts in some of their works are to various degrees linked to the aims that Odera Orika had in mind when he started the philosophic sagacity project—they are therefore works in sagacity. Noteworthy about “The Tripartite in Philosophic Sagacity” is my effort to exhibit, despite variations, the practical value of philosophic sagacity rather than merely explicating and outlining its basic tenets.

“Climate Change Ethics: The End of Development, or New Horizons from African Sagacity?” is a co-authored piece that acknowledges the worldwide problem brought about by climate change.¹¹ The essay recognizes that climate change, development, human well-being, and human security all go hand-in-hand. It recommends that if meaningful resolutions are to be arrived at in relation to the problems, then the one-sided, though monolithic, suggestions emanating from the Western world cannot resolve the problems by themselves. The essay recommends that it is time to move on to consider African philosophical approaches which have hitherto hardly been brought into the picture. The chapter specifically recommends that philosophic sagacity be taken into account.

The recent co-authored text “Role of Sagacity in Educational Philosophizing” is a demonstration of the application and significance of philosophic sagacity in the realm of education.¹² It hones in on showing the significant function the approach can perform in teaching of philosophy of education in Africa. This is a piece that should interest

educators in Africa. This essay is an attempt to extend and show the significance of philosophic sagacity beyond the general discipline of philosophy. Specifically, it illustrates how the approach could be widened into the sub-discipline of philosophy of education in Africa. The argument advanced is that for the sub-discipline to be genuinely African and truly philosophical, then philosophic sagacity needs to be incorporated as an essential ingredient. Pedagogy of sagacity is therefore recommended as a useful science and art of African philosophy of education. It is argued that this would not only engender critical thinking within the sub-discipline, but would at the same time guarantee its relevance to the African milieu.

COMMUNALISM IN AFRICAN SOCIETIES

There is an ongoing conversation regarding the utility of the communal spirit in indigenous African societies. The views have been divergent with some arguing in favor of the individualistic spirit in the modern world. I have myself held a contrary view that privileges communalism also. On this matter, I concur with Wiredu who argued that some aspects of culture in indigenous Africa are good and should be translated into modern African experience. He argued, for instance, that the communal fellowship in traditional society infuses the social life of Africans with a pervasive humanity and fullness of life that visitors to Africa have always easily recognized. This, according to Wiredu, is a quality of African culture that should not only be preserved but positively developed and deepened in the modern world.¹³

There is no question that indigenous African societies were basically communalistic, and this viewpoint has been well argued and documented by several scholars. Mbiti is renowned to have asserted that in indigenous Africa the underlying maxim is "I am because we are, and since we are, therefore I am."¹⁴ The import of this catchphrase is that in indigenous Africa, it is the community that gives meaning to the individual. Hord also underscores the same idea by asserting that communalism in indigenous African culture is the idea that the identity of the individual is never separable from the sociocultural environment, neither from the wider environment and nature, nor even from the continuity of generations. Identity in indigenous African culture is not some Cartesian abstraction grounded in a solipsistic self-consciousness. Ontologically, cosmologically, spiritually, and normatively, the individual in indigenous African societies is connected to the community which is at the center of every activity, practice, belief, and value.¹⁵ Community, in this sense, is not a mere conglomeration of individuals—the way community is conceptualized in modern individualistic societies—but a tight composite of individuals. The "we" is a comprehensively fused collective. It is a transcendental or organic "we" and cannot be reduced to its parts. The individual self is, by various quasi-organic processes, constituted by the community, and the community is an organically fused collectivity of the individual selves. This "we" is a prism of traditions, structures, interests, values, and beliefs that cannot be pinned down or reduced to the set of individuals and institutions constitutive of the community.¹⁶

The communalistic spirit is reflected in various African practices and even languages. For example, the Luo ethnic

group of Kenya has a phrase "ero kamano," which someone is bound to instantly translate as the English "thank you." However, that would not be accurate. Denotatively, "ero kamano" intimately mirrors the inseparability of "I" and "we" in indigenous African cultures. Someone belonging to the Luo ethnic group would typically utter the phrase "ero kamano" to anyone who performs an act considered to be virtuous, noble, honorable, or magnanimous, etc. The phrase is therefore an expression of gratitude and appreciation. Accordingly, it would be understandable for one to ostensibly translate "ero kamano" as equivalent to "thank you." However, the literal and unvarnished translation of "ero kamano" is "that is how it ought to be" or "that is how it should be." This subtle semantic interpretation is understandable in the context of "I am because we are, and since we are, therefore I am." In indigenous Africa, an individual is expected to engage in acts that are consistent with the general well-being of persons. One's conduct and behavior are supposed to conform to or promote the general well-being of the community. Therefore, if and when someone acts accordingly, the person would have done what is expected of him or her; the person would have done the right thing, and so a Luo person will say "ero kamano." In this context, "ero kamano" is less of an expression of gratitude but more of an acknowledgment of an action or behavior in accordance with communal expectations.

Other instances or activities that reflect the communal emphasis in indigenous Africa in contradistinction to the Western world include the rationale for greeting and also eating. In indigenous Africa, the intent to greet is to build relationships; one builds relationships by greeting people. One would not pass others on the way without greeting them even if he or she is not acquainted with them. Doing so would be considered inappropriate and rude. Given the intensity underlying the communal spirit with its attendant cognate conceptions of identity and moral personhood, one is under an obligation to greet others since it is an avenue for establishing relationships and communication. In the Western world, on the other hand, because of its strong individualistic character, one is under no such obligation. In a typical individualistic environment, if one happens to greet someone, then chances are that that person wants to request something of you or obtain some information. In the rural areas and villages in Africa, a greeting is a common phenomenon whereas in the urban areas, it is not. In the villages, if someone passes another without greeting the person (whether one is acquainted with the person or not), that would be considered bizarre and morally unacceptable. In the urban areas, on the contrary, what would be considered bizarre would be when one was to greet someone whom he or she was not acquainted with. All this boils down to the fact that while life in the rural areas and villages is largely communalistic in outlook and orientation, persons in the urban areas have adopted Western values and are generally individualistic.

Another activity in indigenous Africa that has a somewhat additional justification based on the communal emphasis is that of eating. It can be argued reasonably that in a typical individualistic Western setup, the activity of eating is mainly directed at acquiring new energy. The

foods people eat provide the much-needed energy to work, support their everyday activities, and promote their survival. In indigenous Africa, however, eating has an added justification. It is also viewed as a social event. People eat not merely in order to acquire new energy but also to share food and have discussions. As people eat, they chat, they tell stories, they discuss. So eating is seen as an activity that goes beyond acquisition of new energy; it has a social dimension to it. Again, in the urban areas, it is quite common to find that during meal times families do not engage in discussions; they would rather have their discussions before or after meals. This is because, in their minds, meal times are basically occasions for acquiring new energy and not talking. The only sounds one would hear during meal times are those made by the clattering of the eating utensils and plates. However, on some few occasions, the urbanites may engage in socialized eating. This would be mostly when they are celebrating holidays and anniversaries.

SUMMATION

In summation, I propose two engagements that scholars in African philosophy ought to take seriously. These are (1) articulation of the philosophies that underlie the various African cultures and practices; and (2) giving more visibility and relevance, in the modern world, to the various manifestations of the communal spirit in indigenous African communities.

What is the rationale of the first engagement? As stated earlier, today, Africa finds itself at a crossroads in that it is under "invasion" by foreign cultural values. Foreign cultural values and mannerisms of all sorts are finding their way into the African sphere. However, this in itself is not something bad. At any rate, today's world is more of a global village and intercultural mingling is a reality. My concern, nonetheless, has been that the progression of this blending has been a one-way affair—from Europeans to Africans—and what's more, some of the foreign cultural values which are apparently detestable find their way with ease into the African sphere. My submission has been that the reason why foreign cultural values find it easy to penetrate Africa's cultural space is that Africa has more or less lost sight of the philosophical grounding of its cultures. Besides the articulation of the philosophies, the second engagement is equally important. More visibility should be accorded to the various demonstrations of the communal spirit in indigenous African communities. The demonstrations should include illustrating their utilities in the current global sphere. This is necessary because a narrative has been advanced that modernity and individuality go hand in hand.

The first engagement would assist in the retention of African personality and identity in its interface with values of other cultures of the world. The second engagement would lead to a renaissance of the cardinal humanist principle in indigenous African societies, namely, communalism. There is no doubt in my mind that the retention of African personality and the renaissance of communalism in the modern world would in several ways work in the interest of Africa and its Diaspora.

NOTES

1. Nkrumah, *Consciencism: Philosophy and Ideology for Decolonisation with Particular Reference to the African Revolution*, 56–57.
2. Odera Oruka, "Four Trends in Current African Philosophy," 1–7.
3. Odera Oruka, *Sage Philosophy: Indigenous Thinkers and Modern Debate on African Philosophy*, 5.
4. Wiredu, *Philosophy and an African Culture*, 34.
5. Bodunrin, "Which Kind of Philosophy for Africa," 15.
6. Ochieng'-Odhiambo, *Trends and Issues in African Philosophy*, 117–21.
7. Serequeberhan, *The Hermeneutics of African Philosophy: Horizon and Discourse*, 6.
8. Ochieng'-Odhiambo, "Philosophic Sagacity: A Classical Comprehension and Relevance to Post-colonial Social Spaces in Africa," 91–107.
9. Odera Oruka, *Sage Philosophy*, 57–65.
10. Ochieng'-Odhiambo, "The Tripartite in Philosophic Sagacity," 17–34.
11. Ochieng'-Odhiambo, Hellsten, and Schönfeld, "Climate Change Ethics: The End of Development, or New Horizons from African Sagacity?" 89–105.
12. Ochieng'-Odhiambo and Kariuki, "The Role of Sagacity in Educational Philosophizing," 115–41.
13. Wiredu, *Philosophy and an African Culture*, 21.
14. Mbiti, *African Religions and Philosophy*, 106.
15. Hord, *I Am Because We Are: Readings in Black Philosophy*, 7–8.
16. Menkiti, "Person and Community in African Traditional Thought," 179.

REFERENCES

- Bodunrin, P. "Which Kind of Philosophy for Africa." In *Philosophy in the Present Situation of Africa*, edited by Alwin Diemer, 8–22. Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner Verlag GMBH, 1978.
- Hord, F. Lee (Mzee Lasana Okpara) and J. S. Lee. *I Am Because We Are: Readings in Black Philosophy*. Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1995.
- Mbiti, J. *African Religions and Philosophy*. 2nd rev. and enl. ed. Oxford: Heinemann, 1990.
- Menkiti, I. A. "Person and Community in African Traditional Thought." In *African Philosophy: An Introduction*, edited by R. A. Wright, 171–81. New York: University Press of America, 1984.
- Nkrumah, K. *Consciencism: Philosophy and Ideology for Decolonisation with Particular Reference to the African Revolution*. London: Panaf Books, 1970.
- Ochieng'-Odhiambo, F. "The Tripartite in Philosophic Sagacity." *Philosophia Africana: Analysis of Philosophy and Issues in Africa and the Black Diaspora* 9, no. 1 (2006): 17–34.
- Ochieng'-Odhiambo, F. "Philosophic Sagacity: A Classical Comprehension and Relevance to Post-colonial Social Spaces in Africa." *Quest: An African Journal of Philosophy/Revue Africaine de Philosophie* 21, nos. 1–2 (2007): 91–107.
- Ochieng'-Odhiambo, F. "Philosophic Sagacity: Aims and Functions." *Caribbean Journal of Philosophy* 1, no 1 (2009). <http://ojs.mona.uwi.edu/index.php/cjp/issue/view/35>.
- Ochieng'-Odhiambo, F. *Trends and Issues in African Philosophy*. New York: Peter Lang, 2010.
- Ochieng'-Odhiambo, F., Sirkku Hellsten, and Martin Schönfeld. "Climate Change Ethics: The End of Development, or New Horizons from African Sagacity?" In *Global Ethics on Climate Change*, edited by Martin Schönfeld, 89–105. New York: Routledge, 2013.
- Ochieng'-Odhiambo, F., and Michael Kariuki. "The Role of Sagacity in Educational Philosophizing." In *Philosophical Reflections on Some Concerns and Values in African Societies*, edited by F. Ochieng'-Odhiambo, 115–41. Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2023.

Odera Oruka, H. "Four Trends in Current African Philosophy." In *Philosophy in the Present Situation of Africa*, edited by Alwin Diemer, 1–7. Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner Verlag, 1981.

Odera Oruka, H. *Sage Philosophy: Indigenous Thinkers and Modern Debate on African Philosophy*. Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1990.

Serequeberhan, T. *The Hermeneutics of African Philosophy: Horizon and Discourse*. New York: Routledge, 1994.

Wiredu, K. *Philosophy and an African Culture*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980.

Nurturing the Nexus Between African Philosophy and African Psychology

Seth Oppong

UNIVERSITY OF BOTSWANA & UNIVERSITY OF THE WITWATERSRAND, SOUTH AFRICA

Martin Odei Ajei

UNIVERSITY OF GHANA

Hasskei Mohammed Majeed

UNIVERSITY OF GHANA

INTRODUCTION

Historically, psychology evolved out of philosophy and physiology.¹ In other words, psychology can be said to be the study of philosophy by other means.² To the extent that, across the globe today, what is taught in psychology is purely Western or hegemonic psychology,³ it is safe to say that hegemonic psychology evolved out of Western philosophy. Some examples abound to illustrate Western philosophical underpinnings of hegemonic psychology and its relevance to psychological inquiry. For instance, Burrhus Frederic Skinner's (1904–1990) operant conditioning was influenced by Francis Bacon (1561–1626) through his adoption of the Baconian inductive method. Similarly, Rene Descartes's (1596–1650) mechanistic explanations of behavior paved way for exploring stimulus-response theory and radical behaviorism in hegemonic psychology. Again, David Hume's (1711–1776) exposition on the laws of association of ideas and analysis of causation influenced approaches to experimentation in psychology whereas Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (1749–1832) influenced the emergence of phenomenology in the social and behavioral sciences. Baruch Spinoza's (1632–1677) philosophical work on emotions also made it possible to investigate emotions as a construct in psychology, and impacted psychoanalytic thinking. Additionally, Friedrich Wilhelm Nietzsche's (1844–1900) notion of the Dionysian aspect of human nature as *das Es* metamorphosed into Sigmund Freud's (1856–1939) idea of *id* and his exploration of the concept of repression, which later became foundational to Freudian psychoanalysis. These examples serve to illustrate that, indeed, Western philosophy is the unspoken basis (or at least, settled debates) of today's scientific psychology.

The above-argued contingency of psychology on philosophy is strengthened by the fact that all sciences that have human beings and their attributes as their subject matter of study must necessarily confront a philosophical question, a response to which conditions the principles

and methods of their discipline. The human being is the subject of study of psychology, inasmuch as the discipline deals with the thought processes and behavior of persons. But understanding the outward behavior of persons requires a prior knowledge of what a person is: what is the nature of a person, such that her attributes—her mental processes and her behavior—are worthy subject matters for psychological study. This fundamental question, the question of the nature of a person, is a philosophical question that underlies all applied human sciences⁴ and one that conceptually connects philosophy to psychology.

At this juncture, we need to consider what African psychology (or indigenous psychology in Africa) is or could be. Nwoye defines African psychology (APsy) as "the systematic and informed study of the complexities of human mental life, culture and experience in the pre-and post-colonial African world"⁵ whereas Ratele defines APsy as "ways of situating oneself in the field of psychology in relation to and from Africa."⁶ We adopt Oppong's definition that APsy is "an orientation that adopts a culture-conscious approach to the selection of research questions, design, data analysis, and interpretation of results."⁷ When we refer to a person as an "African psychologist," we do not refer to a geographical location per se but to the person's orientation and resolve that African perspectives constitute valid ontology and epistemology for expanding the existing narrow perspectives about human nature in Western psychology.⁸ It has been argued that hegemonic psychology is underpinned by Western folk and philosophical psychologies.⁹ Thus, one cannot study the complexities of human mental life in the African world without exploring the philosophical underpinnings within that context. We, therefore, argue that there cannot be any viable APsy without African philosophy (APH). In the rest of this article, we discuss a potential co-dependence of APsy on APH with the use of the Akan concept of *tiboa*. We show that *tiboa* can and ought to be a viable foundation for exploring the mind, personhood, and behavior. We distill the psychological implications of our philosophical exploration of *tiboa* in the African context.

REFLECTIONS ON *TIBOA* AS A PHILOSOPHICAL FOUNDATION FOR PSYCHOLOGICAL THEORY DEVELOPMENT

Tiboa is a philosophical idea that comes across in Akan conceptions of a person. The term, which has immense psychological significance and provides an avenue for conceptualization in philosophy and psychology, is best understood by analyzing its constituents. *Ti* means head, and *boa*, can mean the verb "help," or it can be a derivative of the noun *aboa* (animal). Thus, *tiboa* may literally be translated as "the helper of one's head" or "the animal in one's head." We endorse the latter interpretation because we believe the agential content embedded in the notion of 'helper' places noteworthy emphasis on the functions of animality. We wish, then, to translate *tiboa* as "the animal in one's head," as an active principle or capacity of the human mind. This interpretation is consistent with the pre-analytic usage of the term, which is unmistakably offered to mean "conscience," a value-laden concept.

Tiboa is often used to denote a moral capacity that a person ought to possess. Hence, a person who acts without moral sense or one who seems not to care about the moral implications of her actions would be rebuked with the question, *wo tiboa awu anaa?* (Is your conscience dead?). The question should, however, be properly construed as an expression of disappointment about (or disapproval of) the refusal of the moral agent to act in accordance with a capacity (moral sense) that she is expected to possess as a member of a community. *Tiboa*, therefore, is a moral category and forms the basis of key concepts in Akan ethics. In our view, it also has implications for the formation of concepts in psychological theories of cognition, personality development, and emotional intelligence, as discussed below:

(i) Emotional Intelligence

There is widespread agreement amongst African philosophers on the notion of relational personhood, the idea that Africans philosophically consider humans as relational beings by nature in the sense that they consider sound interpersonal relationships as necessary for self-definition, human well-being, and social cohesion.¹⁰ The relevance of such a conception of personhood for African psychology has been clarified by some psychologists.¹¹ This notion of personhood would hardly be persuasive without the activity of *tiboa*, which invariably underlies the expression of patience, kindness, fellow-feeling, and respect for the moral status of others in community. The relationality of humans is so ingrained in Akan thought that caring about the welfare and moral integrity of the other and being mindful of the effects of one's actions on others is not only a matter of rational choice but also a crucial element of moral agency.

Ajei and Flikschuh discuss the emphasis of several Ghanaian philosophers on the cooperative activity of reason and emotions in shaping human personality.¹² This view is well captured by Danquah's assertion that emotions promote and enhance the regulative function of reason in that they expand the horizon of reason's acuity and judgment.¹³ It is also embedded in Wiredu's assertion that the absence of feelings as a basis of moral motivation in the foundational principle of Kant's moral theory, i.e., the Categorical Imperative, evacuates the imperative of humanistic impulse.¹⁴ In Wiredu's view, "ability without sentimentality is nothing short of barbarity."¹⁵ In our view, embedded in all of these is the idea that a person's *tiboa* should guide her in making clear the moral benefits of emotional intelligence, towards developing qualities such as patience and forgiveness. For, these attributes, from an Akan perspective, underlie fruitful human relations and moral conduct.

(ii) Cognition

The subjects of theories of cognition in psychology are beings who are equipped with rationality—that is, persons who can know through thinking, experimentation, and perception. The concept of *tiboa* is relevant for cognitive theory in that it presupposes cognition since it is impossible for conscience to exist or, at least, its expression to

be perceived, without knowledge of that which one is expected to be conscientious about. Yet, the acquisition of a moral sense and exhibition of moral wisdom are part of the capacities of a rational being—the subject of cognition.

However, as will be seen in our discussion of personality formation below, *tiboa's* role in evoking moral motivation and in regulating moral behavior is primarily performed by invoking a personal sense of guilt or public censure. Since personal guilt and public censure are largely due to a person's knowledge of right and yet performing wrong actions, *tiboa* provides intellectual grounding for moral knowledge. While *tiboa* is a human quality, a person's knowledge of moral rightness and his or her capacity to perform actions in consonance with conscience are acquired through experience. And this method of knowledge acquisition allows the lessons from a past moral dilemma and its solution to inform a person's decision on a new but similar moral situation. So, any action that is taken about the new moral situation would be contingent on experiential knowledge. This empirical character of Akan morality, and the role of *tiboa* in it, makes it amenable to psychological theories of cognition.

(iii) Personality Formation

The communitarian character of African societies, expressed in the relational ontology of personhood, makes for assigning paramount importance to the interest and well-being of community.¹⁶ One consequence of this is that moral education occurs at two levels: family and community levels. Core values and practices of community serve as standards of child-upbringing (molding of character) that are adopted by families in discharging their direct responsibility for educating young members on moral virtues. The family ensures that a child imbibes community values, shares in its aspirations, and develops a virtuous character. At the center of virtuous character is *tiboa*, that which makes one feel ashamed for behaving morally wrongly. Danquah's discussion of Akan ethics recognizes the feeling of shame—"adeferere"—as an effective moral category.¹⁷ The relevance of shame, a feeling of loss of dignity and of remorse, is a function of *tiboa*. Ackah likewise emphasizes the cultivation of conscience,¹⁸ and cultivating behavior that will elicit praise rather than blame,¹⁹ as a primary focus of Akan moral education.

Tiboa, as basis of personality formation in African societies, is similar to concepts in theories of personality formulation in psychology. For instance, *tiboa* is very similar to an element in Freud's psychoanalytic theory of human personality. According to Freud, three elements of personality (the id, the ego, and the superego) work in tandem to create human behaviors. Whereas the id is entirely unconscious and grounds instinctive and primitive behaviors, the ego comprises a cohesive awareness of personality that deals with reality. The superego, on the other hand, encodes internalized standards and ideals that we acquire from moral education and provides guidelines for moral judgments. There is striking similarity between the function of *tiboa* and the superego, even though there is room for arguing for *tiboa* as an element of the conscious mind, as opposed to the sub-conscious status of Freud's superego.

PSYCHOLOGICAL IMPLICATIONS IN THE AFRICAN CONTEXT

To elicit the psychological implications of the philosophical exploration on *tiboa*, we employ a three-axis framework of theory, research, and praxis.²⁰ We view the domain of theory as providing accurate explanations and predictions by identifying obscure causal relationships.²¹ We also understand research to imply “research questions, design, data analysis, and interpretation of results.”²² In addition, we discuss the potential application of *tiboa* in clinical/health and business settings to improve well-being and wellness.

First, we present the theoretical insights that can be derived from the philosophical reflections on *tiboa*. Undoubtedly, *tiboa* endows an individual with most of the attributes that make up emotional intelligence. Social science researchers have established four dimensions of emotional intelligence: 1) recognizing other people’s emotions, 2) recognizing and expressing one’s own emotions, 3) regulating one’s emotions, and 4) the use of one’s emotional expression to facilitate performance.²³ The reflections above show that *tiboa* is the source of attributes such as patience, kindness, fellow-feeling, respect for the moral status of others in community, as well as sensitivity to the effects of one’s actions on others. Hence, *tiboa* qualifies as a metaphysical concept that explains the expression of what mainstream psychology identifies as emotional intelligence. This is significant, for none of the numerous studies on emotional intelligence convincingly informs readers on the source of emotional intelligence. By “source,” we do not refer to mere correlates of emotional intelligence as predictors, but to an independent theoretical postulate of explanation. And our claim that *tiboa* is a likely source of emotional intelligence constitutes a major theoretical insight and adds to psychological literature on what we have come to call emotional intelligence.

The role of *tiboa* in cognition was also reflected upon in the previous section. As argued, *tiboa* functions as the seat of a person’s knowledge of moral rightness, and her capacity to act in consonance with conscience is acquired through experience. This can rightly be identified as a typology of long-term memory in addition to the current typology that consists of declarative memory (semantic and episodic memory) and implicit memory (priming and procedural memory).²⁴ For a long time, no one has seriously questioned the absence of a seat of moral thinking in long-term memory. The current typology fails to locate the memory for moral guidance. We shall call this morality memory to distinguish it from moral memory in philosophy and psychology and moral memories in cultural sociology. Moral memory refers to the idea of retention, retrieving, and forgetting of moral guidance in relation to one’s moral transgressions²⁵ whereas moral memories refer to a collective memory (akin, in many ways, to institutional memory) that influence the remembering of the collective morally and politically.²⁶ In our view, *tiboa* qualifies as a type of long-term memory dedicated to only morality and expands our current understanding of long-term memory.

In terms of personality formation, *tiboa* enables the African psychologist to account for the similarities in behavior (and even culture as a group phenomenon) and character in a monothetic approach, as opposed to an idiographic approach which mainstream psychological research on personality tend to adopt. Thus, one of the ways African psychologists can use *tiboa* is to employ it as an explanatory framework that accounts for generalization and our understanding of social patterns in behaviors and personality in Africa, and possibly in the rest of the world. In this way, *tiboa* can be seen to explain uniformity and consistency in human nature.

We discuss the psychological research implications of the concept in the rest of this section. One potential implication is the construction of a scale to use in psychological research. In this case, we propose the construction of a Strength of *Tiboa* Scale (STS) as a normative measure of how well one’s *tiboa* is developed or how far it moves towards the desired state of *tiboa* in promoting social harmony in human living. However, this can only be possible with further exploration of the philosophical literature on *tiboa* and subsequent psychological studies that seek to understand the nature (definitions, characteristics, and components) and functions of *tiboa*. Such work will build the needed psychological literature to afford psychometricians the opportunity to construct the STS. As a guide to such work, psychologists ought to employ qualitative research approaches to achieve the desired research objectives. In this instance, Gavi et al. provide a useful guide on how one may proceed because they use qualitative approach to explore the conceptions of personhood in the Ghanaian setting.²⁷ Once developed, the STS can be used in studies that seek to identify predictors of social harmony-promoting behaviors. Based on the current philosophical reflections and social science research on emotional intelligence, we can fairly propose that high scores of the STS would correlate with high scores on measures of prosocial behaviors, organizational commitment, corporate social responsibility (these studies should be done from the upper echelons perspective²⁸), civility, honesty, ethical leadership, organizational citizenship behaviors, and a host of others. Conversely, high scores on STS will correlate with low scores on measures of crimes, counterproductive work behaviors, corruption, social deviance, and related others. We are aware that these proposals remain speculative here at best, and that the exact nature of the relationships can only be determined through empirical studies.

Besides the use of survey study design, it is equally possible to conduct experiments and quasi-experiments whereby aspects of *tiboa* are manipulated to observe their effects on some behaviors or attitudes. This will be possible only when we know enough about *tiboa* in the psychological literature, particularly from the initial qualitative studies. Another research topic that may be very important is an examination of the effects of *tiboa* on common mental health problems (depression, anxiety, stress, substance use, etc.). This is because if *tiboa* enables one to seek social harmony, it is more likely that those high on STS will also experience higher levels of depression, anxiety, and stress given the effect of modernity in Africa on individualism and self-interest. Western education and urbanization tend

to make Africans more likely to assume an “autonomous relatedness” mode of thinking or behavior as the former impact the autonomy (tendency to make decisions for oneself despite the impact on the group).²⁹ This implies that those with high levels of STS are more likely to be frustrated by the non-reciprocity of selfless acts which might lead to these common mental health problems. Again, these propositions remain speculative pending empirical studies to establish the exact nature of the relationships. If such studies suggest that STS is related to common mental health problems, it may require further studies to formulate culturally appropriate interventions to enable mental health patients to minimize or protect themselves against the undesired effects of well-developed *tiboa* in contemporary African society.

Finally, we discuss the psychological practice implications. We see several areas where STS will have implications for psychological assessment. One area of application, for instance, can be in organizational practice, where STS could be used in leader and managerial selection, etc. However, for lack of space, we would choose to discuss the employment of STS in clinical and counseling psychology. STS can be employed to screen clients, particularly those who present signs and symptoms of non-psychotic disorders. This is because the *tiboa* of those suffering from neuropsychiatric or psychotic disorders and those characterized by perceptual disturbances (e.g., schizophrenia, dementia, substance misuse, delirium, severe unipolar depression, etc.) can be said to be “dead” in that they largely lack orientation of self to time, place, and people.³⁰ This screening will enable the practitioner to establish the level of agency and willingness to change or achieve the desired purpose of a therapy. The potential use of *tiboa* in therapeutic settings will hinge on the exploration and animation of the person’s *tiboa*. We shall call this *Tiboa* Exploration and Animation Therapy (TEAT). Although the modalities for such a therapy are not yet defined, TEAT once developed would enable practitioners to explore to identify “misalignments” in the *tiboa* while engaging in activities that can animate (give vigor to or move to action) or give reasons, to the *tiboa* to want to change and/or maintain the momentum to change. Despite the potential effectiveness of TEAT based on the philosophical reflections, Opong observes that the Akan saying *afutuo nsakyera onipa gye se nsowhe* (to wit: challenges change people not advising) has therapeutic implications.³¹ This saying signifies that a talk therapy (modulative modalities) may not be as successful as behavioral modification or therapies that involve making changes to the environment (generative modalities). What this means is that, in addition to TEAT, practitioners would need to expose *tiboa* to conditions that might cause it to want to change. Thus, the focus of TEAT or *tiboa*-informed therapy is not on the person but on that “animal” in the headspace, and the aim is to cause a change from within.

Beyond therapeutic settings, these reflections may have implications for encouraging health-promoting behaviors including health-seeking behaviors and medication compliance in the primary healthcare system. If promoting social harmony involves recognition of one’s responsibility to, and natural membership of, society; then ensuring one’s healthy physical status may strongly signify

acknowledgment of one’s duty to those who depend on you: good health is necessary for one’s ability to offer needed support to others. This may partly explain why some people endure harsh conditions to ensure the survival of others. Thus, TEAT can be modified to target health-promoting behaviors. However, everything we have discussed here remains speculative until empirical studies have been conducted in psychology to understand the exact nature of the relationships.

CONCLUSION

We have discussed the concept of *tiboa* (conscience) and how it connects African philosophy with African psychology. The connection has a twofold grounding: first, on the importance of *tiboa* to the development of personhood and the centrality of this latter notion to theorizing in African philosophy with African psychology; and also, to the fact that philosophy provides conceptual foundation for psychology and the applied sciences in general. From the African perspective, the status of personhood is achieved by cultivation of a virtuous character that fosters sound social relations and communal well-being. We argue that *tiboa* is the basis of virtuous character formation and hence it is central to personhood, one of the most theorized concepts in African philosophy.

We demonstrate that *tiboa* has implications for theorizing in psychology, especially in relation to emotional intelligence, cognition, and personality formation. In our view, *tiboa* can function as an independent theoretical postulate for explaining emotional intelligence, morality memory (as a type of long-term memory), and foreground a monothetic approach to personality studies. Besides, a Strength of *Tiboa* Scale (STS) and a *Tiboa* Exploration and Animation Therapy (TEAT) can be developed for application by clinical and counseling psychologists. These *tiboa*-informed tools can facilitate the development of therapies to assist persons with common mental health problems and encourage health-promoting behaviors in the primary healthcare system.

Tiboa, thus, offers prospects as a conceptual avenue for interdisciplinary research between African philosophers and psychologists. It is for this reason that we call on African philosophers and psychologists to collaborate to conduct the needed research to develop STS, TEAT, and other *tiboa*-informed practices as well as to explore new domains that have not yet been explored.

NOTES

1. Hergenbahn, *An Introduction to the History of Psychology*; Opong, “History of Psychology in Ghana since 989AD.”
2. Opong, “History of Psychology in Ghana since 989AD.”
3. Opong, “Indigenous Psychology in Africa: Centrality of Culture, Misunderstandings, and Global Positioning.”; Ratele, “Editorial: Frequently Asked Questions about African Psychology”; “Four (African) Psychologies”; Teo and Febraro, “Ethnocentrism as a Form of Intuition in Psychology.”
4. Ajei, “Ontology and Human Rights,” 18.
5. Nwoye, “African Psychology, Critical Trends,” 57.
6. Ratele, “Editorial: Frequently Asked Questions about African Psychology,” 274.

7. Oppong, "Indigenous Psychology in Africa: Centrality of Culture, Misunderstandings, and Global Positioning," 956.
8. Oppong, "Overcoming Obstacles to a Truly Global Psychological Theory, Research and Praxis in Africa."
9. Oppong, "The Journey towards Africanizing Psychology in Ghana"; Yang, "Indigenous Psychology, Westernized Psychology, and Indigenized Psychology: A Non-Western Psychologist's View."
10. Majeed, "Moderate Communitarianism Is Different: A Response to B. Matolino and J.O. Famakinwa," 4; Majeed, *Reincarnation: A Question in the African Philosophy of Mind*, 74; Oppong, "An Indigenous Representation of Personhood for Citizenship Behaviours."
11. Gavi et al., "Conceptions of Personhood in Ghana: An Emic Perspective"; Grills, "African Psychology," 180–82; Nwoye, "An Africentric Theory of Human Personhood"; Oppong, "An Indigenous Representation of Personhood for Citizenship Behaviours."
12. Ajei and Flikschuh, "Kantian Ethics and African Philosophy: Receptivity and Disputations," 128. This view seems quite close to an Aristotelian conception of human nature in which reason, though in one sense divine—i.e., extra-natural—nonetheless works in harmony with the emotions in developing a virtuous disposition that allows the agent to experience the full palette of human emotions in ways that are consistent with good conduct. Yet while Aristotelian ethics is essentially self-regarding in that it is focused on self-perfection, all the Ghanaian philosophers demand of the moral agent a concern with the interests of others.
13. Danquah, "The Moral End as Moral Excellence," 23.
14. Wiredu, *Cultural Universals and Particulars: An African Perspective*, 95.
15. Wiredu, "Moral Foundations of an African Culture," 197. Arguably, the notion "ability" in this affirmation by Wiredu, is elliptical. In the context of the quote, it is clear that he understands the term to mean not merely mental aptitude but rather the skill to deploy one's mental faculties toward an end, i.e., skillful action toward an end. If so, then the quote can be rendered as "reasonable action without sentimentality is barbarity."
16. Wiredu, *Cultural Universals and Particulars: An African Perspective*; Gyekye, *An Essay on African Philosophical Thought: The Akan Conceptual Scheme*; Majeed, "The Nexus between Person, Personhood and Community in Kwame Gyekye's Philosophy."
17. Danquah, "The Moral End as Moral Excellence," 108f1.
18. Ackah, *Akan Ethics: A Study of the Moral Ideas and the Moral Behaviour of the Akan Tribes of Ghana*, 112–15.
19. Ackah, *Akan Ethics*, 119–20.
20. Oppong, "Overcoming Obstacles to a Truly Global Psychological Theory, Research and Praxis in Africa."
21. Aguinis and Cronin, "It's the Theory, Stupid"; Eronen and Bringmann, "The Theory Crisis in Psychology: How to Move Forward"; Oppong 2022b
22. Oppong, "Indigenous Psychology in Africa: Centrality of Culture, Misunderstandings, and Global Positioning," 956.
23. Bitmiş and Erogeneli 2014; Fernández-Berrocal and Extremera, "Emotional Intelligence: A Theoretical and Empirical Review of Its First 15 Years of History"; Satuf et al., "Perceived Emotional Intelligence Assessment – The Portuguese Validation of Schutte's Emotional Intelligence Scale (SEIS-P)"; Schlaegel et al., "The Unique and Common Effects of Emotional Intelligence Dimensions on Job Satisfaction and Facets of Job Performance: An Exploratory Study in Three Countries."
24. Bruck, "Long-Term Memory."
25. Cowan, "The Puzzle of Moral Memory"; Stanley and De Brigard, "Moral Memories and the Belief in the Good Self."
26. Olesen, *Moral Memories. Global Injustice Symbols and Social Movements.*
27. Gavi et al., "Conceptions of Personhood in Ghana."
28. See Oppong, "Upper Echelons Theory Revisited: The Need for a Change from Causal Description to Casual Explanation."
29. Bandura, "Toward a Psychology of Human Agency: Pathways and Reflections"; Keller, "Psychological Autonomy and Hierarchical Relatedness as Organizers of Developmental Pathways."
30. Berrios, "Orientation Failures in Medicine and Psychiatry: Discussion Paper."; Peer et al., "Brain System for Mental Orientation in Space, Time, and Person"; Snyderman and Rovner, "Mental Status Exam in Primary Care: A Review."
31. Oppong, "History of Psychology in Ghana since 989AD."

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Ackah, C. A. *Akan Ethics: A Study of the Moral Ideas and the Moral Behaviour of the Akan Tribes of Ghana*. Accra: Ghana Universities Press, 1988.

Aguinis, Herman, and Matthew A. Cronin. "It's the Theory, Stupid." *Organizational Psychology Review* (2020): 1–20. <https://doi.org/10.1177/20413866221080629>.

Ajei, Martin Odei, and Katrin A. Flikschuh. "Kantian Ethics and African Philosophy: Receptivity and Disputations." *Estudos Kantianos* 9, no. 2 (2021): 117–34. <https://doi.org/10.36311/2318-0501.2021.v9n2.p117>.

Ajei, Martin Odei. "Communo-Welfarism: An Akan Humanistic Moral Theory." In *Ethical Theory in Global Perspective*, edited by Michael Hemmingsen. New York: State University of New York Press, forthcoming, 2023.

Ajei, Martin Odei. "Ontology and Human Rights." *South African Journal of Philosophy* 38, no. 1 (2019): 17–29. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02580136.2019.1565065>.

Bandura, Albert. "Toward a Psychology of Human Agency: Pathways and Reflections." *Perspectives on Psychological Science* 13, no. 2 (2018): 130–36. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1745691617699280>.

Berrios, Germán Elías. "Orientation Failures in Medicine and Psychiatry: Discussion Paper." *Journal of the Royal Society of Medicine* 76, no. 5 (1983): 379–85.

Bitmiş, M. Gökhan, and Azize Erogeneli. "Emotional Intelligence: Reassessing the Construct Validity." *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences* 150 (2014): 1090–94. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2014.09.123>.

Bruck, Jason N. "Long-Term Memory." In *Encyclopedia of Animal Cognition and Behavior*, edited by J. Vonk and T. Shackelford, 1–5. Cham: Springer, 2020. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-47829-6_783-1.

Cowan, Robert. "The Puzzle of Moral Memory." *Journal of Moral Philosophy* 17 (2020): 202–28. <https://doi.org/10.1163/17455243-20192914>.

Danquah, Joseph Boakye. "The Moral End as Moral Excellence." PhD thesis, University of London, UK, 1927.

Eronen, Markus I., and Laura F. Bringmann. "The Theory Crisis in Psychology: How to Move Forward." *Perspectives on Psychological Science: A Journal of the Association for Psychological Science* 16, no. 4 (2021): 779–88. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1745691620970586>.

Fernández-Berrocal, Pablo, and Natalio Extremera. "Emotional Intelligence: A Theoretical and Empirical Review of Its First 15 Years of History." *Psicothema* 18, supl. (2006): 7–12. <https://www.psicothema.com/pdf/3270.pdf>.

Gavi, Jonathan Kuma, Charity S. Akotia, Joseph Osafo, Angela A. Gyasi-Gyamerah, Johnny Andoh-Arthur, and Seth M. Asafo. "Conceptions of Personhood in Ghana: An Emic Perspective." *Ghana Social Sciences Journal* 19, no. 1 (2022): 16–31. <https://journals.ug.edu.gh/index.php/gssj/article/view/1905/1094>.

Grills, Cherly T. "African Psychology." In *Black Psychology*, edited by Reginald L. Jones, 171–208. Hampton VA: Cobb & Henry Publishers, 2004.

Gyekye, Kwame. *An Essay on African Philosophical Thought: The Akan Conceptual Scheme*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1987.

Hergenhahn, Baldwin Ross. *An Introduction to the History of Psychology*. Belmont: Wadsworth, 2009.

Keller, Heidi. "Psychological Autonomy and Hierarchical Relatedness as Organizers of Developmental Pathways." *Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society of London. Series B, Biological Sciences* 371, no. 1686 (2016): 20150070. <https://doi.org/10.1098/rstb.2015.0070>.

Majeed, Hasskei Mohammed. "Moderate Communitarianism Is Different: A Response to B. Matolino and J.O. Famakinwa." *Journal of Philosophy and Culture* 6, no. 1 (2018): 3–15.

Majeed, Hasskei Mohammed. "The Nexus between Person, Personhood and Community in Kwame Gyekye's Philosophy." *UJAH: Unizik Journal of Arts and Humanities* 18, no. 3 (2017b): 26–45. <https://doi.org/10.4314/ujah.v18i3.2>.

Majeed, Hasskei Mohammed. *Reincarnation: A Question in the African Philosophy of Mind*. Pretoria: Unisa Press, 2017a.

Nwoye, A. "An Africentric Theory of Human Personhood." *Psychology in Society* 54 (2017): 42–66.

Nwoye, Augustine. "African Psychology, Critical Trends." In *Encyclopedia of Critical Psychology*, edited by Thomas Teo, 57–65. Cham: Springer, 2014.

Olesen, Thomas. *Moral Memories. Global Injustice Symbols and Social Movements*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015. https://doi.org/10.1057/9781137481177_4.

Oppong, Seth. "History of Psychology in Ghana since 989AD." *Psychological Thought* 10, no. 1 (2017): 7–48.

Oppong, Seth. "Overcoming Obstacles to a Truly Global Psychological Theory, Research and Praxis in Africa." *Journal of Psychology in Africa* 29, no. 4 (2019): 292–300. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14330237.2019.1647497>.

Oppong, Seth. "An Indigenous Representation of Personhood for Citizenship Behaviours." In *Personhood, Community and the Human Condition: Reflections and Applications in the African Experience*, edited by Joseph Osafo and Charity S. Akotia. Accra: Sub-Saharan Publishers, in press.

Oppong, Seth. "Indigenous Psychology in Africa: Centrality of Culture, Misunderstandings, and Global Positioning." *Theory & Psychology* 32, no. 6 (2022a): 953–73. <https://doi.org/10.1177/09593543221097334>.

Oppong, Seth. "On Mainstreaming Philosophy of Science in Psychology through 'Psychological Theoretic'." *Annals of Psychology/Roczniki Psychologiczne* XXV, no. 1 (2022b), 27–45. <https://doi.org/10.18290/rpsych2022.0002>.

Oppong, Seth. "The Journey towards Africanizing Psychology in Ghana." *Psychological Thought* 9, no. 1 (2016): 1–14. <https://psyc.swu.bg/index.php/psyc/article/view/128/html>.

Oppong, Seth. "Upper Echelons Theory Revisited: The Need for a Change from Causal Description to Casual Explanation." *Management* 19, no. 2 (2014): 169–83. <https://hrcak.srce.hr/133229>.

Peer, Micheal, Roy Salomon, Ilan Goldberg, Olaf Blanke, and Shahar Arzy. "Brain System for Mental Orientation in Space, Time, and Person." *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of the United States of America* 112, no. 35 (2015): 11072–77. <https://doi.org/10.1073/pnas.1504242112>.

Ratele, Kopano. "Editorial: Frequently Asked Questions about African Psychology." *South African Journal of Psychology* 47, no. 3 (2017a): 273–79. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0081246317703249>.

Ratele, Kopano. "Four (African) Psychologies." *Theory & Psychology* 27, no. 3 (2017b): 313–27. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0959354316684215>.

Satuf, Cibebe, Samuel Monteiro, Graça Esgalhado, Henrique Pereira, Rosa Marina Afonso, Manuel Loureiro, and Maria Miguel Barbosa. "Perceived Emotional Intelligence Assessment – The Portuguese Validation of Schutte's Emotional Intelligence Scale (SEIS-P)." *Avaliação Psicológica* 19, no. 1 (2020): 18–28. <https://doi.org/10.15689/ap.2020.1901.14814.03>.

Schlaegel, Christopher, Robert L. Engle, and Guido Lang. "The Unique and Common Effects of Emotional Intelligence Dimensions on Job Satisfaction and Facets of Job Performance: An Exploratory Study in Three Countries." *The International Journal of Human Resource Management* 33, no. 8 (2022): 1562–1605. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09585192.2020.1811368>.

Snyderman, Danielle, and Barry Rovner. "Mental Status Exam in Primary Care: A Review." *American Family Physician* 80, no. 8 (2009): 809–14.

Stanley, Matthew L., and Felipe De Brigard. "Moral Memories and the Belief in the Good Self." *Current Directions in Psychological Science* 28, no. 4 (2019): 387–91. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0963721419847990>.

Teo, Thomas, and Angela R. Febbraro. "Ethnocentrism as a Form of Intuition in Psychology." *Theory & Psychology* 13 (2003): 673–94. <https://doi.org/10.1177/09593543030135009>.

Wiredu, Kwesi. "Moral Foundations of an African Culture." In *Person and Community: Ghanaian Philosophical Studies, vol. 1*, edited by Kwesi Wiredu and Kwame Gyekye, 93–206. Washington, DC: The Council for Research in Values and Philosophy, 1992.

Wiredu, Kwesi. *Cultural Universals and Particulars: An African Perspective*. Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1996.

Yang, Kuo-Shu. "Indigenous Psychology, Westernized Psychology, and Indigenized Psychology: A Non-Western Psychologist's View." *Chang Gung Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences* 5, no. 1 (2012): 1–32. http://cgjhsc.cgu.edu.tw/data_files/5-1%2001.pdf.

BOOK REVIEW

Some Thoughts on Olúfemi Táíwò's Against Decolonisation

Björn Freter

GETTYSBURG COLLEGE

COLONIALISM AND DECOLONIZATION, PSEUDO-COLONIALISM AND PSEUDO-DECOLONIZATION

Colonialism, explains Olúfemi Táíwò, "represents a subversion of modernity and its core tenets, processes and practices."¹ These tenets of modernity are "the principle of subjectivity, the centrality of Reason, the importance of governance by consent."² Colonization thus denies agency. This "issue of autonomy, of self-governance—the central credo of the modern age—was the *differentia specifica* when it came to defining the economic organisation of the colonies, with the interests of the colonised subordinated to and determined by the colonial powers."³

Decolonization is necessary to transform this heteronomy into autonomy; it means to convert "a colony into a self-governing entity with its political and economic fortunes under its own direction."⁴ This is, as Táíwò insists, the "original meaning"⁵ of decolonization. However, "today [decolonization] has come to mean something entirely different: forcing an ex-colony to forswear, on pain of being forever under the yoke of colonisation, any and every cultural, political, intellectual, social and linguistic artefact, idea, process, institution and practice that retains even the slightest whiff of the colonial past."⁶ This new meaning Táíwò calls "decolonisation₂"; the original meaning he calls "decolonisation₁."⁷

The necessary and justified work of decolonization₁ is done. Amílcar Cabral, an important reference for Táíwò, said in 1965 "that in our countries, which have been martyred for centuries, humiliated and insulted, the insult may no longer rule"⁸ and that he was well aware that "[w]e are struggling to build in our nations [. . .] a life of happiness, a life where every man will have the respect of all men, where discipline will not imposed, where no one will be without work, where salaries will be just, where everyone will have the right to everything man has built, has created for the happiness of men. It

is for this that we are struggling. If we do not reach that point, we shall have failed in our duties, in the purpose of our struggle."⁹ Táíwò completely agrees with Cabral.¹⁰

Interestingly, we can find this understanding of decolonization being done not only in Cabral, but in many other African political philosophers of the twentieth century.¹¹ Kwame Nkrumah wrote, it would be "clear that we must find an African solution to our problems, and that this can only be found in African unity,"¹² Julius K. Nyerere knew that "[i]ndependence means self-reliance [and] cannot be real if a nation depends upon gifts and loans from another for its development,"¹³ and in the *Conscience Africaine Manifesto* it is stated "that the realization of our hopes will depend on our own efforts, and we will not fail to remind the Congolese often of the harsh truth that we are able to demand our rights only if we are fully conscious of our duties and our responsibilities."¹⁴

All this seems forgotten.¹⁵ Today, Táíwò insists, it must be emphasized again, that the "movement towards this outcome is no longer part of the anti-colonial struggle."¹⁶ The further continuation of the decolonization project is no longer necessary, or rather, as we have to be more precise here, it is no longer possible since "colonialism has not survived independence."¹⁷ However, despite this impossibility the decolonization project is continued, Táíwò's primary examples for this are Ngūgĩ wa Thiong'ó and Kwasi Wiredu.

Whoever engages in the struggle to ensure "the realization of our hopes"¹⁸ and "a life of happiness"¹⁹ by continuing the decolonial project, whoever engages in decolonization₂—like, for instance, Ngūgĩ or Wiredu do—does, by implication, contribute to the "persistent ignoring and/or denigration of African agency—whether done with good or bad intentions" and thus "reaffirms the racist ideology that Africans are permanent children."²⁰

To decolonize does no longer mean to convert "a colony into a self-governing entity,"²¹ on the contrary. Decolonization₂, Táíwò's analysis reveals, happens to be an ally of colonialism. The agents of Decolonization₂ do not fight colonialism—it "has not survived independence"²²—they rather, whether they are aware of it or not, stage colonialism as if it were still alive and then they stage themselves as the fighters against this very pseudo-colonialism—which Táíwò could have consequently called colonialism₂. Colonialism₂ means an "absolutisation of European colonization,"²³ which simultaneously means "turning Africans into permanent subalterns in their own history."²⁴ Táíwò lets us know quite clearly what he thinks of these champions of decolonization₂ and their resurrected colonialism₂: "I wish them well. [. . .] I want no part of it."²⁵

MODERNITY AND AGENCY

It is Olúfẹ́mi Táíwò's serious and heartfelt concern to move forward, i.e., to no longer decolonize₂, but to modernize. This cannot happen, he predicts, "until we quit our fascination, even obsession, with forever chasing down the last traces of a colonial presence in the framework

of our world."²⁶ This obsession is motivated by the conflation of "modernity and Westernisation[,] a big and unwarranted mistake."²⁷ The conflation produces the disastrous hidden (or ignored) paradox of the decolonial discourse. When the "call to 'decolonise' lumps together modernity and colonialism" it consequently "insists that the rejection of colonialism means the rejection of modernity."²⁸ And here is the paradox: The decolonizers₂ portray colonialism as a subversion of modernity and, at the same time, they portray their decolonization as a subversion of modernity. Táíwò exposes decolonization₂ as a project against colonialism₂, and thus as an anti-Western and thus as an anti-modernity project.

However, Táíwò insists, as much as decolonization₁ was an anti-colonial project, it was neither an anti-Western nor an anti-modernity project. The "the anti-colonial struggle,"²⁹ as Táíwò explains, "was carried out, at least in part, to force the colonisers to live up to the ideology used to justify the colonial adventure."³⁰ Decolonization₁ wanted to force colonizers to be what they claimed to be, that is, modern. And that means adhering to the principle of modernity and those principles are universal, they are not Western, but human.³¹ "The capacity for agency," Táíwò wrote in his essay on Cabral, "the essential precondition for making history is definitive of humanity"—not definitive of Western humanity. In his earlier *Manifesto, Africa Must Be Modern*, Táíwò explained what modernity, human modernity, human agency, would mean for Africa: "Africa must embrace individualism as a principle of social ordering; make reason central in its relation to, activity upon, understanding of, and producing knowledge about the world, both physical and social, that it inhabits; and adopt progress as its motto in all things."³²

If anything at all, decolonization₁ would insist on more and not less modernity, "it stands to reason that post-independence, decolonisation would not be identified with the abandonment of those principles."³³ For "the western imperialists," as Ralph Leonard has pointed out beautifully in his review of Táíwò's book, "Enlightenment principles were the exclusive property of white Europeans: their inherent universality and dialectical appropriation by the colonised against them was unsettling."³⁴ Colonization subverted modernity and Decolonization₂ continues this subversion. Those who believe that there is still colonization "have made the definition of colonialism so elastic that it no longer has any meaningful boundaries, or they have chosen to ignore African agency after independence."³⁵ And Táíwò adds: "I refuse to accept this dangerous move."³⁶

PERFORMANCE ERRORS

It is quite surprising that an author who so relentlessly criticizes the lack of attention to details and the lumping together of things which do not belong to each other cannot avoid doing so himself. Certainly, the philosophies of Ngūgĩ wa Thiong'ó and Kwasi Wiredu are invested in the question of decolonization. However, is their understanding of decolonization so similar that we can simply "lump" them together? Ngūgĩ wa Thiong'ó, as Emmanuel has expertly shown, "defends and afrocentric approach to

decolonization," while Wiredu "is more pragmatic and largely devoid of the tendencies that Táíwò holds in contempt."³⁷

The portrayal of these thinkers overall is quite strange; especially in Wiredu's case, Táíwò seems to be missing some important ideas. Wiredu, for instance, knew very well that decolonization is a finite project, he wrote—even though, after decolonization₁ was long done in Ghana—"that although at the present time we are still in an era of post-colonial reconstruction which calls for a large dose of decolonization, we ought not to be oblivious to the other imperatives of philosophical thinking. Decolonization, even as only one of our preoccupations, is not something that we will be doing for ever in African philosophy."³⁸

Wiredu did not lump together colonization and modernity; he explicitly writes: "Modernization, properly understood, is the application of the results of modern science for the improvement of human life. People should link the modernization of the conditions of their lives with the modernization of all aspects of their thinking. [. . .] To develop in any serious sense, we in Africa must break with our old un-critical habits of thought; that is to say, we must advance past the stage of traditional thinking."³⁹

Wiredu obviously does not understand decolonization as subversion of modernity; he welcomed African modernity. And he understood that this modernity to be synthesis: "It seems to me likely that any African synthesis for modern living will include indigenous and Western elements, as well, perhaps, as some from the East."⁴⁰ Certainly, Wiredu's and Táíwò's positions are not identical, but Wiredu's position and decolonization₂ are not identical either. It is quite unfortunate that Táíwò seems to claim the latter. I'm not sure why this was necessary.

Something similar also happens in other respects, for instance, in the strange misrepresentation and reductionist understanding of contemporary decolonization. Toyin Falola is right when he notes that Táíwò's "argument against decolonisation appears to portray decolonisation as a game of payback for what the colonial masters did in Africa decades ago, when it should be seen as a patriotic struggle to Africanize Africa."⁴¹ And Falola goes on to point out one of the most serious problems of Táíwò's book. The book "categorised decolonisation solely as efforts to bring down any footprints, culture, system, and institutions of the colonial master in Africa. This, however, understates the seriousness of the struggle."⁴² It is surprising, if not upsetting, that Táíwò wrote a book that is so passionate, so fearless, so fervent, so intelligent, so educated and yet, so harsh towards the heartfelt pain and genuine concern of African philosophers regarding their philosophy. I find this so strange that I find myself asking, very seriously, whether I have overlooked something. I am almost certain I did.

DESUPERIORIZATION

I would like to make one more comment. Táíwò writes at one point, "Why are we now asking Cambridge University Press's *Journal of African History*, dominated by British and American Africanists, to decolonise? Why are we holding

outsiders responsible for our own failure to commit adequate resources to studying Africa?"⁴³

Of course, I am not entitled to comment on this. I am one of the outsiders. However, it is important when it comes to decolonization, and if you are one of the outsiders, to bring up a question that us outsiders like to forget: What does decolonization mean to the ex-colonizer? A lot of outsiders, I would think, understand decolonization as what Táíwò describes as decolonization₂. There might be a difference of decolonization₂ from an insider's or an outsider's perspective.

I cannot speak from the insider's perspective. But I do know that an outsider engaging in the decolonization of Africa would hardly be able to avoid recreating a structure of domination, this time not via colonialism, but via decolonialism. I would, indeed, also advocate for the outsider to not participate in this part of the project of decolonization, or, as I have called it elsewhere, in the project of adseredition.⁴⁴ However, there is a second part to the decolonization project that is often ignored. Not only those who have been colonized need, using Táíwò's term, to modernize, but also those who have colonized. Colonization should have not been possible, if we outsiders would have taken the "core tenets"⁴⁵ of modernity seriously. What did we do, to make it possible to foundationally contradict ourselves without suffering from this contradiction? We need to remember, colonialism did not end because we understood the error of our ways, but because it became too risky, too unprofitable, or too exhausting.⁴⁶ We outsiders need to desuperiorize our philosophical self-understanding, we need to correct the notorious misunderstanding that makes us believe that our culture, our philosophy, our modernity are culture, philosophy modernity per se. So, indeed, it is not for those who suffered colonial violence to ask Cambridge University Press's *Journal of African History* to decolonize. It is for the outsiders to demand that it is desuperiorized.

NOTES

1. Olúfẹ́mi Táíwò, *Against Decolonisation. Taking African Agency Seriously* (London: Hurst & Company, 2022), 47.
2. Táíwò, *Against Decolonisation*, 47.
3. Táíwò, *Against Decolonisation*, 45.
4. Táíwò, *Against Decolonisation*, 3.
5. Táíwò, *Against Decolonisation*, 3.
6. Táíwò, *Against Decolonisation*, 3.
7. Táíwò, *Against Decolonisation*, 3 et pass.
8. Cabral, *Unity and Struggle*, 253.
9. Amílcar Cabral, *Unity and Struggle. Speeches and Writings* (London, New York: Monthly Review Press, 1979), 253.
10. See Táíwò, *Against Decolonisation*, 65sq.
11. See Táíwò, *Against Decolonisation*, 65.
12. Kwame Nkrumah, *I Speak of Freedom, 1961. Modern History Sourcebook* (London, New York: Monthly Review Press, 1961 [2019]), s.p.
13. Julius K. Nyerere, *Essays on socialism* (Dar es Salaam et al.: Oxford University Press, 1971), 23.
14. Alan P. Merriam, *Congo. Background of Conflict* (S.I.: Northwestern University Press, 1956), 326. See Björn Freter,

"Decolonial Philosophical Praxis Exemplified Through Superiorist and Adseredative Understandings of Development," in *Essays on Contemporary Issues in African Philosophy*, eds. Jonathan Okeke Chimakonam, Edwin Etieyibo, Ike Dimegwu (Cham: Springer, 2022), 209–26.

15. See Táiwò, *Against Decolonisation*, 177.
16. Táiwò, *Against Decolonisation*, 66.
17. Táiwò, *Against Decolonisation*, 66.
18. Merriam, *Congo*, 326.
19. Cabral, *Unity and Struggle*, 253.
20. Táiwò, *Against Decolonisation*, 26.
21. Táiwò, *Against Decolonisation*, 3.
22. Táiwò, *Against Decolonisation*, 66.
23. Táiwò, *Against Decolonisation*, 142.
24. Táiwò, *Against Decolonisation*, 142.
25. Táiwò, *Against Decolonisation*, 26. See Olúfẹmi Táiwò, *Africa Must Be Modern. A Manifesto* (Bloomington, Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2011), xxiv.
26. Táiwò, *Against Decolonisation*, 178.
27. Táiwò, *Against Decolonisation*, 39. See, for a detailed analysis: Táiwò, *Africa Must Be Modern*.
28. Táiwò, *Against Decolonisation*, 41.
29. Táiwò, *Against Decolonisation*, 47.
30. Táiwò, *Against Decolonisation*, 47. See Olúfẹmi Táiwò, "Amílcar Cabral: A Philosophical Profile," in *Fanon and the Decolonization of Philosophy*, Elizabeth A. Hoppe, Tracey Nicholls, eds. (Lanham et al.: Rowman & Littlefield, 2010), 208.
31. Táiwò, *Against Decolonisation*, 180.
32. Táiwò, *Africa Must Be Modern*, xxv.
33. Táiwò, *Against Decolonisation*, 47.
34. Ralph Leonard, "Olúfẹmi Táiwò's 'Against Decolonisation'." *Areo Magazine*, June 17, 2022, <https://areomagazine.com/2022/06/17/olufemi-taiwos-against-decolonisation/>.
35. Táiwò, *Against Decolonisation*, 46.
36. Táiwò, *Against Decolonisation*, 46.
37. Abimbólá Olúwafẹmi Emmanuel, "Defending the Decolonization Trope in Philosophy: A Reply to Olúfẹmi Táiwò" *The Southern Journal of Philosophy Volume* 60, no. 2 (2021): 304–19. Emmanuel comments on Olúfẹmi Táiwò, "Rethinking the Decolonization Trope in Philosophy" *The Southern Journal of Philosophy Volume* 57, S1 (2019): 135–59. This paper outlines many of the ideas that Táiwò would explicate in *Against Decolonisation*.
38. Kwasi Wiredu, "Toward Decolonizing African Philosophy and Religion," *African Studies Quarterly* 1, no. 1 (1998): 28.
39. J. E. Wiredu [= Kwasi Wiredu], "How Not to Compare African Traditional Thought with Western Thought," *Transition* 75/76 (1997): 323.
40. Kwasi Wiredu, "Conceptual Decolonization as an Imperative in Contemporary African Philosophy: Some Personal Reflections," *Rue Descartes* 36 (2002): 54sq.
41. Toyin Falola, "Against Decolonization: Taking African Agency Seriously by Olufemi Taiwo," *Commonwealth & Comparative Politics* 61, no. 1 (2023): 125.
42. Falola, "Against Decolonization," 126.
43. Táiwò, *Against Decolonisation*, 53sq.
44. See Freter, *Decolonial Philosophical Praxis*, 210–12.
45. Táiwò, *Against Decolonisation*, 47.
46. See Björn Freter, "Decolonization of the West, Desuperiorization of Thought, and Elative Ethic," in *Handbook of African Philosophy of Difference*, ed. Elvis Imafidon (Cham: Springer, 2022): 105–127, here: 118.

MENTIONS

Books, Anthologies, and Papers

Björn Freter

GETTYSBURG COLLEGE

BOOKS

Agada, Ada. *Consolationism and Comparative African Philosophy: Beyond Universalism and Particularism*. New York: Routledge, 2022.

Chimakonam, Jonathan O., and L. Uchenna Ogbonnaya. *African Metaphysics, Epistemology and a New Logic: A Decolonial Approach to Philosophy*. Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2021.

Falola, Toyin. *Decolonizing African Studies: Knowledge Production, Agency, and Voice*. Rochester: University of Rochester Press, 2022.

Ipadeola, Abosede Priscilla. *Feminist African Philosophy: Women and the Politics of Difference*. London: Routledge, 2023.

Metz, Thaddeus. *A Relational Moral Theory: African Ethics in and Beyond the Continent*. Oxford et al.: Oxford University Press, 2022.

Mungwini, Paschah. *African Philosophy: Emancipation and Practice*. London et al.: Bloomsbury, 2022.

ANTHOLOGIES

Afolayan, Adeshina, Olajumoke Yacob-Haliso, and Samuel Ojo Oloruntoba. *Pathways to Alternative Epistemologies in Africa*. Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2021.

Cakata, Zethu, Nompumelelo Z. Radebe, and Mogobe Ramose. *Azibuye Emasisweni: Reclaiming Our Space and Centering Our Knowledge*. S.I.: AOSIS Publishing, 2024.

Chimakonam, Jonathan O., and Luis Corderio-Rodrigues. *African Ethics: A Guide to Key Ideas*. London, New York, Dublin: Bloomsbury, 2023.

Graneß, Anke, Edwin Etieyibo, and Franz Gmainer-Pranzl. *African Philosophy in an Intercultural Perspective*. Berlin: J. B. Metzler, 2022.

Ikhane, Peter Aloysius, and Isaac E. Ukpokolo. *African Epistemology. Essays on Being and Knowledge*. Oxon, New York: Routledge, 2023.

Imafidon, Elvis, Mpho Tshivhase, and Björn Freter. *Handbook of African Philosophy*. Cham: Springer, 2023.

PAPERS

Agada, Ada. "Rethinking the Concept of God and the Problem of Evil from the Perspective of African Thought." *Religious Studies* (2022): 1–17 [First View].

Akiode, Olajumoke M. "Gender, Rights and Relevant Aids in Pandemics: A Philosophical Analysis." *Philosophia Politica* 1 (2022): 72–91.

Graneß, Anke. "The Status of Oral Traditions in the History of Philosophy: Methodological Considerations." *South African Journal of Philosophy* 41, no. 2 (2022): 181–94.

Imafidon, Elvis. "African Ontology, Albinism and Human Rights." In *Disability Rights and Inclusiveness in Africa. The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities*, edited by J. D. Grischow, M. Mfoafo-M'Carthy, W. Laurier, 231–46. Suffolk: Boydell & Brewer, 2022.

Kumalo, Siseko H. "Resurrecting the Black Archive through the Decolonisation of Philosophy in South Africa." In *Decolonising Curricula and Pedagogy in Higher Education: Bringing Decolonial Theory into Contact with Teaching Practice*, edited by Shannon Morreira, Kathy Luckett, Siseko H. Kumalo, Manjeet Ramgotra, 19–36. London, New York: Routledge, 2021.

Maponya, Dimpho Takane. "Religion, Patriarchy and the Prospect for Gender Equality in South Africa." *International Journal of Philosophy and Theology* 82, nos. 4-5 (2021): 337–49.

Ofuasia, Emmanuel. "Why the Externalist-Internalist Distinction over the African Development Discourse is a Dead End." *Arumaruka: Journal of Conversational Thinking* 2, no. 2 (2022): 1–23.

Ramose, Mogobe. "De-liberating Philosophy: Affirming Freedom." In *Philosophical Responses to Global Challenges with African Examples. Ethiopian Philosophical Studies, III*, edited by Workineh Kelbessa, Tenna Dewo, 9–34. Washington: The Council for Research in Values and Philosophy, 2022.

Serequeberhan, Tsenay. "Philosophy in the Present Context of Africa." *Theoria* 68, no. 3 (2021): 30–41.

Sesanti, Simphiwe. "Teaching Ancient Egyptian Philosophy of Education in Teacher Education." *Filosofia Theoretica* 11, no. 2 (2022): 109–26.

Wambui, Betty. "Feminist Biographies – Telling Our Stories." In *Gender and Sexuality in Kenyan Societies. Centering the Human and the Humane in Critical Studies*, edited by Besi Brillian Muhonja, Babacar M'Baye, 15–48. Lanham: Lexington, 2022.