

## Editor's Note

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More than thirty years ago, Frantz Fanon correctly noted, with regard to the invasion and subjugation of Africa (normally euphemized as “colonialism”), that Europe's most horrible crime was committed in the human heart, and consisted of the pathological tearing apart of the human person's functions and the crumbling away of his or her unity (*The Wretched of the Earth* 1967, 254). Africa's sons and daughters, and genuine friends of the continent from other parts of the world, continue to grapple with the multi-faceted challenges that face her. *Thought and Practice* continues to make its contribution to this noble endeavour by enabling scholars from broadly humanistic and social scientific orientations to share their variegated perspectives on this reconstruction - educational, religious, legal, historical, economic and philosophical, among others. A number of themes are discernible in the articles in the present issue.

*First*, there is the ongoing struggle for the liberation of African scholarship from undue and even demeaning Western influences. In this regard, Pascah Mungwini analyses the way in which the popular term and prefix “traditional” is used in Africa, and argues that it can be pejorative, as it is associated with the well-established Western imperialist custom of thinking of Africa as a continent stuck in the past. Mungwini goes on to suggest how contemporary Africa can engage with its past, and talk about it in terms that do not perpetuate Western imperialist derogation of indigenous African thought and culture.

*Second*, the ethical implications of our individual and corporate decisions are pertinent to our endeavour to reconstruct our continent after centuries of foreign domination and decades of poor self-government. In this regard, Reginald Oduor offers a moral justification for the superiority of non-violent over violent civil disobedience by the Kenyan citizenry in pursuit of its aspirations. Edwin Etieyibo

seeks to determine whether or not the divestiture of Nigeria's state-owned enterprises by the Federal Government of Nigeria is ethical. On their part, Francis Owakah and Daniel Aswani provide guidelines on how to respond to the ethical challenges entailed in corporate communication.

*Third*, there is the need for African scholars to adopt innovative approaches to research in the social sciences. In this regard, James Njihia outlines critical realism, a relatively new philosophy of science, in an attempt to increase awareness of it amongst African researchers. Critical realism is a radical challenge to Western philosophy, and especially positivism which is closely associated with rational choice theory and Western modernity. Njihia argues that critical realism has important implications for framing social science research and development policy in developing countries.

*Fourth*, philosophers are committed to an examination of concepts which many are willing to take for granted. Thus Idowu William critically examines the endangered status of the concept of citizenship. He contends that various factors, especially the multicultural character of most contemporary societies, are impinging on the possibility of developing a theory of citizenship that is universally applicable and globally acceptable. On their part, Fasiku Gbenga and Oyelakin Richard Taye challenge the prevalent assumption that the phenomenal character of a mental experience is an ontological property existing as part of the fabric of the world. In contrast to this widely held belief, Gbenga and Taye argue that phenomenal properties of mental experiences are the results of our epistemological perspectives of the world. Consequently, they contend that in developing issues for African Philosophy of Mind, care must be taken to avoid the metaphysical pitfalls of considering phenomenal characters or properties of mental states to be part of the fabric of the world.

The present issue of the journal also contains two very informative book reviews. D.A. Masolo reviews Barry Hallen's *A Short History of African Philosophy* (Second edition 2009). In his characteristically thorough manner, Masolo places this important book in its philosophical and historical context. On her part, Pamela Ngesa reviews George Gona's *Andrew Mtagwaba Kailembo: The Life and Times of an African Trade*

*Unionist*, offering an assessment of the book with the finesse of the historian that she is.

We look forward to more articles from African and Africanist scholars to further enrich the debate on the total emancipation and holistic reconstruction of Africa.

Reginald M.J. Oduor

Editor-in-Chief