

# Editorial Note

## *Special Issue*

### *Odera Oruka Seventeen Years On*

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It is seventeen years since the renowned Kenyan philosopher, Prof. H. Odera Oruka's untimely death in December 1995. His contributions to theoretical and applied ethics, and his trail-blazing work in sage philosophy, radically changed the landscape of African philosophy. Yet today many younger philosophers inside and outside Kenya are not adequately familiar with his work. I was therefore delighted to find an article on him in *Wikipedia*, the free online encyclopedia.

In 1974, along with other scholars, Prof. Oruka founded *Thought and Practice: The Journal of the Philosophical Association of Kenya*, which ceased publication in 1982, probably partly due to financial constraints. With the advent of the Internet, it became possible to launch this second series of the journal with minimal financial resources, and with the kind support of the African Journals Online (AJOL) which hosts it. Thus the present series of the journal commenced in June 2009 through the efforts of the Editorial Board consisting of Dr. Francis E.A. Owakah, Dr. Oriare Nyarwath, Prof. Samson O. Gunga and myself. I am deeply indebted to colleagues who have assisted with peer review at no charge, and others who have given words of advice and encouragement over the last four years.

This journal is published on an Open Access model, which means that we do not charge anyone for our articles. You can therefore access *all* the articles in the current issue by going to the home page of the journal website, and *all* articles in past issues by clicking on the "Archives" link on the said home page.

The present issue of *Thought and Practice* is wholly dedicated to the memory of Prof. Oruka. The Editorial Board believes that the best way to commemorate him is to continue and encourage the process of interrogating the rational defensibility and social relevance of his ideas. After all, Oruka was a prominent philosopher, *not* the leader of a doctrinaire movement. The articles in this issue can be divided into two broad categories, namely, those on Oruka's ethical thought and those on his pioneering work in sage philosophy. In the first category are to be found the articles by Anke Graness, D.A. Masolo, Robin Attfield, Jacinta Mwendu Maweu, Oriare Nyarwath, and Reginald M.J. Oduor. In the second category are to be found the articles by Francis E.A. Owakah, F. Ochieng-Odhiambo and C. Itayo, Fayemi Ademola Kazeem, and Chigbo Joseph Ekwealo. Gail M. Presbey's article straddles the two categories, offering a critique of the sages' views on the debate concerning the equality of the sexes.

In line with Prof. Oruka's interdisciplinary approach, we are delighted to present this collection of articles not only to the community of philosophers, but also to the wider academia in the social sciences and humanities. Let the discourse on the corpus of Oruka's works continue.

Reginald M.J. Oduor, Ph.D.

Editor-in-Chief

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