

## Editor's Note

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The papers in this issue address two main topics in social philosophy - the moral foundation of African institutions, and the place of the right to cultural identity.

Tayo R.E. Eegunlusi offers a critique of Kwasi Wiredu's consensual democracy. Wiredu prescribes this model of governance as an alternative to the hegemonic liberal democracy which he sees as incapable of addressing Africa's post-colonial political challenges. Wiredu anchors his prescriptions in the traditional African practice of democracy. However, Eegunlusi argues that Wiredu's failure to recognize the important role that belief in supernatural realities plays in political decisions and governance in both traditional and contemporary Africa renders his theory inappropriate as an alternative to liberal democracy on the continent.

Reginald M.J. Oduor traces the history of ethnicized politics in Kenya from colonial times to the present. He argues that ethnicized politics in Kenya has had a deleterious effect on the management of the country's public affairs by engendering gross disparities in economic development along ethno-regional lines, the disproportionately limited economic opportunities and highly constrained room for political participation for ethnic minorities, the stunting of the growth of issue-based politics, the stoking of violent inter-

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ethnic conflicts, and the vulnerability of highly urbanised persons and/or those born out of mixed marriages with no strong ethnic loyalties. He concludes that ethnic equity ought to be factored into Kenya's socio-political engineering to secure the cultural and political rights of all ethnic groups, and thus make political mobilization along ethnic lines less attractive.

Godwin Azenabor examines the Yoruba concept of *Omoluabi*. He informs us that *Omoluabi* is a person who has high regard for honour, moral integrity and solidarity. He argues that if the moral values espoused by *Omoluabi* were appropriated as an integral part of the contemporary African ethical framework, the result would be harmonious co-existence and collective well-being. In particular, he believes that Nigeria's trajectory of development and national cohesion would be placed on a sound footing through these values.

Samuel Okok, Archangel B. Rukooko and Jimmy S. Ssentongo confront the issue of the relationship between morality and politics. They address the fundamental question as to whether or not politics should be guided by the demands of moral integrity. After examining various views on the nature of the relationship between politics and moral integrity, they contend that politics cannot and ought not to be divorced from moral integrity. This is due to the fact that politics is an integral part of society, and a society is essentially a group of people morally bound together under an authority for the enjoyment of the common good.

Wamae W. Muriuki examines the problem of knowing and doing what is morally right in the context of Shinran's Buddhist ethics. He avers that in Shinran's ethics, the times and context in which a person lives necessarily constrain one's knowledge and understanding of what is right and wrong, exposing him or her to conduct that may be undesirable. He concludes that in the context of such moral constraints, devoid of absolute moral principles as a guide, the most viable option for human relations is to rely on the feeling and sensing that embodies a community of care and compassion.

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Editor-in-Chief

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