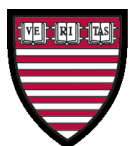


# Half a Century After Malcolm X Came to Visit:

## Reflections on the Thin Presence of African Thought in Global Justice Debates

**Mathias Risse**

Lucius N. Littauer Professor of Philosophy and Public Administration



**HARVARD Kennedy School**

**CARR CENTER**

for Human Rights Policy

# CARR CENTER DISCUSSION PAPER SERIES

---

Discussion Paper  
2019-007

For Academic Citation: Mathias Risse. Half a Century After Malcolm X Came to Visit: Reflections on the Thin Presence of African Thought in Global Justice Debates. CCDP 2019-007, April 2019.

The views expressed in Carr Center Discussion Paper Series are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect those of the Harvard Kennedy School or of Harvard University. Discussion Papers have not undergone formal review and approval. Such papers are included in this series to elicit feedback and to encourage debate on important public policy challenges. Copyright belongs to the author(s). Papers may be downloaded for personal use only.

# Half a Century After Malcolm X Came to Visit: Reflections on the Thin Presence of African Thought in Global Justice Debates

## About the Author

**Mathias Risse** is Lucius N. Littauer Professor of Philosophy and Public Administration and Director of the Carr Center for Human Rights Policy at the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University

Carr Center for Human Rights Policy  
Harvard Kennedy School  
79 JFK Street  
Cambridge, MA 02138  
[www.carrcenter.hks.harvard.edu](http://www.carrcenter.hks.harvard.edu)  
Copyright 2019



HARVARD Kennedy School  
**CARR CENTER**  
for Human Rights Policy

Discussion Paper  
APRIL 2019

# Half a Century After Malcolm X Came to Visit: Reflections on the Thin Presence of African Thought in Global Justice Debates

Mathias Risse, Harvard University  
April 17, 2019

**Abstract:** What would it mean for there to be a *genuinely and legitimately global discourse on justice that involves Africa in authentic ways*? There are various responses. On the one hand, there is the idea of “philosophical fieldwork” developed by Katrin Flikschuh. African thought that fell by the wayside due to European expansionism must be recuperated and inserted into that discourse. On the other hand, there is the world society approach pioneered by John Meyer and others. The point is that ideas from elsewhere in the world can be genuinely and legitimately appropriated, which is how ideas have always spread. Once ideas about justice are appropriated by African thinkers, they are associated with Africa as much as with any other region. My goal here is to explore both approaches and support the second, while also making room for the first. In doing so, I articulate a view about how my own ongoing work on global justice can be seen as a contribution to an actual global discourse. There are rather large (and sensitive) issues at stake here: how to think about respectful appropriation of ideas and thus respectful philosophical discourse. A great deal of nuance is needed.

## 1. Introduction<sup>1</sup>

Martin Luther King fought for emancipation of African-Americans in terms of civil rights, for integration into a polity whose existence and basic orientation remained unquestioned.<sup>2</sup>

Malcolm X advocated separatism. His goal was for blacks to relocate to Africa eventually and

---

<sup>1</sup> This paper – which is a first and very preliminary draft -- was written for a conference on the occasion of the opening of the Ethics and Public Policy Laboratory (EthicsLab) at the Catholic University of Central Africa (UCAC) in Yaounde, Cameroon, held in March 2019. I am grateful to the audience at that event for helpful discussion, especially to Ndidi Nwaneri and Nils Gilman, my commentators on that occasion. I am also grateful to Moshik Temkin for earlier conversations about Malcolm X, as well as to Sushma Raman for editorial work and for raising some important questions that had not been addressed before. This paper connects to work I have done in Risse, “What Is ‘Global’ about Global Justice?”; Risse, *On Justice: Philosophy, History, Foundations*, chapters 4-5; Risse and Meyer, “Thinking about the World: Philosophy and Sociology.” And in the background is my basic view on global justice in Risse, *On Global Justice*.

<sup>2</sup> King, *Why We Can't Wait*; King, *Letter from the Birmingham Jail*.

live away from whites in the meantime. During the year prior to his assassination in February 1965, after leaving the Nation of Islam, he fashioned himself into an ambassador-at-large for black America. Malcolm became a global intellectual as well as a human rights campaigner of sorts, in a period when human rights were less a part of global rhetoric than they would become in the 70s. He traveled extensively, in the Middle East and Europe, but at greatest length in Africa.<sup>3</sup>

Regardless of its actual consequences, there is great symbolic significance to Malcolm's visit to Africa. His message to leaders of newly decolonized countries was that black intellectual and political leaders should appropriate the systems of power and thought that were initially forced upon them but now were theirs as much as they belonged to anybody. The obvious question is whether such a move does not add the insult of intellectual surrender to the previous injury of subjugation. But it does not. Malcolm gave good advice, which – and that is my main point here -- also captures the essence of one way of claiming a place for Africa in global politics and discourse, including global-justice discourse.

Straightforward answers to the question of how to enlarge the thin presence of African thought point to the importance of interacting more. Nothing beats reading up on approaches not developed by people with whom one went to graduate school. But my concern is a different one: what it would mean for there to be *a genuinely and legitimately global discourse on justice that involves Africa in authentic ways*. There are various responses. On the one hand there is the idea of “philosophical fieldwork” developed by Katrin

---

<sup>3</sup> Temkin, “Malcolm X in France, 1964-1965: Anti-Imperialism and the Politics of Travel Control in the Cold War Era.” See also Gaines, “Malcolm X in Global Perspective”; Tyner, “Geography, Ground-Level Reality, and the Epistemology of Malcolm X”; Moyn, *The Last Utopia*, 104–6. Malcolm X thought human rights originated from God. For the importance of the 70s for human rights, see Moyn.

Flikschuh.<sup>4</sup> African thought that fell by the wayside due to European expansionism must be recuperated and inserted into that discourse. On the other hand, there is the world society approach pioneered by John Meyer and others, which I myself have enlisted in earlier work.<sup>5</sup> The point is that ideas from elsewhere in the world can be genuinely and legitimately appropriated, which is how ideas have always spread. Once ideas about justice are appropriated by African thinkers, they are associated with Africa as much as with any other region. Indigenous ideas can and should still be inserted into the discourse, of course: but this would not be required for there to be a genuine and legitimate global discourse that includes Africa. Instead it would be because a broader debate would be a richer and better debate.

I start with Malcolm X because his message to African leaders is in line with what I am proposing here. Later I also draw on Ta-Nehisi Coates, as well as, briefly, Cheikh Anta Diop, Anthony Appiah and Henry Louis Gates. To be blunt, I draw on them because my position might come across as self-serving when articulated by a white philosopher from an institution that is especially deeply rooted in white academic traditions. But it should also become clear that this stance can, and should, be understood as a culturally humble position. And in any event, there are rather large (and sensitive) issues at stake here, to wit, how to think about respectful appropriation of ideas and thus respectful philosophical discourse. How vexing and perplexing the issues here can be becomes clear if we consider that one question one may have about Flikschuh's approach is whether an African thinker who does

---

<sup>4</sup> Flikschuh, "The Idea of Philosophical Fieldwork."

<sup>5</sup> Risse, "What Is 'Global' about Global Justice?"; Risse and Meyer, "Thinking about the World: Philosophy and Sociology."

not do the kind of fieldwork she proposes would still engage with *African* thought; conversely, on the Meyer-inspired approach a question that could arise is whether we simply go with an intellectual version of a might-makes-right approach. In today's intellectual climate, I am afraid some readers will think what I have to say here is trivial and others might think it is offensive. But I hope that neither of these reactions will be the primary response. I certainly submit that they should not be. A great deal of nuance is needed.

After section 2 elaborates on Malcolm X's visit, section 3 explores the kind of marginalization with which we are concerned. After all, the question of how to integrate Africa into global-justice discourse only arises in light of past and ongoing marginalization. But once the nature of African marginalization is in sight, the kind of endorsement, no matter how pragmatic, that Malcolm X urged African leaders to give does not seem to suggest itself as a sensible response – certainly not if we talk about *philosophical discourse* rather than maneuvering a political system created by others. Instead, it seems once we understand what kind of marginalization is at stake here, Flikschuh's fieldwork approach is the more appropriate one. Section 4 introduces that approach more systematically.

Section 5 presents the competing world society analysis. Change in human affairs has always been driven by adoption of ideas as well as role models or scripts perceived as successful. Often such ideas and scripts arrive from the outside, and by force. The spread of Christianity and Islam offers a fountain of examples. Adoption of ideas often occurs only over generations. But ideas *can* be genuinely and legitimately appropriated. Then it no longer matters how they traveled or if their current propagators speak the same language or have the same skin color as those who had them first. I enlist Ta-Nehisi Coates for another illustration, but for theoretical articulation I turn to Stanford sociologist John Meyer's work.

In recent centuries, the colonial system was a major vehicle for the spread of ideas and institutions that generated ideas. But that system is but one stage in the overall development of what historians John and William McNeil have called the *human web*.<sup>6</sup> That system has broadly drawn on ideas from elsewhere, both before and during its heyday. Nothing can belittle the ugliness of white expansionism, or deny the importance of reminding ourselves and each other that ideas that have spread in such a manner are not the only ideas worth exploring. But once ideas are out and discourses unfolding, everybody can appropriate and advance them. They would then no more belong to those who came up with these ideas originally than they belong to the people who currently develop them. This is how, in spite of a violent past, we can now have a genuinely and legitimately global philosophical discourse about matters of justice, one that includes Africa – if indeed African intellectuals want to see it that way. The only difference between Aristotle being taught in California and Rawls being discussed in Mozambique is that more or less time has passed since the relevant ideas spread.

While there could never be anything wrong with philosophical fieldwork, it would be misguided to do it for the reason that such work *rather than* appropriation of previously alien thought is the only means of emancipation. Plausibly both ways, or some combination of them, are appropriate: participants in the relevant discourse can choose which one to pursue. What is crucial is that the shared reality in which we live belongs to everybody now regardless of how it arose. That is something I believe Malcolm X saw clearly. His advice can

---

<sup>6</sup> McNeill and McNeill, *The Human Web*.



still help in particular with thinking about what it would mean for there to be *a genuinely and legitimately global discourse on justice that involves Africa in authentic ways*.

## **2. Malcolm X in Africa**

In speeches at home and abroad, Malcolm X advocated an internationalist platform connecting the condition of blacks in the US to global struggles against imperialism and capitalism. Malcolm X impressed upon leaders in countries he visited that the US pervasively violated human rights of its black citizens. Globally whites were a minority. He expected the US would be embarrassed at the world stage if a case about its treatment of blacks could be submitted to international judgment. One result was that during a debate at the UN about the Congo, African leaders connected the situation there to the struggle in Mississippi. They used the treatment of blacks in the American South as evidence for the plight of blacks at the global level and for the indifference of white Americans to the fate of blacks.<sup>7</sup>

Malcolm X came to Africa to explore political possibilities provided by the existence of a world society that had been created through the European colonialism and imperialism of previous centuries. A key feature of that world society is that it is organized around states, a mode of organization originating on Europe's Western periphery and initially alien to large parts of the world (including Central and Eastern Europe) until well into the 19<sup>th</sup> or 20<sup>th</sup> century. States, in turn, first developed international law to resolve conflicts among them, including conflicts that arose in the spread of European and later also US control around the

---

<sup>7</sup> Temkin, "Malcolm X in France, 1964-1965: Anti-Imperialism and the Politics of Travel Control in the Cold War Era." See also Gaines, "Malcolm X in Global Perspective"; Tyner, "Geography, Ground-Level Reality, and the Epistemology of Malcolm X"; Moyn, *The Last Utopia*, 104–6.

world. Eventually, states also founded international organizations devoted to political coordination of economic betterment, most distinctly following World War II. The human rights framework was the moral blueprint adopted by the core entity among those institutions, the United Nations. Arguably the concerns about protection of individuals and curtailing of organized power could be and have been expressed in alternative vocabularies across cultures and periods of history. But the language of rights prevailed in global efforts to do so, which in turn is a language that has predominantly European origins.

Malcolm X's appeal to international audiences – and ultimately, he hoped, the UN -- was that mistreatment of African Americans should not be regarded as a domestic issue, as it was as long as the struggle was presented in terms of *civil* rights. “When you expand the civil rights struggle to the level of human rights,” he explains in his “Ballot or Bullet” speech,

you can then take the case of the black man in this country before the nations of the UN. (...) Human rights are the rights that are recognized by all nations of this earth. And any time anyone violates your human rights, you can take them to the world court.<sup>8</sup>

The plight of American blacks should be seen as a matter of global concern, and in that sense as human rights violations. Malcolm X thereby became an early activist who operated with ideas that applied to the world society as a whole.

So there is some significance to Malcolm X's visit to Africa. Talking to audiences in Africa was meaningful only because global political and economic interconnectedness made the reactions of these audiences at least potentially relevant for the struggle in the US and because there was a forum where their reactions to the plight of African Americans could be articulated (the UN). The founding of the UN, on the one hand, expressed the pinnacle of

---

<sup>8</sup> Breitman, *Malcolm X Speaks - Selected Speeches and Statements*, 34–35.

global coordination that started with the efforts of colonizers to expand control while inflicting minimal damage on each other. On the other hand, this founding also occurred when two world wars and economic hardship had made the imperialist order unsustainable. Large-scale decolonization was a defining feature of the two decades following the war. New member states that had arisen from colonialism were admitted to an organization that in turn straightforwardly continued erstwhile efforts at white domination.

Malcolm X went to Africa to get the support of some of the newest member countries of the global political and economic order, to pillory the very country that, though itself an offshoot of European colonialism, in recent times had done more than any other to create the order whose moral and institutional framework was now supposed to be utilized for its denunciation. Put differently, within a political order created by whites, Malcolm X hoped to take advantage of opportunities to create solidarity among people who had distinctly not been the intended beneficiaries of that order and the world society within which it had arisen.

We should not over-interpret this, but it is fair to say that, in addition to his call for help for his domestic causes, Malcolm's mission was also an effort to help empower African countries specifically by guiding them to find their voice within the legal, moral and institutional framework that governed the world. It was an effort to help them take their place in what, in spite of the more sinister factors in the long-term history of its origination, and in spite of all its shortcomings, is the most daring and far-reaching effort ever to provide a framework in which something like global justice could be realized. Malcolm X's visit also falls into a time when the Pan-African movement (which he supported) had given rise to an organization that on the one hand would provide a version of institutional reality to the idea

of African unity, but on the other hand also bought into the state-based framework created by the former colonizers, the Organization of African Unity (established in 1963).<sup>9</sup>

There were many other voices in the debate about how best to integrate Africa into the postcolonial world, some more radical than that of Malcolm X. “What counts today,” wrote Frantz Fanon in 1963, in his iconic book of resistance, *The Wretched of the Earth*, “is the need for a redistribution of wealth. Humanity must reply to this question, or be shaken to pieces by it.”<sup>10</sup> Nor was such redistribution charity. “Europe is literally the creation of the Third World,” so what must be given to these countries is their due.<sup>11</sup> Fanon advised emerging countries to eschew the state model, and any efforts to “catch up” with Europe. They should get organized differently. “Two centuries ago,” he wrote,

a former European colony decided to catch up with Europe. It succeeded so well that the United States of America became a monster, in which the taints, the sickness and the inhumanity of Europe have grown to appalling dimensions.<sup>12</sup>

So instead of integration to the postcolonial order, Fanon hoped for an alternative to it. On the other end of the spectrum of views, Swedish economist Gunnar Myrdal wanted more for developing nations, especially Africa, within the postcolonial world of states than what the UN system provided. Myrdal had contributed to the development of the welfare state in his native country. He advocated the global expansion of the welfare state: “*The concept of the welfare state, to which we are now giving reality in all the advanced nations,*

---

<sup>9</sup> On Pan-Africanism, see Adi, *Pan-Africanism*; Abdul-Raheem, *Pan Africanism*; Martin, *African Political Thought*, chapter 4.

<sup>10</sup> Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*, 98.

<sup>11</sup> Fanon, 102.

<sup>12</sup> Fanon, 313.

would have to be widened and changed into a concept of a 'welfare world.'"<sup>13</sup> The goal was to curb the galloping inequality across countries that Myrdal regarded as unbearable in an interconnected world. He realized that the nationalist sentiments and policies that made welfare states possible obstructed global institutionalization. He wanted to resolve that conundrum in favor of global institutionalization, instead of merely integrating new states into a global order not of their making.

As these examples of Malcolm X, Frantz Fanon and Gunnar Myrdal illustrate, the period of decolonization was intense not only as far as changes in global political organization were concerned, but also in terms of intellectual reflection on the world order.<sup>14</sup> That Malcolm X would urge acceptance of the status-quo might surprise. After all, his domestic politics had stood in contrast to Martin Luther King's approach along such lines. The Nation of Islam was built on the assumption that Islam was attractive to blacks because it represented (the only effective) resistance to Christianity and thus to whiteness.<sup>15</sup> And yet there is much more to Malcolm X's visit to Africa, and the human rights stance he took there, than status-quo acceptance. There is also an assertiveness, to the effect that the global order also had to work for the benefit of black people and give a voice to African countries. In particular, the human rights framework that had nominally been adopted as a moral

---

<sup>13</sup> Myrdal, *An International Economy, Problems and Prospects.*; Myrdal, *Rich Lands and Poor*. The quote (emphasis in original) is from Myrdal, *An International Economy, Problems and Prospects.*, 324.

<sup>14</sup> For recent reflections on this period with a special focus on Africa, see Getachew, *Worldmaking after Empire*, chapters 3-5.

<sup>15</sup> "The Christian church," Malcolm X had once written, "became infected with racism when it entered white Europe. The Christian church returned to Africa under the banner of the Cross -- conquering, killing, exploiting, pillaging, raping, bullying, beating -- and teaching white supremacy;" see X and Haley, *The Autobiography of Malcolm X*, 486, chapter 19.

blueprint of this new order also had to benefit the global underdog. Black people were operating within a framework created by others, Malcolm X seemed to say, but they would not, or would no longer, be marginalized within it. They should, and could, make it their own.

### **3. The Marginalization of Africa**

Malcolm was giving his advice at a time when African countries needed to find their way into a global political and economic system not of their making, as well as into a budding intellectual framework (human rights) also not of their making. But the question of how to enhance Africa's standing also arises for contemporary global justice discourse. These various issues arise before a general political and intellectual marginalization of Africa. Let us next throw more light on the nature of this marginalization. Marginalization is always relative to a given system. Needless to say, we must be careful when we talk about the marginalization of Africa. After all, the human species originated in Africa, "the fount of innovation in hominid evolution."<sup>16</sup> Africa is the world's second largest and second most populous continent. In what sense would that continent be marginal?

After their departure from Africa, groups of humans gradually took over the whole globe. They did so while remaining interconnected in what historians John and William McNeill have called "human webs."<sup>17</sup> Around 2000 years ago, the gradual amalgamation of many smaller webs led to the formation of the Old World Web that spanned most of Europe, Asia, as well as North Africa. In the first millennium of the common era, a constellation of

---

<sup>16</sup> Tattersall, *Masters of the Planet: The Search for Our Human Origins*, 145.

<sup>17</sup> McNeill and McNeill, *The Human Web*.

factors generated the Christian web in Western Europe. Especially between 1000 and 1500, once that web had stabilized after centuries of internal fighting, diseases, cultural transition and onslaughts from North, South and East, people in that region became exceedingly good at enhancing skills, knowledge, and power. The “discovery” of the Americas was launched from within that Christian web. That event was part and parcel of the fusion of the world’s various metropolitan webs and few remaining local webs into one global web over several centuries. European ocean navigation and its tendency to commercialize human affairs glued the coalescing global web.<sup>18</sup> Steamships, railroads, and telegraphs later helped unify and streamline the global web. Trade had always made the world, and did so ever more intensely, the more powerful means of communication and transportation were becoming. The Industrial Revolution gave the last push for deep military, economic, and cultural penetration in 19<sup>th</sup> century imperialism and became a cause of inequalities in wealth and power that has shaped the world after 1800. Most of Sub-Saharan Africa did not join that web until the 19<sup>th</sup> or even 20<sup>th</sup> century. It is relative to that system that we must understand the marginalization of Africa.

There is a rather complicated history here, one that, if told in detail, would also have to talk about the world-historical role of Egypt; the political complexities of African kingdoms and empires in pre-colonial times; the spread of Islam in the Northern half of Africa as well as the spread of Christianity in its Southern half beginning with the arrival of the Portuguese at a time when Europeans themselves were marginal to the politically complex affairs of the African interior; and the multifarious ways in which African local

---

<sup>18</sup> For Europe in the late Middle Ages and in early Modernity, see McNeill and McNeill, chapter 5.

traditions mixed with both Islam and Christianity and those two religions engaged with each other where they met.<sup>19</sup> But what I mean by marginalization, specifically on the intellectual front, is this. In the centuries during which Western European colonialism was developed before it reached the interior of Africa at a large scale (during the infamous “Scramble” of the late 19<sup>th</sup> century), Western Europe also built up an intellectual culture, including a philosophical culture, that belittled Africa. To the extent that this intellectual culture was the culture of colonial powers, Africa was marginalized intellectually in relation to that culture.

In recent times, an increasing amount of attention has been paid to how key thinkers have made moves that, cumulatively, generated a kind of philosophical racism, or in any event, a version of white ignorance peculiar to philosophy, especially political philosophy.<sup>20</sup> Questions have arisen about what it says about Western thought that Hobbes’s seminal articulation of social-contract theory captures the state of nature with a reference to the fact that “the savage people in many places of America (...) have no government at all, and live at this day in that brutish manner” Hobbes had laid out;<sup>21</sup> that Locke exclaims “in the beginning all the World was *America*,”<sup>22</sup> denoting a place where cultivation had not yet happened; that Hume’s essay “Of National Characters” endorses the existence of races and asserts the

---

<sup>19</sup> Harms, *Africa in Global History with Sources*. See also Fyle, *Introduction to the History of African Civilization*; Davidson, *The African Genius*; Davidson, *West Africa Before the Colonial Era*; Davidson, *Africa: History of a Continent*; Harris, *Africans and Their History*.

<sup>20</sup> Flikschuh, “Philosophical Racism”; Mills, “White Ignorance”; Mills, “Global White Ignorance.” In the background is the debate about epistemic injustice see Fricker, *Epistemic Injustice*.

<sup>21</sup> Hobbes, *Leviathan*, Chapter XIII.

<sup>22</sup> Locke, *Second Treatise of Government*, Chapter V, sec. 49.



superiority of whites over other races;<sup>23</sup> that Kant arguably played a major role in tidying the notion of race for serious discourse;<sup>24</sup> or that Mill applied his insights about the link between good government and conditions of individual self-government to the UK but not India.<sup>25</sup>

But it has long been Hegel's approach to the philosophy of history (and hence the history of philosophy) that was most directly associated with the exclusion of both Africa and Asia from the history of philosophy.<sup>26</sup> In the case of Africa, this meant first of all a denial of influence of Egyptian on Greek culture. But at a larger scale, it also meant the denial that any talent or inclination existed among Africans broadly speaking (and for that matter Asians and Americans) that would be recognizably philosophical, which in turn would have been a reflection of general deficiencies as human beings that would be ascribed to blacks. Hegel's views were sufficiently widely received even outside of the circle of those responsible for building a canon in the history of philosophy, that in 1860, Mississippi congressman L Q. C. Lamar read aloud passages from Hegel's *Philosophy of History* (which he called "an imperishable monument of human genius") to defend slavery in the U.S. Congress.<sup>27</sup>

---

<sup>23</sup> Hume, *Essays*, 202–20.

<sup>24</sup> Bernasconi, "Who Invented the Concept of Race? Kant's Role in the Enlightenment Construction of Race."

<sup>25</sup> Mill, *Considerations on Representative Government*, chapters 2, 18.

<sup>26</sup> See the section on the "Geographical Basis of History" in Hegel, *The Philosophy of History*.

<sup>27</sup> Park, *Africa, Asia, and the History of Philosophy*, 116. For the speech see [https://archive.org/stream/slaveryquestion00lama/slaveryquestion00lama\\_djvu.txt](https://archive.org/stream/slaveryquestion00lama/slaveryquestion00lama_djvu.txt) Lamar was a well-known and successful politician, academic and jurist before and after the Civil War. His full name is Lucius Quintus Cincinnatus.

However, more recent work blames the stage-setting thought of a less illustrious figure for this exclusion of Africa and Asia from the European understanding of the history of philosophy. Christoph Meiners (1747-1810), professor of philosophy at Göttingen, had argued against the long-standing view that African and Asian colonists had transmitted to the Greeks the sciences and arts. Instead, Meiners made philosophy a distinctively Greek endeavor, denying Asians and Africans both any serious standing in the history of thought and, based on anthropological speculation, then also any aptitude to do serious intellectual work. Kant seems to have adopted his own (early) views on race, in any event the underlying philosophical anthropology, from Meiners while developing further a concept of race more sophisticated than those available at that time.<sup>28</sup>

Hegel too seems to have gotten his views of Africa and Asia from Meiners.<sup>29</sup> So Hegel's exclusion of Africa and Asia from the history of philosophy was neither original nor seminal. Instead, it was the culmination of tendencies in academic philosophy that started decades earlier. Such views left a lasting mark on how the place of non-Europeans in the history of thought was seen. To many who would study the history of philosophy later, philosophy was an activity that started with the Greeks, without help from anywhere, and remained a European preoccupation. Others may have had religion but not philosophy, properly understood.

---

<sup>28</sup> Park, chapter 4. For the view that ancient Egyptians and Phoenicians colonized Greece and that Western academia from the 18th century fostered a denial of any significant African and Phoenician influence on ancient Greek civilization, see Bernal, *Black Athena*.

<sup>29</sup> Park, *Africa, Asia, and the History of Philosophy*, chapter 6.

With this sort of background in place – and here philosophy would just have been part and parcel of an overall intellectual outlook -- it was unsurprising that, when the Scramble for Africa occurred, Europeans would not approach Africa with curious minds, to ascertain what they might be able to learn from Africans. That African traditions were mostly passed on orally did not help the matter. This by itself made for an enormous contrast with the written traditions developed at Western universities that could draw on written sources going back millennia and thus already created a scholarly culture around the preservation and interpretation of such texts.<sup>30</sup> The resulting intellectual marginalization has many faces. To this day, general knowledge about precolonial Africa outside of African is limited, with the exception of Egypt.<sup>31</sup> Standing as a *pars pro toto*, the human rights regime to which Malcolm X made reference came into being with basically no participation by Africans – except South Africans, who got involved to make sure South African whites at the margin of the British empire received appropriate recognition in efforts at global norm-creation.<sup>32</sup>

Such marginalization also continues to live in contemporary global justice debates. In recent decades global justice has been a major sub-domain of Western political philosophy. But although such theorizing distinctly addresses non-Western contexts, few efforts have been made to bring about actual conversations. In recent times, this has changed to some extent especially with regard to East Asia. As far as Africa is concerned, there seems to be

---

<sup>30</sup> Fyle, *Introduction to the History of African Civilization*, 4. For a contemporary discussion of the relevance of oral history in the context of Africa, see Elkins, *Imperial Reckoning*, 371–76.

<sup>31</sup> For a good survey of the history, see Harms, *Africa in Global History with Sources*. See also Fyle, *Introduction to the History of African Civilization*; Davidson, *The African Genius*; Davidson, *West Africa Before the Colonial Era*; Davidson, *Africa: History of a Continent*; Harris, *Africans and Their History*.

<sup>32</sup> Mazower, *No Enchanted Palace*.

relatively little normative theorizing in African academia itself, as African political thinking generally seems to remain concerned with domestic or broadly African issues. Nor has Africa mattered much to political philosophers concerned with global issues except as a place where “distant others” and “the global poor” live. This situation is increasingly problematic as global political philosophy self-consciously tries to be a global discourse.

#### **4. Philosophical Fieldwork**

In principle, there are three major ways of responding to marginalization: leaving the system or otherwise stopping to engage, one way or another; voicing complaints and thus bringing about change so the system itself changes and one’s own status is no longer that of marginalization; and finally, an appropriation of its (the system’s) major features so the system does not change but one’s status in it is no longer one of marginalization.<sup>33</sup> A version of the first in the present context (marginalization of Africa) could be to cease any kind of intellectual engagement, and to withdraw, one way or another. A version of the second would be to protest the overbearing presence of thought of non-African origin by articulating indigenous African ideas. Finally, a version of the third would be to appropriate thoughts of non-African origin and thereby make them one’s own. I am setting aside the first option though I suspect that in practice such withdrawal happens quite a bit, not literally as a departure from the system but a refusal to engage. A version of the second was developed by Katrin Flikschuk, and for a version of the third we can draw on the work of John Meyer.

---

<sup>33</sup> This is structurally similar to Albert Hirschman’s celebrated distinction among “exit,” “voice” and “loyalty,” though he primarily applies that distinction to consumer behavior. For that reason also I do not actually use his terms; see Hirschman, *Exit, Voice, and Loyalty*.

Drawing on the work on Ghanaian philosophers Kwasi Wiredu and Kwame Gyekye, Flikschuh points out that African intellectuals face a challenge unknown to Western intellectuals who have seen their traditions prevail in the world.<sup>34</sup> That challenge is “to retrieve a pre-colonial oral tradition and to translate it into a written framework fit for modern African contexts.”<sup>35</sup> That kind of work is necessary for there to be a philosophy that would satisfy “African nationalists in search for an African identity, Afro-Americans in search of their African roots and foreigners in search of exotic diversion,” all of which “demand an African philosophy fundamentally different from Western philosophy.”<sup>36</sup>

One distinction central to the required revitalization is that between culture and tradition that Flikschuh takes from Kwame Gyekye. “Culture” represents the set of beliefs and attitudes held by a certain social group at any given time. “Traditions” are that subset of culture that endures over time, where the test for endurance is survival over roughly three generations. Flikschuh refers to “a frequently noted phenomenon in modern African societies,” to wit, “the extreme resilience of traditional structures in the face of frequently volatile political conditions.”<sup>37</sup> One manifestation is that in colonial times, traditions frequently went underground, covered by more superficially adopted components of culture that are subsequently more visible to the public eye and then in particular are also taken by

---

<sup>34</sup> Gyekye, *Tradition and Modernity*; Wiredu, *Philosophy and an African Culture*.

<sup>35</sup> Flikschuh, “The Idea of Philosophical Fieldwork,” 5.

<sup>36</sup> Wiredu, *Philosophy and an African Culture*, 46. This is quoted by Flikschuh, “The Idea of Philosophical Fieldwork,” 23.

<sup>37</sup> Flikschuh, “The Idea of Philosophical Fieldwork,” 24.

Western investigators as the hallmark of the local intellectual orientation. Thereby traditions also ran the risk of stagnation because they could only be attended to in clandestine ways.

Philosophical fieldwork then is required by both contemporary African thinkers and non-African thinkers in search of a respectful attitude towards Africa's philosophical roots. African intellectuals face the challenge of unearthing and reactivating these traditions again. Non-African, and especially Western, philosophers are supposed to approach this whole endeavor with an appropriate attitude of curiosity but also intellectual reflectiveness and modesty. But both in their own ways could then do the work required to connect African traditions (in Gyekye's sense) to contemporary philosophical debates.

Doing such philosophical fieldwork is fueled by a certain attitude, an attitude of genuine curiosity about how those from other philosophical traditions think. The point is not to revel in their strangeness, or their "otherness." Instead, the point is to appreciate that they have responded to some of the same questions that one's own traditions also generated, while also pursuing others, and that they developed a conceptual apparatus that is to some extent different but then also perhaps related to what one is used to. The key is to appreciate the differences without being too eager to draw the conclusion that there is no common ground to be found.

## **5. World Society Analysis**

In *Between the World and Me*, African-American writer Ta-Nehisi Coates muses on a quip attributed to novelist Saul Bellow, who asks "who is the Tolstoy of the Zulus?" Coates reads Bellow as belittling people like him: only whites matter, black people could not possibly

produce anything of the caliber of Tolstoy's writings<sup>38</sup> He reports on encountering an essay by black journalist Ralph Wiley where Wiley retorts to Bellow that "Tolstoy is the Tolstoy of the Zulus." Wiley adds, "unless you find a profit in fencing off universal properties of mankind into exclusive tribal ownership."<sup>39</sup> "In fact," Coates elaborates, "Bellow was no closer to Tolstoy than I was to Nzinga. And if I were closer it would be because I chose to be, not because destiny is written in DNA."<sup>40</sup> (Nzinga is a 16<sup>th</sup> century African queen famous for resisting Portuguese intrusion, whom Coates admires.)

Coates seems to have this exactly right. Consider a contrast. In his introduction to African political thought, Guy Martin points out that he does not discuss African Marxist regimes "because they do not derive from an original ideology," meaning an original African ideology.<sup>41</sup> He also points out, by way of concluding his chapter on the penetration of Northern Africa by Islam, that Islam "is one of the fundamental aspects of African civilization."<sup>42</sup> He argues that, over the centuries, an Africanization of Islam took place, as

---

<sup>38</sup> Coates, *Between the World and Me*, 43. One recorded source of this statement is *John Blades* (19 June 1994), "Bellow's Latest Chapter." *Chicago Tribune*. [http://articles.chicagotribune.com/1994-06-19/features/9406190395\\_1\\_saul-bellow-janis-freedman-keith-botsford/2](http://articles.chicagotribune.com/1994-06-19/features/9406190395_1_saul-bellow-janis-freedman-keith-botsford/2) Last accessed June 7, 2017. But in an op-ed in the *New York Times* on March 10, 1994 Bellow had already denied he made the comment, or ever said anything about Zulus. <http://www.nytimes.com/books/00/04/23/specials/bellow-papuans.html> Last accessed January 30, 2019. Authentic or not, the Zulu point has been discussed in the literature on multiculturalism, e.g., Taylor, *Multiculturalism and The Politics of Recognition*, 71–72. Taylor opposes the alleged arrogance of the statement supposedly uttered by Bellow. Not only might the Zulus have produced a Tolstoy yet to be discovered, but Zulu culture might evaluate merit differently. We would benefit from learning their evaluative system.

<sup>39</sup> Coates, *Between the World and Me*, 56. For Wiley, see Wiley, *Dark Witness*.

<sup>40</sup> Coates, *Between the World and Me*, 43.

<sup>41</sup> Martin, *African Political Thought*, 4.

<sup>42</sup> Martin, 39.

opposed to an Arabization of Africa. But one wonders then on what grounds adoption of Marxism is dismissed as merely an implementation of a *foreign* ideology “in an African context.” Appropriation of ideas has not only always driven human history but is also entirely legitimate. The most important difference here between Islam and Marxism as far as their presence in Africa is concerned is that Islam got there much earlier.<sup>43</sup>

Consider how ideas function in the world. The account I enlist to this effect is a research program proposed by Stanford sociologist John Meyer and others: *world society analysis*.<sup>44</sup> According to that stance, ideas are causally efficacious, by way of contrast, say, with materialist approaches in the Marxist tradition that hold that only material circumstances drive change. World society analysis understands efficacy of ideas in a global context, by way of contrast, for instance, with international relations realists who believe it is mostly interests backed by power (e.g., military, industrial apparatus or generally a strong economy) that generate explanations in the international domain. Meyer has proposed, theoretically and empirically, an approach that views the world as one social system with a unified cultural framework (world polity or society) that nonetheless is implemented in a myriad of frequently conflicting variations. People, organizations, and states (but not *merely* states) are seen to act on normative and cognitive models that are global in character and aspiration.

---

<sup>43</sup> To be sure, Coates himself does not always follow through with his lesson. On Christianity, Coates pretty much agrees with the Malcolm X from the time of the Nation of Islam: “We spurned the holidays marketed by the people who wanted to be white. We would not stand for their anthems. We would not kneel for their God. (...) My understanding of the universe was physical, and its moral arc bent towards chaos and then concluded in a box.” Coates, *Between the World and Me*, 28. For Africa’s Islamic intellectual traditions, see Kane, *Non-Europhone Intellectuals*; Kane, *Beyond Timbuktu*.

<sup>44</sup> Krücken and Drori, *World Society*.



A polity or society is a system where values and norms are defined and implemented through collective mechanisms that confer authority. The system itself also determines who gets to confer what kind of authority, and how that occurs. A *world* polity, accordingly, is such a system with global dimensions. In a pluralist spirit, this approach theorizes various kinds of actors (whose interplay confers authority), including nations, companies, intergovernmental organizations, non-governmental organizations and individuals. All of these have causal roles to play in explanations, and influence each other. The defining feature of the world polity is that it provides a set of norms and roles that the various actors adopt. Through the implementation and spread of such “scripts,” world society becomes a global “imagined community” in Benedict Anderson’s well-known sense.<sup>45</sup>

World culture generates pressures towards isomorphisms (structural similarities). For instance, the model of statehood was adopted globally as a result of the centuries-long process of decolonization that generated about 130 states after WWII alone. States at different levels of development adopted similar guidelines and institutions, *independently of their respective usefulness for the problems that needed to be solved locally*. Examples include constitutional forms, education systems, policies on women's emancipation and environment, and notions of development. States obtain institutional set-up and authority from being embedded into a world polity offering as worthy of imitation or “enactment” of certain behaviors, organizational designs or legal patterns. At the level of individuals, a sense of individuality as well as a notion of citizenship spread. World culture was elaborated and

---

<sup>45</sup> Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*. An *imagined* community is a socially constructed community, imagined by the people who perceive themselves as part of that group. Since they do see themselves that way, an *imagined* community is not *imaginary*.

implemented by organizations ranging from scientific associations to feminist groups, from standard-setting bodies to environmental movements. States, individuals, but also non-state organizations adopted scripts designed to be followed anywhere. World society has become a common heritage.

According to world society analysis in recent centuries, Western culture was pivotal to the spread of many successful scripts (whose success, at that stage, was sufficiently strong that their spread did no longer depend on their immediate usefulness for solving local problems in regions to which they were spread through exercise of power). In one of their research anthologies, world society analysts state “the world polity is the direct descendent of Christendom.”<sup>46</sup> Notions of individual value and autonomy, rationality in pursuit of secular progress, and the sovereign status of states have roots in Western history.

To be sure, today’s world society is itself embedded into a human web that has been unfolding for much longer. The “rise of the West” did not encounter a hitherto disjointed world where multifarious cultures had evolved in isolation. Instead, that rise occurred within a larger and much older interconnected web that subsequently thickened into the world society. As we already noted, historians McNeill argue that, ever since groups of *homo sapiens* set out from Africa, there was a very loose human web where ideas and practices travelled.<sup>47</sup> Some parts of that web thickened into metropolitan webs. Over millennia, these webs intensified to such an extent that a world society emerged. Such exchanges were unevenly developed, more intense at some locations than others, which continues to be true. World

---

<sup>46</sup> Thomas et al., *Institutional Structure*, 75–76.

<sup>47</sup> McNeill and McNeill, *The Human Web*.

society is the especially thick and relatively unified stage this web has entered through developments that led to the age of colonialism and imperialism, as well as through developments during that age itself.

Pointing out that Western ideas have shaped world society is consistent with seeing those ideas in close cultural connections with ideas and practices adopted from other cultures. Touching in similar points, Senegalese historian Cheikh Anta Diop writes in his chapter on intellectual life in his book on precolonial Africa: “long before colonization, then, black Africa had acceded to colonization. It might be argued that these centers of civilization were, for the most part, influenced by Islam, and that there was nothing original, nothing specifically African about them.” But not only had Islamic thought interacted with indigenous thought, but “Christian Europe at the time was no more original than Mohammedan Black Africa; Latin, until the 19<sup>th</sup> century, had remained the language of science. Gauss, the ‘prince of mathematicians,’ wrote his memoirs in Latin.”<sup>48</sup>

Similarly, in the introduction to their *Dictionary of Global Culture*, following a discussion of how the most common dating system revolves around the birth of a figure (Jesus) who for many belongs to somebody else’s story, Anthony Appiah and Henry Louis Gates say this:

Whatever their intentions, Europeans and their descendants in North America, a civilization we now call ‘the West,’ began a process that brought the human species into a single political, economic, and cultural system whose details are, of course, the work of people from all around the globe.<sup>49</sup>

---

<sup>48</sup> Diop, *Precolonial Black Africa*, 184–85. Diop goes on to say that “forgetfulness of our past now becomes a tangible fact, and that what is needed is a “resuscitation” and “defossilization” of those parts of African history that had been forgotten during the period of colonialism.

<sup>49</sup> Appiah and Gates, *The Dictionary of Global Culture*, ix.

So with its emphasis on explaining change through adoption of ideas, role-models and scripts, world society analysis explains Western ideas as *themselves* descending from earlier adaptations. It lies in the methodological spirit of world society analysis to connect to the human-web approach as I just did. So accepting the outsized role of Western ideas for the way world society has shaped up is consistent with (and in fact requires) recognizing a bigger picture that sees that outsized importance as one episode in a larger narrative (the human web).

Although Western ideas played an outsized role in the genesis of world society and have spread with violence, it does not mean their success simply results from violence or coercion. Often ideas that spread coercively were adopted by later generations, as voluntarily as new ideas could ever be adopted by people born into a society where certain views prevail. The violence of colonialism and imperialism does play a role in explaining global culture. But world society analysis also sees other factors at work in the spread of scripts. To the extent that it led to enduring changes, that spread can be explained largely through voluntary adoption of role models *perceived as successful*, such as in more recent times statehood or individuality.

What is crucial too is that we are talking about processes unfolding over time. World society analysis readily captures that thought because of its emphasis on the adoption of role models in the spread of ideas. Odious origins do not preclude authentic acceptance later. For subsequent generations, ideas that spread coercively are part of their intellectual infrastructure. What matters is *only* if ideas generate allegiance. One could think of countless examples, especially from the spread of religion. Both Islam and Christianity spread partially through violence, but it would be implausible to say descendants of those who first

encountered these religions in violent ways are remiss in endorsing them. But today, it would be as implausible to ask Africans to stop practicing these religions as it would be to say that soccer does not belong to Africa because it was introduced by British colonialists and first promoted by soldiers, traders and missionaries.<sup>50</sup>

So world society analysis would readily endorse what Malcolm X did by pointing out to African leaders that they were just as entitled to appropriating the political framework of the global order and the intellectual framework behind human rights. Ideas have always spread like that, and thus actual change has always happened that way. There was much injury in the spread of all these components. But no insult is added by talking about the legitimacy of appropriation. Both Malcolm X and Ta-Nehisi Coates are correct in this regard.

## **6. Conclusion**

So what then about the neglect of Africa in global justice debates? What are the lessons to draw? Again, my topic has not been how to make African voices heard more in conversations about global topics – to that question the answer can only be that we have to engage more, and that there have to be more events like the one for which this paper was written. My question was the somewhat different one of how there can be a *genuinely and legitimately global discourse on justice that involves Africa in authentic ways*. My question was about how to think about respectful appropriation of ideas and thus respectful philosophical discourse.

Is the answer we have developed to that question now a license not to be interested in what indigenous African views might have to say on the matter, and thus not to do the kind of fieldwork Flikschuh recommends? Not at all. The debate should be enriched and will

---

<sup>50</sup> Alegi, *African Soccerscapes*; Goldblatt, *The Ball Is Round*.

only benefit from new input, and a narrow focus on one's own tradition is problematic by limiting creativity, where of course as always with the arrival of all new ideas there is a burden of proof on those who push for them to show that they add to, or possibly help reframe, ongoing debates, or redirect attention to other debates. For most people, going to graduate school is a brainwashing experience that is not normally perceived as such, and it will always be hard to be open-minded to approaches from beyond one's ken. Nonetheless, the insight that open-mindedness towards what has grown outside of one's own philosophical echo-chamber is an intellectual virtue is increasingly present in many domains of philosophy.

Moreover, philosophers, and especially political philosophers have taken first steps to engage with the built-in white ignorance and philosophical racism – one might even talk of the coloniality – of their discipline and its classics. Much more work along such lines is obviously needed, and in the classroom we should teach classic texts with an active focus on fostering such attitudes. And it should be clear that this is going to be an effort that can prevail only in time. But the need to do this kind of work is also increasingly seen by research-active philosophers. And this kind of critical attitude towards one's own intellectual roots should accompany that aforementioned open-mindedness.

However, I also submit that both African and non-African philosophers should take the route Flikschuh recommends because new ideas should be welcome and parochial attitudes need to be overcome (attitudes to the effect that only ideas of certain origins count whereas ideas from other regions are dismissed) – but not because Africans are presently confronted with a philosophical framework that is *not theirs*. It indeed is theirs if they want it, and then it is theirs as much as it belongs to anybody else. If Aristotle can legitimately be

taught in California, Rawls can be taught in Cameroon. Aristotle is not taught better in Athens only because there are sites in one can visit in Athens where, apparently, he came up with some of his central ideas, nor is Harvard a better place than any other university to enhance Rawls's ideas only because that is where he walked the corridors. Any African philosopher who connects traditional African philosophy to other themes in ongoing debates would do the world an intellectual favor. But no African philosopher who does not do that kind work would need to feel she is not doing as an African philosopher should do. Similarly, non-African thinkers should feel free to learn from African traditions as they see fit, and should judge African contributions to ongoing debates only by their quality. And, certainly, no Western philosopher should feel he has an interpretive monopoly or otherwise any kind of special ties to certain ideas only because they were first articulated at a relatively nearby location. In such ways the lessons to be drawn from the world-society approach are also rather humbling given that many of us are, I submit, instinctively inclined to claim special connections to ideas that arose from one's own geographical region of the world.

But how is saying all this different from saying that everybody else should just adopt the current discourse that is merely a reflection on previous and ongoing hegemony? It is different in the sense that it comes with a theoretical outlook that makes clear that nobody has any proprietary claims to ideas that originated in their quarters, and that actual change in human history has always happened through adoption of new ideas, which often were ideas that arrived from the outside, and then frequently in initially violent ways. Nobody *has* to accept such ideas, but nor is there any reason to reject them only because they came from elsewhere and arrived in violent ways. Tolstoy indeed is the Tolstoy of the Zulus: there is no other Tolstoy, nor do we need one. Similarly, global justice discourse is there for everybody

to join. Participation in such a discourse becomes genuine and legitimate simply through a typical philosophical engagement with the ideas that are already present there.

Neither from the perspective of those who live in the territories where these ideas originated nor from the perspective of those who adopt them should there be anything hegemonial about that discourse or its adoption. To the extent that views are articulated that only ideas “from around here” can be legitimately adopted, or that only people “from around here” are properly authorized to interpret and advance ideas introduced by their forbears, such views should be resisted. But such views are wide-spread, and so the point I am trying to make here is, I submit, more demanding (but hopefully also enabling) than it may at first appear. In much the same way, of course, what Malcolm X was trying to do was both demanding and enabling.

## **Bibliography**

- Abdul-Raheem, Tajudeen. *Pan Africanism: Politics, Economy, and Social Change in the Twenty-First Century*. New York: NYU Press, 1996.
- Adi, Hakim. *Pan-Africanism: A History*. London New York Oxford New Delhi Sydney: Bloomsbury Academic, 2018.
- Alegi, Peter. *African Soccerescapes: How A Continent Changed the World's Game*. London: C Hurst & Co Publishers Ltd, 2010.
- Anderson, Benedict. *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*. London: Verso, 1983.
- Appiah, Kwame Anthony, and Henry Louis Gates, eds. *The Dictionary of Global Culture*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1996.
- Bernal, Martin. *Black Athena: The Afroasiatic Roots of Classical Civilization*. New Brunswick, N.J: Rutland Local History & Record Society, 1987.
- Bernasconi, Robert. “Who Invented the Concept of Race? Kant’s Role in the Enlightenment Construction of Race.” In *Race*, edited by Robert Bernasconi, 11–36. Malden, Mass: Wiley-Blackwell, 2001.
- Breitman, George, ed. *Malcolm X Speaks - Selected Speeches and Statements*. New York City: Grove Press, 1966.
- Coates, Ta-Nehisi. *Between the World and Me*. Melbourne: The Text Publishing Company, 2015.
- Davidson, Basil. *Africa: History of a Continent*. New York: Macmillan, 1966.



- . *The African Genius*. Athens, Ohio: Ohio University Press, 2005.
- . *West Africa Before the Colonial Era: A History to 1850*. London; New York: Longman, 1998.
- Diop, Cheikh Anta. *Precolonial Black Africa: A Comparative Study of the Political and Social Systems of Europe and Black Africa, from Antiquity to the Formation of Modern States*. Westport, Conn.: LHill, 1987.
- Elkins, Caroline. *Imperial Reckoning: The Untold Story of Britain's Gulag in Kenya*. London: Holt Paperbacks, 2005.
- Fanon, Frantz. *The Wretched of the Earth*. Translated by Richard Philcox. Reprint edition. New York: Grove Press, 2005.
- Flikschuh, Katrin. "Philosophical Racism." *Aristotelian Society Supplementary Volume* 92, no. 1 (2018): 91–110.
- . "The Idea of Philosophical Fieldwork: Global Justice, Moral Ignorance, and Intellectual Attitudes." *Journal of Political Philosophy* 22, no. 1 (2012): 1–26.
- Fricker, Miranda. *Epistemic Injustice: Power and the Ethics of Knowing*. 1 edition. Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2009.
- Fyle, C. Magbaily. *Introduction to the History of African Civilization*. Lanham, Md: University Press Of America, 1999.
- Gaines, Kevin. "Malcolm X in Global Perspective." In *The Cambridge Companion to Malcolm X*, edited by Robert E. Terrill, 158–70. Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010.
- Getachew, Adom. *Worldmaking after Empire: The Rise and Fall of Self-Determination*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2019.
- Goldblatt, David. *The Ball Is Round: A Global History of Soccer*. 1St Edition edition. New York: Riverhead Books, 2008.
- Gyekye, Kwame. *Tradition and Modernity: Philosophical Reflections on the African Experience*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1997.
- Harms, Robert. *Africa in Global History with Sources*. New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2018.
- Harris, Joseph E. *Africans and Their History*. New York City: Penguin Books, 1972.
- Hegel, Georg Wilhelm Friedrich. *The Philosophy of History*. Translated by J. Sibree. Mineola, N.Y.: Dover Publications, 2004.
- Hirschman, Albert O. *Exit, Voice, and Loyalty: Responses to Decline in Firms, Organizations, and States*. Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1970.
- Hobbes, Thomas. *Leviathan*. Edited by Richard Tuck. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991.
- Hume, David. *Essays: Moral, Political, and Literary*. Indianapolis: Liberty Fund, 1985.
- Kane, Ousmane Oumar. *Beyond Timbuktu: An Intellectual History of Muslim West Africa*. Cambridge, Massachusetts; London: Harvard University Press, 2016.
- . *Non-Europhone Intellectuals*. Dakar: Oxford, UK: Codesria, 2012.
- King, Martin Luther Jr. *Letter from the Birmingham Jail*. CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform, 2016.
- King, Martin Luther Jr. *Why We Can't Wait*. New York: Harper & Row, 1963.
- Krücken, Georg, and Gili S. Drori, eds. *World Society: The Writings of John W. Meyer*. 1 edition. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010.

- Locke, John. *Second Treatise of Government*. Edited by C. B. Macpherson. Indianapolis, Ind: Hackett Publishing Company, Inc., 1980.
- Martin, Guy. *African Political Thought*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012.
- Mazower, Mark. *No Enchanted Palace: The End of Empire and the Ideological Origins of the United Nations*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2009.
- McNeill, J.R., and William McNeill. *The Human Web: A Bird's Eye View of World History*. New York: Norton, 2003.
- Mill, John Stuart. *Considerations on Representative Government*. CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform, 2015.
- Mills, Charles W. "Global White Ignorance." In *Routledge International Handbook of Ignorance Studies*, edited by Matthias Gross and Linsey McGoey, 217–27. New York: Routledge, 2015.
- . "White Ignorance." In *Race and Epistemology of Ignorance*, edited by Shannon Sullivan and Nancy Tuana, 13–38. Albany, N.Y: State University of New York Press, 2007.
- Moyn, Samuel. *The Last Utopia: Human Rights in History*. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press, 2012.
- Myrdal, Gunnar. *An International Economy, Problems and Prospects*. [1st ed.]. New York: Harper, 1956.
- . *Rich Lands and Poor: The Road to World Prosperity*. [1st American ed.]. World Perspectives ; v. 16. New York: Harper, 1958.
- Park, Peter K. J. *Africa, Asia, and the History of Philosophy: Racism in the Formation of the Philosophical Canon, 1780-1830*. Albany: State University of New York Press, 2014.
- Risse, Mathias. *On Global Justice*. 1 edition. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2012.
- . *On Justice: Philosophy, History, Foundations*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, forthcoming.
- . "What Is 'Global' about Global Justice?" *Fudan Journal of the Humanities and Social Sciences*, forthcoming.
- Risse, Mathias, and John W. Meyer. "Thinking about the World: Philosophy and Sociology." In *Capitalism Beyond Mutuality?: Perspectives Integrating Philosophy and Social Science*, edited by Subramanian Rangan, 25–57. Oxford, United Kingdom: Oxford University Press, 2018.
- Tattersall, Ian. *Masters of the Planet: The Search for Our Human Origins*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012.
- Taylor, Charles. *Multiculturalism and The Politics of Recognition: An Essay with Commentary*. Edited by Amy Gutmann. Princeton, N.J: Princeton University Press, 1992.
- Temkin, Moshik. "Malcolm X in France, 1964-1965: Anti-Imperialism and the Politics of Travel Control in the Cold War Era." In *Decolonization and the Cold War: Negotiating Independence*, edited by Leslie James and Elisabeth Leake, 219–38. London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2015.
- Thomas, George M., John W. Meyer, Francisco O. Ramirez, and John Boli. *Institutional Structure: Constituting State, Society and the Individual*. 1 edition. Newbury Park, Calif.: SAGE Publications, Inc, 1987.
- Tyner, James. "Geography, Ground-Level Reality, and the Epistemology of Malcolm X." *Journal of Geography* 102, no. 4 (2003): 167–78.
- Wiley, Ralph. *Dark Witness*. New York: One World/Ballantine, 1996.

Wiredu, Kwasi. *Philosophy and an African Culture*. Cambridge Eng. ; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1980.

X, Malcolm, and Alex Haley. *The Autobiography of Malcolm X*. Penguin Books, 1968.



Carr Center for Human Rights Policy  
Harvard Kennedy School  
79 John F. Kennedy Street Cambridge, MA 02138

[www.carrcenter.hks.harvard.edu](http://www.carrcenter.hks.harvard.edu)

Copyright 2019, President and Fellows of Harvard  
College Printed in the United States of America

**Half a Century After Malcolm X Came to Visit:  
Reflections on the Thin Presence of African Thought in Global Justice Debates**