2020

An African Theory of Good Leadership

Thaddeus Metz

Recommended Citation

An African Theory of Good Leadership

Thaddeus Metz

Introducing African Values

International academic reflection on good leadership has tended to follow the rise of political or economic power, first in the West and then in the East. As has been pointed out, ideas indigenous to Africa are under-represented in the English-speaking literature on leadership (Blunt & Jones, 1997; Ncube, 2010:77–78). The authors of a book devoted to personal growth suggest, "Of all the gifts that Africa has given the world, African values in leadership have not yet claimed the place that they could" (Nussbaum, Palsule, & Mkhize, 2010:5).

There are a number of reasons for thinking that this ignorance of African[1] understandings of good leadership is unwelcome. One familiar rationale is that interaction in a globalized world requires familiarity with the views of "the other" as a matter of prudence. Another important rationale is that any long-standing culture probably has some insight into the human condition, such that one risks being mistaken about what counts as a good leader if one remains unfamiliar with African culture. Despite having been a largely oral tradition until recently, African philosophy and related ideas have been in existence for at least several hundred years and, as this article is meant to show, their implications for leadership merit global consideration.

This article draws on the indigenous African intellectual tradition to ground a moral–philosophical theory of leadership that is meant to constitute a plausible rival to salient accounts of leadership in the East Asian and Western traditions. Specifically, it articulates an interpretation of the characteristically African value of communion and indicates how this Afro-communal value system grounds a certain ideal approach to leadership. Along the way, the article contrasts the implications of Afro-communal leadership, particularly with those of Confucianism and Kantian contract theory, and suggests that, by comparison, the African theory deserves to be treated as a viable alternative to them.

This article does not appeal to all prescriptive ideas about African leadership in the contemporary literature or from traditional practices. Instead of trying to accommodate every idea from the African context, this article advances a reading of one purportedly basic value from it that should be taken seriously by a twenty-first century, open-minded ethicist or related enquirer from any part of the world and then considers what it entails for good leadership. Such a moral orientation, as is spelled out in the next section (sec. 2), is relational. After spelling out this specifically communal ethic, the article draws out of it a conception of good leadership (sec. 3), and then applies this conception to a variety of topics, including how decisions ought to be made within a firm or other large organization, who counts as a stakeholder, and how to deal with non-performing or misbehaving employees (sec. 4). For each topic, the article notes respects in which Afro-communal leadership supports approaches that differ from those prescribed by other, more internationally familiar views of it, and it suggests that its implications are prima facie attractive relative to them.

Communion as a Basic African Value

In recent years there have been a number of literate, philosophical interpretations of the African ethical tradition (e.g., Bujo, 1997; Gyekye, 1997), but this article draws on one according to which communal relationship is to be pursued as an end, and not merely means to some other value such as society's well-being or people's *life force* (an imperceptible vital energy that has come from God). This interpretation is advanced as merely one plausible moral philosophy grounded on sub-Saharan customs, and specifically as an attractive way to understand two maxims widely taken to capture indigenous sub-Saharan ethical thought, namely, "I am because we are" and "A person is a person through other persons."[2]

These phrases are routinely used to express an ethical judgment, specifically the prescription to become a *real* self or a *complete* person (Wiredu, 1992; Menkiti, 2004), or, in the influential southern African vernacular, they are exhortations to exhibit *ubuntu*, the Nguni term for humanness or human excellence (Mokgoro, 1998; Tutu, 1999:32–35; Khoza, 2006). According to this ethic, the ultimate answer to the question of why one should live one way rather than another is the fact that it would make one a better person. There is a distinctively human and higher part of our nature and a lower, animal self, and both can be realized to various degrees. That is, the thought is that one can be more or less of a human, person,

or self, and one's basic aim in life should be to develop one's humanness, personhood, or selfhood as much as one can. Indeed, it is common for those from indigenous African cultures to describe those who are wicked as "not persons," "zero-persons," or even "animals" (Wiredu, 1992:199–200; Gyekye, 1997:49–51; Nkulu-N'Sengha, 2009:144).[3]

Turning to the second part of the maxims, one becomes a real self "because we are" or a complete person "through other persons," which roughly means insofar as one prizes communal or harmonious relationships with others. As Augustine Shutte, who has provided a book-length interpretation of an *ubuntu* ethic, remarks, "Our deepest moral obligation is to become more fully human. And this means entering more and more deeply into community with others. So although the goal is personal fulfilment, selfishness is excluded" (2001:30). It is common for ethicists working in the African tradition to maintain, or at least to suggest, that the only comprehensive respect in which one can exhibit human excellence is by relating to others communally or harmoniously.

To begin to appreciate how one large swathe of African moral thought has been fundamentally relational, consider these remarks about sub-Saharan values and norms from theorists who are from various parts of the continent:

> "(I)n African societies, immorality is the word or deed which undermines fellowship," says the Ugandan theologian Peter Kasenene (1998:21).

> "Social harmony is for us (Africans—ed.) the *summum bonum*— the greatest good. Anything that subverts or undermines this sought-after good is to be avoided like the plague," according to the South African former Chair of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Desmond Tutu (1999:35).

> "(O)ne should always live and behave in a way that maximises harmonious existence at present as well as in the future," prescribes the Zimbabwean academic ethicist Munyaradzi Murove (2007:181).

> "A life of cohesion, or positive integration with others, becomes a goal, one that people design modalities for achieving. Let us call this goal communalism, or, as other people have called it, communitarianism. In light of this goal, the virtues…also become

desirable," opines the Kenyan intellectual historian of African philosophy Dismas Masolo (2010:240).

Talk of "fellowship," "harmony," and "cohesion" is recurrent in the above quotations, which suggest that these are to be valued for their own sake. That approach differs from the idea that these ways of relating are valuable merely as a means to some other value, such as the common good or vital force. It also is prima facie distinct from the most salient philosophical approaches to morally right action in the contemporary West, which typically appeal at bottom to utility promotion, respect for autonomy, or agreement in a social contract.

The next question is how one is to understand these relational goods, or what this article most often refers to as "communion." Representative African theorists are again quoted about what it means to live in communion, harmony, etc. with others, after which the article draws on their comments to advance a principle to guide thought about leadership matters:

> "Every member is expected to consider him/herself an integral part of the whole and to play an appropriate role towards achieving the good of all," says the Nigerian philosopher Segun Gbadegesin (1991:65) of his Yoruba people as an example.

> "The fundamental meaning of community is the sharing of an overall way of life, inspired by the notion of the common good," suggests the influential Ghanaian moral-political philosopher Kwame Gyekye (2004:16).

> "(T)he purpose of our life is community-service and community-belongingness," according to the Nigerian–Igbo theologian Pantaleon Iroegbu (2005:442).

> "If you asked *ubuntu* advocates and philosophers: What principles inform and organise your life? …the answers would express commitment to the good of the community in which their identities were formed, and a need to experience their lives as bound up in that of their community," contends the South African public intellectual Gessler Muxe Nkondo (2007:91).

What is striking about these characterizations of how to commune, harmonize, or otherwise become a real person is that two distinct rela-

tional goods are repeatedly mentioned, namely, considering oneself part of the whole, sharing a way of life, belonging, and experiencing oneself as bound up with others, on the one hand, and then achieving the good of all, advancing the common good, serving the community, and being committed to the good of one's society, on the other.

These two facets of a communal relationship have been distinguished and reconstructed with some precision (Metz, 2017a). It is revealing to understand the relationship of "identifying" with others or "sharing a way of life" with them (i.e., belonging, etc.) to be the combination of exhibiting certain psychological attitudes of cohesion and cooperative behavior consequent to them. The attitudes include a tendency to think of oneself as a member of a group with the other and to refer to oneself as a "we" (rather than an "I"), a disposition to feel pride or shame in what the other or one's group does and, at a higher level of intensity, an emotional appreciation of the other's nature and value. The cooperative behaviors include being transparent about the terms of interaction, allowing others to make voluntary choices, acting on the basis of trust, adopting common goals, and, at the extreme end, choosing for the reason that "this is who we are."

What is labeled the relationship of "exhibiting solidarity" with or "caring" for others (i.e., acting for others' good, etc.) is similarly aptly construed as the combination of exhibiting certain psychological attitudes and engaging in helpful behavior. Here, the attitudes are ones positively oriented towards the other's good, and they include an empathetic awareness of the other's condition and a sympathetic emotional reaction to this awareness. The actions are not merely those likely to be beneficial, that is, to meet her biological, psychological, and social needs, but also are ones done consequent to certain motives, say, for the sake of making the other better off or even a better person.

Bringing things together, here are some concrete and explicit principled interpretations of "I am because we are" and "A person is a person through other persons": one should strive to become a real self, which is matter of prizing those capable of identity and solidarity. Or, one ought to develop *personhood*, which means honoring people by virtue of their dignified ability to be party to communal relationships of sharing a way of life and caring for others' quality of life. Conversely, one lacking in human excellence or who is "not a person" would be one who fails to respect those able to commune. Substantial vice or wrongdoing by this ethic consists of prizing the opposite, discordant relationships of acting on an "us versus them" attitude, subordinating others, harming them, and doing so out of indifference to their good.

To honor communion, or those capable of it, is not a prescription to promote communion as much as one can, and wherever one can, in the long run. So, for example, one should give some priority to the communal relationships of which one is already a part, instead of cutting them off when doing so would foster marginally more communion on the part of others. All things being equal, the stronger and longer one's communal ties with others, the greater the obligation to help them, even if it comes at some cost to communal relationship elsewhere in the world. This interpretation of partiality is meant to reconstruct the traditional sub-Saharan practice of prioritizing aid to blood relatives (on which see Appiah, 1998).

However, partiality is not meant to be absolute, and the urgent needs of strangers, who also matter for their own sake by virtue of being capable of communion, merit consideration and must be weighed up against the interests of intimates. The impartial idea that every person has dignity is also prominent in the African tradition (Wiredu, 1992:199–200; Gyekye, 2010:sec. 6), and is expressed here in terms of respecting those with the natural ability to be communed with and to commune.

There is much more than could be said to spell out and to motivate this Afro-communal ethic. However, there is enough here to draw some conclusions about what counts as good leadership, on the supposition that a moral agent must respect human beings capable of communion, where those with whom she has already communed are entitled to some priority relative to strangers, whose needs nonetheless matter by virtue of being potential sites of communion.

From an Afro-communal ethic to an account of leadership

In the light of the previous section's analysis, one can now grasp the import of maxims about leadership from the literature that might otherwise have been opaque. For example, probably the most common saying in an African context about good leadership is this: "A king is a king through his people" (e.g., Pheko & Linchwe, 2008:399, 409; Mofuoa, 2015:32). There is also this remark: "Leaders have a deep awareness that they are what they are because of other people" (Nussbaum, Palsule, & Mkhize, 2010:10). Notice how these maxims echo the ones about personhood ("A person is a person through other persons") and selfhood ("I am because we are") from the previous section. Supposing the communal interpretation of ethical behavior in general made there is plausible, it makes sense to construe these statements about leadership this way: *one should become a real leader, which one can do insofar as one relates communally and enables others to commune.*

This conception of leadership is an instance of servant leadership, which phrase abounds in the literature on African approaches to leadership (Mbigi & Maree, 2005:102; Nicholson, 2005:260–261; Bhengu, 2006:185–187, 229; Khoza, 2006:58–59; Mbigi, 2007:298–301; Msila, 2014; Ndlovu, 2016; Ndlovu-Gatsheni & Ngcaweni, 2017). Broadly speaking, a servant leader is not so much one who gets others to do what he wants or thinks best, but is one who does much to help others. Servant leadership is of course not unfamiliar in the Western literature, but, unlike it, service is the patently predominant theme in the African literature on leadership. In addition, the Afro-communal ethic grounds a distinct specification of precisely what should be involved in serving others: a good leader is one who helps to meet others' needs, and above all their need to realize their social nature by prizing communal relationship.

By this approach, communion is a way of relating to be pursued as an end, not solely as a means to other values such as, say, productivity or innovation. The Afro-communal ethic should not be read as merely entailing the banalities that social capital and effective teamwork are useful to succeed in a competitive environment. Instead, it supports the bolder claim that a certain way of relating is to be valued for its own sake as a good leader.

Implications of Afro-communal leadership

What would a firm or other large organization look like if it were guided by the Afro-communal conception of good leadership? This section answers this question in a variety of contexts, often drawing contrasts with typical East Asian and Western conceptions of good leadership.

What is the point of a firm?

Prizing communion differs from end-pursuit (Kantianism) or desire-satisfaction (utilitarianism), which are characteristically Western and individualist views of what a firm, or other organization with a large public influence, ultimately ought to be striving to achieve. Instead of the point of a firm being to satisfy contingent and variable demand, a firm lead by Afro-communal values would exhibit solidarity with consumers, meaning that it would do what is expected to enable them to live objectively better lives, particularly socio-moral ones.

This orientation towards people's needs, and especially their virtue, means that there would be reflection amongst at least shareholders and managers on whether a firm is selling something that is good for people (Lutz, 2009).

For example, if an Afro-communal leader took over a firm that sold cigarettes or food with trans fats, she would make a concerted effort to

shift production towards something that, for all we can tell, would not cause addiction, inflict serious bodily harm, and, as a consequence of these, disrupt familial and friendly relationships. Consumers might freely elect to purchase these things, but that is not a sufficient reason to sell them for one who deems good leadership to consist of prizing communion.

Confucian values, so prominent in East Asia, are also well known for similarly directing a firm to act in an objectively beneficent way towards consumers (e.g., Ip, 2009). However, one difference with the Afro-communal approach, in terms of what the final end of a firm should be, is that Confucianism tends to prize relationship as a final value to be promoted that can be distinct from the good of individuals. If relationships such as balance or integration have some significant final value in themselves, then a leader could wind up treating individuals merely as a means to the end of promoting them, something admitted by those sympathetic to Confucianism (e.g., Ip, 2009:470; and Li, 2014:14). In contrast, by the Afro-communal conception of leadership advanced here, each person has a dignity in virtue of her capacity to commune and to be communed with, which means that, to treat every person with respect, a leader must strive to meet the needs of each.

Whom should a firm aid?

A firm cannot meet the needs of literally all; it must rather attend to those of its stakeholders. But who counts as a stakeholder, that is, as someone for whom a firm has moral reason to go out of its way to aid?

In the Western tradition, there are two main moral reasons to help someone: she is amongst the worst off and so owed aid because of a general duty to help, or she is someone whom we have assumed an obligation to aid in particular, say, by promising or by accepting the benefits from a cooperative scheme of which she is a member. By this largely Kantian and Rawlsian approach, the leader of a firm roughly must take positive steps to carry out what it has contracted to do and must also donate, in the form of a corporate social responsibility program, to those who are especially badly off.

In addition to these two moral reasons to aid others, the Afro-communal ethic grounds a third reason: one has already related communally with others to some extent (Metz, 2017b; Woermann & Engelbrecht, 2019). If one has been party to a communal relationship with others intensely or for a long time, and especially both, then one can have some strong moral reason to aid these intimates as opposed to strangers, even if the latter are

worse off and if one did not promise to aid the former. Such an approach plausibly explains why a parent owes more to her children than to other people's children.

Applied to a business context, Afro-communal leadership would mean that a firm goes out of its way to help not merely those in desperate need of aid or those it has promised to aid, but also those with whom it has shared a way of life, including its society. African thinkers have sometimes noted the duty of a firm to aid those near to it (Bhengu, 2006:160–161; Amaeshi & Idemudia, 2015), but the appeal to Afro-communal leadership explains why the duty obtains: a firm has identified with the society in which it is based and therefore has moral reason to exhibit solidarity with it, too.

An additional implication is that if a firm has a long-standing relationship with a particular supplier, the former's leaders would have some moral reason to continue to contract with the latter, even if a new supplier would be marginally less expensive. The reason is not invariably the most important, for instance a firm's leaders need not continue to contract with a supplier regardless of how expensive its goods or how shoddy its services become. The point is that there would usually be *some* moral cost to be considered when deciding whether to dump a long-standing supplier.

How should a firm make decisions?

An account of which decisions a firm should make (say, when it comes to which products to make or whom to aid) is one thing, while an account of how to make those decisions is another. How should business and other leaders go about determining which policies and practices to adopt?

Here, the Afro-communal theory parts ways with much of both the East Asian and Western traditions of philosophical thought about leadership. Typical Western thinkers and managers, appealing to Kantian (or Lockean) ideas, consider consent to be ruled to be sufficient to give managers the authority to determine the course of a firm. Basically, the fact that a worker has contracted to submit her labor-power to the direction of a firm's managers in exchange for a wage is enough to warrant her obedience to managerial decree. East Asian thinkers and managers, appealing particularly to Confucianism, consider superior qualifications sufficient to give managers the authority to govern the workplace (Ip, 2009:469–470).

Both traditions can of course recommend consultation with employees as often being a useful way to further the proper final ends of a firm. However, neither approach entails that input, let alone authorization, from employees is morally required as a way to give them their due. Afro-communal leader-

ship, in contrast, does. Perhaps the most salient theme in the literature on good leadership in the sub–Saharan tradition is the idea that leaders should normally deploy consensual democracy when making decisions (Bhengu, 2006:191–193, 230; Nussbaum, 2003; Mbigi & Maree, 2005:8, 29–30, 58–60; Khoza, 2006; Boon, 2007:82–93, 103–109, 125, 150–152; Mbigi, 2007:299–300; Ncube, 2010:79–80). By this approach, it is not enough to consult with employees or even to give them a vote; in addition, all in the firm should usually be expected to agree to the essentials before going forward. Agreeing does not imply that everyone comes to share the same judgment, but instead means, at the core, that no one has objections to the proposal so strenuous as to hold back the rest from acting on it.

Such an approach seems to follow from the Afro-communal ethic expounded above. If a key goal is to realize communion in a firm or other organization, then a leader will aim to ensure that all genuinely share a way of life, which includes sharing the power to create it together. Sharing a way of life, as explained above, is not merely people living the same way, which way of life could be imposed from above. Instead, it essentially includes cooperative participation, prescribing unanimitarian democracy not merely when it comes to (representative) political legislation, but also other major public spheres of life. In addition, such an approach to decision-making would best enable people to enjoy a sense of togetherness, thinking of themselves as a "we" and taking pride in their collective accomplishments. And, then, consensual democracy would usually be expected to realize solidarity (Gyekye, 1997:130–131, 142). Everyone's interests are most likely to be adequately promoted when everyone freely signs onto a policy consequent to deliberation about it.

Readers might doubt that it is realistic to expect consensus among a large group of people. For now, on behalf of the consensual model, consider how the Paris climate change talks were conducted back in 2015. Fascinatingly, by appealing to conflict resolution techniques used by the Zulu people of South Africa, some 200 countries, naturally with quite divergent perspectives, were brought to unanimous agreement in about two days' time (Rathi 2015; cf. Boon 2007).

How should a workplace be organized?

In the 21st century efficiency is invariably sought by means of managerialism, in both the East and the West. That is, in order to maximize outputs and minimize inputs, subordinates are steered, usually with money or power, in ways that call for the production of standardized outputs according to

measurable criteria. Such an approach is thought to be justified philosophically either by the idea that managerialist production would benefit society or that it has been freely agreed to by workers. Afro-communal leadership, however, is ambivalent about the aptness of such a mode of production.

On the one hand, a firm has moral reason to commune with shareholders and with consumers, which provides some reason for it to "squeeze" employees to do what it takes to produce goods/services efficiently. If managerialism best fostered efficiency of a sort that was likely to make the lives of shareholders and consumers objectively better off, that would be some reason for a leader to use it to orient the workplace.

On the other hand, managerialism is on the face of it "anti-social" when it comes to the way that managers treat employees (as per Metz, 2017c). It hardly fosters a sense of togetherness between these two groups of people. Its use of steering mechanisms, such as financial incentives and punitive threats, is prima facie incompatible with cooperative participation on the part of workers. In addition, managerialism is unlikely to foster sympathy, and probably encourages managers to view workers as human resources, not so much as people whose interests matter for their own sake. Although workers might gain financially from doing well by managerialist criteria, their own good in the production process is of little interest beyond avoiding health and safety violations. Still more, if workers are competing against each other for scarce rewards, as is often the case, then a spirit of camaraderie amongst them and an inclination of some to sacrifice for the sake of others are discouraged.

It appears, therefore, that the value of communion pulls in different directions when it comes to how to organize a workplace. The natural resolution of the tension is compromise. Here are two examples of how a leader inspired by Afro-communal values might proceed. First, she might retain the use of numerical targets that workers must meet, but not set them down unilaterally. Instead, she could go beyond merely consulting with workers about targets by obtaining their unanimous agreement to them, upon discussion of what would be best for all those affected by the firm. Second, a leader might retain the use of a year-end bonus to express appreciation and to motivate, but not allocate it strictly in proportion to the quantified output of individuals. Instead, she could award the same bonus to all those who have done well enough, if not share profits in a more robust sense with them (briefly suggested by Bhengu, 2006:179–180, 192; and Ncube, 2010:79).

How are emotions of relevance to an organization?

Any plausible view of leadership will entail that a leader is good insofar as she takes employees' emotions into account. However, what stands out about the Afro-communal approach to leadership is that cultivating certain feelings and attitudes is good for its own sake, not merely as a means to an end in order to motivate employees to perform, the natural approach of Confucianism and Kantian contract theory.

A communal relationship is not merely behavioral, that is, not merely a matter of coordination and mutual aid. It is also psychological and specifically emotional. For one, part of a communal relationship involves a sense of togetherness such as feeling pride in what others accomplish and liking being with others. For another, communion includes feeling sympathy and compassion for others.

Insofar as one major task of a leader is to forge communion in a firm, she must therefore be committed to prompting such feelings and attitudes, and do so as ends in themselves. Such a theoretical rationale explains why some African leadership proponents have been right to recommend—fascinatingly—that an organization include ritual, prayer, song, and dance (Mbigi & Maree, 2005:50–52, 102, 108; Bhengu, 2006:186–187; Boon, 2007:68, 83). These would be ways to bring people closer together on an emotional level and thereby to realize communion along a certain dimension.

How should conflict be resolved?

Consider two ways of dealing with actual and potential problems in the workplace that Afro-communal leadership would abjure. First, note that American managers are known for having the discretion to fire at will for under-performance or misbehavior. Many American workers can be dismissed immediately for failing to perform or even for no cause at all, an approach that is on the face of it consistent with a contractual ethical orientation. Second, think about the reputation that Chinese managers in Africa have for hiring Chinese laborers, and not so much African ones, because the former are expected to be more highly skilled and compliant than the latter. Although such practices might in fact not be so widespread (Xiaoyang, 2016), it is worth considering what would be wrong with them from an Afro-communal perspective.

There is an underlying similarity between immediately dismissing someone perceived to be a problem in the workplace and not even hiring those expected to be: exclusion. In contrast, inclusion is a salient theme in the literature on African leadership. It highlights using emotional intelligence

to address conflict, trying hard to develop weak employees, and enabling everyone to feel part of a community (Blunt & Jones, 1997:15; Nicholson, 2005:261; Boon, 2007:62–63; Msila, 2014:1107). Conspicuously absent from African thought about leadership are ideas of using fear, imposing retribution, or simply removing an employee altogether (without having tried to bring him up to speed).

Again, a focus on communion provides a plausible theoretical explanation of why inclusiveness should be the overarching approach of a good leader. If what matters morally about us is our capacity to commune and to be communed with, then respect for that special value will mean creating relationships and repairing them when they have broken down. Instead of summarily dismissing an employee who has made a mistake, a good leader would try to ascertain why she did so, consider whether the employee could be reformed, and, if so, offer a second chance. And instead of avoiding hiring people who might be more difficult to work with as employees, a good leader would give them a chance and do what he could to develop their abilities, particularly if he were a visitor in their land.

In conclusion, it is not obvious what makes someone a good leader, particularly in the light of conflicting value systems around the world. This article has expounded a conception of good leadership that is under-appreciated in the English-speaking literature on the topic. Specifically, it has drawn on the African intellectual tradition to develop a normative theory of leadership in terms of prizing people by virtue of their capacity to relate communally. Although some of its concrete prescriptions have already been recommended in the literature, this article has aimed to show how they can all be theoretically grounded on the basic value of communion that is prominent in African philosophical discussions of morality. It has also sought to argue that these prescriptions constitute plausible alternatives to what characteristically East Asian or Western accounts of leadership support.

References

Amaeshi, K. & Idemudia, U. 2015. "Africapitalism: A Management Idea for Business in Africa?" *Africa Journal of Management* 1: 210–223.

Appiah, A. 1998. "Ethical Systems, African." In E. Craig (ed.), *Routledge Encyclopedia of Philosophy*. London: Routledge.

Bhengu, M. J. 2006. *Ubuntu: The Global Philosophy for Humankind*. Cape Town: Lotsha Publications.

Blunt, P. & Jones, M. 1997. "Exploring the Limits of Western Leadership Theory in East Asia and Africa." *Personnel Review* 26: 6–23.

Boon, M. 2007. *The African Way: The Power of Interactive Leadership,* 3rd ed. Cape Town: Zebra Press.

Bujo, B. 1997. *The Ethical Dimension of Community*. Translated by C. N. Nganda. Nairobi: Paulines Publications Africa.

Gbadegesin, S. 1991. *African Philosophy*. New York: Peter Lang.

Gyekye, K. 1997. *Tradition and Modernity: Philosophical Reflections on the African Experience*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Gyekye, K. 2004. *Beyond Cultures; Ghanaian Philosophical Studies, Vol. III.* Washington, DC: Council for Research in Values and Philosophy.

Gyekye, K. 2010. "African Ethics." In E. Zalta (ed.), *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/african-ethics/.

Ip, P. K. 2009. "Is Confucianism Good for Business Ethics in China?" *Journal of Business Ethics* 88: 463–476.

Iroegbu, P. 2005. "Beginning, Purpose and End of Life." In P. Iroegbu & A. Echekwube (eds.), *Kpim of Morality Ethics,* 440–445. Ibadan: Heinemann Educational Books.

Kasenene, P. 1998. *Religious Ethics in Africa*. Kampala: Fountain Publishers.

Khoza, R. 2006. *Let Africa Lead*. Johannesburg: Vezubuntu.

Li, C. 2014. *The Confucian Philosophy of Harmony*. London: Routledge.

Lutz, D. 2009. African *Ubuntu* Philosophy and Global Management. *Journal of Business Ethics* 84: 313–328.

Masolo, D. A. 2010. *Self and Community in a Changing World*. Bloomington: University of Indiana Press.

Mbigi, L. 2007. "The Spirit of African Leadership." In K. April & M. Shockley (eds.) *Diversity*, 294–303. London: Palgrave Macmillan.

Mbigi, L. & Maree, J. 2005. *Ubuntu: The Spirit of African Transformation Management*. Randburg: Knowres Publishing.

Menkiti, I. 2004. "On the Normative Conception of a Person." In K. Wiredu (ed.), *A Companion to African Philosophy*, 324–331. Malden, MA: Blackwell.

Metz, T. 2017a. "Toward an African Moral Theory, rev. ed." In I. Ukpokolo (ed.) *Themes, Issues and Problems in African Philosophy,* 97–119. London: Palgrave Macmillan, 97–119.

———. 2017b. "Ancillary Care Obligations in Light of an African Bioethic." *Theoretical Medicine and Bioethics* , 38: 111–126.

———. 2017c. "Managerialism as Anti-Social." In M. Cross & A. Ndofirepi (eds.), *Knowledge and Change in African Universities, Vol. 2*, 139–154. Rotterdam: Sense Publishers.

Mofuoa, K. 2015. "The Exemplary Ethical Leadership of King Moshoeshoe of Basotho of Lesotho in the Nineteenth Century Southern Africa." *Journal of Public Administration and Governance* 5: 21–35.

Mokgoro, Y. 1998. *Ubuntu* and the Law in South Africa. *Potchefstroom Electronic Law Journal* 1: 15–26.

Msila, V. 2014. African Leadership Models in Education. *Anthropologist*, 18: 1105–1114.

Murove, M. F. 2007. "The Shona Ethic of *Ukama* with Reference to the Immortality of Values." *The Mankind Quarterly* 48: 235–241.

Ncube, L. 2010. "*Ubuntu*: A Transformative Leadership Philosophy." *Journal of Leadership Studies* 4: 77–82.

Ndlovu, P. M. 2016. *Discovering the Spirit of* Ubuntu *Leadership*. London: Palgrave Macmillan.

Ndlovu-Gatsheni, S. & Ngcaweni, B. (eds.) 2017. *Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela: Decolonial Ethics of Liberation and Servant Leadership*. Trenton, NJ: Africa World Press.

Nicholson, N. 2005. "Meeting the Maasai: Messages for Management." *Journal of Management Inquiry* 14: 255–267.

Nkondo, G. M. 2007. "*Ubuntu* as a Public Policy in South Africa." *International Journal of African Renaissance Studies* 2: 88–100.

Nkulu-N'Sengha, M. 2009. *Bumuntu*. In M. K. Asante & A. Mazama (eds.), *Encyclopedia of African Religion*, 142–147. Los Angeles: Sage.

Nussbaum, B. 2003. "*Ubuntu* and Business." *World Business Academy Perspectives* 17: 1–16.

Nussbaum, B., Palsule, S., & Mkhize, V. *Personal Growth, African Style*. Johannesburg: Penguin Books, 2010.

Pheko, B. & Linchwe, K. 2008. "Leadership from Two Cultural Perspectives. *International Journal of Lifelong Education* 27: 399–411.

Rathi, Akshat. 2015. "This Simple Negotiation Tactic Brought 195 Countries to Consensus." *Quartz,* December 12. https://qz.com/572623/this-simple-negotiation-tactic-brought-195-countries-to-consensus-in-the-paris-climate-talks/.

Shutte, A. 2001. *Ubuntu: An Ethic for the New South Africa*. Cape Town: Cluster Publications.

Tutu, D. 1999. *No Future without Forgiveness*. New York: Random House.

Wiredu, K. 1992. "The African Concept of Personhood." In H. Flack & E. Pellegrino (eds.), *African-American Perspectives on Biomedical Ethics*, 104–117. Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press.

Woermann, M. & Engelbrecht, S. 2019. "The Ubuntu Challenge to Business: From Stakeholders to Relationholders." *Journal of Business Ethics* 157: 27–44.

Xiaoyang, T. 2016. "Does Chinese Employment Benefit Africans?" *African Studies Quarterly* 16: 107–128.

Notes

1. This article uses geographical labels such as "African" and "Western" to mean features salient in a large array of space and over a long span of time. Hence, these terms imply neither that these features can be found solely in this place, nor that they can be found everywhere in it.

2. For a survey of how several sub-Saharan peoples understand these maxims, see Nkulu-N'Sengha (2009).

3. These ascriptions are meant to signify a lack of virtue, but not a lack of dignity or full moral status; one can be lacking humanness but still be a human being entitled to human rights.