Karl Popper in Africa:
Liberal-Communitarianism as Ideology for Democratic Social Reconstruction

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Article Info	ABSTRACT
	This paper examines the liberal society that Popper lauds, that aims to be truly open, and discusses why another, more communitarian kind of society, particularly societies in Africa, may also reflect the quest for intellectual openness that is Popper's ideal. Moreover, this paper avers reasons why Popper should be comfortable with such a liberal-communitarian mix. The inter-subjectivity in his critical rationalism is a balance of an explicit individualism, and an implicit social element (Afisi, 2016a). Popper is indeed an author of such a balance. For a society to be truly open requires the careful recognition and protection of individual freedom. However, the extent to which individuals are free to perform actions that they desire without external constraints, and the level of their individuality in relation to others when performing such actions, remain a contentious issue between liberals and more communitarian thinkers. Popper's critical rationalism provides the necessary impetus to this contention through his view of freedom that I contend can best be viewed as carefully balanced, a view which combines individuality with a social element that upholds community values necessary for openness of society. With this combination, Popper's politics of liberalism provides an effective model of how a truly open society can be achieved. The values inherent to Popper's liberalism including those concerning intellectual openness, individual freedom, mutual respect, measured self-respect, welfarism, humanitarianism, accountability, critical debates and feedback from the citizens, together concern the conditions for a society to be truly open. There are many competing thoughts as to what openness might be in Popper's philosophy. The present study of Popper does not presume to address them all. The focus here is specifically on using Popper's idea of critical rationalism to balance relations between liberal politics of individual rights and freedom, and communitarian politics of the common good, as it relates to situations about how socio-economic and political conditions in Africa societies should be structured. While I contend that Popper's works in political philosophy focused centrally on Western political tradition, and not about Africa in its strict sense, significant lessons can be distilled from Popper that can offer suggestions on social reforms in Africa. This paper explores Popper's project of the open society across the plurality and differences of societies, so that his liberal ideas of individual freedom are not undermined, and the progress of the communitarian idea of the common good, that Africa societies are built upon, is also well enhanced. Liberal individualism and community values inherent to communitarianism are both well accommodated within Popper's critical rationalism.

Nationalizing Communalism

The contemporary labelling of people who organize themselves in communal socio-economic and political settings as communitarians have its origins in Western classifications. Pre-colonial traditional African societies were believed to have been structured in indigenous communal background, instead of it in a communitarian context. This clarification is essential, as I will use the term communalism, as it relates to the structure of pre-colonial Africa, rather than its western connotation.

Some African scholars, such as John Mbiti (1970) and Ifeanyi Menkiti (1984) had contended that pre-colonial African society was basically communal, and that no mention can be made of an individual without making reference to the community, since the latter has supremacy over the former. In a bid to define and justify the supremacy of the community over individual rights, Mbiti noted that in African societies, the 'we' which means the community as a whole is a prerequisite for the 'I'. There cannot be 'I' unless understood in terms of 'we'. Consequently, the individual does and cannot exist independent of the community. Communal existence explains the totality of the Africans. Whatever happens to the whole group happens to the individual (Mbiti, 1970). It is within the same line of thought that Menkiti, in his assertion, said that no talk of human rights or personhood can be explained outside of the community which inhabits them. The individual is wholly communal (Menkiti, 1984). No will, memory or rationality defines an individual, only the community does (Menkiti, 1984).

Granted, there have been societies, not only pre-colonial African societies, even Western societies that have been communalistic at some point in the history of their developments. Evidence of this abound in the writings of Ferdinand Tönnies in his comparison of **Gemeinschaft** (oppressive but nurturing communities), and Gesellschaft (liberating but impersonal societies), and in others such as Robert Nisbet (Twilight of Authority), Robert N. Bellah (Habits of the Heart), Alan Ehrenhalt (The Lost City: The Forgotten Virtues Of Community In America), and in Robert Putnam's book, (Bowling Alone) with general discussions about the alienation in modern societies and the attendant consequences of atomized individuals who emphasizes on liberty without reverence to their social moorings, the concerns about the integrating role of social values and the relations between the individual and society. However, Western societies evolved out of emphasizing community values, due largely to the period of the enlightenment that accentuates new ideologies on individual rights and personal liberties. Consequently, Western societies became technologically advanced and their societies transformed into a more individualistic one.

The description of early Western societies as communitarian evidenced above and in some other classical socialist doctrine, such as, writings about the early commune and about workers' solidarity, traced back to early monasticism, is similar to what existed in pre-colonial traditional African societies, which were recorded to have been communalistic in social structure, economy and politics. The old Oyo Empire from the western part of Nigeria, for instance, had its empire covered thousands of kilometers with a well-organized and structured management system, lauding

its strength on the values of communal living and thriving, and displaying its admonition for callous individualism. Describing the Akan tribe of Ghana, Kwasi Wiredu's concept of consensual democracy presupposes that societies in Africa can be said to have experienced an all-inclusive system of governance in form of consensual democracy in pre-colonial times (Wiredu, 1995). The crux of consensual democracy is aimed at mitigating any problematic political upsurge through its conservative discussions and deliberations, and having its participants as representatives from every household and clans. Pre-colonial Africa was said to have had functional systems anchored on the basis of communalism, and channeled towards its advancement. Even with the manifestation of differences in traditions and cultures among African societies, communalism as a socio-economic and political system was its ideological basis.

With the advent of colonialism, the introduction of a capitalist economy, and the idea that one should allow only market forces to determine the prices of goods and services, the economy is controlled solely by private investors. This seems to portend that individuals can build and amass wealth without recourse to the welfare and concerns of one's employees. Karl Marx had criticized this kind of capitalist system that is based on class stratification between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie, which alienates labour, impoverishes workers, and establishes surplus value for the capitalists (Marx, 1977). This is the reality of most societies in our world today. Colonialism, and its attendant liberal-capitalism eroded the communalistic ways of traditional Africa, given way to a more individualistic or capitalist individualistic economy. In spite of the throbbing nature of capitalism and its capacity to dominate, communalism, as a way of life, held on strongly to its values. Africans were to ensure that the advantages inherent in the idea of the common good remained traditionally communalistic. This account for reasons that when agitations for independence or sovereign rule in most African countries began in the early 1960s, many of Africa's political thinkers at the time, who were also politicians in their own rights, began to advocate for a form of socialism that was inherently African in context and content.

African socialism became an ideology for decolonization, and particularly for the socio-economic and political emancipation from colonialism, due largely to two (2) major reasons. First, African political thinkers began to persistently demand for the adoption of socialism or better still, African socialism at the time, because of the successes witnessed in the prevailing economic growth in Soviet socialism. There was the successful Russian Revolution of 1917 which culminated in the Bolsheviks establishing a Soviet socialist state. This became heightened with the Soviets' successful launch of Sputnik 1 into orbit on October 4, 1957, the first of its kind, surpassing the United States of America in the race. This was followed up with the launch of the first man by name, Yuri Gagarin, into space in 1961. Subsequently, the Soviets sent the first woman, Valentina Tereshkova, into space in 1963, then they did the first spacewalk, performed by Alexei Leonov in 1965 (Petersen, 2019). The second reason was simply because of the presuppositions on the existence of the communal structure in pre-colonial Africa that bears a resemblance to socialism. Some elements of this way of life, persist till present days. Owing to these two factors, therefore, the resolution on an African form of socialism made the centrepoint of the Arusha Declaration, as

championed by Julius Nyerere of Tanzania in 1967. For Nyerere, the commitment to African socialism embellishes the principle of 'Ujamaa' (familyhood or brotherhood) as a social and economic development policy. Similarly, there was also the 'philosophical consciencism', as a model of African socialism advocated by Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana. Nkrumah argued that the conscience of the post-colonial African possesses threes strands of influence: "traditional way of life; a second segment which is filled by the presence of the Islamic tradition in Africa; it has a final segment which represents the infiltration of the Christian tradition and culture of Western Europe into Africa, using colonialism and neocolonialism as its primary vehicles" (Nkrumah 1978). Other forms of prefixes on African socialism in Africa included, 'Democratic Socialism' by Obafemi Awolowo. (Nigeria); 'Negritude' by Leopold Sedar Senghor (Senegal), '*Communaucratique*' by Sekou Toure (Guinea), and quite a number of other ideologies, such as the ancient *Ubuntu* philosophy (South Africa) that is anchored on recognizing the humanity of a person through their interpersonal relationships; and also *Harambee* (Swahili, Kenya) meaning "Let us pull together". All these were efforts to ensure that the communalistic spirit was instilled, incongruence with the peculiarities of their immediate environments, into the new found socialism in Africa in a bid to annihilate tendencies of capitalism in post-colonial independent Africa.

The Concern about Popper's Liberalism in Africa

Most African societies of today have adopted capitalist individualism wholeheartedly, abrogating African socialism in its entirety. Post-colonial Africa continued to experience the domination of the Western styled economic model that was prevalent during the period of colonialism. Neocolonialism became the order of the day as there continued to exist the subtle propagation of socio-economic and political activities by former colonial rulers aimed at reinforcing capitalism, neo-liberal globalization, and cultural subjugation of their former colonies (Afisi, 2017). Yet, there continued to be agitations from socialist bystanders on the need to adopt a more humane socio-economic and political system that would address the gap between the 'haves and the have-nots' and the class stratification which appears to be associated with capitalism. Many arguments and resource materials have consistently addressed the negative impacts of liberal capitalism on the African economy; as it appears that African states, politically, favour the capitalist system without a backward glance, rather than considering what features and values that communalism may offer. Despite many of those positions against it, liberal capitalism overruns the politics and economics of most African states today. A look at the systems in Nigeria, Ghana and South Africa, for instance, shows that liberal capitalism persists. However, it appears that liberal capitalism has failed in Africa because corruption and underdevelopment are still pervasive there.

While it is an attractive venture to make a call to a total return to the African past, which has been said to be 'glorious', where communalism held sway, (in the hope that Africa would purge itself from the effects and shackles of neocolonialism), such a call would be futile because the prevailing circumstances in today's African societies is that the societies have become modern. Contemporary African societies have become modernised; people have become more mobile, and

the influences of liberal capitalism on the socio-economic and political system in Africa can no longer be repudiated. The tendencies that consistently call for a total eradication of capitalism in Africa, and clamour for a return to the socio-economic and political system of the pre-colonial era, seem to misconstrue the overarching principles that western liberalism have embedded on the continent. Rather than this battle on eradication, a realignment of these understandings would bring about a new set of interpretations involving learning from both traditions towards mutually harnessed benefits from the process of interaction. This is why Olufemi Taiwo, in *Africa Must Be Modern: A Manifesto,* berates the level of hostility that Africa is showing towards capitalism, stating the regrettable impact of such hostility to the economic, social, and political development of the continent. Africa must address the challenges of modernity and globalization by embracing them instead of being hostile to them. Africa needs to fully engage with and derive benefits from globalization and its attendant capitalist democracy (Taiwo, 2014).

One of the reasons that Popper's idea of liberalism is important for this interaction to succeed is that in Popper there are clear cut guidelines or features in his liberal ideology that makes it stand out from various other liberal ideologies. For what its worth, Popper's liberalism stands different from the libertarianism that Robert Nozick propagates. While individual freedom is sacrosanct in both Popper and Nozick, Popper's liberalism considers the idea of the common good. Even though liberalism in Popper is explicitly individualistic, there are inherent social elements in his political philosophy, such as in his idea of negative utilitarianism. Popper's idea of negative utilitarianism is the principle of ameliorating suffering and fighting the greatest and most urgent evils of society, and includes but not limited to ameliorating "starvation, pain, humiliation, injustice, exploitation". Negative utilitarianism would be a public policy which aims to alleviate suffering for the greatest number of people than promoting happiness. Consequently, this idea of negative utilitarianism exhibits both elements of the individual and the social, as espoused in Popper. With negative utilitarianism, Popper's welfarism is established which is to be implemented through state's limited interventionism. The aim is for the state to take care of the wellbeing of the individual and the social public. Popper's welfarism aims at ameliorating extreme inequality, which is what the social engineer should address. It is upon these ideas that Popper's concept of social liberalism is built, or what I call Popper's enduring liberal-communitarianism (Afisi, 2016b). While Jeremy Bentham and John Stuart Mill's idea of utilitarianism deal with producing the greatest amount of good for the greatest number of people, Popper's negative utilitarianism requires us to promote the least amount of evil or harm, or to prevent the greatest amount of suffering for the greatest number. Popper's idea is that governments should respond piecemeal to recognized social ills – to whatever is widely acknowledged to be harmful to the people. This can take the form of economic intervention, state protectionism and the creation of legal frameworks. This also transcends to Popper's idea of piecemeal social engineering where government should reform society in a piecemeal approach or in bits and pieces approach, rather than a holistic approach that characterizes a large-scale planning intervention. With the piecemeal approach to social reform, one can look at the education sector, for instance, in order to identify the inherent problems, and propose a tentative

solution on how to resolve the issues in bits and pieces. The reason for this approach is simple. Attacking a problem within a sector holistically just in an effort to radically resolving the issues without applying due diligence in reforming it, could lead to unintended consequences that would come along the way. However, this can be mitigated and dealt with accordingly as one takes them in a piecemeal approach.

There is a systematic connection in Popper's liberal ideas about how the piecemeal social engineering approach works in relation to the idea of negative utilitarianism, individual freedom, and also to the idea of limited state interventionism. For Popper, democratic social reconstruction must be piecemeal in order to preserve individual freedom and to ameliorate human suffering. One can ameliorate a perceived problem in order to ensure that they reduce suffering' piecemeal. Consequently, government can only intervene in issues in the society when there are recognized social-ills. This intervention can happen when, for instance, there is a need for control, for punishment and for ways by which suffering can be reduced on as many people as possible. An intervention of a social welfare system that ensures that people who cannot afford necessary basic needs such as food and accommodation, particularly when they do not earn enough to cover these basic necessities for survival can receive some assistance from the government. These are some of the basic features of Popper's liberal ideas and they are in consonance with the idea of the common good. One can then see that there is a social element to Popper's liberal ideas in spite of the sacrosanct nature of the concept of freedom in his political philosophy. Social in the sense that it considers, for instance, how to ensure that people do not suffer. How to ensure that government policies tackle social reform in the way that it is piecemeal, and avoid holistic approaches with tendencies of having ever-lasting damaging effects. These attributes are social, and it is the reason that I believe that rather than just adopting liberalism on the whole, we can find ways to synthesize Popper's liberal ideas with the positive elements in the communalistic background that societies in Africa are supposedly built. In other words, because there is inherent implicit social element to Popper's idea, in spite of its explicit individualism, it makes it easier, different from all other liberal ideas, to be able to apply it to the basic constituents of communalism. This is the crux of what I have termed liberal-communitarianism, in its sophisticated form. This is 'a new way of thinking' about social democratic reforms for Africa.

Liberal-Communitarianism: A New Way of Thinking for Africa

To achieve this new way of thinking about social reform for Africa is simple. Unfortunately, politics and economy in Africa have not been mostly ideological. Governments often merely apply whatever economic and political indices they feel would work, at particular times, without establishing ideological bases for them. It is not even clear, in most African states, if the economy is purely market driven or whether it is public sector price controlled. Even politics in Africa are not ideological, compared to what is obtainable in Western societies where politics and economy are either ideologically right-wing, left-wing, conservatives, democrats, and republicans. Most African states arbitrarily assign policies on situational basis, rather than on ideological basis. Party

politics is the worse-off, as promises during electioneering campaign are often never fulfilled. The reason for most promises unfulfilled is because they are not ideological. While there are visible socio-economic and political challenges in Western democratic societies themselves, the strict ideological foundations in their polity seems to account for reasons that these societies are growing both politically and economically when compared theoretically to Africa.

With the vast number of arable lands in Africa, the continent has immense potential for feeding itself. However, the agricultural sector does not seem to be growing enough. One is perturbed that many countries in Africa are still dependent on imported grains. Take the Nigerian economy for instance, with a population of over 220million people, the country largely eats food it does not grow, largely wears cloths it does not sew, largely use products it does not produce, largely drives cars it does not manufacture. By this absolute dependence on other countries for imported goods, the country is helping to grow the economies of others at the expense of its own growth. The United States Federal Reserve hike of its benchmark interest rate by three-quarters of a percentage point in mid-2022, for instance, means a sprawling reduction in the currency values of many emerging markets economies against a stronger dollar. This is what happens to a society whose socio-economic and political models are solely reliant on foreign parameters.

I think that with Popper, we can establish an ideological structure or ideological basis for Africa so that they do not just apply policies haphazardly to their politics, to their economies, even to social reforms. Once there is an agreement that Popper's liberal ideas are fitting, going by the various features of his political philosophy as earlier enumerated, it can apply suitably, say for instance, to the idea of food sufficiency. One can then begin to conduct adequate research into how to provide food sufficiency for the society. They can be done piecemeal. It is not enough to just say because people are hungry, the government decided on an importation of food, rather than trying to see how to grow the food that its people can consume, and how to reform the society in a manner that would be sustainable both for the economy and the politics. Popper recommended a liberal society where reform would be dealt with piecemeal with a view to the social 'engineer' learning from this person's own mistakes.

Granted that Popper's political philosophy is itself a western ideology; but lessons can still be distilled in ways that would embrace positive elements in African communal experience. Popper can be applied to suit cultural, economic and political situations in Africa. In applying Popper's piecemeal social engineering method, I contend that the piecemeal social engineering approach would work well in a society that is already highly technologically advanced (Afisi, 2021). However, in a society, such as societies in Africa, that require radical reforms, in order to be able to measure up to the level by which one can be safe to assume that people have attained a high standard of living, there is a need to modify the piecemeal engineering approach to suit Africa's situation. This modification is what I have called 'many-pieces-at-once-social engineering' (Afisi, 2021). For instance, it is not enough to say there are problems in the educational sector, health sector and road infrastructure, and one begins to take such problems and tackle them one after the one, which would have been the most ideal. However, Governments do not just sit down and

undertake only one reform or adjustment at a time. Governments are made up of different departments and ministries — all of which undertake all kinds of reforms. Some may undertake bank reforms, others education reforms, legal reforms, sports reforms, health reforms. All of which can go on simultaneously insofar as they are undertaken by different departments of government. This approach is many-pieces-at-once. The piecemeal approach considered from the point of view of each department is one-piece or two-piece reform and from the point of view of society, it is many-pieces-at-once reform. Popper's phrase "piecemeal" can be used as a placeholder in the sense of a fragmented approach that is for any kinds of reforms that are adjustments in every facet of society — adjustments that change the society's "content/substance" rather than adjustments that are intended to change its "structure /foundation". In a many-piece-at-once approach we can have one-piece, two-piece, three-piece, many pieces and lots of pieces (Afisi, 2021). The goal would be that for many-pieces-at-once social engineering, the objective is to achieve a radical change rather than just applying piecemeal engineering approach that may be snail-paced. The piecemeal engineering approach may not bring about the needed change as speedily as it is required. In spite of its radical nature, one can still monitor the extent of reforms even when it is done 'many-pieces-at-once' over a long period. Where there are mistakes along the way one is able to retrace and correct such mistakes. No matter how rapid the reforms undertaken by 'many-pieces-at-once' social engineering the effects are better mitigated than the unintended consequences that large-scale reforms would bring about. It would be possible to monitor, applying Popper's conjecture and refutation approach by picking the right variables to change 'many-pieces-at-once' in order to promote social ends.

Popper and Liberal-Communitarianism

On the question of whether liberal individualism that is explicit in Popper's political philosophy can accommodate the communal values indigenous to African socio-political system in a non-contradictory way, I will argue in the affirmative. This forms the structure of a liberal-communitarian philosophy that promotes both self-determination by individuals and community enhancement of individual well-being. There are prospects for such a liberal-communitarian philosophy with aims and objectives that enhance Karl Popper's project of the open society. As I have argued, while Popper's politics of liberalism are overtly individualistic, they also are implicitly communitarian. Popper's ideas offer a basis for rational engagement with non-liberal ideologies that emphasize social and community togetherness. There are underlying ethical and epistemological principles associated with this idea in the sense that brings out an implicit social element as it interrelates with the explicit strand of individualism in Popper's critical rationalism. These principles can be used to further explain that Popper's idea of freedom is different from the general idea of freedom that most liberals defend. With Popper, there is a social dimension to individual freedom in such a way that the individual performs actions without external constraints yet such freedom is exercised with respect to the freedom of others within the social environment. Some commonly held views about Popper's critical rationalism, particularly his liberal political

philosophy, emphasize that Popper's philosophy is founded only on the principle of individualism. This counteracts the position of the enduring social element that I argue for in this paper. The concept of "social freedom" (Afisi, 2014) is an attempt to unite two ideas that are in seeming tension with one another, the one Popper's explicit emphasis upon individual liberty, and the other Popper's often implicit invoking of social interaction, for example from his emphasizing intersubjective criticism. With the above description, it is apparent that Popper used both concepts of methodological individualism and ethical individualism only as a theoretical basis for his criticisms of holism or methodological collectivism. Popper merely did this in order to reveal the potential dangers in theorizing a collectivist ideology that renders individual rights and freedom susceptible to being subjugated to totalitarian rule. Popper was not averse to a communitarian ideology that upholds not only individual freedom but also community values. It is on this basis that I maintain that as methodological individualism addresses the nature of research in the social sciences in relation to human individual choices and actions, and ethical individualism responds to the ethical obligation of liberal politics to attach importance to the individual, they both have implications for the concept of freedom in Popper's liberal politics. However, they do not suffice in capturing the total configuration of Popper's philosophy as the call for openness and intersubjective criticism in Popper is of a social kind. The point here is that Popper's understanding of openness of the quality of a society is not merely of an individual envisioning a life of pure egoism. The openness of society embodies individuals who are socially embedded with others in the society, whose goals, aspirations and self-determination are socially interdependent upon one another. This is why for Popper critical rationalism is intersubjective and mutual, and to that extent social. In the light of these points, although Popper may have explicitly endorsed individualism (both methodological and ethical) his actual position on individualism is balanced with a social element. Without the implicit social element, Popper's critical rationalism becomes less comprehensible. The point to remark here is that Popper's critical rationalism expresses the capacity for individual self-determination or the ability of an individual to perform an action without being impinged upon by another. This is the individualistic aspect. However, the features of inter-subjectivity and critical feedback from others ultimately constitute a social element. One can then categorically say that openness of society in Popper's critical rationalism has a balanced individual and social element. Even with this communitarian element in Popper, one thing is clear: Popper expressed aversion for any collectivist or socialist ideology that erodes the freedom of the individual for the sake of the group or the collective. Although Popper may have acknowledged the sense of equality that collectivist or socialist ideology aims to achieve, he was critical of the utopian dream of an egalitarian society that usually characterizes socialism.

   The magical or tribal or collectivist society [can] also be called the closed society, and the society in which individuals are confronted with personal decisions, the open society … A closed society resembles a herd or a tribe in being a semi organic unit whose members are held together by semibiological ties – kinship, living together, sharing common efforts, common dangers, common joy and common distress. It is still a concrete group of concrete individuals, related to one

another not merely by such abstract social relationships as division of labour and exchange of commodities, but by concrete physical relationships such as touch, smell, and sight. (Popper, 1945, Chapter 10)

In spite of my position about contextualising Popper's liberal ideas to correct wrongs in political situations in Africa, I disagree with the above epigram more or less completely. This is a grossly false anthropological generalisation for Popper to assume that all tribal societies are necessary closed ones and intellectually stagnated. Popper advanced the historical claim that rational methods within society had taken humans beyond tribalism. Yet anthropologically the purview of Popper's thinking was rather narrow. It chiefly concerned the "West". It concerned Europe chiefly, that was in Popper's time riven by totalitarianism and political disasters. For the occurrences in Europe at the time, Popper rejected collectivist societies, and labelled them as not intellectually opened. He termed them, "closed tribal societies". Popper considered the "Greek society alone as one with the values essential for an open society" (Metz, 2021). In my view, traditional African societies were both collectivists and communalistic in nature, yet they were not necessarily totalitarian, anti-egalitarian and stagnated. Traditional African societies had a strong sense of community belongingness where individual right, liberty or freedom was guaranteed alongside the common good of the community (Afisi, 2021). We can learn from Kwame Gyekye's idea of moderate communitarianism which maintain the position that although African society was communal, individual freedom was never in jeopardy. Aside from the social nature of human beings, Africans also possess other things which define them such as rationality, the right sense of making moral judgement and virtue capabilities (Gyekye, 1997). This view is also similar to that of Thaddeus Metz's Afro-Communal Ethic which emphasizes on the people's capacity to relate communally rather than rationally. Indigenous African tradition is anchored on the human capacity to be relational, and specifically communal and not so much their capacity for rationality (Metz, 2021), as Popper believed was a basic feature of an open society. As an African myself who, as is the case with so many people in Africa, stands as a member of a tribe, with the strong sense of community that is entailed by such membership, I know from personal experience that Popper's gross anthropological generalisation is wrong. Yet my purpose in this paper is to mobilize Popper's own overall philosophy with only modest corrections. I endeavour to grow Popper's philosophy beyond its concentration upon Europe, and to develop it in ways that involve some corrections of this error, and in light of that correction, to develop from insights of Popper's own a political philosophy that I have proudly termed liberal-communitarianism.

For liberal-communitarianism in Popper, there is no need for a contradiction. There is a social element in critical rationalism, and it is the social attribute that Bryan Magee (1973) considers as a social democratic philosophy in Popper. The social element in Popper epitomizes the idea of inter-subjectivity, as it trades in the communitarian or intersubjective requirements for critical reflection. The idea of critical feedback from others is social.

Conclusion

Understanding liberal-communitarianism from the Popperian perspective is not inclined to altering the value of the common good that communalism exemplifies. Rather, it will enhance the typical African contemporary outlook to doing things; instead of ruminating about a past in pre-colonial times that is no longer attainable. The Africans today, like what Kwame Nkrumah said, has been influenced by the triple heritage. The Afro-Islamic tradition, the Euro-Christian tradition as well as the African tradition itself. A true African personality of today is a hybrid of cultures. This is the reason that communalism can no longer adequately take care of socio-economic and political complexities of modern society, while at the same time, liberalism cannot sufficiently address the question of the value of common good that African societies are characterized. This accounts for this new thinking on a liberal-communitarian philosophy. I do not think that liberal-communitarianism, as with other theories, is final. However, the objective is to endorse Popper's critical rationalism and thus to show the continued relevance of his ideas in contemporary political philosophy, quite in order to develop a liberal-communitarian political philosophy that I am proud to call my own. This liberal-communitarian philosophy that emerges offers the clearest and most careful grounding, I contend, for the idea in general of social unity. The goal, therefore, is to ensure an appropriate application of Popper's philosophy to Africa for proper democratic social reconstruction.

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