

**Wariboko, Nimi. *The Split Time: Economic Philosophy for Human Flourishing in African Perspective* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 2022). 246 + xiv pp. \$32 paperback.**

For the past few years I often find myself inspired by Nigerian Pentecostal social-theorist Nimi Wariboko's prose; grounded on his split/crack/void scheme. Through this, he explores generative gaps within the human psyche that, contingent to how wisely we traverse their generative possibilities—liminalize towards expanding, common good flourishing (he recaps this theme in pp. ix, 79).

In this newest book *The Split Time: Economic Philosophy for Human Flourishing in African Perspective*, Wariboko furthers these themes by drawing on his experiences as an economist and in investment banking, to proffer a timely philosophical pathway towards African economic development; comprising moreover—salient global relevancy. One that moreover engages moral goods for global development sourced from Southern Hemisphere indigenous religious/philosophical notions. In other words, here we have a novel example of appropriating to modern social-economic challenges, the moral goods of traditional wisdom traditions too often silenced through exogenous knowledges that modernity imposes on regional localities worldwide. Or as social theorist-sociologist Boaventura de Sousa Santos assessed, silenced through dominating Western/Euro-rooted knowledges and epistemologies through their hegemony over the world knowledge economy. Thus in this book's final two pages as he alludes to this historic Western colonialist fallout, Wariboko climactically argues that the pathway to Africa's development lies foremost within its ancient epistemic resources (pp. 192-193).

Published under Suny Press' Theology and Continental Thought series, Wariboko therefore presents through this book, a socioeconomic theory of development funded through African traditional religious/philosophical ideas (pp. 1-2, 142) in conversation with critical continental thought (p. 142) and Sub-Saharan Africa's unique forms of Christianity (pp. 132-133, 137-138, 157); particularly African Pentecostalism (pp. 52, 71, 74, 77, 79). He thus argues that African indigenous religious/philosophical ideas – particularly human destiny becoming either thwarted or actualized through wisely traversing experiences of time and desire – wield vital conceptual tools for recalibrating African economic paradigms and social/governmental policies. More pointedly, in ways that can effect a new history of African economic development, benchmarked by sustainable common good flourishing and hence poverty reduction (pp. xi-xiv, 1-2). Hence, Wariboko constructs an economic philosophy that correlates human economic life in its *agential* (human telos), *circumstantial* (material/social context) and *affective* (desire for flourishing) facets to traditional African notions of *destiny*, *temporality* and *desire* (pp. xi, 11). Namely then, a philosophy that, notwithstanding the continent's tragic human impoverishment, can fire the African "social imagination" for better

aligning social/economic policies and developmental projects enroute towards his unwavering hope for and belief for Africa's coming transformation into a flourishing continent (xi).

Drawing foremost on Kalabarian thought (Kalabari referring to the culture of Nigeria's eastern Niger Delta region) in conversation with Lacanian analysis and Aristotelian philosophy, Wariboko posits human finitude as a divinely given temporal space that prompts human desires for experiencing actualized, flourishing destiny (pp. 1-2). Yet accounting for the book's title, time is always "split"; "in its sense as a movement of successions" which humans infuse with latent memories of a purposeful "past," driving them towards actualizing its potential for a flourishing destiny (pp. 1-5). Time is *split* then when it "crafts . . . a gap within the human being" in which "desire circulates and pushes forward the horizon of human flourishing" (pp. 77-78).

Through this work, Wariboko is thus challenging economic policy-makers to give far greater attention to enduring, primal African notions of flourishing, their desire for flourishing and its operation within the "temporal structure of human existence" (p. xi). He thus insightfully develops his discussions on destiny from its Kalabari meaning that he explicates through its notions of *fiyeteboye* (divinely mandated destiny), *bibibari* (destiny recalibration during one's lifetime) and *after-bibibari*, (consequent imagining of a flourishing future) which together points towards a definitive African ideal that is presently relevant though largely ignored within African policy-making. Namely, the African's innate recognition that human life comprises a divinely-mandated flourishing destiny, enjoining periodic evaluation on how well one's actions "conform" or "deviate" from this "telos" (p. 9). With particular concern for Nigeria, Wariboko thus urges African "public-policy makers" to make this primal Kalabari "dynamic notion of destiny" a primary tool for enabling the nation's peoples towards the lacking yet needful task of nationally envisioning, equitably shared economic flourishing (pp. 7-9).

Wariboko well explicates the preceding themes through his "Introduction" and first three chapters. Beginning with his fourth chapter ("Economy and Destiny"), Wariboko appropriates these themes towards an argued "theory of agnostic communitarianism" that combines traditional African "communalism" with more Western-reflecting ideas of agnostic "market competition" (pp. 113-127). Drawing on his previously developed "excellence principle" (a reenvisioning of Aristotelian wisdom tradition) (pp. 68, 131-132, 157-158, 173-174), he then explains through his fifth chapter ("Pursuit of Excellence and Economic Development") how through this confluence, policy-makers can effectively and morally must steer economic development towards actualizing all human potentialities within the community through "privileging" pathways for every person's actualized potentiality (pp. 42-44, 152-174). In his final chapter, Wariboko concludes this study by reiterating the preceding themes via a dialectical genre of Nigerian comedy: "comedic dialectics" used by a popular Nigerian comedian for making "cultural criticism" (p. 180). By doing so, he thus aims at one final demonstrated congruency between his argued economic philosophy and the traditional Kalabari epistemology that he argues, inculcates in people (if Nigerians look deeper within

their folk history) hope, expectancy and resolve towards “*Ngei konte*”: the “one more” of new non-potentialized, flourishing possibilities (pp. 17-18, 188, 191-193).

Through this study, Wariboko thus generates from his earlier philosophical analysis on Pentecostal spirituality, another innovative trajectory for the cause of global flourishing. I thus refer to his earlier works titled, *The Principle of Excellence* (2009) (pp. 131-139), *The Pentecostal Principle* (2012) (p. 71), and especially his 2018 work, *The Split God: Pentecostalism and Critical Theory* (SUNY Press). Thus not only showing how we may proffer salient epistemic resources from within Pentecostal studies towards the broader humanities, Wariboko’s *Split Time* book provides another vital facet to what we might call, the promise of Waribokoian social theory for human flourishing. For this reason, I especially commend this book as an imperative resource within the ongoing evolvement of Pentecostal philosophical studies, social theory and political theology. This book can moreover aid studies and efforts towards global cognitive justice, insofar it demonstrates the moral goods traditional indigenous knowledges proffer for contemporary challenges though often suppressed through mainstreamed but exogenous ways of knowing and planning for social-economic development.

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