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## **Does Logic Decolonization involve having a Relativistic approach to Logical Principles? A Philosophical Case for Logic Decolonization**

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### **Abstract**

The concept of “decolonization” has been widely and erroneously used to the point that it has lost meaning. Whenever decolonization is invoked, there seems to be disagreement between the universalist and relativist camps. While the debate continues, one can barely imagine a middle position where both camps could find a synthesis. So, the resonant question is, does logic decolonization involve a relativistic approach to logical principles? The logical premise is not universal, as this paper acknowledges, because no system of thought has the divine right to declare something to be true or incorrect. That being said, relativism, on the other hand, which is universalism’s opposite, does not result in logic decolonization either because doing so involves swapping one system for another. In light of this issue, this paper makes the case that logic decolonization is necessary, but only if it entails integrating the indigenous logical system with the Western logical system and vice versa.

Keywords: Relativism; Universalism; Decolonization; Logical Principles; Western Thought.

### **Introduction**

The concept of “decolonization” has been widely and erroneously used to the point that it has lost meaning. Whenever decolonization is invoked, there seems to be disagreement between the universalists and relativists. On the one hand, advocates of the universalist position suggest that logical principle is independent of place, ideology, and value systems, and therefore, any consideration of cultural specificities or need for decolonization is ultimately excluded in this context (Lemmon, 1978; Reiser, 2004). While on the other hand, advocates from the relativist camp view the concept of universal logical principle as an imposition of

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Western values, implying a need to decolonize our knowledge system (Younkins, 2000; Harris 1992). While the debate continues, one can barely imagine a middle position where both camps could find a synthesis. This paper then addresses whether logic decolonization involves a relativistic approach to logical principles.

This paper aims to find a middle ground between the two positions. To achieve this aim, this paper will seek to answer this question; are logical theorems such as the law of non-contradiction a necessary part of the way humans reason, or is it merely an accidental inclusion in our Western-influenced way of thinking? And what does the answer to the above question imply about the call for Logic to be ‘decolonized’? So, to put it differently, does logic decolonization involve upholding a relativistic approach to Logic?

I recognize that since no logical system has a divine authority to assert that something is true or false, the logical principle is not universal. I further believe that relativism, the alternative to universalism, does not lead to logic decolonization since it entails replacing one system with another. Therefore, I argue that there is a need for logic decolonization, and this decolonization is possible if and only if decolonization means embedding indigenous logical systems into the Western logical system in Africa, and the same is done in the West as well. For decolonization to be successful, the embedment process should not be one-centric; both logical systems should do it.

To sustain my proposition, this paper is divided into three sections. The first section will critically evaluate the universalist and relativist positions on logical principles. The aim will be to explain why their position necessitated the call for epistemic decolonization. This section will argue that adopting a relativistic approach to Logic is not Logic decolonization; instead, it is a form of Logic that still needs decolonizing. The second section will explain what logic decolonization means and how it can be achieved. The last section will welcome possible objections to my argument and adequately respond to them.

## **1 Universalists and Relativist approach to the decolonization of logical principle**

In this section, I explore the argument proposed by both camps on how we could see the logical principles. But first, I will explain what logical principle means.

Irving Copi defines Logic as “the study of the principles and methods used to distinguish correct from incorrect reasoning” (2014:1). This entails that Logic is a tool used to develop reasonable conclusions based on a given set of data and “to make as precise as possible the conditions under which an argument is acceptable” (Lemmon, 1978:1). As a tool, Logic has principles. Pierce Charles (1992) defines logical principles as the laws or rules that govern our thought. He thinks logical principles are empty or merely formal propositions because they can add nothing to the premises of the argument it governs, although it is relevant (Pierce, 1992: n.p). From the above definition of logical principles, we understand that they are not factual statements but tools that ensure our arguments’ validity and invalidity. These principles are; (I) the law of identity, (ii) the law of non-contradiction, and (iii) the law of excluded middle. Pierce made an exciting point further. He regards those logical principles as fundamental principles of reasoning (Pierce, 1992: n.p). The reason for doing so rests in believing that any correct or good argument must conform to these laws. This implies that any argument that does not conform to these laws is invalid, automatically meaning that these laws are universal laws that everyone should subscribe to.

In this paper, I will use the principle of non-contradiction to work through the analysis. This principle states that “something cannot be both true and not true at the same time when dealing with the same context” (Carm.org: n.p). For instance, the tree in front of my room cannot simultaneously be an apple and mango tree. It is sure one of them. This means that a statement cannot be both true and false. In the language of propositional Logic this is “ $\neg(p \wedge \neg p)$ ”, where  $p$  is a proposition. In addition, the law of excluded middle states that every statement must be either true or false. In the language of propositional Logic, this is “ $p \vee \neg p$ ” (Encyclopedia Britannica, 2020: Laws of thought).

### **1.1 Universalist Approach to Logical Principle**

The philosophical roots of universalism are evident in western philosophical discourse from the Greeks through the medieval and modern periods. Mary C. MacLeod and Eric M. Rubenstein defined universals as “a class of mind-independent entities postulated to ground and explain relations of qualitative identity and resemblance among individuals” (2021: n.p). For example, a rose

flower is red; this common redness results from sharing a universal, i.e., having a qualitative resemblance for mind-independent entities. The Universalist generally argues that Logic is universal as the instrument of thought and its principle. They draw on the a priori belief in the existence of immutable natural laws that apply to all human beings, regardless of their belief in or acceptance.

To understand the claim that the logical principle is universal, let us consider E J Lemmon's (1978) idea on conditionals and negation.

Now, if we select two English sentences, say 'it is raining' and 'it is snowing', then we may suitably place 'if ... then ...', '... and ...', and 'either ... or ...' to obtain the new English sentences: 'if it is raining, then it is snowing', 'it is raining, and it is snowing', and 'either it is raining, or it is snowing'. The two original sentences have merely been substituted for the two blanks in 'if ... then ...', '... and ...', and 'either ... or ...'. Further, if we select one English sentence, say 'it is raining', then we may suitably place 'not' to obtain the new English sentence: 'it is not raining'. Thus, grammatically speaking, the effect of these words is to form new sentences out of (one or two) given sentences. Hence, I call them sentence-forming operators on sentences. This book is written in English, and so mentions English sentences and words, but the above account could be applied, by appropriate translation, to all languages I know of. There is nothing parochial about Logic, despite this appearance to the contrary - Lemmon, 1978:6.

Lemmon makes the case that whatever language or culture a person speaks is irrelevant. Any language will have a logical operator similar to the English logical operator "not" if one makes a declarative claim. The truth value of the proposition changes from true to false or from false to true if the negation sign is placed in front of it in any language. According to Lemmon (1978), this idea holds regardless of the person's language and cultural background. What this suggests is that the logical premise applies to all situations.

Oliver Reiser supports the universality of logical principles (2004). According to Reiser, developing an African logic or any other type of Logic other than the three basic rules of thinking might be difficult because doing so would require forming a new logic (Reiser, 2004). This suggests that since logical principles are universal and essential to reasoning, any alternate logic system is no longer Logic and cannot be used to develop or support an argument.

## 1.2 Why universal logical principle should not dismiss other logical systems

On the surface, universalism appears to be the most logical option. They seem to be just as much a part of our various indigenous cultures and philosophy as we are. However, issues occur when distinctions between our native and universal ways of thinking become apparent and are not addressed. The following explanations below justify my claim. Richard Jennings (1989) in his article on “Zande Logic and Western Logic”, quoted Evan- Pritchard’s statement from C. R. Lagae;

If a man has witchcraft substance in his belly and begets a male child, this child also has witchcraft because his father was a witch.... Thus witchcraft does not trouble a person born free from it by entering into him. To our minds, it appears evident that if a man is proven a witch, the whole of his clan are ipso facto witches since the Zande clan is a group of persons related biologically to one another through the male line. Azande see the sense of this argument, but they do not accept its conclusions, and it would involve the whole notion of witchcraft in contradiction were they to do so - Evan-Pritchard, 1937: 23-24.

Here, Jennings claims that Western and African (Azande people) logic varies in significant ways. Therefore, it is untrue to say that there could not be a fundamental difference across logic systems. Azande Logic was also deemed unviable since it violated the rule of contradiction. However, a universalist argument would hold that since all Azande clan members are linked biologically, and witchcraft is a substance handed down from father to son biologically, therefore all male Azande clan members must be witches. Although the Azande’s will agree to the two premises, they will not agree to the conclusion, for there is no contradiction in their system of thought. For the Azandes, to say that witchcraft is biologically transferable from father to son and that all of the Azande clan are not witches is logically correct. This implies that to say that Azandes does not have a system of thought is unfounded. Therefore, there must be another reason why the Westerns suggest that Azandes does not have a logical system. Concerning this, I argue that the problems with Azande Logic are not related to their use of Logic but rather to the viability and tenability of their ideas.

There seems to be more reason why Azande logic is not recognized, and such reasons cannot just be because it does not obey the law of non-contradiction. In his analysis of the Azande logic, David Bloor agrees that there is more to the criticism of Azande logic than just how it does not obey the law of non-contradiction. He

argues that “it is not the contradiction that results in the unacceptability, it is, rather, the unacceptability that results in the contradictoriness” (Bloor, 1983: 122). Bloor suggests that what is contradictory here is the denial of the Azande logic. Whether they obey the law of non-contradiction or not does not suggest they do not have a logic system. Bloor argues that how contradictions are presented causes people to have trouble with them rather than the Logic of contradictions themselves. Therefore,

the meaning of negation does not determine the use; the use determines its meaning. The practical difficulties that surround the utterance of contradictions are not to be explained by Logic. Instead, their logical properties are grounded in these practical problems.... - Bloor, 1983: 122.

Bloor further suggests that there is no problem in this practice for the Azande people, and if there is no difficulty in the practice, then there is no contradiction. Therefore, the difficulty in this situation is that the Azandes’ beliefs are tenable, indicating that the problem people have with them is a practical problem and not logical. Richard Jennings (1989) refers to this as a functioning system for the Azandes, not a common notion or belief, which helps alleviate the issue of practicality. The Azandes use natural reason as a working system that enables them to reach a non-contradictory conclusion.

This understanding implies that other logical systems, especially in Africa, need to be recognized. And since the western logical system cannot help to arrive at a conclusion the Azandes believe in, it implies that universalism may not always be necessary because any philosophical work done by universals can be done just as well without them, whether they are strange or not. This is because the problem in Zande Logic is the practice, not the law of non-contradiction, and if we understand the justification for those practices as shared ideas for the Azandes, then we do not have any problem with the Azandes. The experience of Helen Verran (2001) in Nigeria is a shining illustration of how local techniques may precisely do what universalism can accomplish.

Verran (2001) told a story of what she noticed when she taught this cohort of teachers in Nigeria. She narrated the story of the lesson Mr. Ojo and Mrs. Babatunde gave their classes, respectively. Verran noticed that both teachers introduced an intervening step between the first and last measurements. Verran noticed that teachers like Mr. Ojo and Mrs. Babatunde, who subverted her lectures’ message,

presented very successful classes because the students understood what was happening and got the correct calculations. Other teachers who implement her lectures lose the students because they do not grasp how to measure the length and volume at the end. Initially, Verran was scandalized by what was going on. Though the students eventually got the right results, she feels they were going about it the wrong way. How some of the teachers who used Verran's method failed to teach the student properly made Verran (2001) conclude that universalism must have a problem, for it does not work in all contexts. This narrative seeks to demonstrate why universalism is not absolutely necessary because it does not help us comprehend the world better. This position was supported by Duignan (2014) when he claimed that the universality of logical principles does not always improve human thinking, and as such, universalism is irrelevant. This is not to say that universalism should be tossed; rather, in some cases, the universalism approach might not work.

Another significant issue with universalism is that, by proposing universal logical principles, we appear to be claiming that everyone has a common understanding and application of Logic. As a result, we choose to apply one principle over the potential for several conceptions or logical principles. However, Mary C. MacLeod and Eric M. Rubenstein (2021) asked whether there is anything in reality to match the linguistics of one-over-many. Or whether there are 'the truth' or general truths or a general way of attaining truth? Is there commonality in our usage of Logic, or is the idea of commonality a mere language product? The fact remains that there is no objective way to attain truth "out there, and science does not have the capacity or tools to prove its external existence" (Duignan, 2014: n.p). Hence, no one should claim the power and authority to determine what is true and false, for there is no commonality in language and logic usage.

### **1.3 Relativist Approach to Logical Principles**

Some thinkers argue that a relativistic approach to logical principles is the way forward, while some other African thinkers suggest that establishing an African logic governed by an African set of logical rules and recognized universally as a method of practicing Logic is the way forward. This subsection will articulate their positions and critically evaluate them.

For instance, Emrys Westacott (2021) proposes a simple definition of relativism. For Westacott, relativism is “the thesis that all points of view are equally valid.” Very simply, Westacott implies that every position stands since there is no superior position. Equally, Baghramian, Maria, and J. Adam Carter (2021) added depth to the definition of relativism. They argue that “truth and falsity, right and wrong, standards of reasoning, and procedures of justification are products of differing conventions and frameworks of assessment and that their authority is confined to the context giving rise to them” (Baghramian et al, 2021: n.p). This is more than just saying that all position is valid, but that the justification of all position lies in the context of such position, which means that in so far as there is a justification for a specific position, such a position is valid. To justify this position, Edward Younkins (2000) added that relativism is “the view that truth is different for each individual, social group, or historical period” (Younkins, 2000: n.p). We understand that for relativists, each individual or group has their own beliefs and opinion, and as much as they can defend their position or provide an argumentative backup to such a position, their idea is valid.

Furthermore, according to relativists, logical principles depend on relative values and cannot be universalized. They contend that each culture or community has the unassailable “sovereignty” to choose and uphold its own particular set of beliefs, and they reject the idea that there are any universal truths or rules that apply to all people. This is similar to how Harris James comprehends Rudolf Carnap’s contention that anyone or a group of people are free to create whatever logic system they see fit, provided that the system’s rules are clearly stated and intelligible (Harris 1992: 42). So, relativists argue against universalism because they think there is a need to create indigenous logical principles that appeal to them.

C. S. Momoh (2000) introduced the quest to create this indigenous logical principle that appeals to Africans. In the book titled *The “Logic” Question in African Philosophy*, C. S. Momoh proposed African Logic. He stated that “even though it is possible to use existing formal logics and rules of inference to evaluate discourse, reasoning, and thoughts in African cultures and world-views, the authentic African logic in an artificial language is yet to be developed” (Momoh, 2000:187). This task was then taken up by Jonathan Chimakonam, who sought to establish an African logic.



Chimakonam argues that constructing an alternative logic system should be the aim of African Logic to make sense and not create a culture-bound logic (Chimakonam, 2019:40). This means that African Logic should be formed not to be strange and not based on culture but on principles that can be understood and evaluated worldwide. Chimakonam provided the criterion for African Logic. They are; 1) it has to be analyzed by someone who has in-depth knowledge of African culture and African Intellectual life, 2) Such analysis should be grounded in the Arumarisitic logical structure of African ontology, and 3) It should be capable of universal application. Furthermore, Chimakonam argues that the difference between Ezumezu Logic and Aristotelian Logic is its dynamism and flexibility (Chimakonam, 2019:94). Its dynamism and flexibility lie in the fact that the truth of a particular proposition affirms the truth of the universal proposition (Arumaruka), and the truth of the universal proposition affirms that of the particular (Ohakarasi). More so, he argues that this African Logic is a “Context-dependence value” for the truth, and the falsity of a proposition depends on the context in which it is asserted (Chimakonam, 2019). He regrets that the argument has shifted to focus on African Logic’s correctness and incorrectness rather than on its applicability, a challenge Zande Logic also encountered. To do more than merely suggest an African logic, he advocated for the Decolonization of Logic. He believes decolonizing Logic will advance and enhance African Logic’s universalizability (Chimakonam 2019:145).

Two points to be made here. The first is that the call for decolonizing Logic for Chimakonam arose from a reasonable position: that African Logic should be judged based on whether they are applicable rather than its correctness or wrongness. The second point is to ask whether Chimakonam’s Ezumezu logic is consistent with the law of non-contradiction. To put it, did Chimakonam use the law of non-contradiction while proposing his Ezumezu Logic?

The foundational ideas of Ezumezu logic must be explained to comment on Ezumezu logic and its consistency with the law of non-contradiction. Ezumezu logic is trivalent rather than divalent, with the three truth values being emu (truth), izu (falsity), and ezumezu (truth and falsity supplemented). This is a significant distinction between Ezumezu logic and conventional Western Logic (Chimakonam, 2019: 98). According to Chimakonam, Ezumezu logic has three extra principles in addition to the classic ones of identity, excluded middle, and non-contradiction. He

claims that context will determine when each of these principles should be used (2019: 50). Therefore, the law of non-contradiction is not a universal tenet of Ezumezu logic.

I argue that Chimakonam only concludes that the law of non-contradiction is not a universal principle of reasoning because he uses a stricter form of the law of non-contradiction rather than the true law of non-contradiction. To explain this, first note that the law of non-contradiction does not simply state that a statement cannot be both true and false, but that a statement cannot be both true and false in the same sense and at the same time.

This definition allows us to explain the third truth value (ezumezu) which Chimakonam takes to refute the law of non-contradiction since the ezumezu truth value is both truth and falsity complimented. Chimakonam explains that two mutually exclusive statements can be true at the same time “if their fundamental presuppositions are different” (Chimakonam, 2019: 98). This suggests that if a statement is given the ezumezu truth value, it is not simultaneously true and false in the same meaning but rather that the statement is true when regarded in one manner and false when evaluated in another way. The law of non-contradiction is adhered to in this situation.

By examining Chimakonam’s example of when a statement might assume the ezumezu truth value, it is possible to find more support for this interpretation of the third truth value (Chimakonam, 2019: 109). I provide a comparable example of my own to support Chimakonam’s argument. Imagine that an acorn was accidentally thrown in a forest, and there was a 50/50 chance it would develop into an oak tree. Chimakonam would thus assert that both the claims “the acorn will develop into an oak tree” and “the acorn will decay or be eaten” may be true. Consequently, the claim that “the acorn will develop into an oak tree” is both correct and wrong (ezumezu truth value). According to Chimakonam, if a third party saw the event, they would only see one of the two possible outcomes. Using this finding, Chimakonam contends that trivalence would collapse back into bivalence (2019: 110). We can only declare this to be both true and untrue when there is doubt.

Nevertheless, the concept of non-contradiction is upheld in situations like these because something being potentially true and potentially untrue is not the same as it is true and false simultaneously. Chimakonam distinguishes between the circumstances under which he claims the sentence to be true and those under which

he claims it to be untrue. This proves that the ezumezu truth value cannot be both true and false in a manner that defies the law of non-contradiction. This demonstrates that the only reason Chimakonam rejects the law of non-contradiction is that he ignores the section of the law's definition that states that the law is only broken when a statement is both true and incorrect in the same sense, time, and context. However, when looked at profoundly, Ezumezu's reasoning is consistent with the law of non-contradiction when expressed completely or adequately interpreted.

Thus far, while Ezumezu logic seems appealing to Africans, there is no ultimate difference between Ezumezu Logic and the law of non-contradiction, for ultimately, both assert that nothing can be true and false under the same circumstances as previously explained. However, both arrived at that conclusion using different steps. This implies that there is no reason to deny the existence of African Logic or argue that it does not lead to truth or knowledge, for Ezumezu logic obeys the law of non-contradiction but does that differently. If that is the case, then denying the existence of African Logic seems to be unfounded, thereby suggesting that there is a need to recognize African Logic as a logical system of thought that can be used to arrive at knowledge. My point here is that the universalist law of non-contradiction is also seen in indigenous thought, thereby making the indigenous logical system a relevant logical system that ought to be recognized.

#### **1.4 Considering Relativism and Logic Decolonization**

This section will show why relativism does not help achieve Logic Decolonization and suggest redefining how to decolonize. I argue that relativism, used as a foundation for Logic Decolonization, is neither an indigenous idea nor an idea that will lead us to the truth and cannot replace Western thought, for it will eventually need to be re-decolonized if it replaces Western thought.

Maria Baghramian argues that relativism could be traced to the early 5th Century in Greek culture. She states that Euripides shocked the audience when one of his characters, discussing incest with his sister, announces that “no behavior is shameful if it did not appear so to those who practice it” (Euripides 1971: 173–176). Euripides explained that Protagoras of Abdera is considered the first official voice of relativism when he proclaims: “man is the measure of all things: of the things

which are, that they are, and of the things which are not, that they are not” (Euripides, 1977: 152a1–3). What this shows is that relativism has been there for a long time. Then it suggests that if there is a need to decolonize a system of thought that underpins colonialism, then there is a need to decolonize relativism as well for it has been there for as long as universalism. Moreover, one cannot use colonial tools to fight against colonialism. Audre Lorde understands it and proclaims, “the master’s tool will never demolish the master’s house” (Jazeel 2017: 335). This entails that there is a strong possibility that relativism might not be able to achieve decolonization.

Furthermore, Edward Buckner (2005) defines Logic as the science that directs the mind’s operations to attain truth. To explain what he meant by truth, he argued that an assertion is said to be true when it corresponds to the reality of which the assertion is made. According to Buckner, a vocal statement is simply the internal manifestation of a thought; therefore, it is true to claim that our ideas are truthful or mistaken. Buckner (2005) argues that all our mental operations aim to attain true judgments. He meant that any endeavour’s objective is to arrive at a judgment that conforms with reality and not more questions or does not correspond with reality. It implies that there have to be specific ways in which our thinking faculty must proceed to achieve its task of faithfully representing the current order. So, there must be rules we must observe in reasoning to arrive at a good result.

The question that resonates from the understanding is that if the rules are not respected, can we justify the true value of our result? In context, if the call for Decolonization of Logic implies creating new indigenous logical principles that will replace the western logical system, will there be a way to test those principles without comparing them to universal principles? Furthermore, if we can use a method or a principle to test them that is not universal, how can we justify those principles? Moreover, how can we justify its result when we cannot even justify its principle? The difficulty of answering these questions confirms that relativity cannot achieve such an aim since knowledge aims to arrive at the truth.

Another case against relativism achieving decolonization is that relativism does not decolonize; instead, it re-colonizes. James Harris argues that individuals or a group of people have the liberty to construct any Logic system they feel like, so far as its rules are well formulated and understandable (Harris 1992: 42). This suggests replacing one system, the western system, with the indigenous system.

However, Hellen Verraan disagrees that decolonization means replacing one system with another system. She thinks that decolonization means more than that, and we need to get rid of this idea of foundationalism and rethink decolonization (Verran, 2001:31). Foundationalism, Verran argues, is the idea that there is a justification or foundation of our knowledge that exists, and our job as epistemic agents is to become familiar with what those foundations are (2001:32-33). By removing foundationalism, we will understand that decolonization does not mean putting African ideas and schemes where western ideas are. If so, it is re-colonization, and there will eventually be a need to decolonize it. How, then, could we achieve Logic decolonization? To understand how to decolonize logic, one must understand what decolonization entails.

## **2 Decolonization; Logic Decolonization**

First, the phrase “decolonization” is ambiguous. Dan Wood argued that decolonization is not only not self-evident but also contains many possible interpretations (2017:3). It suggests that many conceptual ambiguities and approaches denote the phrase. It is ambiguous because it has interpretive possibilities. It is invoked for war against racism, white domination, gender violence, and political corruption. Similarly, Achille Mbembe proclaimed that the idea of decolonization is a path that has many ambiguities. Mbembe claimed that the more he investigates the concepts, he feels that he is fighting “a mutating entity with concepts inherited from an entirely different age and epoch” (Mbembe, 2015: n.p), and because of the interpretive possibilities of this phrase, multiple problems surrounding it.

What, then, are the problems that surround the concept of decolonization? First, decolonization is perceived as jargon and a concept. Wood argued that terms could either function as a concept or jargon. A concept is defined as the mental representation of reality (Copi, 2014:25). According to Oxford Advanced Learner Dictionary, Jargon is “an obscure and often pretentious language marked by circumlocutions and long words.” The interpretive possibilities of the word “decolonization” motivated Wood to argue that it often circulates as jargon and not a concept, and as a jargon, “decolonization is being used differently, and for a different end” (Wood, 2017:12)

Second, there is no clear understanding of the realities of what we are doing when we are decolonizing. For example, when we say “to decolonize,” do we mean; a) to decolonize the forceful imposition of a knowledge system by the colonial rulers or b) to decolonize the system of helping the indigenous people to understand the world around them through western ideas? The realities of these two possibilities being the truth are one reason why decolonizing knowledge is complex and can be easily misunderstood.

Third, decolonization has two perspectives: revolutionary decolonization and decolonization as preservation and restoration. While the revolutionaries look at the future creativity of the indigenous epistemic approach, the preservation and restoration group dig into the past to negate the domination of the colonial epistemic system (Wood, 2017). Wood argues that the assumption that “both approaches value the same thing have the same goals in mind, approach epistemic matters identically is both mistaken and under-theorized” (Wood, 2017:14). Therefore, when we invoke decolonization, we should be clear about which aspect of decolonization we mean.

Lastly, the aim of decolonization varies as well. While some, by invoking the concept of decolonization, aim to replace the colonial thought system with the indigenous thought system, some desire to create an alternative one and others seek to embed the indigenous thought system into the colonial thought system. The variation in goal entails a divergence in understanding, implying that for logic decolonization to succeed, we must first grasp the intricacies of understanding decolonization as a concept.

## **2.1 What does Logic decolonization entails, and how could we decolonize better?**

To address the issue of how we could decolonize better, I must explain why we need to decolonize. The previous sections explained how there is no difference between western Logic and ezumezu Logic. And since there is no such difference, then both logic systems should be recognized. There are other reasons why we should decolonize. Knowledge is cumulative. Cumulative means that knowledge develops or increases by successive additions of accumulated ideas and inputs. Hence, any input in the knowledge strengthens knowledge generally by providing

the basis for subsequent development. This implies that every knowledge system is necessary to construct a robust logical system of thought. As a result, a concept's worth should be assessed in terms of how effectively it adds to or explains what has already been said. Consequently, decolonization becomes essential for the sake of the knowledge system. In addition, the idea makes much sense when it considers indigenous contributions to it and enables local components to explain it using a variety of languages and ways. That being said, I will explain how we could decolonize better.

Alex Broadbent proposed a kind of decolonization called “critical decolonization” (Broadbent, 2017: n.p). To explain what he meant by “critical decolonization,” he argued that decolonization does not mean accepting that what we used to hold as truth or objective facts is not so. One cannot claim that there is no objective truth in the system of thought because it is self-refuting. It is self-refuting because for one to claim that there is no objective truth, questions will be asked on how they concluded that there is no objective truth. One must have at least an element of objective truth to claim that what one has learned is not objective. Therefore, the idea of “decolonization as the rejection of objectivity or universality which is perceived as a sort of heritage of colonial thinking is not an attempt to resurrect the dispassionate search for knowledge” (Broadbent, 2017: n.p)

Alex then presented the ideas embedded in his conception of critical thinking. He argued that since the indigenous knowledge system might be wrong sometimes, critical decolonization means “considering whether indigenous knowledge system might contain truths that western science has not accessed” (Broadbent, 2017: n.p). This means we should consider whether what we find in Western disciplines weighs much and how much our local knowledge can contribute to the general knowledge.

What we are getting here is that when I suggest we need to decolonize Logic, I do not mean we should replace western Logic with indigenous Logic. Instead, I mean that we find a way to embed indigenous thought into the existing western thought in Africa, and then the Westerners should also find a way to embed the African logic system into their own logical system, which means that the embedment process should occur at both sides for logic decolonization to be successful.

This position is strengthened by Kohn Margaret and Kavita Reddy (2017) research, in which they understand that before colonialism, non-Western societies were not necessarily primitive, and more complex forms of social organization were not necessarily superior. Similarly, Olufemi Taiwo (2010) stressed this point. He argued that Africa is already on the path of modernization before the advent of colonialism (Taiwo, 2010). However, the advent of colonial rule hindered such a process. This implies that Africa are not relatively primitive as the westerners said when they arrived Africa, for there was already a system of thought on how we arrive at knowledge. To put it in context, this means that the call for logic decolonization ought not to be a call to change our system of knowledge from western to indigenous but a call to embed the indigenous logical system into the Western logical system because the indigenous system is not a primitive system but a system that has not been recognized.

My contention is that there is no evidence to support the claim that conventional Western Logic preserves truth or advances knowledge more effectively than African Logic, by rejecting parts of its tenets while being consistent with the known information. This suggests that a logic that does not directly contradict the data while disputing some of the principles of conventional Western Logic cannot be claimed to be worse than traditional Western Logic. Some African logics do not adhere to all the typical Western logical precepts and do not directly contradict the available data. This leads me to conclude that since multiple logics exist and none are better or worse than others, they should all be taught side by side, and none should be neglected. Hence, logic decolonization then implies improving our knowledge with the best possible knowledge available to humans, either from an African or traditional Western logic. And importantly, this understanding of logic decolonization is only be achieved successfully when the embedment is done from both sides, that is, the westerners embed the African logical system into theirs, and the Africans embed the Western logical system into theirs.

### **3 Possible objection**

Brenda Wingfield (2017) argued against decolonization. Targeting her audience to be South Africans, she stated, “What is really important is that South African teachers, lecturers, and professors must develop curricula that build on the



best knowledge skills, values, beliefs and habits from around the world” (Wingfield, 2017: n.p). She argued that decolonization might isolate South Africa from cutting-edge science and reduce South African scholars’ access to the most advanced knowledge, whatever its source, the knowledge they could utilize to address local issues. Hence, decolonization could “hinder liberation from poverty and equal involvement in the global production of knowledge about the shared world” (Wingfield, 2017: n.p).

### **3.1 Attempt to respond to the possible objections**

To begin with, the idea of logic decolonization as I have argued thus far in the paper, suggests that we should not seek to replace universal logical principles with relative ones because those principles, logical principles, are derived in a different context, different culture, and a different purpose. Replacing them with African thoughts and systems might be complicated, and it will distort the message aimed to pass across. For example, the curriculum should not replace Immanuel Kant’s ideas with African philosophers’ ideas, for although African philosophers’ ideas might appeal more to Africans, there is still something Immanuel Kant’s ideas will teach students and could inspire students to seek new ideas or understanding. Therefore, instead of replacing western thoughts with African thought, we should aim at embedding African thought in western thought, for there are some philosophical underpinnings of the Western logical principles closely linked to African traditions and not intrinsically alien to them. This will allow universal and indigenous principles to work together and improve the knowledge system. And importantly, this understanding of logic decolonization is only be achieved successfully when the embedment is done from both sides, that is, the westerners embed the African logical system into theirs, and the Africans embed the Western logical system into theirs. That being said, there should also be a possibility that a Western logical system might not appeal to African curriculum. In such circumstances, decolonization also implies understanding such scenarios, and using a thought system that appeals more to the audience. Verran experience in Nigeria is a perfect example of how Western thought system might not appeal anymore to a particular audience.

Secondly, there is no reason to believe that achieving logical decolonization might isolate South Africa from cutting-edge science and reduce South African scholars' access to the most advanced knowledge, whatever its source, the knowledge they could utilize to address local issues. If there is anything that will promote such deficiency, it is not attempting Logic Decolonization. As I have said before, knowledge is cumulative; it provides the basis for subsequent development in knowledge. So, if there is anything beneficial to knowledge, it is cultural input; and if there is anything beneficial in solving our local problem, it is universal input. Some ideas are indigenously South African that the world has not heard of, and there are ideas across the world that South Africa still possesses. Instead of decolonizing, which Brenda thinks will be cutting South Africa off, it puts them at the center of things to learn how to solve local issues and further develop our knowledge system.

## **Conclusion**

As with many philosophical issues, we started with a relatively simple question and found it challenging to reach a satisfactory answer. The point is that not all African communities accept all the laws of traditional Western Logic, with the Azande being a concrete example of people with different reasoning. Furthermore, Ezumezu logic that I have considered is, however, consistent with the law of non-contradiction, and this gives me the reason to believe that this law is universal, although arrived to from a different perspective. This implies that the debate between universalists and relativists has often been one where both sides have not understood that neither is entirely right nor completely wrong. However, since decolonization is the goal, replacing Western thought, which is assumed to be the universalist system, with indigenous thought, is problematic because it might require further decolonization. Therefore, embedding indigenous thought into the western thought system seems to be a way to decolonize better, improve the general knowledge system, and avoid the need to re-decolonize. And this embedment is complete when it is done from both sides, that is, from Africans and Westerners.

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