

**Post-development Thesis and African Intercultural Theory of Development**

<https://dx.doi.org/10.4314/ft.v12i1.2>

**Submission: October 5, 2022 Acceptance: April 6, 2023**

Philip Adah IDACHABA  
Department of Philosophy  
Federal University of Lafia

[Email: Idachaba.adah@arts.fulafia.edu.ng](mailto:Idachaba.adah@arts.fulafia.edu.ng)

<http://orcid.org/0000-0001-6290-6519>

&

Paul Terngu HAAGA  
Department of Philosophy  
Federal University of Lafia

[Email: paul.haaga@arts.fulafia.edu.ng](mailto:paul.haaga@arts.fulafia.edu.ng)

<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-1954-0002>

**Abstract**

The aim of the paper is to address the question: is the end of development possible? Post-development theorists declare the end of development. They insist that the problematisation of poverty by development theory is one of the key defects of development. The irony in this problematisation is that development practice as an offshoot of development theory does not actually alleviate poverty, particularly in colonial spaces. Rather, the agents of development have perpetuated underdevelopment at the fringes of the colonial metropolis. Given this perpetuation of underdevelopment, post-development theorists argue, the idea of development has run its course and is no longer efficient; it should be put to an end. We assess this declaration of post-development theory from the perspective of Agbakoba's intercultural philosophy of development. Using the philosophical methods of analysis and critique, we argue that Agbakoba's intercultural proposal for a transition to development in Africa holds more prospects and is more feasible in addressing the concerns of post-development scholars. This is because, Agbakoba's intercultural philosophy of development does not insist on the end of development, but on hybridity as the end of development.

**Keywords:** Development, Hybridity, Interculturality, Post-development, Responsibility and Self-determination

**Introduction**

Post-development is the view of development that insists on the 'end of development' (PARFITT 2002, BROOKS 2017). Proponents argue that development 'makes and unmakes the third world' (ESCOBAR 1997, 85-93). Others opine that 'development is planned poverty' (ILLICH 1997, 94-102), and some ask 'is development the devil we know' (NUSTAD 2007, 35-46). From these dispositions, post-development thinking challenges the idea of development and its quest to end poverty as well as to make more wealth available to humanity. The major argument of development theory is not just the concept of economic growth but ways by which such growth can translate into tangible goods in the lives of men. It is for this reason that efforts are made to track wealth and its

spread all over the world. The data from some of these efforts are not encouraging. *The Changing Wealth of Nations 2021* is a United Nations document which assesses the world's wealth using data gathered from 146 countries. This document released in October 2021 assesses the world's wealth from 1995 – 2018. In this document, “global wealth (as measured by natural, human and produced capital) grew significantly...” (WORLD BANK GROUP 2021, xxi). Despite this growth, the document further indicates that “inequalities between countries persists.” (WORLD BANK GROUP 2021, xxi). The situation in terms of wealth per capita is even worse. “In 26 countries, wealth per capita stagnated or even declined between 1995 and 2018, and almost half of these were in Sub-Saharan Africa” (WORLD BANK GROUP 2021, xxi). The projection is that “if the trend continues, future generations will be materially worse off” (WORLD BANK GROUP 2021, xxi). Prior to this, *The 2020 Credit Suisse Global Wealth Report* released at the end of October 2020 revealed that the top 1% of households globally own 43% of all personal wealth, while the bottom 50% own only 1% of all personal wealth globally (SHORROCKS, DAVIES & LLUBERAS 2020, 29). These statistics are grim. They testify that even though the world's wealth is increasing, the expected impact of this increase on the wretched of the earth is not as rapid as the growth rate. In spite of the plenty, poverty still abounds. Despite all the vigour of the rhetoric of development, the squalor of the earth continues unabated. This reality seems to be vindicating the claims of post-development that development has run its course.

Relatedly, there have been recent practical challenges to western modernisation, particularly in China. Nathan Gardels refers to this in the article “China's Defectors from Western Modernisation.” So also does Jacob Dreyer refer to it in an article titled “Back Down to the Countryside” published in the online magazine, *Noema*. The basic argument in these articles is that “the alienated children of prosperity favour harmony with nature and each other over competition” (GARDELS 2022 Online). And that “young people all over China, fed up with city life are searching for new ways of life amid old traditions in undeveloped rural parts of the country” (DREYER 2022 Online). These Chinese folks are beginning to experience the desolation and meaninglessness of work consequent upon the developmentalist ideology. They are afraid that after having taken in the world economy, it now threatens to swallow China and eventually deprive it of its soul. The remedy to this is in the current switch to rural life. This could be another point of vindication for the post-development aspiration. But are these pieces of evidence enough to suggest that development is no longer a useful aspiration?

Africa is one region of the world that has continued to suffer the lack of development despite all efforts to stem the tide of underdevelopment. In the quest for alternative frameworks for development, African scholars have also interacted with post-development. Some have quite positively appraised it and advanced ways by which some of its ideals can be implemented in the continent. On a general note, Eris Schoburg thinks that one of the points of relevance of post-development is the ‘local developmental state’ (2016, 18-19). It is within the context of the local developmental state that some argue that the Local Government System in Nigeria could be one way to implement the ideas of post-development (ISA, 2016). While other views show the downsides of post-

development, they also identify ways to make post-development workable. Stefan Andreasson, for example, argues that “to offer something more appealing and attractive than what has manifestly become a primary pursuit of the societies worldwide in the era of Development remains the challenge for development’s detractors” (2017, 21). However, he proposes *Ubuntu* as one way to make post-development ideas realisable in Africa (2007: 18-24). In a similar vein, Sally Matthews is of the view that NGOs, particularly Enda Graft Sahel and their activities in Senegal could be one way to implement post-development in Africa (2007, 131-144, 2017: 2650-2663). This is after she has identified some of the shortcomings of post-development. But some opinions reject post-development outrightly in Africa. Felix Olatunji and Anthony Bature insist that post-development theory is inadequate to the discourse of development and social order in the global south (2019: 236-242). Maduka Enyimba proposes conversational thinking as an alternative theory of development and post-development in Africa. In specific terms, Enyimba refers to his proposal as Conversational Theory of Development (CTD), and it operates on the laws of: constructive mutual benefit, recognising the peculiarity of entities, and sacred cow (2021, 31-37). While these efforts make cogent claims with regard to post-development in Africa, they have not been able to assess post-development within the context of its understanding of development, the place of agency in development and the priority of hybridity as the end of development. The intercultural theory of development as espoused by Agbakoba, with which this paper assesses post-development, is unique in that it addresses these concerns as they relate to the development of Africa. Therefore, this essay's original point is to assess post-development based on the above points from the intercultural theory of development. The argument is that the intercultural proposal for a transition to development in Africa holds more prospects and is more feasible in addressing the concerns of post-development scholars. This is because, intercultural philosophy of development does not insist on the end of development, but on a proper conceptualisation and implementation of development.

In making our case, we proceed in the following order. The first section considers what post-development is, and it closes with an assessment of some of the ways post-development has been deployed in Africa. The next section exposes the basic elements of Agbakoba’s intercultural theory of development. Following the intercultural theory of development, attention is given to three issues within post-development theory. The following section addresses the issue of the lack of a proper definition of development in post-development theory. This is addressed using the intercultural idea of development as self-determination. The next section focuses on the question of responsibility in development, which ties up with the question of agency in development. The last section attends to the end of development as hybridity. We conclude that it is obviously impossible to end development and it is difficult to accomplish post-development aspirations, generally and in Africa particularly.

### **Post-development Thesis**

One unifying thread in all post-development literature is that - post-development declares the end of development. This declaration of the end of development is premised on the idea that development has failed. It has not succeeded in

accomplishing its aim of eradicating poverty. As Wolfgang Sachs puts it “it did not work” (1992, 1). Post-development scholars insist further that the failure of development is not the case of a bad implementation of a good idea. Rather, it is the case of a bad idea which no measure of informed implementation can salvage. For post-development scholars, the idea of development is inherently flawed. Development is standing on faulty foundations. In the first instance, the idea of infinite progress, which grounds development is flawed. This is because progress is not infinite (MATTHEWS 2018). Development is also problematic because it works with false labels – developed and underdeveloped. These labels give the impression that a developed state is desirable and an underdeveloped state is undesirable. But in actual living, the underdeveloped way of life cannot be dismissed as undesirable, and the developed way of life cannot be completely embraced as desirable. The case of China presented in the introduction, is a good example of this. Besides, these labels engender a kind of reverse-mirroring, where people understand themselves based on how others perceive and construct them. In this case, the underdeveloped do not see themselves as such; they only come to such understanding because others have categorised them as such. Another faulty fact in this regard is the alignment of the essence of development with westernisation, such that to be developed is to be westernised. For Sachs, this makes the success of development dangerous (1992, 3). These flaws are some of the basis for the declaration of the failure of development.

Furthermore, post-development theory insists that aside from the failure to solve the problem it has mapped out for itself, development has also resulted in more problems with greater magnitude (RAHNEMA & BAWTREE 1997, 378). Foremost among these new problems is that of environmental degradation. Some post-development scholars opine that if the industrial (development) model is to be extended across the world, “five or six planets would be needed to serve as mines and waste dumps” (SACHS 1992, 2). Meanwhile, underdeveloped life can be “generally self-reliant, self-sufficient, sustainable, and far less destructive to humanity as well as nature” (SHRESTHA 1995, 276). Another problem that has evolved in the wake of the development ideology is sociocultural in character. Experiences like “spiritual desolation, meaningless work, (and) neglect of the aged are dubious examples” (MARGLIN 1990, 3) of the downside of development. The sociocultural defects of the developed region have led others to describe such regions as “an impersonal machine, devoid of spirit ... Characterised by desolation, numbness, and insecurity” (LATOUCHE 1993, 11-13). Also, the developed form of life is inherently parasitic. It survives by preying on and sustaining underdeveloped forms of life. The “permanent victimhood” (ALVARES 1992, 145) of others is an undeniable requirement for sustaining the developed form of life. On the basis of these problems, post-development scholars embark on a “frontal attack on the ideology of development... there is no such thing as developed or an underdeveloped person” (ALVARES 1992, 108). Majid Rahnema and Victoria Bowtree declare that they “have come to the conclusion that development was indeed a poisonous gift to the populations it sets out to help” (1997, 378, 381). Perhaps, some post-development scholars insist, we should “write its obituary” (SACHS 1992, 1).

Consequently, post-development scholars insist that it is now pertinent to come up with a new approach to understanding human progress and improvement.

Perhaps this approach could help us understand that some problems are not problems at all. This new approach will have to underscore that being poor does not mean being underdeveloped. Poverty, though discomforting, does not signal a deficit of human dignity and integrity (SHRESTHA 1995, 268). Rahnama opines that in vernacular societies “(convivial) poverty is a blessing and never a scourge. This kind of poverty is used to describe a mode of life based on the ethics of simplicity, frugality, conviviality and solidarity” (1991, 44). Such kind of poverty is based “on the notion of moral economy, general to all peasant societies, an economy based on the recognition that needs and resources cannot be delinked” (RAHNEMA 1991, 44-5). The rise of development ideology is what turns poverty into a curse (the problematisation of poverty (ESCOBAR 1995) and subsequently the need for a grand solution to this problem. Post-development is suspicious of grand solutions to problems of improvement and this is where the destiny of post-development meets that of postmodernism. It rather favours local or grassroots approaches to human improvement. Arturo Escobar insists that, “there are no grand alternatives that can be applied to all places or all situations... one must resist the desire to formulate alternatives at an abstract, macro level” (1995, 222). The ultimate point here is that, “...different societies need to find different ways to cope with the problems they face – and that the problems, too, will differ from place to place” (MATTHEWS 2018 Online). In pursuing local visions for human progress, it must be understood that post-development does not favour *alternative development*, rather it seeks *alternative to development*. Serge Latouche expresses this sentiment in the following words, “the opposition between alternative development and alternative to development is radical, irreconcilable and one of essence, both in the abstract and theoretical analysis” (1993, 159). Post-development is basically about challenging the prospects of development in general.

Post-development has come under criticism in the form described above for some reasons. Three of these will be the focus of this paper. The first weak point of post-development identified here is that, post-development is inattentive to an alternative to development because it was never poised to be attentive; it was rather posed to deconstruct and fragment the development idea. This is part of the reason post-development has no clear understanding of development. At the second level, post-development downplays agency in the development quest. This is what some refer to as discourse-agency conundrum in post-development thinking (LIE (2008). In this line of thinking, development becomes “a particular discourse which does not reflect but actually constructs reality...” (KIELY 1999, 31). As a result of this emphasis on discourse, post-development underplays agency, freedom and responsibility in the quest for development. Thirdly, attempts to bring Africa into the post-development equation have not been comprehensive enough. There has been an attempt to develop an alternative to development using the Senegalese model in which A gives to B from his/her excess and expects nothing in return (MATTHEWS 2004). This Senegalese approach is not comprehensive because, giving in the context of development carries more the sense of justice than that of charity. To give in a certain quantity and expect in the same quantity is justice, but to give and not expect back is charity. What guarantees the success of development is justice. Alyson puts it quite succinctly in discussing charity and development “Charity and development

are entirely different. One keeps the patient comfortable, and the other tries to cure the disease. Theoretically they can co-exist. More often, they are opposites, sometimes enemies” (ALYSON 2021, para 3). Justice is a more worthy companion to the development quest. The lack of justice in this African Senegalese paradigm makes it incomprehensive as a development perspective.

Even the approaches that evoke the Ubuntu model in the quest to accomplish an alternative to development in the African context also exhibit the incomprehensiveness described above. Andreasson is of the view that Ubuntu is one reliable way of instantiating post-development in Africa. Ubuntu, as used here translates into humanity, humanness or even humaneness. Here, a person is person through other persons (2007, 20). There are questions as to the extent of personhood inherent in the idea of Ubuntu; is the person in this context any and everybody? Or the person is limited to a member of the community? When advocates of this ideal stress that this model emanates from the communal life of the village, they also fail to see that the definition of a person is limited to the community within which such a person is native. This means that the solidarity Ubuntu advocates can only fully operate when it is dealing with members of the same community. That is, community solidarity is strong when dealing with members of the in-house. The solidarity decreases as the community spread gets wider; when it gets to the realm of the out-house members, cordiality and hospitality as core elements of Ubuntu, decreases (AGBAKOKA 2008; FUKUYAMA 2005). This is the reason ethnicity is endemic on the African continent. In adopting such a model as alternative to development, no effort has been made to address the narrow radius of brotherhood in the Ubuntu model. Such a narrow radius is not comprehensive enough to address the defects of development. In what follows, we will first expound on the African indigenous intercultural philosophy of development before discussing how it addresses some of the downsides of post-development theory. In so doing, we will be working towards demonstrating that development cannot end, rather the end of development is hybridity.

### **African Intercultural Philosophy of Development**

Joseph C. A. Agbakoba in his [Development and Modernity in Africa: An Intercultural Perspective], published in 2019, attempts to create an African perspective to intercultural philosophy and relates this to the problem of African development and development in general. This perspective is what we describe as ‘African intercultural theory of development’ (and we use it interchangeably with interculturality in this paper). This approach to development is a refinement of the modernity theory of development bearing in mind African specificity and the demand of intercultural theory, which include “comprehensive mutuality, reciprocity and equality” (SWEET 2014, 2). The sense of modern which is germane to this perspective of development refers to modern as “commitment to reason and its supremacy, which is the characteristic element of European modernity; however, supremacy here does not require or imply exclusion of emotions, the intuition, drives, desires, humanness, respect for persons, empathy, beneficence; but these must not contradict reason; must be compatible with or derivable from reason in-itself, including especially transcendental reason or reason in itself” (AGBAKOKA 2019, 27). This understanding of the modern

demonstrates the alignment of this theory of development with a robust understanding of reason. Robust in the sense that reason in this context is not cold, calculative and instrumental reason, but one which is tamed by the elements of emotions, intuitions, empathy and most importantly, beneficence, for “reason without beneficence is inhuman (in the form of inhumanness and wickedness) while beneficence without reason is inhumane (in the form of self-indulgent, nihilistic, self –destructive or weakness – the operation of the law of self-preservation bound by reason and morality would have taken leave here)” (AGBAKOBA 2019, 92). Here, we have a form of reasonability which has beneficence – in fact, ontological-beneficence (which includes those things that would make self-realisation possible) – as its hallmark.

In line with this understanding of reason as consistency-beneficence, this theory understands development as “the unfolding of reasonability in the sphere of human activities, relations and institutions as well as states of consciousness generally” (AGBAKOBA 2019, 93). The idea of state of consciousness brings to the fore the place of agency in the quest for development. In fact, this approach to development is organicist on the basis of agency. As an organicist approach, it is internalist; that is, it is based on agency and “holds the view that the internal state of a society initiates and directs the development of a society by responding constructively to internal and external stimuli and/or by adopting or rejecting such stimuli” (AGBAKOBA 2019, 65). Agency, as used here, refers to the entire capabilities of a person or group (both natural and acquired capabilities; including the underdetermined and indeterminate capacities for spontaneity, creativity and freedom) and their dispositions, that is, arrangements or alignment, focus and orientation, in so far as these are determined and determinable given the indeterminism in creativity and freedom (AGBAKOBA 2019, 155). An agent that bears these features properly is said to have agential integrity. This integrity is what interacts with external circumstances, creatively and energetically to produce the spectra of development we have in the world. This means that development may never be accomplished if human agents are not properly formed, no matter the level of circumstantial conduciveness. But a properly formed agency will guarantee development no matter how inhibiting external circumstances are. This is because such agents have the proper firewall that insulates them from debilitating external influences. Thus, such agents are able to keep focus and creatively work towards development. Such agents will properly utilise the positive freedom which they have, as against loathing over the negative freedoms which they lack (AGBAKOBA 2021, 24ff). These agents take responsibility seriously, and such responsibility could be either objective or subjective.

In the face of the various levels of irresponsibility that inhibits development in Africa, this theory of development identifies initiative justice/pro-active solidarity as an intercultural means of beginning to foster development (reasonability-beneficence) in Africa. This is an intercultural means because, its details are a product of an intercultural hybrid between that ideas of justice in the Igbo (African) context and the Western model. This idea highlights how the operation of positive justice in the African context can help foster a more pragmatic disposition to justice and to development on the African continent and even the world at large. The expression of this form of justice can be seen in how the African (Igbo) execute numeric equality, as an aspect of justice, especially in

property and wealth distribution. In the event of the loss of a propertied man who is polygamous (with two wives, for example), the Igbo, in distributing the man's wealth to both wives will do so equally, not minding the fact that one of the wives has just one child and the other has more than one. The sense in this is that, the wife with numerous children may suffer in the present because her inheritance may not be enough for her and her children; in the long run, at her old age, these children will translate to numerous pair of hands at her service. For the wife with a single child, she will have just a pair of hands to see her through the advanced stage of her life. This means that, the flow of temporality has a way of balancing the inconsistency of numerical equality. At a deeper level, it behoves on the wife with a child to assist the wife with numerous children from her abundance so that these can in turn render her services when old age takes its toll. In Agbakoba's specific words, "she (wife with one child) should be pro-active and expect compensatory justice in the form of reciprocity – this is pro-active solidarity, especially regarding vulnerable, exploitable, relatively weak persons or groups outside one's circle of responsibility (specifically, outside one's circle of subjective responsibility but within the scope of one's objective responsibility)" (2019, 352).

This model of justice can apply transculturally. In the first instance, the colonial master failed in initiating pro-active solidarity. This is because the colonial master was only out to exploit the weakness of the colonised (even though the colonised has a large share of the blame too). Even today, advance capitalist nations have not been able to refrain from exploiting the weaknesses of developing nations, knowing fully the consequences of the global system on these communities in terms of poverty, poor living standards, violence, displacement of people and forced migration. In the end,

the point is that pro-active solidarity and initiative justice on grounds of enlightened self-interest could have averted some of these problems because a more developed Africa and Middle East would have been more secure economically, politically and thus make migration less necessary or attractive to many of the people in these regions." (AGBAKOKA 2019, 363)

From the African standpoint, the Africanisation policy, favoured at independence did not demonstrate pro-active solidarity or initiative justice in any way. At best, it was retributive and only helped to plant ill-prepared Africans in the public service and the result is the high level of insensibilism and apathetic-beneficence prevalent in Africa today. Pro-active solidarity would have required that African governments create a just environment that would encourage foreigners with more experience in administration to stay back and Africans can understudy them for optimal performance. This is what Lee Kwan Yaw did in Singapore; and Sereste Khama did in Botswana. But the indigenisation policies of Nigeria and Ghana failed. Even today, the indigenisation policy continues to rear its head in the form of 'ethnicisation' and 'tribalisation' of the public service in many parts of Africa.

In summary, intercultural philosophy of development (interculturality) understands development as an intercultural phenomenon related to the consistent unfolding of reasonability-beneficence in a social setting. Reasonability-



beneficence in this context points at those elements required to accomplish positive freedom or self-realisation. It is a combination of reason with elements of intuition, emotion, empathy and respect for persons. Tenacity to this form of reasonability, is to a large extent, responsible for the ideological edge of modernity. Reasonability-beneficence is attained in cultivating agents with sufficient integrity with cultural firewalls that selectively react to and receive influences. This kind of agent is attentive to the demands of responsibility at both the subjective and objective levels. These agents also accomplish the unique task of actualising pro-active solidarity and initiative justice in a transcultural setting. Such an agent is a hybrid; a product of the hybridity between native elements and features of ideological modernity.

### **Development as Self-Determination**

By understanding development as self-determination, interculturality is already poised to remedy a fundamental defect of post-development theory. This defect is its lack of a definition of development. Can development be accomplished without a working definition or basic understanding of what it is? This is what post-development attempts to do by fragmenting the development experience space. Matthews attempts to explain the lacuna at the heart of post-development thinking. Her thought is that post-development is only averse to the post World War II understanding of development. Quoting Rahnema and Bawtree she submits that post-development thinkers "... want change that would enable them to blossom 'like a flower from the bud' that could leave them free to change the rules and context of change according to their own culturally defined ethics and aspirations" (1997, 375). The phrase, 'to blossom like flower from the bud' is curious. This makes development a natural and largely accidental phenomenon, which does not require planning but depends on the whims of nature. Such an analogy for development is quite inappropriate. Setting goals and putting regulations in place to accomplish those are integral to what development is. Besides, the idea that development is all about the post-World War II version of it, is reductionist. Efforts to develop were always there before the post-World War II era. In beginning with a definition of what development is, interculturality is demonstrating an understanding of the fact that development is beyond the natural unfolding of things and that there was the idea of development before the post-World War II era.

Interculturality understands development as a type of change. This type of change is positive and it is not haphazard or accidental. It is rather a purposeful and goal-oriented change. The change of development presupposes a knowledge of the goals or end-state to which the change aspires. Beyond this knowledge of the end-state, this kind of change also requires value choices. That is, some values need to be upheld in the process of accomplishing this kind of change. With regard to human beings, the end-state of this kind of change is self-realisation. Thus, development can be understood as the "process by which human beings seek the maximum realisation of themselves..." (AGBAKOBA 2019, 55). It is a positive and progressive transformation of capacities and capabilities as well as the freedoms thereof. This is a sense of development as positive freedom which is central to Amartya Sen's idea of development as freedom. This idea of development as self-realisation through positive freedom has universal and

particular dimensions. Its universal dimensions are the values, orientations, attitudes, ideas, practices, and objects for the realisation of people across the globe. The modification and adaptation of ideas and practices of universal interest of development to suit particular geographical and/or socio-cultural situations refer to the particular dimensions of development. This balances out the inability of post-development to grapple with universality in development. This balancing addresses post-development's extreme and unrealistic option of wanting to do away completely with development.

From all of the foregoing, development can be understood as positive freedom for self-determination and self-realisation. The centrality of freedom in this regard is that freedom is both an end and a means for accomplishing development. By this definition, the understanding of development is at two levels. Development is first in terms of the satisfaction of basic everyday stuff, such as a dignified existence free of hunger, unemployment, and disease. Secondly, and more importantly, it could be deliberate efforts at fulfilling political imperatives such as freedom of the individual, equal and fair treatment before the law and freedom from being victimised by the state (MATOLINO 2018, xii). In this understanding of development as self-determination through positive freedom, development is not about what you are prevented from doing or what others can do for you or how/what others will allow you do for yourself. It is rather about what you can do for yourself within the confines of the means and resources available to you. In rejecting development because of its constraining elements (negative freedom), post-development only tells half of the story; the passive side of the development story. By understanding development as positive freedom, interculturality projects the active phase of development. That is, in spite of the constraints, we can still do good things for ourselves.

### **Re-fixing the Face of Responsibility in Development**

Since post-development places so much emphasis on the passive side of development, it cannot comprehensively account for development responsibility. The agency conundrum which was identified as one of the setbacks of post-development is directly related to this. Since agents are presented as completely passive and are under the power of discourse in post-development thinking, they cannot be brought into the sphere of responsibility in development. The responsibility for development has to be squarely at the feet of the framers of the development discourse. The recipients of development have no responsibility. This continues the old trajectory of blaming others for the dearth of development in the world. In this way, post-development exonerates the complicity of agency in the perpetuation of underdevelopment, especially in underdeveloped places. The poverty of the Third World is exclusively a result of the irresponsibility of the First World.

This point where post-development places the responsibility for underdevelopment only tells half of the story for the culpability in underdevelopment. In line with the centrality of agency in the intercultural perspective to development, responsibility is a very fundamental factor in development. It is not only the intercultural perspective that centralises responsibility in development. On the question of collective responsibility in development, using the Ubuntu model, some defend the thesis that, the collective

responsibility of developing societies in relation to development is grounded by the imperative to care about the humanity of people (OKEJA 2017). This thesis of Uchenna Okeja is a laudable ideal in the quest for responsibility in development. But this sounds more like the case for objective responsibility in the intercultural perspective. In the intercultural perspective, agential integrity is key to development and agents with such integrity are very alive to responsibility, which can be at both the subjective and objective levels. Given the understanding of development as purposeful and value-driven positive change (in which all the elements of value are couched in rational consistency-beneficence and the aim is to accomplish self-realisation through positive freedom), when the framers of development do not guarantee the conditions for the accomplishment of this kind of change, their complicity in underdevelopment is at the level of objective responsibility. In this sense, objective responsibility is all about ensuring proper treatment for people who are not connected to the significant self in any way. It is about giving fair treatment to those who are members of the out-house community. Okeja's case for giving care to humanity falls conveniently at this level. The recipients of development are also part of humanity, thus there is every need to show them care as well. There is every need to be fair to them. Thus, Trans-Atlantic Slavery, Colonialism, neo-colonialism, coloniality all represent objective irresponsibility on the side of the Europeans nations that master-minded these. The victims of these experiences were not members of the in-house group of the perpetrators (European nations) of these acts. Responsibility, in terms of apportioning blameworthiness, is obvious in this regard and it is objective.

But post-development does not acknowledge subjective responsibility in terms of apportioning blameworthiness to the agency of the recipients of development. It does not highlight the fact that development also failed because the recipients of development were subjectively irresponsible. They were unable to show responsibility to the significant self and the in-house community. In Africa, for example, Slave-Trade was quite successful because blacks helped in capturing and organising slave raids within their communities. Indirect rule of colonialism was successful because Warrant Officers/Chiefs were handy, from among the people, to help accomplish the aspiration of colonisation. The Apartheid in South Africa could not have been successful if not for the ways the natives aided and abated the process. Even today, in the aftermath of colonialism, African nations are degraded politically, economically and socially because her leaders (and even followers) have refused to be subjectively responsible for her development. Part of the reason for this kind of complicity in the under developing of Africa is in the fact of the improper constitution of agency. Two key elements of agential integrity in the intercultural perspective to development are agential reactivity/receptivity and cultural firewalling. These are paths through which agency is formed and the particularistic nature of African Traditional Religions makes cultural firewalling and agential receptivity weak. Thus, it is difficult to easily resist negative influences and Africa has continued to blame others for her unfortunate situation.

In summary, the division of responsibility into its subjective and objective sides, properly narrows down the question of responsibility in development. Post-development only tells half of the story of responsibility in development. It attends only to the objective irresponsibility of the framers of development to the course of underdevelopment in the world. By highlighting the

powerlessness of agents in the face of discourse, it also wipes clean the subjective irresponsibility of the recipients of development in the cause of the failure of development. In this situation of only partly determining responsibility to development, it is difficult to construct a response to underdevelopment that is comprehensive enough. This partial understanding of the responsibility for development is why post-development is quite reductionist in its understanding of development and it can even envision the end of development.

### **Hybridity and the ‘End of Development’**

Following the understanding of development in the above and the levels of responsibility for development, one can begin to understand that ‘the end of development’ is not possible. This is because, by its very nature development is desirable. Once the pursuit of development is attentive to the dictate of rational consistency beneficence as identified in the intercultural perspective above, development will be a more fruitful experience for humanity. The instrumentalization of reason in the pursuit of development is part of what has created the impression that development is something to be avoided, something flawed and something poised to give the very opposite of what it claims to offer (that is, it has produced more poverty and more problems for the world than it has solved). Understanding development as rational consistency beneficence in the quest for self-determination through positive freedom represents some of the universal values and attitudes engrained in development. Adapting and expressing these values and interests in various contexts refers to the particular dimensions of development. Agbakoba submits in this regard that, “... the universal and particular dimensions of development, are interlocking, forming a functionally integrated whole within which the individual can realise himself/herself” (2019, 64). Thus, the end of development is a fruitful combination of the universal and particular dimensions of development; a hybrid of a sort.

The idea of hybrid is very germane to the intercultural approach to development. Prior to the operationalisation of the concept of the hybridity in interculturality, it was already functioning in the works of Homi Bhabha. First mentioned in [The Location of Culture] (1994), it “is one of the most vital concepts in cultural criticism today. Along with his other ideas such as ‘sly civility’ and ‘colonial non-sense’, by the late 1990s it had passed into the currency of theoretical debate and has remained influential ever since” (RAJAN 1998, 496). In Bhabha's works, the concept of hybridity of cultures carries the sense of mixedness or impurity of cultures knowing that no culture is pure. According to Bhabha, every culture is an original mixedness within every form of identity. Thus, the development of the concept is an attempt at diffusing the essentialism that there is in the conceptualisation of culture and identity (IDACHABA 2020, 46). On this question of the non-essential nature of culture and identity, Bhabha writes that, “the very idea of pure ethnically cleansed national identity can only be achieved through the death, literal and figurative, of the complex interweavings of history, and the culturally contingent borderlines of modern nationhood” (1994, 7).

Interculturality takes this discussion further by drawing a distinction between a hybrid and a mongrel. In the words of Agbakoba:

Ordinarily, a hybrid means the same as a mongrel, namely, a product, especially biologically, of the breeding or union of two different stocks. However,...a mongrel represents the product of a forcible union or fusion of two different cultures in which the element from one of the cultures is very significant and brought about at the instance of the more powerful of the two cultures as could be seen, for instance, in colonialism and imperialism... the hybrid on the other hand, is a product of a more consensual union of two different cultures in which a very significant element of such a product is from one of the cultures – a hybrid is a product of conscious, constructive efforts at a fusion of cultures. (2019, 19)

Agbakoba further buttresses his point when he concludes that, "... a colonial people could be cultural mongrels and a postcolonial people would be cultural hybrids" (2019, 20). Furthermore, hybridity could result in heterosis or heterolysis. Heterosis (hybrid vigour), refers to "the superior energy and vigorosity displayed in a hybrid relative to its parents" (AGBAKOBA 2019, 31). Simply put, heterosis suggests that the production of the hybrid between two cultures should exhibit superior positive qualities over and above the initial cultures from which the hybrid came (IDACHABA 2020, 46). In the case of Heterolysis, the hybrid is enervated or devitalised relative to its parents on account of the enormity of the total effects of negations and negative effects in the hybridisation processes and their consequences (AGBAKOBA 2019, 32). From the nature of heterolysis, the end product of the hybrid is inferior to its parents.

While it has been noted that development is the product of the hybrid between the universal and particular dimensions of development, it should be underscored that the idea of hybridity in development also carries that sense that development is always constructed, not given. This construction can only happen from the rubbles of cultural items available to us. In this world of heavy cross-cultural contact, to want to construct development solely on local cultural items is not only retrograde but parochially utopic. Thus, this construction can only be through a combination of cultural items from diverse backgrounds. This is hybridity. Societies seeking development must construct themselves based on the cultural items available to them. The hybrid outcomes of heterosis and heterolysis in the intercultural perspective to development further points to the kind of outcome such construction should have. Development as has been experienced as a result of the effects of instrumental reason and as a result of the subjective irresponsibility of the recipients of development have all been cases of heterolysis. They are cases of hybrid devitalisation. A better construction of development in reaction to this should aspire to a form of hybrid vigour (heterosis). A situation in which the outcome has to be more or less as strong as the parents even if it cannot be stronger. This is why development cannot end, rather its end is (or has to be) hybridity (hybrid vigour or heterosis).

### **Conclusion**

The arguments in the foregoing have been simple. The position of post-development is not tenable because, it does not espouse a clear position of what development is or rather, reduces development to the post-World War II

understanding of development; it is unable to account for agency in the development quest properly; and some of the efforts of African voices with regard to it are not comprehensive enough. We have argued that interculturality addresses these defects by: defining development bearing in mind its universal and particular dimensions; insisting on properly re-fixing the face of responsibility in development; and pointing to hybridity as the end of development. Following this trend of thinking in the African indigenous intercultural theory of development, the final word is that the end of development is not possible, rather the end of development is hybridity (heterosis or hybrid vigour).

### **Declarations**

The author declares no conflict of interest and no ethical issues for this research.

### **Relevant Literature**

1. AGBAKOBA, Joseph C. A. "An Examination of the Impact of the Traditional African Knowledge Systems and Culture on Contemporary Educational Achievement in Africa," [Academic Co- Operation with Africa, Eike SCHAMP and Stefan SCHMID Eds.], pp19-36, 2008. Lit Verlag: Munster. Paperback.
2. AGBAKOBA, Joseph C. A. [Development and Modernity in Africa: An Intercultural Philosophical Perspective], 2019. Rudiger Köppe Verlag: Köln. Paperback.
3. AGBAKOBA, Joseph C. A. "On the Kantian Influence in African Thought and the Notion of Trans-Colonization," [Revista do centro de pesquisas e Estudoskantianos], pp15-32, 2021. Vol 9. No 2. <https://doi.org/10.36311/2318-0501.2021.v9n2.p15>. Web.
4. ALVARES, Claude. [Science, Development and Violence: The Revolt against Modernity], 1992, Oxford University Press: Delhi. Paperback.
5. ALYSON, Sasha. "Charity versus Development: The Aid Industry's Bait-and-Switch," 2021. Available at: <https://karmacolonialism.org/charity-versus-development-the-aid-industrys-bait-and-switch/> [accessed 12 2 2022]. Web.
6. ANDREASSON, Stefan. "Thinking Beyond Development: The Future of Post-development Theory in South Africa," [Draft paper prepared for the British International Studies Association Annual Conference, University of Cambridge, 17-19 December], pp1-37, 2007. Available at: <https://www.open.ac.uk/socialsciences/bisa-africa/confpapers/AndreassonBISA2007.pdf> [assessed 13 4 2022]. Web.

7. ANDREASSON, Stefan. "Fossil-Fuelled Development and the Legacy of Post-development Theory in Twenty-First Century Africa," [Third World Quarterly], pp1-16, 2017. <https://dx.doi.org/10.1080/01436597.201.1334544>. Web.
8. BHABHA, Homi Kharshedji. [The Location of Culture], 1994. Routledge: London. Paperback.
9. BROOKS, Andrew: [The End of Development], 2017. Zed Books: London. Paperback.
10. DREYER, Jacob. "Back Down to the Countryside," [Noema Magazine], 2022. 10th May. Available at: <https://www.noemamag.com/back-down-to-the-countryside/> [accessed 12 6 2022]. Web.
11. ESCOBAR, Arturo. [Encountering development: The making and the unmaking of the Third World], 1995. Princeton University Press: Princeton, NJ. Paperback.
12. ESCOBAR, Arturo. "The Making and Unmaking of the Third World through Development," [The Post-Development Reader, M. Rahnema and V. BAWTREE Eds.], pp85-93, 1997. Zed Books: London. Paperback.
13. ENYIMBA, Maduka. "Conversational Thinking as an Alternative Theory of Development," [Arumaruka: Journal of Conversational Thinking], pp18-41, 2021. Vol. 1 No. 2. <http://dx.doi.org/10.4314/ajct.voli2.2>. Web.
14. FUKUYAMA, Francis. [Trust: The Social Virtues and the Creation of Prosperity], 2005. Force Press: New York. Paperback.
15. GARDELS, Nathan. "China's Defectors from Western Modernisation." [Noema Magazine], 2022. 20th May. Available at: <https://www.noemamag.com/chinas-defectors-from-western-modernization/> [accessed 12 6 2022]. Web.
16. HEINBERG, Richard. [The End of Growth], 2011. New Society Publisher: Canada. Paperback.

17. IDACHABA, Philip Adah. "Humanising the Igala Culture and Particularising the Humanities: Analytic Reflections on Some of the Works of Fidelis Eleojo Egbunu," [Essays in the Humanities and Arts: A Gedenkschrift in Honour of Very Rev. Fr. Dr. Fidelis Eleojo Egbunu, F. E. ENEGHO, J. I. EBEH and P. A. IDACHABA Eds.], pp 36-49, 2020. Iiwa Press Nigeria Limited: Jos. Paperback.
18. ILLICH, Ivan. "Development as Planned Poverty" [The Post-Development Reader, M. Rahnema and V. BAWTREE Eds.], pp94-102, 1997. Zed Books: London. Paperback.
19. ISA, Muhammad Kabir. "Nigerian Local Government System and Governance: Lessons, Prospects and Challenges for Post-2015 Development Goals," [Developmental Local Governance: A Critical Discourse on 'Alternative Development', E. D. SCHOBURGH, J. MARTIN and S. GATCHAIR Eds.], pp 107-126, 2016. Palgrave Macmillan: London. Paperback.
20. KIELY, Ray. "The Last Refuge of the Noble Savage? A Critical Assessment of Post-development Theory," [European Journal of Development Research], pp30-55, 1999. Vol 11. No 1. DOI: 10.1080/09578819908426726. Web.
21. LATOUCHE, Serge. [In the Wake of the Affluent Society: An Exploration of Post-development, M. O'Connor & R. Arnoux, Trans.], 1993. Zed Books: London, England. Paperback.
22. LIE, Joh H. S. "Post-Development Theory and the Discourse-Agency Conundrum," [Social Analysis], pp118-137, 2008. Vol 52 Issue 3. DOI: 10.3167/sa.2008.520306. Web.
23. MARGLIN, Stephen Apffel. "Towards the Decolonization of the Mind," [Dominating knowledge: Development, culture and resistance, F. Apffel MARGLIN & S. MARGLIN Eds.], pp. 1-28, 1990. Clarendon Press: Oxford, England. Paperback.
24. MATOLINO, Berbard. [Consensus as Democracy in Africa], 2018. African Humanities Program: Grahamstown, South Africa. Available at: <https://www.nisc.co.za/media/docs/155559642918.pdf> [accessed 10 12 2021]. Web.



25. MATTHEWS, Sally J. "Colonised Minds? Post-development Theory and Desirability of Development in Africa," [Third World Quarterly], pp2650-2663, 2017. Vol. 38, Issue 12: Special Issue: The Development Dictionary @ 25: Post-Development and its Consequences. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01436597.2017.1279540>. Web.
26. MATTHEWS, Sally J. "Post-development Theory and the Question of Alternatives: A View from Africa," [Third World Quarterly], pp373-384, 2004. Vol 25. No 2. DOI: 10.1080/0143659042000174860. Web.
27. MATTHEWS, Sally J. "Postdevelopment Theory," [Oxford Research Encyclopaedias], 2018. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1093/acrefore/9780190846626.013.39> [accessed 12 6 2022]. Web.
28. MATTHEWS, Sally J. "What, then, should we do? Insights and Experiences of Senegalese NGO," [Exploring Post-development: Theory and Practice, Problems and Perspectives, A. ZIAI Ed.], pp131-144, 2007. Routledge: London. Paperback
29. NUSTAD, Knut G. "Development as the Devil we Know?" [Exploring Post-development: Theory and Practice, Problems and Perspectives, A. ZIAI Ed.], pp35-46, 2007. Routledge: London. Paperback
30. OKEJA, Uchenna. "Evaluating Societies Morally: The Case of Development and Developing Societies," [Analyse & Kritik], pp241-263, 2017. Vol 39. No 2. <https://doi.org/10.1515/auk-2017-0015>. Web.
31. OLATUNJI, Felix O. & BATURE, Anthony I. "The Inadequacy of Post-Development Theory in the Discourse of Development and Social Order in the Global South," [Social Evolution & History], pp229-243, 2019. Vol 18. No 2. DOI:10.30884/seh/2019.02.12. Web.
32. PARFITT, Trevor. [The End of Development: Modernity, Postmodernity and Development], 2002. Pluto Books. London. Paperback.
33. RAHNEMA, Majid & BAWTREE, Victoria. Eds. [The Post-development Reader], 1997. David Philip: Cape Town, South Africa. Paperback.

34. RAHNEMA, Majid. "Global Poverty: A Pauperizing Myth," [Interculture], pp4-51, 1991. Vol xxiv. No 2. Available at: <https://idl-bnc-idrc.dspacedirect.org/handle/10625/10354> [accessed 12 6 2022]. Web.
35. RAJAN, Balachandra. "Excess of India," [Modern Philology], pp490-500, 1998. Vol 95. No 4. DOI: <https://www.jstor.org/stable/438907>. Web.
36. SACHS, Wolfgang. Ed. [The Development Dictionary: A Guide to Knowledge as Power], 1992. Zed Books: London, England. Paperback.
37. SCHOBURGH, Eris D. "Post-development Theory and the Local Developmental State," [*Developmental Local Governance: A Critical Discourse on 'Alternative Development'*, E. D. SCHOBURGH, J. MARTIN and S. GATCHAIR Eds.], pp 12-23, 2016. Palgrave Macmillan: London. Paperback.
38. SHORROCKS, Anthony, DAVIES, James & LLUBERAS, Rodrigo. [Global Wealth Report 2020], 2020. Credit Suisse Research Institute: Switzerland. Available at: <https://www.credit-suisse.com/media/assets/corporate/docs/about-us/research/publications/global-wealth-report-2020-en.pdf> [accessed 12 6 2022]. Web.
39. SHRESTHA, Nanda. "Becoming a Development Category," [Power of Development, J. CRUSH Ed.], pp266-277, 1995. Routledge: London. Paperback.
40. SWEET, William. Ed. [What Is Intercultural Philosophy?], 2014. Council Research in Values and Philosophy: Washington, DC. Available at: <http://www.crvp.org/publications/Series-I/I-44.pdf> [accessed 12 6 2022]. Web.
41. WORLD BANK GROUP. [The Changing Wealth of Nations 2021: Managing Assets for the Future], 2021. International Bank for Reconstruction and Development/World Bank: Washington. Available at: <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/36400> [accessed 12 6 2022]. Web.