

BOOK REVIEW

Sanya Osha. *Dani Nabudere's Afrikology: A Quest for African Holism*. Dakar: CODESRIA, 2018. vii + 148 pp. Acknowledgments. Bibliography. Index. \$30.00. Paper. ISBN: 978-2-86978-753-7.

Afrikology, contemporarily known as Afrocentricity, is a philosophical term which centralizes the historicity of Africa and Africanity at the core of continental and diasporan Africans' cultural consciousness. Within *Dani Nabudere's Afrikology: A Quest for African Holism*, the philosophy of Afrikology is a sociocultural/political concept that aspires to provide historical relevancy and contemporary significance by way of reinvention via the re-education of the said Black/African mind trans-continently. Sanya Osha presents a complex analysis that examines Dani Wadada Nabudere's theoretical intersectionality between Afrikology and Eurocentrism—their epistemological singularities and duplicities, which, he argues, create a schism within the Black mind known as “double-consciousness.”

The book consists of seven chapters, in which Osha diligently interlaces scholarly references with oppositional scholarship. “Chapter 1: A World War in Africa” commences with selected history of European colonialism in sub-Saharan Africa, starting with the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). Osha contextualizes the Berlin Conference of 1884–85, which spawned the geopolitical divisions of continental Africa, internal governmental mismanagement, and ethnic political unrest. However, Osha's scholarship primarily concentrates on Dani Nabudere and his transformation from a Ugandan politician into an enigmatic revolutionary theoretician of African-centered consciousness, coined as Afrikology.

In “Chapter 2: The Concept of Afrikology” and “Chapter 3: Further Explorations in Afrikology,” Osha surveys Nabudere's scholarly reinvention of himself as he studied multidisciplinary and transdisciplinary methodologies toward solving the psychological trauma of Black/African people internationally. As Dani Nabudere formulates his philosophy of Afrikology, it is here where he appraises Western and Eastern epistemologies. Nabudere's sole objective is to bypass treating Black/African traumatic experiences with laissez-faire philosophical rhetoric and instead to identify the root causes. Osha extends his analysis of Nabudere's thinking as being influenced by

Senegalese historian and Afro-anthropologist Cheikh Anta Diop and ascribing to the history of the ancient Nile Valley civilizations of Kemet (Egypt) and Kush (Ethiopia). While deconstructing the differences between Eurocentric and Afrocentric philosophies, Nabudere expresses a somewhat acrimonious perspective by concluding that ancient Greece should not be considered the apex of civilization for the rest of the world.


In “Chapter 4: The Universe and Philosophy Before Socrates,” Osha further examines Dani Nabudere’s study of protohistory and comparative cultural aesthetics to aid in proving the theory that Africa is the said “Cradle of Civilization.” Nabudere used accepted paleoanthropology, geomancy, iconography, cosmology, ethnology, and religious/spiritual systems to argue for the omnipresence of African culture prior to the advent of Greek civilization and mythology. Osha does not, however, entirely discredit ancient Greece for its contributions to civilization. The author demonstrates Nabudere’s gallant efforts in his comparative historical studies to offer credence to Afrikology as a self-sustaining philosophy supported by anthropological evidence.

In “Chapter 5: Classical Afrocentricity,” Osha contextualizes African history as an antidote to Eurocentric thought, which debunks the idea of Africa’s absence of intrinsic cultural value prior to colonialism. The author compares Cheikh Anta Diop’s scholarship in *Precolonial Black Africa* (Lawrence Hill Books, 1987) with Nabudere’s philosophy of Afrikology to qualify the African antiquity of the Maghreb, the Levant, and Sub-Saharan African civilization(s) as the historical “subject” rather than the proverbial “object.” In other words, African civilization(s) are subjectively identified as the historical *professor*, rather than the *pupil*. Without reservation, Osha condemns the unqualifiable Eurocentric assessments of African history that often present linear perspectives which covertly conceal Africa’s cultural gifts to humanity.

Finally, in “Chapter 6: Deep Afrocentricity” and “Chapter 7: Before Afrocentricity,” Osha references Dr. Molefi Kete Asante to establish the philosophy of Afrikology or Afrocentricity as not conceptually anti-Eurocentric. Osha rationalizes that Afrikology acts as a dynamic paradigm shift which grants continental and diasporic Blacks/Africans the ability to unapologetically comprehend life via their own ancestral lens, devoid of external cultural influences. The author argues that Africanized philosophical consciousness should not be simply limited to the academic world. Conversely, it ought to proactively serve as an ethnic justification for the psychology of the contemporary Black/African mind.

Dani Nabudere’s Afrikology: A Quest for African Holism is an anthropological and empirical survey of African antiquity intended to advance research on African civilizations. The scholarship of this book affords more than merely intellectual self-absorption of repetitive Afrocentric and Eurocentric historicity; it is a concise read which assists in dispelling the myths and inaccuracies regarding African antiquity. Sanya Osha skillfully integrates scholarly references and oppositional scholarship, which challenges readers and encourages greater research by modern historians and generally inquiring minds.

Although the book is arguably circuitous in presentation, scholars of higher learning should find *Dani Nabudere's Afrikology: A Quest for African Holism* to be a useful resource for research purposes as well as for personal edification.

U. Chinedu Amaefula 

The African American Research Library and Cultural Center
Fort Lauderdale, Florida

doi:10.1017/asr.2020.114

chinedu.amaefula@gmail.com

For additional reading on this subject, the ASR recommends:

Miller, Paul T. 1997. "Black Studies, White Studies, and Afrocentrism." *Issue: A Journal of Opinion* 25 (1): 43–44. doi:10.1017/S1548450500005308.

Mittelman, James H. 2014. "A Better Intellectual Community Is Possible: Dialogues with Ali A. Mazrui." *African Studies Review* 57 (1): 153–70. doi:10.1017/asr.2014.11.