

Editorial: *Ex Africa*

South America is now the only continent without an English-speaking journal of philosophy. Africa has just ceased to be the only continent without a journal of philosophy at all. *Second Order: an African Journal of Philosophy* was born in January 1972. It is published bi-annually, in January and July, by the University of Ife Press, and edited by Professor J. O. Sodipo, Head of the Department of Religious Studies and Philosophy in the University.

The title suggests, and the inside front cover confirms, that the initiators of the journal belong to the Anglo-Saxon tradition of philosophy. It does not suggest, though the cover goes on to announce, that 'they see it as their job to construe their subject rather widely: to regard interdisciplinary boundaries as made for man, not man for them, and to watch out for growing points in their subject as it applies itself to new problems'.

Many of the contributors are Anglo-Saxon by birth as well as by philosophical tradition. Others are Africans who have added an Anglo-Saxon philosophical training to a first-hand knowledge of the native traditions of their own regions of Africa. All are fruitfully concerned with the cross-cultural comparisons in which the journal has found a distinctive theme that is nevertheless central enough to disarm any suspicion of parochialism. The first issue amounts to a balanced and varied symposium on rationality, witchcraft, understanding a primitive society—a cluster of themes which, for all its prominence in current philosophical discussion in Britain and America, has a timely topicality in an African context.

Bryan Wilson's collection of papers on *Rationality* is reviewed in the first issue, and *Criticism and the Growth of Knowledge*, edited by Imre Lakatos and Alan Musgrave, is reviewed in the second issue. These reviews, and the articles on kindred topics that accompany them, will foster the incipient recognition among philosophers that debates about cultural relativism and conceptual relativism differ more in choice of idiom and example than in substantive philosophical content from the controversies between Kuhn and Popper and their critics and supporters.

Professor Dorothy Emmet will soon be revisiting Africa to advise on the establishment of a Department of Philosophy at the University of Ibadan in Nigeria. Her article on 'Haunted Universes' in the third issue of *Second Order* shows her own recognition that here is a theme that unites philosophy of science, philosophy of religion and the standing problems of epistemology and metaphysics. She will be able to advise her friends in Ibadan that Pliny's proverbial aside now applies to a new sphere, and that out of Africa we may expect to see not only something new but something of value to the progress of philosophy.