

WIJSBEGEERTE *Philosophie* Φιλοσοφία 哲学 *Filosofia* Fil

African Centre for Epistemology and Philosophy of Science
(**ACEPS**)

University of Johannesburg
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<https://zoom.us/j/95988953869>

Philosophy through Indigenous Knowledge Speaker Series

Lecture 1: 'Ethnophilosophy as Decolonization'

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Abstract

In this paper, I challenge the deeply held view in African philosophy that ethnophilosophy is a form of degenerate philosophy. I do so in two steps. First, I argue that the ethnophilosophical problems raised by the self-styled 'professional philosophers' in African philosophy rest on a profound mistake: the characterization of ethnophilosophy they attack does not exist in the great works of Tempels, Mbiti, Senghor, and Kagame. Second, I argue that ethnophilosophy properly understood is a specific instance of epistemological decolonization, which among other things, invites us to question those very assumptions about the nature of philosophy and rational belief from which the ethnophilosophical problems seem to greatly arise. I develop this second argument by drawing on a framework of decolonization that stems from the works of Anibal Quijano (2000, 2007), Ramón Grosfoguel (2007, 2013), Walter D. Mignolo (2002, 2007, 2009, 2011), and Veli Mitova (2020, 2023).

Paul Irikefe is a President and Andrew W. Mellon Foundation Postdoctoral Fellow at the University of California, Irvine. He is also a Research Associate in the Faculty of the Humanities, University of Johannesburg, South Africa. He works mainly in African philosophy, metaphilosophy, and epistemology.

At UC Irvine, he equally works on a campus-wide initiative led by Duncan Pritchard to embed intellectual virtues in the university curriculum at UC Irvine and beyond. He is presently working on a book manuscript on the epistemology of philosophy. Paul Irikefe defended his PhD this year at Cardiff University with Avner Baz (Tufts University) as his external examiner and Jonathan Webber (Cardiff University) as his internal examiner. He was supervised by Alessandra Tanesini (Cardiff University), Liz Irvine (Cardiff University) and Mona Simeon (University of Glasgow).

