

## ECTOGENESIS and The Challenges of AFRICAN MOTHERHOOD in Contemporary Society

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### Abstract

The study revolves around the complexities of barrenness and its pressing challenges in contemporary African society, with reports of 15–45% prevalence in various regions of sub-Saharan Africa<sup>1</sup>, which adversely impact the lives of infertile couples, particularly women, who often bear societal blame for the issue. The paper explores ectogenesis as a potential response, for it holds the promise to provide an alternative path to parenthood for those facing fertility challenges in Africa, where having children is central to the fulfilment of the idea of marriage. Through meticulous scrutiny this paper, draws on the works of prominent African and Western feminists, with a view to revealing the practical utility of ectogenesis in addressing the plight of barren women in Africa. The findings emphasise the practical utility of ectogenesis, transcending theoretical limitations, and that the technology's potential to alleviate the social stigma of childlessness is a viable solution within the African societal framework. Moreso, Afro-Feminist evaluations may not entirely validate the discourse on ectogenesis, given the deeply rooted connections to the ontology of motherhood and the mother-foetus

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<sup>1</sup>. Legese Nanati, Tura AberaKenay, RobaKedirTeji, DemekeHenok, “The prevalence of infertility and factors associated with infertility in Ethiopia: Analysis of Ethiopian Demographic and Health Survey (EDHS)”. PLoS One, (2023), 2.

relationship, as they advocate for a nuanced approach, recognising the medical and fertility promises offered by ectogenesis and suggesting that awareness campaigns and the reevaluation of certain traditional beliefs could facilitate its acceptance. The study recommends the incorporation of moral normative theories to encourage the patronage and utilisation of ectogenesis within the African context, presenting it as a solution to the challenges faced by African women in the realm of barrenness and motherhood.

**Keywords:** Ectogenesis, Motherhood, African Motherhood, and Technological Advancements

## **Introduction**

Over the past century, the idea of an artificial womb has been extensively explored in the fields of science and literature. Scholars and ethicists have also written about this subject; their works in scholarly journals and popular media have examined the morality of growing embryos and fetuses outside of female bodies<sup>2</sup>. The paper "Ectogenesis and the Challenges of African Motherhood in Contemporary Society" explores the fascinating idea of ectogenesis and how it might be applied to alleviate the various problems that African mothers in modern society confront. The artificial gestation of embryos outside of the human body, or ectogenesis, offers a cutting-edge method of birthing that upends conventional ideas about pregnancy and motherhood<sup>3</sup>. This study explores how ectogenesis might lessen social pressure and change perceptions of infertility while critically analysing the practical applications of the procedure within the African cultural environment. This essay seeks to illuminate the intricate relationships between technology, culture, and gender in the discussion of reproductive rights

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<sup>2</sup> Stefano, L., Mills, C., Watkins, A., and Wilkinson, D., (2020). Ectogestation ethics: The implications of artificially extending gestation for viability, newborn resuscitation and abortion. Available at: <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC7216952/> Accessed on 15/04/2024.

<sup>3</sup> Udag, G.E., The Mind-body Problem in African Culture. In A. Uduigwomen (Ed). From Footmarks to Landmarks in African Philosophy, Lagos: Obaroh&Ogbinaka Publishers. (2009), 97.

and maternal health in Africa by looking at the viewpoints of both African and Western feminists. This study aims to offer important insights into how ectogenesis could provide a special solution to the problems faced by African mothers, ultimately contributing to the advancement of maternal and child health in the region, through a thorough analysis of the body of existing literature and empirical evidence.

### **Ectogenesis: Meaning and Nature**

Ectogenesis, which is defined as the gestation of a foetus outside the human body, is one of the groundbreaking innovations that have challenged traditional notions of human reproduction in recent years. Ectogenesis challenges traditional conceptions of reproduction by imagining the gestation of a human foetus outside the mother's body. It presents a paradigm shift in reproductive technology and addresses the complexities within African maternal health systems and socio-cultural frameworks. As a result, ectogenesis emerges as a promising solution to the multifaceted challenges faced by African motherhood. African motherhood, characterised by a rich tapestry of cultural practices, beliefs, and socio-economic dynamics, encounters challenges intersecting with maternal health, social stigma, and access to quality healthcare services. High maternal mortality rates persist in many African countries, exacerbated by inadequate healthcare infrastructure, limited access to prenatal care, and cultural barriers inhibiting women's autonomy in reproductive decision-making<sup>4</sup>. By tackling significant obstacles to maternal health and well-being, ectogenesis has the potential to significantly improve African motherhood. Ectogenesis provides a route to safer and more egalitarian reproductive experiences for African women by removing the physiological hazards connected with pregnancy. Not only does it lessen difficulties for new mothers, but it also gives women more options in making reproductive decisions and helps

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<sup>4</sup>. Oyèwálé, R., ÀgbéyèwòÒròlífèÀtiùgbéyàwóNínúÀsàyàniwéltànÀròsoFágúnwà. In O. Adébòwàlé, D. Adéléké, & A. Adéjùmò (eds), ÒtunÌmòNínùitànÀròsoD.O. Fágúnwà, Mankato: The Capstone Publications. (2016), 253.

them make educated decisions about their bodies and futures<sup>5</sup>.

In addition, the discovery of ectogenesis, a groundbreaking scientific discovery, reveals a complicated web of feminist viewpoints and ontological conundrums, reverberating across the world of discussions<sup>6</sup>. Divergent perspectives are sparked by this technological frontier: African feminists manage its consequences within the framework of their own social environment, while Western feminists embrace it as a liberating force<sup>7</sup>. Ectogenesis is frequently defended in Western discourse as a way to empower women and free them from the financial, social, and physical hazards associated with traditional reproduction<sup>8</sup>. The idea is based on the conviction that gender differences in reproductive burden may be eliminated by technology. But a unique story arises within the African feminist paradigm. African feminists see ectogenesis as a tool created expressly to make motherhood possible for individuals who lack the innate ability, not as a general emancipation<sup>9</sup>. The necessity of a comprehensive investigation of ectogenesis that takes into account the intersections of gender, culture, and technology progress is highlighted by these opposing viewpoints. An in-depth comprehension of these feminist dynamics is essential for promoting intelligent discussion and forming morally sound and culturally aware behaviours, especially as Africa struggles with the consequences of ectogenesis's integration into its reproductive structure. Furthermore, in African countries, ectogenesis has the power to subvert traditional conceptions of motherhood and prevalent social conventions. Women's duties within the family are frequently determined by traditional beliefs, which also influence how society views childbirth, fertility, and reproductive health<sup>10</sup>.

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<sup>5</sup>. MacKay, K., The 'tyranny of reproduction': Could ectogenesis further women's liberation? *Bioethics*. (2020). May;34(4):346-353. doi: 10.1111/bioe.12706. Epub 2020 Jan 13. PMID: 31943247; PMCID: PMC7217043.

<sup>6</sup>. Hendricks, J. S., "Of Woman Born? Technology, Relationship, and the Right to a Human Mother. College of Law Faculty Scholarship.[http://trace.tennessee.edu/utk\\_lawpubl/45](http://trace.tennessee.edu/utk_lawpubl/45) (2011), 11.

<sup>7</sup>. Ibid.

<sup>8</sup>. Ibid.

<sup>9</sup>. Ibid.

<sup>10</sup>. Ibid.

These conventions are upended by the discovery of ectogenesis, which causes critical analysis of how science, culture, and ethics connect with African reproductive rights. In the African environment, ethical considerations and societal repercussions must be taken into account as the debate over ectogenesis develops. To maintain ethical integrity and a balanced distribution of the advantages of ectogenesis, it is important to carefully navigate issues of autonomy, agency, and cultural sensitivity. Ectogenesis raises worries about the monetization of reproduction and the possible erosion of cultural values, even as it promises safer pregnancies and healthier results<sup>11</sup>. The complex web of traditional beliefs, societal expectations, and cultural values all play a significant role in the complexity of motherhood in Africa. Based on this, investigating ectogenesis as a potential remedy for problems associated with African motherhood represents a turning point at the nexus of science, culture, and reproductive rights. Maternal health in Africa may be transformed by embracing innovations with cultural sensitivity and ethical integrity<sup>12</sup> bringing in a new age of empowered motherhood and fair access to reproductive healthcare services. To reap the benefits of ectogenesis while preserving the rights, autonomy, and dignity of African women, stakeholders must have meaningful conversations and work together.

### **A Review of Infertility stigma and its societal impact in traditional Africa Society**

According to Chimbatata and Malimba, having children is the primary way that a couple in African culture truly fulfils the idea of marriage. There have been reports of 15–45% prevalence in various regions of sub-Saharan Africa concerning barrenness<sup>13</sup>. The lives of infertile couples,

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<sup>11</sup>. Wilkinson, S., & Williams, N., Should uterus transplants be publicly funded? *Journal of Medical Ethics*, (2016). 42, 559–565.

<sup>12</sup>. Walana, W., Ekuban, S. & Acquah, K. Preference of Birth Delivery Modes among Women Attending Antenatal and Postnatal Clinics in the Tamale Metropolis of Ghana. *Journal of Pregnancy and Child Health*. (2017).4 (297), 8.

<sup>13</sup>. Chimbatata, N. and Malimba, C. (2016) Infertility in Sub-Saharan Africa: A Woman's Issue for How Long? A Qualitative Review of Literature. *Open Journal of Social Sciences*, 4, 96-102. doi: 10.4236/jss.2016.48012.

especially women, are significantly negatively impacted by society since they are held responsible for issue<sup>14</sup>.

Motherhood is one of the most deeply rooted cultural values in African nations, especially among the Yoruba people. It is seen as a sacred life event that represents a woman's intrinsic value and rank. These communities place a high value on the distinction made between delivery and motherhood, which highlights the ongoing duty of a woman to nurture and care for her child after giving birth. According to Olaiya, this cultural viewpoint highlights the significance of the mother-foetus bond and how it continues to have an impact until the mother's death<sup>15</sup>. The sacredness of the maternal journey is further enhanced by customs like the symbolic act of tapping the pregnant tummy, which emphasises the spiritual bond between the mother and the unborn child<sup>16</sup>. Looking at motherhood in Africa from this cultural perspective reveals the deep relationship between spiritual beliefs, societal expectations, and the long-lasting value that these cultures place on the role of the mother. The aforementioned cultural viewpoint provides a fundamental framework for comprehending the effects of technological progress, namely ectogenesis, on the profoundly ingrained customs surrounding African motherhood. According to Jegede and Fayemiwo, touching the pregnant belly is a symbolic act that conveys the tactile significance of the bond between the mother and the unborn child. Together with representing a spiritual bond, this rite denotes the community's acceptance of the impending duty of raising and providing for the kid<sup>17</sup>. The biological act of giving birth is not the only way that motherhood is elevated to a highly

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<sup>14</sup>. Legese, N., Tura, A.K., Roba, K.T.i, Demeke, H., (2023). "The prevalence of infertility and factors associated with infertility in Ethiopia: Analysis of Ethiopian Demographic and Health Survey (EDHS)". PLoS One, (2023), 2.

<sup>15</sup>. Olaiya, T. (2017). Childbirth, Childbearing and Child Education. In T. Falola & A. Akinyemi (Eds). Culture and Customs of the Yoruba, pp. 145-159. Houston: Pan African Press

<sup>16</sup>. Jegede and Fayemiwo (2010). Cultural and Ethical challenges of Assisted Reproductive Technologies in the management of Infertility among the Yoruba of Southwestern Nigeria. African Journal of Reproductive Health, 14 (2): 114- 121

<sup>17</sup>. Jegede and Fayemiwo (2010). Cultural and Ethical challenges of Assisted Reproductive Technologies in the management of Infertility among the Yoruba of Southwestern Nigeria. African Journal of Reproductive Health, 14 (2): 114- 121

esteemed status within the Yoruba cultural framework. It includes all aspects of raising a kid, from the earliest phases of pregnancy to caring for the child after birth. These cultural rituals are intricately entwined with the Yoruba conception of motherhood, which reflects the interdependence of spiritual beliefs, societal expectations, and the long-lasting significance of the maternal role. Understanding these cultural underpinnings is crucial for negotiating the complications that emerge at the nexus of tradition and innovation, especially when considering the possible effects of contemporary technology, such as ectogenesis, on conventional conceptions of motherhood. The Yoruba rich cultural fabric enfold a complicated system of customs and beliefs around pregnancy that mould the spiritual bond between the expecting woman and her foetus. Pregnancy-related sun avoidance is one such tradition, which reflects the deep belief that the pregnant mother and her unborn child have a divine connection<sup>18</sup>. This cultural precaution represents more than just a medical worry; it represents the awareness of a spiritual vulnerability during this sensitive time, when the Yoruba think that sunlight might potentially threaten the unborn child from bad spirits. Moreover, the Yoruba community views the mother's womb as the "source" of a child and accords it great value<sup>19</sup>.

This view goes beyond the physical aspect of childbirth to the exploration of the spiritual plane, acknowledging the mother's womb as the creator of the child. Any curse or incantation on the child is closely connected to this maternal source, and the womb becomes a hallowed place. The physical, spiritual, and community aspects of pregnancy are intertwined in Yoruba society, which emphasises the holistic nature of pregnancy and its cultural beliefs and traditions. The expectant mother is no longer just an individual; she becomes a conduit by which the community actively participates in preserving the health of the unborn. It is critical to comprehend these cultural distinctions as we consider how scientific developments like ectogenesis might potentially undermine

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<sup>18</sup>. Ezeama, M. & Ezeamah, I. Attitude and Socio-Cultural Practice during Pregnancy among Women in Akinyele LGA of Oyo State Nigeria. *Journal of Researches in Nursing and Midwifery*, (2014).3: 14–20.

<sup>19</sup>. Washington, 2014: 68.

and transform Yoruba traditional ideas about the holy journey of pregnancy.

Another challenge to ectogenesis could be the acceptance of reproductive technology. African communities have been profoundly impacted by the globalisation of medical technology, particularly in the area of reproductive health. Global medical breakthroughs have had a substantial impact on the adoption and integration of assisted reproductive technology (ART) within various communities<sup>20</sup>. Technologies for assisted birth, such as gamete intra-fallopian transfer (GIFT) and in vitro fertilisation (IVF), have progressively gained popularity as treatments for infertility and reproductive problems<sup>21</sup>. With ectogenesis on the horizon, the progressive use of these reproductive techniques has paved the way for increasingly inventive and progressive technologies. The idea of a human foetus growing outside of its mother's body, or ectogenesis, is a new development in assisted reproduction<sup>22</sup>.

It is critical to acknowledge the transformational potential of these technologies as Africa works to integrate them into its cultural and socioeconomic fabric and to change the way that choices about reproduction and maternal health are made. This transition from conventional methods of reproduction to modern technologies represents a paradigm shift in medicine as well as a larger shift in society. To ensure that the advantages of these technologies are in congruence with the many values and beliefs that exist throughout the continent, addressing the issue surrounding ectogenesis in Africa requires a thorough grasp of the cultural quirks and ethical issues.

### **The Relevance of Ectogenesis among African Feminists**

The discovery of ectogenesis, a significant scientific and technical advance, has drawn attention to feminist viewpoints and ethical

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<sup>20</sup>. Jegede and Fayemiwo (2010). Cultural and Ethical challenges of Assisted Reproductive Technologies in the management of Infertility among the Yoruba of Southwestern Nigeria. *African Journal of Reproductive Health*, 14 (2): 114- 121.

<sup>21</sup>. Walana, W., Ekuban, S. & Acquah, K. (2017). Preference of Birth Delivery Modes among Women Attending Antenatal and Postnatal Clinics in the Tamale Metropolis of Ghana. *Journal of Pregnancy and Child Health*. 4 (297): 2 – 7.

<sup>22</sup>. Ibid

conundrums pertaining to the mother-foetus bond in the African context<sup>23</sup>. The upcoming advent of ectogenesis raises important issues about the cultural and socioeconomic characteristics behind the varied conceptions of motherhood held by African people on a continent where cultural values transcend material ties<sup>24</sup>. Culture has a big impact on behaviour, and the variety of African civilizations' cultures, along with imported technical innovations, make things more complicated<sup>25</sup>. This study evaluates how ectogenesis may affect attitudes about this important part of life and revisits feminist conundrums coming from the African conception of delivery<sup>26</sup>.

Though futuristic, Haldane's plan addressed existing discussions about eugenics and contraception, taking into account worries about genetic load avoidance and population control. With advancements supporting foetal life in artificial placentas, the idea of developing an organism outside the body has gained increased attention<sup>27</sup>. Ectogenesis has great potential, but it is also the subject of ethical, moral, and scientific disputes that balance usefulness and possible improvement against rejection due to moral objections. Western feminists are in favour of ectogenesis utility because it frees women from the dangers of conventional reproduction. On the other hand, proponents of Judeo-Christian and Arabo-Islamic revelations frequently denounce ectogenesis, highlighting the holiness of human birth and the entitlement to a human mother. This study examines feminist theories of ectogenesis with an emphasis on radical and liberal ideas in Western discourse. It explores moral and ethical issues, attempting to determine how this technological development fits within the African context of motherhood

<sup>23</sup>. Udag, G.E (2009). "The Mind-body Problem in African Culture." In A. Uduigwomen (Ed). *From Footmarks to Landmarks in African Philosophy*, Lagos: Obaroh&Ogbinaka Publishers.

<sup>24</sup>. Makinde, T. (2004). Motherhood as a Source of Empowerment of Women in Yoruba Culture. *Nordic Journal of African Studies*. 13 (2): 164–174.

<sup>25</sup>. Akpan, N. E. (2016). "Men without women: An analysis of the 2015 general elections in Nigeria." Retrieved from

<sup>26</sup>. Gelfand, S. (2006). Ectogenesis and the Ethics of Care. In S. Gelfand & J.R. Shook (Eds.). *Ectogenesis: Artificial Womb Technology and the Future of Human Reproduction*, pp. 89-107. New York: Rodopi

<sup>27</sup>. Chiavelli, 2018: 6.

and the ontological foundations of the mother-fetus bond. African communities must adopt cutting-edge innovations like ectogenesis if they are to go forward in the age of globalisation and technological integration<sup>28</sup>.

### **Yoruba tradition: a setback to ectogenesis**

Maternity has great cultural significance in Yoruba tradition, as it is ingrained in customs, beliefs, and group activities. By removing gestation from the female body, ectogenesis has the potential to upend conventional reproductive techniques, which may be seen as a challenge to these firmly rooted societal norms.

Yoruba culture places a strong emphasis on fertility and childbirth as essential components of womanhood, with childbirth rituals and ceremonies serving as a vital means of confirming women's standing in the community<sup>29</sup>. Because ectogenesis provides an alternate method of gestation, it may weaken the social and symbolic significance that Yoruba society attaches to natural childbirth, which could cause traditionalists to object and become uneasy.

Furthermore, lineage and kinship links serve as the cornerstone of social cohesiveness in Yoruba culture, which strongly emphasises familial and ancestral bonds<sup>30</sup>. Ectogenesis may cast doubt on the conventional understanding of lineage and inheritance by severing the reproductive process from familial and ancestral contexts. This raises questions regarding the continuity and preservation of cultural identity among Yoruba communities.

A multimodal strategy that respects and acknowledges the cultural intricacies at play while also fostering discussion and education about the possible advantages of reproductive technologies is needed to address the obstacle that Yoruba tradition poses to ectogenesis.

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<sup>28</sup>. Stutz, F.P., Barney, W. *The World Economy: Resources, Location, Trade and Development*. New Jersey: Pearson education Inc. (2007), 9.

<sup>29</sup>. Ogunleye, O. (2019). Pregnancy, birth and newborn care practices among the Yoruba insouth west Nigeria: A historical perspective. *BMC Pregnancy and Childbirth*, 19(1), 455.

<sup>30</sup>. Abimbola, W. (1975). *Yoruba Culture: A Philosophical Account*. Ibadan University Press.

Engaging the community and implementing educational programmes to help Yoruba communities accept and understand ectogenesis is one concrete way to address the issue. Such programmes can help dispel myths and allay worries around the technique by supplying knowledge about the scientific concepts behind ectogenesis and its potential to ameliorate reproductive issues<sup>31</sup>.

Furthermore, it is imperative that the development and application of ectogenesis technologies take cultural sensitivity and diversity into account. Ectogenesis can be incorporated into Yoruba society in a way that respects cultural values and customs by working together with local community leaders, religious leaders, and traditional healers<sup>32</sup>.

In addition, fostering research and development initiatives aimed at modifying ectogenesis technology to conform to customs and cultural preferences can aid in bridging the gap between innovation and tradition. Developers can produce solutions that align with the values and beliefs of Yoruba communities by integrating components of Yoruba cultural symbolism and rituals into the design and execution of ectogenesis technologies<sup>33</sup>.

Born of scientific endeavour, this revolutionary technology has the potential to completely change the landscape of parenthood and reproductive health. The advantages of ectogenesis go beyond the norm. This benefit is emphasised by Gelfand, who notes that ectogenesis can protect the growing foetus from a variety of hazards found in the outside world, such as possible risks resulting from careless mother behaviour. In the African<sup>34</sup> setting, where mother and infant health are major social issues, this element is especially important. In addition to its immediate benefits, ectogenesis encourages a critical discussion on the nexus of

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<sup>31</sup>. Mkandawire-Valhmu, L., & Stevens, P. E. (2010). *Learning from African women: Integrating indigenous knowledge into global development*. Routledge.

<sup>32</sup>. Mkandawire-Valhmu, L., & Stevens, P. E. (2010). *Learning from African women: Integrating indigenous knowledge into global development*. Routledge.

<sup>33</sup>. Ogunleye, O. (2019). Pregnancy, birth and newborn care practices among the Yoruba insouth west Nigeria: A historical perspective.BMC Pregnancy and Childbirth, 19(1), 455.

<sup>34</sup>. Gelfand, S. (2006).Ectogenesis and the Ethics of Care.In S. Gelfand& J.R. Shook (Eds.). *Ectogenesis: Artificial Womb Technology and the Future of Human Reproduction*, pp. 89-107. New York: Rodopi

science, culture, and ethics and calls for a fair assessment of the potential benefits it may have for advancing maternal and reproductive healthcare in Africa.

Despite the significant advantages that ectogenesis may have in redefining motherhood, it is imperative to address the technological obstacles that come with this scientific advance. Hendricks highlights the problems associated with developmental and life-support hurdles, highlighting the limitations of artificially executing biological activities that are vital for the growing fetus<sup>35</sup>. These problems, which are common in neonatal critical care, include making sure that systems for waste evacuation, nutrition intake, and oxygen absorption are in place.

In the African context, where the adoption of ectogenesis is slowly gaining ground, it is crucial to recognise the technology's potential to assist women who face inherent biological limitations.

Dasaolu brings attention to cases of Mullerian agenesis among African women, emphasising the absence of a womb and the hope that ectogenesis offers for those who can ovulate but lack the natural capacity for gestation<sup>36</sup>. This acknowledgment aligns with the understanding that ectogenesis can be a viable solution, particularly for African women who aspire to experience motherhood but encounter biological constraints. It is critical to address these technological issues as the conversation around ectogenesis develops. For technology improvements to really integrate into the intricate web of African communities, a delicate balance must be struck between the obstacles and the promises. Only then can technical advancements be in line with cultural sensitivities and the particular struggles encountered by women in the region.

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<sup>35</sup>. Hendricks, J. S. (2011). Of Woman Born? Technology, Relationship, and the Right to a Human Mother. College of Law Faculty Scholarship. [http://trace.tennessee.edu/utk\\_lawpubl/45](http://trace.tennessee.edu/utk_lawpubl/45) Last Accessed 12 October 2021

<sup>36</sup>. Dasaolu, B.O., "OrisanlaMade me Thus": Arguing for Homosexuality using the Yoruba Thought System as Paradigm. *LASU Journal of Philosophy* 1(2): (2018), 135-155.

## Techniques for Critical and Comparative Analysis of Feminist Views on Ectogenesis in the West and Africa

The process of ectogenesis, in which embryos develop outside of the human body, has significant ramifications for motherhood, especially in African contexts where traditional norms and scientific progress coexist. By comparing and contrasting viewpoints from Africa and the West, critical analysis techniques bring forth the various feminist perspectives on ectogenesis and clarify the intricacies surrounding this phenomenon.

**Intersectional Analysis:** Taking into account how racial, social class, and colonial history influence reproductive experiences, African feminists may examine ectogenesis via an intersectional lens<sup>37</sup>. This viewpoint questions ideas of the universal woman and emphasises the significance of resolving disparities in access to reproductive technologies.

Western feminists, on the other hand, can emphasise ectogenesis's ability to free people from conventional reproductive responsibilities while focusing on autonomy and body rights<sup>38</sup>. But criticisms of the commercialization of reproduction and the maintenance of current power structures could also surface<sup>39</sup>.

**Cultural Context:** In the context of traditional practices and communal parenting, African feminists may challenge the suitability of ectogenesis in light of cultural values including kinship networks and collective caregiving<sup>40</sup>. Talks can focus on how specific groups - rural or economically disadvantaged women in particular are marginalised and how community ties could be eroded. Conversely, ectogenesis may be hailed by Western feminists as a way to free women from patriarchal

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<sup>37</sup>. Crenshaw, K. (1989). Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex: A Black Feminist Critique of Antidiscrimination Doctrine, Feminist Theory, and Antiracist Politics. University of Chicago Legal Forum, 139-167.

<sup>38</sup>. Firestone, S. (1970). The Dialectic of Sex: The Case for Feminist Revolution. Bantam Books.

<sup>39</sup>. Haraway, D. (1991). Simians, Cyborgs, and Women: The Reinvention of Nature. Routledge.

<sup>40</sup>. Momsen, J. H. (1999). Gender and Development: Routledge Perspectives on Development. Routledge.

systems and redistribute caregiving duties<sup>41</sup>. But as long as access to reproductive technologies is still unevenly distributed, worries about the strengthening of individualism and the widening of class gaps may surface<sup>42</sup>.

**Reproductive Justice Framework:** According to Ross<sup>43</sup>, African feminists may support a framework for reproductive justice that takes into account a wider range of social, economic, and environmental issues that have an impact on reproductive decisions. This viewpoint places a strong emphasis on the need to eliminate structural inequities and provide marginalised populations the agency to make decisions for their families and bodies.

Similar reproductive justice frameworks may be adopted by feminists in the West, although disagreements may emerge over how important it is to prioritise individual rights over the welfare of the group as a whole<sup>44</sup>. The conflict between social duty and reproductive autonomy may be the main topic of discussion, especially in light of the limited resources and conflicting demands.

**Decolonial Views:** Examining ectogenesis from a decolonial perspective allows African feminists to question its roots in Western science as well as its consequences for native knowledge systems<sup>45</sup>. This viewpoint opposes Eurocentric ideas of development and progress and promotes locally grounded alternative forms of technical innovation and knowledge production.

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<sup>41</sup>. Bordo, S. (1993). *Unbearable Weight: Feminism, Western Culture, and the Body*. University of California Press.

<sup>42</sup>. Raymond, J. G. (1980). *A Passion for Friends: Toward a Philosophy of Female Friendship*. Beacon Press.

<sup>43</sup>. Ross, L. (2006). *Reproductive Justice: An Introduction*. University of California Press.

<sup>44</sup>. Roberts, D. (2017). *Killing the Black Body: Race, Reproduction, and the Meaning of Liberty*. Vintage.

<sup>45</sup>. Mohanty, C. T. (1988). Under Western Eyes: Feminist Scholarship and Colonial Discourses. *Feminist Review*, 30(1), 61-88.

## Conclusion

Ectogenesis is at the intersection of technological innovation and tradition, it poses both opportunities and challenges for African motherhood. Africans must have a thorough discussion about the advantages and challenges of technology without compromising traditional values if they are to profit from what it has to offer women and families<sup>46</sup>. By doing this, African countries might pave the way for a time when technical advancements will be used to enrich rather than to ignore the richness of cultural traditions around motherhood. Ectogenesis connects customs and the possibility of a recreated mother experience in Africa, signaling progress in this delicate balance. It is clear from thorough critical analysis and comparative study that cultural, historical, and ideological elements have a significant impact on feminist viewpoints on ectogenesis<sup>47</sup>. There are areas of overlap and room for unity even though African and Western feminists may have different goals and methods. We may strive towards a more inclusive and equitable future for parenting and reproductive technologies in both African and Western contexts by having thoughtful conversations that put various women's experiences front and centre<sup>48</sup>.

Ectogenesis, then, not only questions established theories but also provides an opportunity for feminists in various cultural contexts to work together more effectively and understand each other better.

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<sup>46</sup>. Mkandawire-Valhmu, L., & Stevens, P. E. (2010). *Learning from African women: Integrating indigenous knowledge into global development*. Routledge.

<sup>47</sup>. Crenshaw, K. (1989). *Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex: A Black Feminist Critique of Antidiscrimination Doctrine, Feminist Theory, and Antiracist Politics*. University of Chicago Legal Forum, 139-167.

<sup>48</sup>. Ibid,45

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