



# **Edward Wilmot Blyden and the Racial Nationalist Imagination (Rochester Studies in African History and the Diasp)**

*Teshale Tibebu*

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## **Edward Wilmot Blyden and the Racial Nationalist Imagination (Rochester Studies in African History and the Diasp)** Teshale Tibebu

Edward Wilmot Blyden and the Racial Nationalist Imagination is a critical study of one of the most prolific and knowledgeable black-world intellectuals of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Focusing on his writings, it shows the contradictions, ambiguities, complexities, and paradoxes in Blyden's powerful black racial nationalism. Blyden was a modernist who called upon African Americans to "uplift" Africa; yet he was a defender of Africa's culture and customs. He was the most sophisticated critic of Eurocentrism; yet he was an avid Anglophile. He was a Protestant who admired Islam's "civilizing" role in Africa. Blyden was the first black intellectual to advocate for the symbiosis of Africa's "triple heritage": indigenous, Islamic, and Western. His voluminous writings laid the groundwork for some of the most important ideas of African and black diasporic thinkers of the twentieth century, including Frantz Fanon, Amílcar Cabral, Cheikh Anta Diop, Leopold Sedar Senghor, Aimé Césaire, and Walter Rodney. Though Blyden is often overlooked in the history of modern black thought, in this book, Teshale Tibebu brings him out of oblivion and engages the reader in an extended, systematic evaluation of his written works. Teshale Tibebu is professor of history at Temple University. He is the author of *The Making of Modern Ethiopia, 1896-1974*, *Hegel and Anti-Semitism*, and *Hegel and the Third World: The Making of Eurocentrism in World History*.

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