

**FILOSOFIA THEORETICA:
JOURNAL OF AFRICAN PHILOSOPHY,
CULTURE AND RELIGION**

Published by
Congress on African Philosophy and Religion (CAPAR)

Department of Philosophy, University of Calabar



ISSN: 2276-8386

Editorial Board

Dr. Jonathan Okeke Chimakonam	Editor-in- chief
Kanu, Ikechukwu Anthony (OSA)	Managing Editor
Professor Chris Ijiomah	Assoc. editor I
Dr. Leo Ochulor	Assoc. editor II
Sunny Nzie Agu	Secretary
Dr. Mulumba Obiajulu	Member
Dr. Oduora Asuo	Member
Aniyom Grace	Computer/graphics

Editorial Consultants

Professor Godfrey Ozumba	University of Calabar
Professor Andrew Uduigwomen	University of Calabar
Professor Udobata Onunwa	University of Birmingham UK
Professor Edward Nelson	Princeton University USA
Professor Innocent Asouzu	University of Calabar
Professor Udo Etuk	University of Uyo
Professor Emmanuel Ezedinachi	University of Calabar
Professor Stephen Egariévwe	Alabama A&M University USA
Professor Dorothy Olu-Jacob	University of Calabar
Assoc. Prof. Kyrian Ojong	University of Calabar
Assoc. Prof. Uduma O Uduma	Ebonyi State University
Dr. Asira E Asira	University of Calabar

NOTE TO CONTRIBUTORS:

GENERAL INFORMATION: *Filosofia Theoretica: African Journal of Philosophy, Culture and Religion* is purely dedicated to the publication of original academic papers in African Philosophy, History, Culture, Religion and other areas of African studies. These results are presented as fresh theories, hypotheses, and

analyses of new ideas or discoveries in all the areas mentioned above. Extensions of existing theories and review of books of this nature are also covered within the standard range of this journal. The journal has a vision to put Africa and African intellectuals on the global map. However, this does not imply that non-Africans cannot publish on it.

SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS: All manuscripts must be original (hence, not under consideration anywhere) and submitted to the editor in MS word format via e-mail: filosofiatheoretica@gmail.com. The entire work can range from two to fifty double-spaced pages with a concise title, abstract, and a standard scholarly citation: do not place page numbers or paper title (on each page) on the manuscript; articles (or parts of articles) in languages other than English will be considered, however they must also be presented in English, and all submissions must list the author's current affiliation and contact points (location, e-mail address, etc.). In regards to style (APA, MLA, Chicago, etc.), use what is standard in your area of study. Camera ready manuscripts will receive first preference in the publishing cycle. All manuscripts are peer-reviewed and those approved by the editorial published free of any charges as quality and originality are the ONLY conditions for publication in this journal.

The aim of founding FILOSOFIA THEORETICA is to make it a world class academic journal with a global brand that would thrive on standard, quality and originality. It is published twice a year with maximum of ten (10) articles including book review on each volume.

Generally, Editors should be able to reach a decision including recommending corrections if any or acceptance of any paper within two months of receipt which is communicated to the author subsequently. Authors are therefore advised to avoid needless correspondences. Also, Editors are not committed to the views

expressed in articles. Contributors may receive one copy of the journal free of charge but additional copies may be obtained at the normal price. Copyright to articles published in the journal shall remain vested with the journal. All correspondences including subscription and sponsorship to the Editor via: filosofiatheoretica@gmail.com, visit www.africanphilcongress.com the former site which hosted the journal i.e. www.platojournal.com has been disabled.

THE ‘NEW’ FILOSOFIA THEORETICA: AFRICAN JOURNAL OF PHILOSOPHY, CULTURE AND RELIGION

Formerly published under the title *Filosofia Theoretica: African Journal of Invention and Ideas*, by the Graduate Research Unit (GRU), Department of Philosophy, University of Calabar, Nigeria and edited by Prof. G.O. Ozumba, has now been adopted by Congress on African Philosophy and Religion (CAPAR) and edited by Dr. Jonathan Okeke Chimakonam. The website has also moved from www.platojournal.com to www.africanphilcongress.com the former site which hosted the journal has been disabled.

Principal Contacts

Editor-in- chief

C/O Dr. Jonathan O. Chimakonam
Department of Philosophy
University of Calabar,
PMB 1115, Cross River State
Nigeria
Telephone: +234-7035254923
admincap@gmail.com Or

Managing Editor

C/O Rev. Fr. Kanu Ikechukwu Anthony (OSA)
Augustinian Institute

Makurdi
P.O.BOX, 584
Benue State
Nigeria
Telephone: +234-8036345466
Ikeemario@yahoo.com

CONTENTS

Editorial	385 - 389
The Quest for the Nature of Being in African Philosophy <i>Kanu, Ikechukwu Anthony (OSA)</i>	391 - 407
Quantification in African Logic <i>Jonathan M. O. Chimakonam Ph.D</i>	409 - 422
The Principle of “Refl-Action” as the Basis for a Culture of Philosophy in Africa <i>Joseph N. Agbo</i>	423 - 460
A Critique of Sartre’s Notion of Being and Nothingness from the Perspective of Ibuanyidanda Philosophy <i>Ogbonnaya, Lucky Uchenna</i>	461 - 482
The Thematic Contradiction in Thomas Aquinas’ Conception of the State: An African (Nigerian) Perspective <i>Olúkáyòdé R. Adésuyì</i>	483 - 516
Metaphysics of Kola Nut: Toward Authentic African Igbo Communion; A Challenge to Christianity <i>Obiajulu Mulumba Ibeabuchi</i>	517 - 531
The Dimensions of African Cosmology <i>Kanu, Ikechukwu Anthony (OSA)</i>	533 - 555
Afrizealotism as a Theory in African Philosophy <i>Innocent Chukwudolue Egwutuorah</i>	557 - 569
Book Review	571 – 579

Editorial

In this volume the reader shall be treated to a collection of original papers in different aspects of African thought. Some of these papers are voluminous thus offering detail exegeses. Some others however are rather brief but dense confirming the Igbo-African saying “*enenja nwite, ogbonyuọ oku*” meaning “the neglected small pot that fumed and quenched the big fire beneath it”. In keeping once again with our tradition and reputation as a journal that makes the most original presentations in African studies, we bring to the reader in this issue a cache of scintillating papers.

From the University of Nigeria Nsukka, Kanu critically chronicles the theories of being in African philosophy. In this concise but rich work, the author leads the reader into the worldview metaphysics which account for the various conceptions starting from Tempels Placid’s concept of being as force, Alexis Kagame’s concept of being as Ntu, Iroegbu’s understanding of being as belongingness, the perspectives of Okere, Abanuka and Njoku who view being as Chi and Edeh’s analysis of being as ife-dị. Although, this work did not exhaust the list but the dexterity with which the author treated his concerns are insightful. This is a resource the student, researcher and first time reader of African philosophy would find properly educating.

Chimakonam in the University of Calabar takes his theory of African logic to Quantificational level. ‘*Ana etu mmadu ori ji, owere obi na apị mbazu*’, ‘one who is being accused of stealing yam from someone’s farm goes on sharpening a spear in his heart’. The controversies generated from his conference papers where he has developed elementary systems of African logic have not did down, this author here presents a quantificational theory of African logic. Fit with signs, symbols and rules, Chimakonam develops African predicate logic first and second order. He presents the syntax and the semantic components pointing out the places of

contexts and other metalogical properties. Apostles of African ingenuity and thought freedom would find this paper very interesting.

Joseph Agbo from Ebonyi State University theorizes on a way to get African philosophy from this era of commentary to an era of creativity. The author argues that the concern of philosophy in Africa in the past three or four decades has centered on the philosophy of culture, but that the greatest challenge facing contemporary philosophy in Africa is for Philosophers and other scholars to develop a culture - “culture of philosophy”. This imperious need for a culture of philosophy he states would be brought about by the principles of “refl-action” – thinking-to-act! The development of this theory of “refl-action” becomes the focus of this scintillating paper. Students and African philosophers generally will find this work a useful intellectual resource.

From Essien Ukpabio Presbyterian Theological College, Ogbonnaya sets out to juxtapose Sartre’s ontology with Asouzu’s ontology. The work holds that any bifurcative and polarizing concept of being is problematic. In critically examining Sartre’s idea of being the author discovers that it is bifurcating and polarizing in nature. The result of his study is that Asouzu’s ontology as based on the concept of *Ibuanyidanda*, undergirded by the principle that “anything that exists serves as missing link of reality” is antithetical to Sartre’s. Asouzu’s ontology he explains posits mutual complementary relationship among all fragments of realities rather than segmentation. This position of Asouzu accentuates the African metaphysical stance above that of the West represented by Sartre. This deeply analytic paper is an important piece in African ontology.

From Obafemi Awolowo University Ile-Ife, Adesuyi presents the African (Nigerian) perspective to the Thematic contradiction in Thomas Aquinas’ conception of the State. The author examines Thomas Aquinas’ conception of the state and its implication(s) in the post-colonial Africa, and Nigeria as the reference point. He

critically looks into the various conceptions of state of some of Aquinas' predecessors, to serve as background to Aquinas' political theory. From there he argues that Aquinas' theory is self-defeating, given what obtains in the Nigerian religious groups. He also shows that the themes in Aquinas' conception of the state are contradictory, factually not acceptable and logically absurd given the situation of the Nigerian religious entities. Certainly, this is an insightful piece.

If you are allergic to radical thoughts or paradigm shift then you need not read this paper. Obiajulu writing from Nnamdi Azikiwe University Awka advocates the indigenization, Africanization, Nigerianization and even Igbonization of Christianity while retaining its essence. One point of his argument is the replacement of wafer bread and medicated wine with Oji Igbo (Igbo Kola nut) and Nkwu enu (Palm wine) as sacramentals of body and blood of Christ. His argument is that it is consecration that transforms them into body and blood of Christ. And as such, African substitutes to wafer bread and medicated wine are necessary and would suffice. The philosophical merit of this work is astonishing and its readership is imperative to all well-meaning African philosophers. For its radical insight, we award it the best paper of this issue.

Writing from the University of Nigeria Nsukka, Kanu again dwells on the subject of African cosmology. The focus of this paper is to review the dimensions and conceptions of African cosmology single out the places of the divinities. The author argues for the equivalence of the different conceptions from Ijiomah to Ekwealor and to Onunwa despite the geometrical difference. The places of the divinities in African cosmology are well laid out in this work with examples from some cultural worldviews. This insightful paper clears the air as per the non-uniform conceptions offered by African theorists. A must read for those interested in deeper knowledge about Africa.

From Imo State University Owerri comes Egwutuorah's presentation of the theory of Afrizealotism in African Philosophy. The author states that Afrizealotism addresses the issue of returning to authentic African life characterized by black dignity, black nobility, black power and black consciousness. He also says that it awakens the African from his slumber and makes effort to liberate Africa from the shackles of imperialism, colonialism and neo-colonialism. Hence, the Salvation of Africa must come from Africans through the Spirit of Afrizealotism. In this aggressive master piece, Egwutuorah makes a cultural campaign in African Philosophy. He seems to argue that the philosophy that Africa needs is the philosophy developed from native African thought system. Those who can't take their hands off anything original need to read this.

In concluding this issue, Bissong treats the scholars to a review of Asouzu's recent work *Ibuanyindanda (Complementary Reflection) and some Basic Philosophical Problems in Africa Today*. An exhaustive and terrific presentation, it can almost be said to be a concise photocopy of the book. It gives the first time reader of Asouzu a clear perception of what the philosophy of Ibuanyidanda is. The reviewer says that Asouzu attempts to highlight in his usual eclectic style, the impact of *ihe mkpuchi anya* and our ambivalent laden experience of reality on our consciousness. He believes these constraining mechanisms or phenomena impact on the way we judge, act, will and philosophize. He seeks through his Ibuanyidanda philosophy to neutralize the effect of these constraining mechanisms on our consciousness; so that at every instance we may be able to grasp the *Ibuanyidandaness* of every reality. This book is both original and innovation. Innovational, in the sense that it seeks to advance the frontiers of the theory. According to the reviewer, "Asouzu in this beautifully written book has laid bare the foundation of the problems in Africa and the world at large – the problems that have kept philosophy in a tortuous movement over eons of years".

According to an African proverb ukwa rue oge ya odaa which means “the bread fruit falls when it is ripen”. The time is ripe for the present generation of Africa’s intellectuals to chart a new course for African philosophy, history, culture and religion. In our characteristic manner, we applaud all the scholars who use our journal’s platform to lend their voices to the future of Africa. They are the champions of our time and the makers of the new Africa. Through the creativity in their pens, they seek to inaugurate a better and progressive Africa. *Hakuna Matata!*

Editor -in- Chief

THE QUEST FOR THE NATURE OF BEING IN AFRICAN PHILOSOPHY

Kanu, Ikechukwu Anthony (OSA)

Department of Philosophy

University of Nigeria, Nsukka

ikee_mario@yahoo.com

1. Introduction

The fundamental question within the parameters of enquiry in metaphysics has been on the nature of being (Kanu, 2012a). It is one that has remained evergreen right from the Pre-Socratic period to the Contemporary Era (Andre, 2005). This enquiry was set in an articulated motion by Parmenides when he argued that whatever is, is being. He further said that being is one, eternal and unchanging, meaning that whatever changes is not being (Omogbe, 2002). This notwithstanding, Heraclitus of Ephesus was chiefly famous in antiquity for his doctrine that everything is in a state of flux, as such, being is characterised by flux (Betrand, 1975). Plato, while disagreeing with Heraclitus on his doctrine of flux, agrees with Parmenides that reality is eternal and unchanging, however differs from Parmenides in arguing that being is multiple rather than one; and these are the forms in the Platonic World of Forms. Aristotle who defines Metaphysics as the study of 'being qua being' identifies being with the divine or deity, it is therefore not surprising that in Aristotle, Metaphysics at some point becomes theological (Kanu, 2013).

The emergence of the Medieval Epoch did not alter the centrepiece (Izu, 2009) of metaphysical enquiry. St Thomas Aquinas followed Aristotle and in his own articulation identifies being with God, an argument which Duns Scotus rejects and proposes that creatures are beings in the real sense of the word and not in an analogical sense as Aquinas had taught. During the Modern Period, the problem of being did not feature prominently as philosophers were

more concerned with the problem of substance. The problem however emerged in Hegel, Jean-Paul Sartre and Gabriel Marcel, in whom being became a mystery (Omoregbe, 2002).

These notwithstanding, in recent times, African thinkers have tried to redefine being, moving away from the elusive and unsubstantive concepts employed by their Western counterparts. In this process, they have employed categories common to the experience of the African. This piece would be concerned with an analysis of the various African perspectives of the nature of being, ranging from Placid Tempel's concept of being as force, Alexis Kagame's concept of being as Ntu, Iroegbu's understanding of being as belongingness, the perspectives of Okere, Abanuka and Njoku of being as Chi and Edeh's analysis of being as ife-di.

2. Being as Force in Placid Tempels

In his work, *La Philosophie Bantou* Published in 1945, Placid Tempels set out to help European missionaries understand the thought pattern or worldview of the Bantu people. This he thought, according to Imbo (1998), would make the work of evangelization easier for the European missionaries, and also help them to avoid misunderstanding the people and their culture. In the process of his research, Tempels arrives at a fundamental and underlining factor in Bantu philosophy, which he calls force. While for the Westerner it could be considered as an attribute of being, for Tempels, it is identical with being in Bantu ontology. Tempels (1945) writes:

I believe that we should most faithfully render the Bantu thought in European language by saying that the Bantu speak, act, live as if, for them, beings were forces. Force is not for them an adventitious, accidental reality. Force is even more than a necessary attribute of being; force is the nature of being, force is being, being is force. (p. 431).

Having described being as force, Tempels goes ahead to differentiate the degree of force in the hierarchy of being.

i. God

- ii. Spirits of ancestors
- iii. Human Beings
- iv. Animals
- v. Plants
- vi. Inanimate Objects

Thus from the above hierarchy, God has a greater force, followed by the Spirit of the Ancestors, then human beings. However, the created universe of the Bantu people is centred on the human force, for everything in the universe is understood only in relation to man. From this perspective, we gather that in Bantu ontology, as in other African worldviews, the cosmos is anthropocentric.

3. Being as *Ntu* in Alexis Kagame

Alexis Kagame, in his work *Philosophie Bantou-Rwandaise de L'Etre*, shows that he was one among the African philosophers who tried to develop further Tempels' philosophy of force. He worked among the people of Rwanda who were called Kinyarwanda and tried to develop their thought through a linguistic ethno-philosophy. According to Njoku (2010), he discovered that *Ntu* is the category of being or the generic meaning of something. This he classified into four: *Umuntu* (human beings); *Ikintu* (non-human beings); *Ahantu* (place and time); *Ukuntu* (Aristotelian category of quantity). *Ntu* is the unifying notion among all these, even though God does not belong to it. There is an interaction between all these: *Umuntu* being a being with intelligence has the consciousness that allows it to use other objects that do not have the same capacity. Thus, *Ikuntu* is at the disposal of *Umuntu* for self-actualization. The absence of a place for God in Kagame's project of being reveals the limitation of the philosophy.

4. Being as Belongingness in Iroegbu Iroegbu

Pantaleon Iroegbu, a Nigerian Philosopher, avers that *to be is to belong*, thus for him, borrowing from Igbo ontology, *Being is Belongingness*.

Igbo Ontology as the Provenance of Being Qua Belongingness

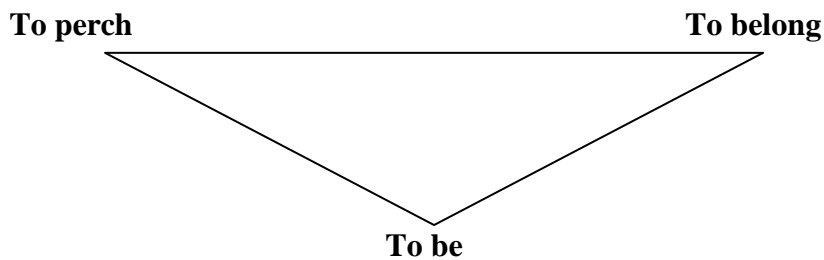
Iroegbu (1995) believes that the Igbo world into which a child is born crying *abatala m ya* (I have come into it) is made up of seven characteristics: common origin, common world-view, common language, shared culture, shared race, colour and habits, common historical experience and a common destiny (Iroegbu, 1995). Without any choice of its own, with neither interrogations nor dialogue, the child is made to be an Igbo in its prolixity. Even as the baby sleeps in its cradle, it already has its being, performance and *akaraka* (destiny) partly enshrined and construed in the Igbo world (Iroegbu, 1995). The communal individuality of the Igbo is expressed in proverbs such as, *Ngwere ghara ukwu osisi, aka akpara ya* (If a lizard stays off from the tree, it would stray into danger). This expresses the indisputable and inevitable presence of, not just the family, but the community to which the individual belongs (Iroegbu, 1995). The Igbo's believe in the Akan saying that "when a man descends from heaven, he descends into a community". The community rejoices and welcomes his arrival, finds out whose reincarnation he is, gives the person a name and interprets that arrival within the circumstance of the birth. As the child grows, he becomes aware of his dependence on his kin group and community. He also realizes the necessity of making his own contribution to the group (Uchendu, 1965).

The Ontology of Belongingness

Iroegbu (1995) defines belongingness as 'the synthesis of the reality and experience of belongingness' (p. 374). In this case, the recipient-subject of belonging is involved: something belongs and it belongs to something. Belongingness is a special noun from the verb 'to belong'. It means to be part of, Daisein-with or to be a

member of a group. For instance, ‘I belong to Arondizuogu community’, this gives me rights and privileges that others who do not belong to this community do not have. There is also a possessive nuance of the verb ‘to belong’ (Iroegbu, 2004, p. 7). I can say that the soap belongs to me. In the first nuance, to belong creates a situation of participation and in the second, it creates a situation of possession. There is an ontological nuance of belongingness, which specifies that a thing is because it belongs. *To be is to belong and to belong is to be* (Andre, 2005).

According to Iroegbu (1995), the Igbo principle of *Egbe bere Ugo bere* (let the kite perch, let the eagle perch) re-enacts the contents and significance of belongingness as the essence and hermeneutic core of reality. He believes that what a being is, is its activity of perching (belonging). To perch is to be. To be is to perch. To be is to belong and to belong is to be. Iroegbu expressed this in a diagram expressing the relationship between perching, belonging and being (Iroegbu, 1995). And this diagram reveals that when one perches, one belongs and when one belongs one becomes.



When *Egbe* perches and *Ugo* perches, they come face to face with each other. They are with each other. They are present to each other. They relate to each other deeply and directly as well as have relationships with other inhabitants of *Uwa* (world). To relate is to share something: to give and take. They have common projects, needs and desires. Together they struggle to overcome their difficulties and share their joy (Iroegbu, 1995).

Obviously, the idea of ‘To be is to belong and to belong is to be’ may sound tautological, but it is the definitional circle involved in any description of being as being. This circle will however be clarified as the four Iroegbuian analytic connotations of belongingness is explored.

Be-(I)-on (Be on)

In this case, ‘to belong’ involves ‘being on’ in the *Uwa* (*Uwa* is the world in English, but in Igbo it takes up a meaningful depth. It is the entirety of existence, from God the highest being to inanimate beings of our cosmos) from which all concrete realities derive their being. To be on in this sense is to escape the contrary of being off. For either one is on or he is off. To be off is to cease to exist and to be on is to be (Iroegbu, 1994).

Be- (l)-on-going

Having been given existence in the *Uwa*, this aspect of belongingness speaks of the being now going on in its *Uwa* and *Uwaness* (Iroegbu, 1995). In this case, Iroegbu suggests that *Uwa* is the underlying principle in Igbo Metaphysics. This particularly speaks of the process of being, for to remain in being is to proceed in being and not out of being. In this process of being, he makes a difficult synthesis of change and permanence. As the being goes on in being, it maintains its identity even though something in it changes. In ancient philosophy, change and permanence was a bone of contention between Heraclitus and Parmenides, but in Igbo Metaphysics it is no problem at all. For *uwa na-eme ntughari* (the world changes), even though, in the midst of the change *Uwa bu otu* (the world does not change).

Be-long

To be-long means to abide, to stay or live long (Iroegbu, 1995). In this case, it means that belongingness lives long. As such, the subject of *Uwa* lives long. This brings in the issue of space and

time, for belongingness is expressed in space and time. Be-long extends into eternity in Igbo ontology; it goes beyond the present dimension of the *Uwa* to the *Uwa* of the ancestors, such that to be and not to be-long is not to be at all (Iroegbu, 1995). While *on-going* belongingness may be open-ended, *being-long* belongingness stretches into everlastingness. As such, in Iroegbu, one becomes through being-on so as to be-going, in other to be-long.

Be-longing

This speaks of being and longing to be. It stresses the longing for life and being. It is founded on the awareness that nothing is higher a value than life. Expressions in Igbo bring this home: *nduka* (life is greater); *Ndubuisi* (life is the principal thing). To long for life is to want to be, not in the abstract *Uwa* but in the concreteness of what *Uwa* offers (Kanu, 2012b).

The Dimensions of Being qua Belongingness

From the Iroegbuian concept of belongingness as ‘the synthesis of the reality and experience of belongingness’, it is obvious that the idea of belongingness touches on every aspect of reality. It extends to the political, economic, social and ethical dimensions of being.

The political implications of belongingness

The political implication of belongingness is that each citizen be given a sense of belongingness in the political arena, and democracy has no other purpose than the realisation of belongingness for all (Iroegbu, 2000). The neglect of this dimensional implication of belongingness is at the base of most ethnic and political violence in Africa. Belongingness helps a government to discover the circumstances that can link human beings who inhabit a country, igniting and increasing in the led a feeling of personal security and group preservation (Iroegbu, 1995). Belongingness proposes a system of government which will concede coexistence to all linguistic groups, on the basis of

equality, within a framework of political and constitutional warrantees. Such a system of government would protect individual freedom under the rule of law and thus preserve and sustain linguistic groups. Once there is a failure in political belongingness, then loyalty to the tribe would replace loyalty to the nation (Azikiwe, 1978). The level to which each member of the political society belongs determines the future of a successful politics.

The economic implications of belongingness

The 21st century is characterized by the creation and expansion of economic opportunities. Virtually, every activity is geared towards economic interest. When people meet, it is for economic reasons. Friends are made based on economic interests. The yearning for a global village was born out of economic needs (Andre, 2005). But as long as people are robbed of their economic belongingness, situations of conflict would always arise. The Niger Delta crisis is born out of the feeling by a few that they have been robbed of their economic belongingness. A situation where few have and many do not have, in relation to resources that is meant for all, is against the principle of economic belongingness. Every people who desire a glorious future must employ the ideology of belongingness while taking decisions that border on economic interests.

The social implications of belongingness

The society is the perching ground for belongingness, and the sense of belongingness it is able to offer its members is very significant. When people who are members of a society do not feel the sense of belongingness, it affects their contribution towards the development of the society. The social dimension of belongingness would call for the Jettisoning of all forms of prejudice, be they racial, national, tribal, societal, political, ethical, etc. To postpone the breaking down of all forms of barriers of tribal prejudice, be they inter-tribal or intra-tribal is to postpone the social unity and advancement of a society (Ikenna, 1978). The social significance

of belongingness is solidarity, which would create a society where everyone would relate and contribute to the well-being of the other.

The ethical implications of belongingness

When people do not have the feeling of belongingness, lots of anomalies abound, such as suicide, abortion, armed robbery, etc. When people feel that they are part of a system, they would carry out their duties responsibly. For instance, situations of suicide arise most of the time when the sense of belonging is lost, mutual trust betrayed, kinship bond broken. When a person undergoes this experience, he sees nothing to live for and as such no desire to go on living (Bernard, 2005). At a time when we are fast losing much of our values of comradeship, the ethical consequences of belongingness needs to be emphasized.

The idea of being as belongingness in Iroegbu can be criticized variously: First is that the idea of belongingness speaks of the characteristic of being and not of being itself. A thing has to be before it belongs. Moreover, the idea of being as belongingness is central to human beings. In Iroegbu and whenever he applies it to other things it is always in relation to human beings, but being goes beyond human beings and involves inanimate things. Notwithstanding these criticisms, the Iroegbuian redefinition of being is a huge contribution to the development of African metaphysics. And in this definition, he makes a difficult synthesis of ontology and ethics. It is a concept that cuts across all aspects of human endeavour, be it politics, social, economic, ethical, etc., it demands an inextricable reciprocity with the act of acting, relating and communing. It is an idea that is substantive, egalitarian, communalistic, and transcendental and yet concrete. It also identifies with the categories of the African people. At a time when individuality, among others, is eating deep into Africa and her values, the philosophy of belongingness is in tandem with the call for an African cultural renaissance.

5. Being as *Chi* in Okere, Abanuka and Njoku

Okere (1983), Abanuka (2003) and Njoku (2010), have proposed *chi* as an alternative concept for being. The idea of *chi* has created more problems than it set out to address. Njoku's argument is that *chi* is preferable because everything in Igbo, whether animate or inanimate has a *chi*. Njoku forgets here that what we are looking for in Igbo metaphysics is not a name for a thing that is contained in everything in the Igbo world. *Chi* would better serve as an underlying principle in Igbo metaphysics than as a name for being in Igbo. The idea of *chi* takes us back to the arguments of the Ionian Philosophers who speak of water and air and fire as the underlying principle in every reality. There isn't enough ground to conclude from here that reality is water or air or fire. It is difficult to conclude that because a thing, say 'A', possesses another thing inside of itself, say 'B', that 'B' is now 'A'. For instance, as human beings possess blood in their veins, it is not a sufficient reason to conclude that because every human being has blood therefore every human being can be called blood. *Chi* cannot stand as a concept for being. That 'all things possess *Chi*' does not easily translate into 'all things can be called *chi*'.

6. Being as *Ife* in Emmanuel Edeh's Philosophy

Emmanuel Edeh, was one of the earliest Nigerian thinkers from the Igbo speaking area who tried to articulate Igbo metaphysics, in which he tried to define being, using Igbo categories. Edeh posits a notion of being that is derived from a dual *loci*: from the Igbo language and the Igbo concept of the human person. Edeh says that it is born from the fact that human beings are the principal focus of the Igbo physical world, basically comprising the human and non-human. This is expressed in Igbo names and proverbs: *madu-ka* (Human beings are the greatest) *madu-bisi* (Human life is the first). From the foregoing, one becomes aware of *what is* through an awareness of the human person as a visible concrete instance of

what exists. But this would not be the area of concern in this piece. The researcher is primarily concerned with Edeh's derivation of being from the Igbo language.

From Igbo language

Edeh's presentation of being in Igbo metaphysics reveals a deep search by a pioneer African thinker of an African concept that would equal the concept of being employed by his Western contemporaries. And since the Igbo language has no exact equivalence of being in English as he argues "The Igbo language has no word that exactly translates the English word" (Edeh 1985, p.93), he draws out two hypothesis that approximates this notion: the *onye* and *ife* hypothesis.

The 'onye' hypothesis

He employs the concept of *onye* in Igbo language to test-denote the concept of being. But he discovers that *onye* hypothesis is basically applicable to human beings only. What then becomes of non-human existence that cannot be described as *onye*? According to Edeh (1985), the concept of *onye* has three applications:

1. ***Onye as a pronominal clause:*** as a pronominal clause it means 'who', as in "Jonathan who is the president of Nigeria" (Jonathan *Onye bu onye* isi-ala Nigeria).
2. ***Onye as an interrogative adjective:*** as an interrogative adjective, *Onye* is used to introduce interrogative statements. '*Onye?*' For instance, if someone knocks at your door, you can ask, *onye?* That is 'who?' Then the person responds, *obu Kanu* (It is Kanu). One can also speak of '*onye ma echi?*' (who knows tomorrow?)
3. ***Onye as a noun:*** 'In this category, its nearest but not exact English equivalent is person' (Edeh 1985, p.94). *Onye* in this sense refers to all living entities, both human and superhuman. However, each time it is employed, it is always preceded by an adjective or another noun. For example, *onye okike*

(creator), *onye uko* (Intermediary), *onye nzuzu* (fool), *onye mmuta* (scholar).

Although most of his informants prefer the use of *onye* to speak of being in Igbo language, especially since it conveys the idea of human beings and designates spiritual beings, Edeh (1985) realizes that it cannot be employed to adequately designate the Igbo notion of being. This is based on the principal defect that *onye* cannot include inanimate objects, vegetation or nonhuman animate entities. Things like stone, wood, house, book, pen, etc., cannot be referred to as *onye*. If for instance a piece of stone falls on my roof or a vulture lands on my roof, I cannot use *onye* to make enquiries. The limitedness of the *onye* hypothesis makes Edeh to seek an alternative concept for the designation of being in Igbo ontology.

From 'onye' to 'ife' hypothesis

Having understood the limitations of *onye*, Edeh (1985) in his indefatigable spirit moves on to make further investigations on a more appropriate concept for being. In his investigation, he arrives at *ife*. According to Edeh, “the Igbo word *ife* primarily means thing, anything material or immaterial. It is used to refer to a happening, an event, an occurrence. *Ife* can also be affixed to any adjective to mean specific things” (Edeh 1985, p.95). For instance, *ife obuna* (anything), *ife ebube* (thing of wonder), *ife ojoo* (bad thing), *ife oma* (good thing). After a wide and profound investigation, he realizes that there is no word in Igbo language outside *ife* that approximates the Igbo concept of being.

And thus, he subscribes to the *ife* hypothesis for the following metaphysical reasons: the Igbo notion of being embraces all categories of being. The *onye* hypothesis on the one hand, already fails in covering all dimensions of being since it only concerns human and spiritual beings, leaving out inanimate, vegetative and non-human animate beings. *Ife* on the other hand, although it primarily refers to inanimate things, by expansion can include

human and suprahuman beings (Kanu, 2012c). For instance, Edeh (1985) says that if an elder asks the question: *kedu ife kelu madu?* (what thing created human beings), any person conversant with the language knows that *ife* in this context refers to *Chineke*, the Igbo name for the highest of the suprasensible being, the unmade maker of all things.

From 'ife' to 'ife-di'

Having arrived at the *ife* hypothesis, Edeh (1985) realised that *ife* as a concept does not bring out all that being means. In his word: However, we must note that *ife* does not bring out completely all that being means. *Ife* does not emphasize the important aspect of being, namely, the fact of existence. *Ife* standing on its own can be used to refer to both existent and non-existent entities. Hence we have to search for a way of using *ife* to highlight the fact of existence and exclude the possibility of nonexistence. (Edeh 1985, p.96)

To find a solution to this problem, Edeh (1985) combines *ife* and *idi* to get *ife-idi*. *Idi* is the Igbo verb *to be*. It can be used as an adjective and can also be suffixed to anything to show that it exists. For example, *okwute di* (the stone that exists), *Nkita di* (the dog that exists), *Kanu di* (Kanu who exists). He does not end here, but goes further to bring out the categories of *ife-di* that corresponds to different kinds of being.

1. The suprasensory category: in the suprasensory category are beings like *Chineke* and *Ndi mmuo* (spirits).
2. The human category: the human category is subdivided into *Ndi di ndu* (the living) and *Ndi nwuru* (the dead).
3. The thing category: the thing category is divided into three major groupings: *anu* (which means animals), *ife nkiti* (this covers all inanimate entities), and *ogu* (beings that have no existence of their own).

Edeh's work titled *Towards an Igbo Metaphysics* is a courageous and purposeful attempt of not only to articulate the Igbo people's

theory of being, but also to name and defend it as a veritable metaphysics. The work as a pioneer thought, provides a good starting point for further reflections on African metaphysics in general and Igbo metaphysics in particular.

7. Evaluation and Conclusion

Great efforts have been made to understand the African concept of being, and this piece is an attempt to assemble some of these perspectives. Temples attempt is a pioneer effort that requires great credit. However, his idea of force speaks more of the underlining principle of being and not of being itself. This is a confusion that would run through the ideas of being as expressed in the views of subsequent African philosophers. A more advanced effort we see in Kagame's Ntu, however, there is a vacuum, in the sense that Ntu encompasses all that exist except for God; a wonderful analysis of being, but incomplete in its extension capacity.

These notwithstanding, over the years, many African thinkers have made attempts to criticize Edeh's work on metaphysics and his concept of being in particular. Critics like Pantaleon Iroegbu argue that the designation of Edeh's philosophical reflection as Igbo Metaphysics is wrong, that it should rather be called Edeh's Metaphysics. He sees Edeh as a man who was not courageous enough to own his metaphysics, as such, feels more comfortable designating it to a people. Contrary to this opinion, the researcher sees Edeh's step as a courageous one, because it is easier to own a thing to oneself than to attribute it to a whole people. As an individual it is easier to sort out oneself than to achieve that as a group. The reverse is the case here: Edeh is more a philosopher with courage than Iroegbu who had developed his metaphysics of being. Surprising is that Iroegbu who speaks of being as belongingness should have a problem with someone who developed a philosophy that speaks of where he belongs. Edeh saw himself as a being who belongs to a totality of people, and as a person who belongs. He developed the philosophy of the people to

whom he belongs. Moreover, the fact that it was Edeh who wrote the metaphysics does not mean it has to be called Edeh's metaphysics. Edeh is not saying that he is not aware that he wrote it by himself. All he is saying is that it represents the philosophy of the Igbo people. We read different works by different philosophers from the West and we call them Western philosophy. What problem do we have calling Edeh's articulation Igbo Metaphysics? A cursory glance at the philosophical positions proposed as a replacement for Edeh's concept of being as *ife*, reveals that they have not solved the problem of seeking a concept for being; so far, they have created new ones. What African philosophers should be looking for is a concept that would designate every reality, and not concepts that speak of what every reality possesses like the *chi* of T. Okere, B. Abanaku and F. O. C. Njoku or Iroegbu's *belongingness* which is just an attribute of being, or better put the modality of being and not the name of being. Being exists first before it can have a *chi* or before it can belong. So far, the concept of being by Edeh as *ife-di*, with all its defects is still the most appropriate and defensible concept of being in African metaphysics. While Edeh's perspective is appreciable, there is need for a further research on the Africa concept of being.

References

- Anah, A. (2005). Belongingness: A redefinition of being. In George Ukagba. *Father Kpim: Philosophy and theology of Iroegbu Iroegbu* (pp.130-152). Ibadan: Hope Publications.
- Abanuka, B. (2003). *Two Enquiries in African Philosophy*. Nsukka: Spiritan Publications
- Achebe, C. (2008). *Things fall apart*. England: Heinemann.
- Edeh, E. (1985). *Towards an Igbo Metaphysics*. USA: Loyola University Press
- Izu, O. (2009). *Beginning Metaphysics*, Enugu: Victojo
- Kanu, I. A. (2013). The dynamics and functionality of being in Iroegbu's operative metaphysics vis-a-vis the quest for Gender equality. In C. Umezina (Ed.). *Philosophical essays on human problems* (pp. 172-191). Enugu: Afro-Orbis Publications Ltd.
- Kanu, I. A. (2012a). The problem of being in metaphysics. *Africa Research Review*. 6, 25. 113-122.
- Kanu, I. A. (2012b). Being qua belongingness: The provenance and implications of Iroegbu's concept of being. *Lwati: A Journal of Contemporary Research*. 9, 3. 227-234.
- Kanu, I. A. (2012c). From 'Onye' to 'Ife' hypothesis: The contribution of Edeh to the development of the concept of being. *Lwati: A Journal of Contemporary Research*. 9, 4. 218-223.
- Mbiti, J. (1970). *African religions and philosophy*. Nairobi: East African Educational Publishers.

- Njoku, F. O. C. (2010). *A Search for Unifying Concepts- Destiny and Change, Freedom and Determinism in African Philosophy*. In Benjamin Ike Ekwelu (Ed.). *Philosophical Reflections on African issues*. Enugu: Delta
- Omoregbe, J. (2002). *Metaphysics without Tears*. Lagos: Joja Educational Research and Publications.
- Iroegbu, I. (1994). *Ewizdomization and African Philosophy: Two selected essays*. Owerri: International University Press.
- Iroegbu, I. (1995). *Metaphysics: The Kpim of Philosophy*. Owerri: IUP.
- Iroegbu, I. (2000). *Kpim of Personality: Treatise on the Human Person*. Owerri: Eustel
- Iroegbu, I. (2004). Being as belongingness: A substantive redefinition of being. In *Ekpoma Review*, 1. 1.7.
- Iroegbu, I. (2004). *Kpim of Time: Eternity*. Ibadan: Hope Publications.
- Okere, T. (1983). *African Philosophy: A Historico-Hermeneutical Investigation of the conditions of its possibility*. Lanham: University Press
- Russell, B. (1975). *History of Western philosophy*. London: George Allen and Unwin Ltd.

QUANTIFICATION IN AFRICAN LOGIC

Jonathan M. O. Chimakonam Ph.D

Department of Philosophy

University of Calabar, Nigeria

jonathansphilosophy@gmail.com

1. Predication

By predication alone, Africans say many things with seeming ease which ordinarily they would not and could not say. The metalogical beauty of it is that they say without having said and they make hills flat without having lifted a hoe. In this one finds African predicate logic a lot richer than its western counterpart. Predicate logic, sometimes called quantification logic was invented by the German Logician Gottlob Frege¹ in his monumental book *Begriffsschrift*. It has since been broken down to a number of classifications namely first-order, second-order and higher-order. In African demarcation, we shall treat just the first and the second order. The mainline of difference between the western and the African versions of these logics are to be found in the quantifiers, rules, evaluations, operators, variables, proof mechanisms and the criterion for logically valid formulae. For the latter, while validity depends on subject matter in African logic, in western logic it depends primarily on logical form. Logical form in its secondary role is just like another tool in a kit box for African logic. In what follows, I shall outline the main doctrines of the first and the second order logics.

¹ Begriffsschrift". *From Frege to Godel: A Source Book in Mathematical Logic, 1879-1931*. Ed. Heijenoort, van Jean. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1967. Print.

African first-order logic lays additional blocks on top of its propositional logic earlier discussed. Some of such main additions include:

- Statements that ascribe a predicate to an individual e.g. Okonkwo² is brave, we symbolize this as Bo . Notice that the predicate constant is written in upper case and appears before the subject constant. This is because in this logic, attention shifts from the subject (as in propositional logic) to the predicate (what is being said of the subject).

This shift accounts in part for the massive expressive power of this logic and of course for this focus on predicates, it is called predicate logic sometimes.

- Statements that ascribe a relation to individuals, e.g. Ihuoma³ was a concubine of Emenike, we symbolize this as Cie .
- Quantified statements which, say that a certain predicate or relation applies to some individuals e.g. at least some persons are brave, we symbolize this as $((GH_{\circ})B_{\circ})$. Here we employ the upper case of the Igbo twin alphabet GH as existential quantifier (some) and one of the Igbo dotted letters \circ as a variable.
- Quantified statements which, say that a certain predicate or relation applies to one individual e.g. one person is brave, we symbolize this as $((GB_{\circ})B_{\circ})$. Here we employ the uppercase of the Igbo twin alphabet GB as existential quantifier (one). Notice therefore that unlike in western logic, African logic does not issue the same quantification to the expressions “one” and “some”. The expression “at least” covers “some” but it is unnecessary when the object is only “one”. Thus for clarity of thought in African logic we quantify some and one differently.

² Okonkwo, Unoka and Ezeudo are some of the characters in Achebe, Chinua. *Things Fall Apart*. London: Heinemann, 1958

³ Ihuoma and Emenike are some of the characters in Amadi, Elechi. *The Concubine*. London: Heinemann.

- Quantified statements which, say that a certain predicate or relation applies to every individual e.g. every African is strong, we symbolize this as $(KW\forall)(A\forall_M S\forall)$. Notice that we intuitively assigned a context indicator M because the subject matter reveals that what is said of the African occurs in the para-contingent world that is.
- Multi-quantified statements in which, the variables stand for individuals e.g., everything is caused by something, we can symbolize this as $(KW\forall)[(GH\forall)(C\forall)]$. Notice also that everyman is created by one God attracts existential quantifier (one) i.e. $(KW\forall)(GB\exists)(C\forall)$. One point to remember is that all the statements of first-order logic are about individual entities. The second order logic varies in that it focuses mainly on predicates and relations. Thus, African second-order logic like its western counterpart adds to first-order logic, the logic of statements concerning predicates and relations e.g. there is a predicate that applies both to Unoka and Okonkwo, we may symbolize this as $(GBP)(P\forall \wedge P\forall)$; notice that we employ the uppercase letter P as both the quantified constant and the predicate constant. The reason for using it as an upper case quantified constant is to distinguish it from the individual variable. On relations, we take the example; “there is a property that belongs to everything”, we may symbolize this as; $(GBP)(KW\forall)P\forall$. Notice again that we employ upper case letter P as a quantified constant for property or relation and as predicate constant. On the whole, the student of African logic should ultimately focus on what is being quantified in second order logic. It is either a predicate or a relation constant and not an individual variable as in first-order logic. Also, the two examples above could well be rewritten “there are some predicates that apply both to Unoka and Okonkwo” and “there are some properties that belong to everything”. This changes the existential quantifier from one (GB) to some (GH) and by so doing further increases the

↳

expressive power of African second order logic. The above two statements may now be symbolized as follows.

(GHP) $(P\bar{u} \wedge P\bar{q})$ and

(GHP) $(KW\bar{q}) P\bar{q}$

With this at hand, let us now deal with the syntax and semantics of African predicate logic.

2. Syntax

Every logical system has both the syntactic and the semantic components. The function of syntax is to determine which, array of symbols are legal expressions within the system while that of semantics is to determine the meanings behind these expressions. African predicate logic has a language and a set of alphabets different from ordinary language like Akan, Igbo, Zulu, Swahili etc., this language is formal but unlike the western logic, it is not completely formal. A logical language is formal when it is constituted of strings of symbols which obey the rule of consequence relation such that it can be mechanically determined whether a given expression is legal or a formula valid. But the language of African predicate logic is said to be customary⁴ rather than completely formal thus in testing the legality of expression or the validity of formulae, the African logician goes beyond logical form and appeals ultimately to logical custom and this is also done mechanically.

In all standard logics, there are two main types of legal expressions: terms, which intuitively represent objects and

⁴ Okeke Chimakonam, J. “Why Can’t There be an African logic?”. *Journal of Integrative Humanism*. 1.

2. (2011). 141-152. Print. P.148. Other scholars like Udo Etuk. The Possibility of Igbo-African logic”. *The Third Way in African Philosophy*, Olusegun Oladipo (ed). Ibadan: Hope Publications, 2002. Print.” would prefer the term ‘affective’. This latter term is similar to Lepold Senghor’s much misinterpreted and misunderstood term ‘emotion’ in his *Liberte I: Negritude et Humanisme*. Paris: Editions du Seuil, 1964. Pp23-24

formulae, which intuitively express predicates that can be true or false. The terms and formulae of predicate logic are strings of symbols which together form the alphabet of the language. In a customary language therefore, the nature of the symbols themselves is outside the scope of formal logic because they are not merely place holders that maintain formal order but are supposed to reflect realities around. They also function simply as letters and punctuation symbols.

Let us also divide the symbols of the alphabet into logical symbols, which, always have the same meaning, and non-logical symbols, whose meanings vary by interpretation. The wedged-implication sign $\vdash\rightarrow$ always represents the expression “if then through ...” and is never interpreted as “and” \wedge . But a non-logical predicate symbol such as *schol* (ϕ) could be interpreted to, mean “ ϕ is a scholar”, “ ϕ is a teacher”, “ ϕ is a mouse” or just any expression with a unary predicate.

The basic logical symbols of African predicate logic include: quantifier symbols KW (Universal), GH (existential some) and GB (existential one). The logical connective, \wedge for *na* or conjunction (and); \vee for *ma- obo* disjunction (or); $\vdash\rightarrow$ for *site-na* wedged-implication $\leftarrow\vdash$; for *sitelu-na* wedged-reduction, \Leftrightarrow for *bu-otu* equivalence, \sim for *obughiji* negation. Punctuations, brackets, parenthesis, braces, commas, diagrams and others as the context may demand. Variables, an infinite strings of lower case letter starting with the Igbo dotted letters ϕ ψ ι , i , ... usually used in denoting arbitrary individuals. Constants, an infinite string of most times upper case letters, usually the first of the predicate term or the individual as the case may be. Subscripts, strings of lower case letters or numbers used in distinguishing variables usually lowered down in front of the variables e.g. ϕ_0 , ϕ_1 ϕ_2 , Superscripts, strings of lower case letters or numbers used in distinguishing variables usually higher up in front of the variables e.g. ψ^n , ψ^m , ψ^a Sign of equality or identity \leftrightarrow . Numerals for numbering or

distinguishing variables and evaluating formulae namely, $\emptyset, 1, \perp, \oplus, \dots$.⁵ Mathematical signs for proofs namely, multiplication \times , addition $+$, subtraction $-$, greater than $>$, less than $<$, greater than or equal to \geq , less than or equal to \leq , division \div . Truth constants for signifying true and false formulae or expressions T or \top (true); \perp, F, \emptyset (false), etc.

For non-logical symbols which, includes predicates or relations, functions and constants within the structures of a statement. In our logic, the logician is at liberty to use different non-logical symbols according to the application one has in mind. For this, it is imperative to name the set of all non-logical symbols used in a given application. This is called assignment of signature e.g. Let A be a set of formulae and let B be a formula in a first-order logical system C ... A, B and C as used in this signature are non-logical symbols. In western logic there is a traditional approach in which, there is only one language of first-order logic. This practice still persists and some of them may be adopted by an African mathematical logician, example:

- For every integer $n \in \mathbb{N}$ there is a collection of n -ary, or n -place, predicate symbols, because they represent relations between n elements, they are also called relation symbols. For each arity n we have an infinite supply of them.
 $P^n \emptyset, P^n 1, P^n \perp, P^n \oplus, \dots$
- For every integer $n \in \mathbb{N}$ there are infinitely many n -ary function symbols:
 $f^n \emptyset, f^n 1, f^n \perp, f^n \oplus, \dots$

⁵ In "An Investigation into the Nature of Mathematical Meaning" *Filosofia Theoretica* 1.1 2011. Pp. 27-28. Chimakonam had first attempted the development of signs of basic numerals from the perspective of African thought system. A better and more concise development however could be found in Chimakonam O. J. "Idea of Africa Numeric System". *Filosofia Theoretica*...2.1. 2013.

As an alternative to the traditional approach, the following may be adopted:

- A predicate symbol or relation symbol with some valence (or arity, number of arguments) greater than or equal to \emptyset . These should be denoted by uppercase letters P, R, S ...
- Relations of valence \emptyset can be identified with propositional variables. For example, P, this can stand for any statement.
- For example, P (ϕ) is a predicate variable of valence 1. One possible interpretation is “ ϕ is a teacher”.
- R ($\phi\psi$) is a predicate variable of valence 2. Possible interpretations include “ ϕ is greater than ψ ” and “ ϕ is the father of ψ ”.
- A function symbol, with some valence greater than or equal to \emptyset . These should be denoted by lowercase letters d, e, f, g, ...
- Examples: d(ϕ) may be interpreted as “the father ϕ ”. In arithmetic, it may stand for “- ϕ ”. In set theory, it may stand for “the power set of ϕ ”. In arithmetic, f (ϕ, ψ) may stand for “ $\phi \times \psi$ ”. In set theory, it may stand for “the union ϕ and ψ ”.
- Function symbols of valence \emptyset are called constant symbols, and should be denoted by lowercase letters at the beginning of the Igbo alphabet a, b, ch, ..., the symbol a may stand for Ezeudo. In arithmetic, it may stand for \emptyset . In set theory, such a constant may stand for the empty set.

There are also rules that define the terms and formulae of predicate logic. The set of terms is inductively defined by the following rules:

- Variables: any variable is a term
- Functions: any expression (j_1, \dots, j_n) of n argument (where each argument j_i is a term and g is a function symbol of valence n) is a term. Note therefore that only expressions which can be obtained by finitely many applications of rules and are terms. For example, no expression involving a predicate symbol is a term. On the other hand, the set of

formulae (also called well-formed formulae or wffs) is inductively defined by the following rules:

- Predicate symbols: if P is an n -ary predicate symbol and j_1, \dots, j_n terms then $P(j_1, \dots, j_n)$ is a formula.
- Equality: we consider the equality symbol as part of African logic, therefore if j_1 and j_2 are terms, then $j_1 \leftrightarrow j_2$ is a formula.
- Negation: if ϕ is a formula, then $\sim \phi$ is a formula.
- Binary connectives: if ϕ and ψ are formulae, then $(\phi \rightarrow \psi)$ is a formula; $(\phi \vee \psi)$ is a formula; $(\phi \leftarrow \psi)$ is a formula; and $(\phi \leftrightarrow \psi)$ is a formula, etc.
- Quantifiers: if ϕ is a formula and t is a variable, then $KW_{t\phi}$, $GB_{t\phi}$ and $GH_{t\phi}$ are formulae.

Note that only expressions which can be obtained by finitely many applications of rules – are formulae. The formulae obtained from the first two rules are said to be atomic formulae while that of fourth rule specifically are compound formulae.

Free and bound variables

Variables in any logical formula are either free or bound. A given variable is said to be free if it is not quantified: for example in $KW\phi P(u, \phi)$, the variable u is free while ϕ is bound. We may now define inductively the free and bound variable of a formula as follows.

- Atomic formulae: if i is an atomic formula then u is free in i if and only if u occurs in i . However, there are no bound variables in any atomic formula.
- Negation: u is free in $\sim i$ if and only if u is free in i . u is bound in $\sim i$ if and only if u is bound in i .
- Binary connectives: u is free in $(i \rightarrow j)$ if and only if u is free in either i or j . u is bound in $(i \rightarrow j)$ if and only if u is bound in either i or j . The same rule applies to other binary connectives.
- Quantifiers: u is free in $KW\phi i$ if and only if u is free in i and u is a different symbol from ϕ . Again, u is bound in $KW\phi i$ if

and only if \forall or \exists or \neg is bound in \mathcal{L} . The same rule applies to GH and GB quantifiers.

However, when a formula in African predicate logic has no free variables it is called first-order or second order sentence such code-named sentences are formulae that have well-defined truth values under an interpretation. In other words, whether a formula such as $\text{schol}(\mathcal{L})$ is true must depend on what \mathcal{L} represents. On the other hand, the sentence $\text{GH}\mathcal{L}\text{schol}(\mathcal{L})$ will be either true or false in a given interpretation while just as in KW, that $\text{GB}\mathcal{L}\text{schol}(\mathcal{L})$ is true must also depend on what \mathcal{L} represents.

3. Semantics

Let us note that for Africans meaning is hidden. Expressions whether in formal or in meta-language mostly do not guide directly to their semantic content. Okonkwo is a tortoise, among the Ibo this does not mean that Okonkwo is an animal but that he is crafty. Likewise most expressions in African natural languages have signatures other than what they seem to contain. We have stated earlier that an assignment of semantic meaning to a logical signature is called interpretation. Now, an interpretation of say a first-order predicate language assigns a denotation to all non-logical constants in that language. In addition, it determines a domain of discourse i.e. subject matter and scope which, specifies the range of the quantifiers. In other words, an interpretation also tells the African logician which variables are free and which are bound by which quantifiers. Normally, under a given interpretation, each term is assigned an object that it represents and each sentence is assigned a truth value but unlike in the western logic, this is not done arbitrarily in African logic. The semantics of African logic is generated from the subject matter or what is called logical custom rather than logical form, the only difficulty is that a non African would have to study the signature of African expressions in order not to be misled by the literally orientation of such expressions. That is to say, it is important to know what an

African means when he utters a logical expression which is most times different from what such expressions literally refer to. On the whole, the truth value assigned to any sentence depends on the semantics of the domain of discourse. We do not for example say “snow falls in Abakaliki during wet season” and assign the value true to it, arbitrarily when we know this to be false in actuality. This is where African logic makes a connection with relevance logic where the claims of the premises must be relevant to the conclusion and the negation of the conclusion is necessarily non-complementary with the premises. So in African logic, an interpretation provides actual semantic meaning to the terms and formulae of the language. The study of the interpretations of customary languages in African logic is called customary semantics, in western logic, it would be formal semantics. Another promising area of African predicate logic is the evaluation of truth values. A formula evaluates to true, true-false or false given an interpretation, and a variable assignment y that associates an element of the domain of discourse with each variable. This is not done arbitrarily and according to the discretion of the African logician but strictly in line with the subject matter or the actual content of the domain of discourse. In other words, formulae and variables are evaluated true, true-false or false in accordance with what they represent in reality. We can map out the following rules for making truth value assignment.

- Variables: each variable u with an assignment y evaluates to $y(u) \mapsto_M T(u) \vee F(u)$
- Functions: given terms t_1, \dots, t_n that have been evaluated to elements g_1, \dots, g_n of the domain of discourse, and a n -ary function symbol f , the term $f(t_1, \dots, t_n)$ evaluates to $(f)(g_1, \dots, g_n)$.

From here, each formula is assigned a truth value according to the actual value of the subject matter they represent. In fact, in African logic, we do not talk of truth value assignment as though the logicians had the power to do this, what we actually do is to assign

subject matter which, each formula or variable would represent. This is where the power and discretion of the African logician ends, the values for such formulae or variables naturally reveal themselves to the logician. Hence, the values to be assigned to any given formula and variable in African logic are determined by the subject-matter of the domain of discourse. The inductive definition used to make this truth value assignment we shall here call the R-schema. In western logic, it would be the Alfred Tarski's T-schema⁶ due to the fact that truth values in western logic are arbitrarily assigned following the discretion of the western logician.

R-schema in African logic can be stated thus:

$$F \mapsto_M S \leftrightarrow T$$

Where F symbolizes functions, S for subject matter and T for truth value, the R-schema states that every function i.e. formulae or variable has a subject matter assigned to it or it represents and the truth value of such a formula or variable depends entirely on the actual content of the subject matter it represents. R-schema therefore simply means relevance-schema because African logicians insist that the evaluation of their logical formulae be relevant to the subject matter. The inductive definition for R-schema is as follows:

- Atomic formula (1): A formula $P(t_1, \dots, t_n)$ is assigned the value true, true-false or false depending on whether $(v_1, \dots, v_n) \in I(P)$, where v_1, \dots, v_n are the evaluation of the terms t_1, \dots, t_n and $i(P)$ is the interpretation of P, which, by assumption is a subject of D^n (infinite domain of discourse). Note of course

⁶ Tarski, Alfred. "The Semantic Conception of Truth and the Foundations of Semantics". *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research*. 4 (1944): 341 – 376. Print. See also his work "The Concept of Truth in the Languages of the Deductive Sciences". *Studia Philosophica*. (1933 and 1935): 261 – 405. Print.

that i (P) and D^n are not arbitrary signatures unless stated otherwise. African logicians may sometimes choose to assign signatures in an interpretation from a possible rather than the para-contingent world. However, when this is done, it is stated in the interpretation. The evaluation of formulae in such domain of discourse generally becomes modal and inferential. Similarly, when signatures are assigned arbitrarily as most times is the case in western logic, the evaluation of formulae becomes a formal exercise. In African logic, we describe such as restrictive logic (RL) in the sense that evaluation has been restricted to logical form and logical custom (relevance) thrown over-board. This type of logic is done to exercise the mind rather than to obtain good reasoning.

- Atomic formulae (\lrcorner): a formula $t_1 \leftrightarrow t_2$ is assigned true if t_1 and t_2 evaluate to the same object of the domain of discourse.
- Logical connectives: a formula in the form of $\sim \phi, \phi \vdash \rightarrow_M \psi$ etc., is evaluated according to the truth table method (TTM), truth funnel method (TFM) or short proof method (SPM)⁷ for the connective in question, as in propositional logic earlier discussed.
- Existential quantifiers (one and some): the quantifier $\exists e \phi(e)$ and $\exists e \psi(e)$ are true if and only if there is a way to choose a value for e such that $\phi(e)$ is satisfied. This entails that ϕ is a subject of ψ , thus if e is satisfied in ψ it would be satisfied in ϕ as well given the same context. But the hub of this decision starts from the subject matter ψ represents.

⁷ In Chimakonam, Okeke, Jonathan. *Introducing African logic and Numeric System: Formalist and Axiomatic Approach*. (Forthcoming), extensive developments and applications of some of these proof methods were carried out under the African propositional logic.

- Universal quantifier: the formula $K\forall e (\phi)$ is true if every possible choice of a value for e causes $\phi(e)$ to be true. For this to hold, ϕ must be a subset of \forall and the interpretation given \forall must be actual. Based on this, if \forall actually satisfies e then every possible subset of \forall would satisfy e given the same context.

4. Contexts, Worlds and Quantifiers

There are three worlds in African universe namely: \forall wa (material), \forall lu-igwe (anti-material) and \forall la-mm \forall o (non-material) which translate to the three contexts para-contingent, necessary and possible symbolized respectively as M, A, N (universals) and m, a, n (particulars)⁸. In African logic these are variously expressed as :

- a. For all things para-contingent...KW(M)
- b. For all things necessary...KW(A)
- ch. For all things possible...KW(N)
- d. There are some things para-contingent...GH(m)
- e. There is a thing para-contingent...GB(m)
- f. There are some things necessary...GH(a)
- g. There is a thing necessary...GB(a)
- gb. There are some things possible...GH(n)
- gh. There is a thing possible...GB(n)

In the above, Igbo twin upper case letters KW, GH, GB are used as universal and existential quantifiers (some and one) respectively. Hence a propositional function as f perm $\vdash \rightarrow_M g$ would be read as f wedge-implies g in all things para-contingent. The wider implication here is that whenever f is stated g may and may not follow since para-contingence depicts a context that is both contingent and necessary depending on existential circumstances. The same goes for the existential version where the truth-value

↳

⁸ For initial extensive treatment of the M-A-N contexts in African logic see Chimakonam O. J. *Introducing African Science: Systematic and Philosophical Approach*. Bloomington Indiana: Authorhouse, 2012. Pp. 25-34

also depends on both logical custom and logical form. But for all things necessary and its existential version, the truth-value which is definitely true or false depends on logical form. However, for all things possible and its existential version, the truth-value depends on logical custom rather than on logical form and is said to be complemented. This is because the possible world that might have been is also a world that permanently is and it is different from the para-contingent world that may and may not be, and the necessary world that simply is. The further difference between the necessary world that simply is, and the possible world that permanently is, is that the former is a partial realization of value whereas the latter is a full or complete realization of value. Although the possible world is also a world that might have been if fragmented, it is nonetheless permanently is. This is called truth-value glut where logical functions or constants complement themselves (see the section on complementary mode)

5. Soundness, validity, satisfiability and wedged-consequence

If a sentence ϕ evaluates to true under a given interpretation H , one says that H satisfies ϕ ; this is symbolized $H \models \phi$. A sentence is satisfiable if there is some interpretation under which, it is true through a relevant context, hence the formula is logically sound or simply sound; if it is inconsistent in some interpretation then it is valid. These formulae play role similar to tautologies in propositional logic. Finally, a formula ϕ is a wedged-consequence of a formula ψ if every interpretation that makes ψ true also makes ϕ true through a relevant context. In this case one says that ϕ is wedge-implied by ψ . Elsewhere⁹, I have undertaken the task of this section in clearer detail.

⁹ Chimakonam, Okeke, Jonathan. *Introducing African logic and Numeric System: Formalist and Axiomatic Approach*. (Forthcoming)

**A CRITIQUE OF SARTRE’S NOTION OF BEING AND
NOTHINGNESS FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF
IBUANYIDANDA PHILOSOPHY**

Ogbonnaya, Lucky Uchenna
Essien Ukpabio Presbyterian Theological College,
Itu, Akwa Ibom State

1. Introduction

This work, *A Critique of Sartre’s Notion of Being and Nothingness from the Perspective of Ibuanyidanda Philosophy*, is an analysis and evaluation of Sartre’s ontology using *Ibuanyidanda* philosophy. The work holds that any bifurcative and polarizing concept of being is problematic. In critically examining Sartre’s idea of being the work discovers that it is bifurcating and polarizing in nature. It reveals that Sartre whose original intention was to overcome the bifurcating and polarizing notion of being that was predominant in Western philosophy in turn fell into the same problem as he notes that being is of two kinds namely, being-in-itself and being-for-itself. He afterwards focused all of his philosophizing on being-for-itself (Human being), which he terms as conscious being and is believed by him to be the source of nothingness. And through this nothingness, being-for-itself negates the existence of other beings. After a critical study of Asouzu’s ontology as based on the concept of *Ibuanyidanda*, undergirded by the principle that “anything that exists serves as missing link of reality” we discover that Asouzu’s idea is antithetical to Sartre’s. Asouzu’s ontology posits mutual complementary relationship among all fragments of realities rather than segmentation.

This work uses the philosophical approach of criticism, evaluation, analysis and reasoned prescription to assess both Sartre’s and Asouzu’s works in conjunction with the library method where relevant literatures or works are interpreted and synthesised for our purpose. The thesis advanced in conclusion that from the

framework of Asouzu's *Ibuanyidanda* philosophy there is no need for bifurcation and polarization of being and that all aspects and kinds of being cannot exist outside a mutual complementary relationship since they are serving as missing links to each other. The benefit of such a conception of being is that it ensures harmony, mutual relations and integration of all aspects of being, and this in turn could improve interpersonal relations in our society.

The notion of 'Being' is unarguably, the most important theme in metaphysics. Hence, metaphysics simply defined is the "philosophy of being" (Daugherty 5), or "the science of being in common" (Daugherty 10). This 'Being' that metaphysics studies, is the being of being distinct from the being of particular things. Daugherty quotes Aristotle as holding that metaphysics is "a science which investigates being as being and the attributes which belong to this in virtue of its own nature...it is of being as that we also must grasp the first causes" (11). Hence, for Aristotle, metaphysics is the science of being as being. This pursuit of metaphysics is most expressed in one of its major branch called ontology. Ontology is derived from two Greek words namely "onto" – meaning being and "logos" – meaning study. Ontology is simply the study of being. It is "the study of the meaning, nature, and principles of whatever is and in as much as it is or exists" (Wallace 85). Briefly put, it is the science of being.

Being signifies a concept that has the widest extension and the least comprehension (Wallace 86). Being as a subject-matter of ontology is very complex and has been discussed by most philosophers of various era. This is because it poses a lot of problems to philosophers. These philosophers tend to probe into being, its nature and manifestations. In so doing, they encounter more and more problems. There are those who see being as an abstract entity. There are also those who are of the view that being

is solely concrete. There are furthermore, those who see being as consisting of both abstract and concrete nature.

Also among philosophers, there exists the tendency to bifurcate being and elevate an aspect of being over and against the other. The problem of being further extends to the notion of being and nothingness. The underlying question begging for answer and which appears to pose a perennial problem is the question: what really is the nature of being and how is it related to nothingness. It is against this problem of being and nothingness that Jean-Paul Sartre developed his metaphysics or ontology. In his notion of being and nothingness, Sartre was able to show that being is not distinct from its phenomenon, it is simply “what is”. Therefore, for him, objects of phenomenon are beings, they do not participate in, nor represent being, they are themselves beings.

Notwithstanding Sartre’s great effort to refute the bifurcation of being common to (Western) philosophy, he also fell into the same problem as he asserts that “there are two kinds of entity in existence; Beings-in-themselves, and Being-for-themselves” (Sartre, *Being and Nothingness* ix). He goes ahead to lay emphasis on being-for-themselves, and identifies them with human beings, and that it is the source of nothingness over against the view of other Western philosophers, that nothingness is the opposite of being and it is negation. He asserts that it is through consciousness of being-for –itself that nothingness came into being.

The notion of being held by Sartre involves the bifurcation of being and it emphasizes an aspect of being (being-for-itself) over against the other (being-in-itself). This position of Sartre leads to ethnocentrism, individualism and superiority/inferiority complex. This work seeks to overcome this dualism and bifurcation of being in Sartre’s notion of being and nothingness, using *Ibuanyidanda* ontology, which according to Asouzu, “attempts to penetrate and grasp being, and with its ultimate reality through mediation or via

the instrumentality of mutual relations” (*Inaugural Lecture 4*). Instead of polarizing being, complementarity seeks to harmonize, complement and unify the same. In this mutual relationship “being is that on the account of which anything that exists serves as missing link of reality” (Asouzu, *Inaugural Lecture 41*). It is on this “principle of integration” of Asouzu that the being and nothingness of Sartre will be assessed. Here, it will be argued that no being can exist alone and that when one is able to live in a mutual complementary relationship with one another within a whole and contributes efficiently for effective functioning of the whole then he or she is said to be in existence.

2. An Exposition of the Notion of Being and Nothingness in Sartre’s Ontology

This section treats Sartre’s notion of being as well as his notion of nothingness.

Sartre’s Notion of Being

The notion of being as portrayed by the predecessors of Sartre, were for him, is dualistic and bifurcating and he sought to overcome it as he posits that:

the dualism of being and appearance is no longer entitled to any legal status within philosophy. The appearance refers to the total series of appearance and not to a hidden reality which would draw to itself all the being of the existent . . . being will be disclosed to us by some kind of immediate access-boredom, nausea, etc., and ontology will be the description of the phenomenon of being as it manifests itself; that is, without intermediary (*Being and Nothingness* xxi,xxiv).

By implication, being is no longer whatever is in a transitory state, but that which is; it is not an abstract entity as the idealists conceived of being. It is that which is a phenomenal object. This

also implies that in being there is no distinction between appearance and essence as well as the essence and its existence.

In the same vein, Sartre notes that there is the being of phenomenon and the phenomenon of being and attaches being to the phenomenon of being as he argues that “the phenomenon is what manifest itself, and being manifests itself to all in some way, since we can speak of it and since we have certain comprehension of it. Thus there must be for it a *phenomenon of being...*” (xxiv). He goes further to argue that the phenomenon of being is not the being of phenomenon. “The phenomenon of being requires the transphenomenality of being. That does not mean being is hidden behind phenomena..., nor that the phenomenon is an appearance which refers to a distinct being... (xxv, xxvi)”. This is to say being of the phenomenon though coextensive with, is not restricted to, the phenomenon as revealed but it is being that goes beyond what is revealed. The being of Sartre is a being that is distinct from Georg Berkeley’s notion of being of which he (Berkeley) notes that to be is to be perceived. For Sartre, the existence of being does not depend on its being perceived although it is the being of a certain mode of being.

Sartre holds that being is of two kinds namely, the being in itself and the being - for - itself. The being – in – itself (*L’etren – Soi*) consists of the unconscious being or it is that object in the cosmos which has neither a ‘within’ nor a ‘without’:

Being is what it is in the in–itself. There is no particle of being which is not within itself, with not distance . . . The density of being of in–self is infinite . . . It is fullness It is not true that the in–itself has any need of a synthetic unification of its being . . . the in–itself full or itself. (26)

In other words, the being – in – itself has nothing secret, it is solid (*Massif*). In a sense we can designate it as a synthesis. But is the

most indissoluble of all: the synthesis of itself with itself. It is itself indefinitely and it exhausts itself in it being (*Being and Nothingness* Vlii). It simply exists solidly, massively as what it is, like a chair, a stone or a tree.

The being – in – itself ; is a being that is devoid of potency and without any reason for its existence. Thus Sartre perceives being – in – itself as that which makes existence superfluous' (John, *Jean – Sartre: The Popularize of Existentialism* 152). It is in this way that Sartre rejected Aristotle's notion of act and potency, holding that being is that which is act without potency. He also rejected Immanuel Kant's thing –in- itself in that concrete phenomena could be assigned any ontological status, by saying that "there is no longer an exterior for the existent if one means by that a superficial covering which hides from sight the true nature of the object" (Sartre, *Being and Nothingness* xxi). That is to say, nothing exists beyond phenomena, in line with Husserl's position but goes beyond Husserl to asserting that being is more than the phenomenal appearances, it is the phenomena itself. It is the being – in – itself.

The being - in – itself possesses essence since they exist independently of any observer. The in-itself (unconscious being) is not adapted to temporality because it is what it is. The being – in – itself is a passive active object around man, which debar him from actualizing his abilities. All you can say of it is that, it is; it has no meaning except in and through man. It is just there. That is to say, "to exist is simply to be there" (*Nausea* 188).

"Sartre identifies the being – for – itself with being of consciousness. The chief characteristic of being – for – itself is its activity. It is incapable of being acted on from without, and it consists in and is exhausted by its own intentional, meaning conferral acts" (Oyishile 186). The being -for- itself is the source of universal time in the world. In the word of Sartre:

Universal time comes into the world through the for – itself . . . the for – itself . . . is temporarily, but itself not consciousness of temporality except when it appears itself in the relation “reflective reflected on”. In the unreflective mode the for-itself discovers temporality on being that is, outside. Universal temporality is objective. (*Being and Nothingness* 204)

By implication, without the presence of the being – for – itself, there could have been no idea of time and temporality. Hence, time and temporality is strictly attached to being – for – itself, which is the conscious being.

The being-for-itself has the capacity to relate other being and is termed being-for-others. The “for-itself” - apprehends other being than itself. It has the quality of self-transcending and is always separated from itself by nothingness which is bestowed upon it by its being and which it attempts to overcome in order to fulfil or recognize itself (Oyeshile 187).

This being-for-itself of Sartre is not only a conscious being but also being that is free, autonomous and responsible. Sartre’s for-itself is the being of subject, not of object, facings or ideas. It characterizes man as acting and conscious, as distinct from the beings of the unconscious objects, the for-itself is characteristically active, self-regarding, and self-affirming of its being’ (Iroegbu, *Metaphysics* 252). Hence, as a conscious being the being-for-itself is aware of its selfness. It also constitutes itself as being by negating being, by separating itself from it and placing itself at a distance from it. Sartre identifies the being – for – itself with human being. Being – for – itself which is the human being has the capacity of asserting its ends and the why of its being. Hence, for Sartre the problematic region of being is that of the for-itself (IEP. Web. N. P) and this is what Sartre focuses on in his philosophizing.

Sartre's Notion of Nothingness

The most original contributions of Sartre's metaphysics lies in his analysis of the notion of nothingness and the claim that it plays a central role at the heart of being (www.iep.utm.edu/sartre-ex). This is because for Sartre, the relationship between Being and non-Being is thus not a mere logical one; Being is in a sense already 'in' non-Being, and through the negating capacity of consciousness Being introduces a hole within Being-in-itself and thereby, as it were, instantiates or particularizes not-Being (Web. N. P). He sees nothingness as identical with being i.e., being- for –itself (human being). Sartre puts this thus, "human reality is being in so far as within its being and for its being is the unique foundation of nothingness at the heart" (*Being and Nothingness* 78,79). For Sartre, "nothingness enters the world through human existence. Nothingness depends on being for its existence" (Sahakian 354). This nothingness, for him, does not exist outside a conscious being. "That which generates its own nothingness is human consciousness ...human consciousness creates a hole in the being-in-itself and subsequently, the horizon that surrounds this focus of negation becomes a world" (Olafson 293). According to Warnack, Sartre introduces two senses of nothingness:

In the first sense, nothingness was a kind of a gap or separation which lay between a man and the world, or rather between a man's consciousness and the world of objects which he was conscious. The second sense of nothingness was that almost of futility, and the vanishing and evaporating of objects in the world. (Warnack 93)

From the first sense, nothingness which is based on consciousness is the gap or space, the emptiness which divides being-for-itself from being-in-itself. Human as a conscious being (being for itself) is distinguished from unconscious being (being-in-itself) by nothingness.

Based on the second sense, nothingness is considered as internal to the being-for-itself. Human strives to fill this emptiness or nothingness within himself through his action. This nothingness according to Sartre, is the origin and foundation of negation and is rooted in negation and it is through constant negation that human reality exists. Sartre illustrates his idea of nothingness as rooted in negation by saying that if one enters a café to meet Pierre and discovering his absence from his usual place, Sartre talks of this absence as haunting the café. And since Pierre is not there in the café, the person therefore negates the presence of others that are present at that time in the café. He or she believes not to see anyone present in the café since he/she has not seen Pierre, that is, the object of his/her interest (*Being and Nothingness* 9-10). In this way, Sartre regards others present who are not objects of his interest as nothing. This implies that an essential feature of consciousness (being-for-itself) is its negative power, by which we can experience “nothingness” (www.iep.utm.edu/sartre-ex). Hence, for Sartre, “nothingness...derive(s) its origin from negative judgment” (*Being and Nothingness* 6). Hence, if one gives a negative answer to a question the person is inferring nothingness with respect to the question.

3. An Analysis of Being and Nothingness in Ibuanyidanda Philosophy

This section focuses on the notion of being and nothingness in *Ibuanyidanda* (complementary) philosophy.

The Notion of Being

Ibuanyidanda is an approach to ontology which wishes to bridge the artificial chasm, and overcome all forms of bifurcating barriers, which the mind imposes on the relationship between substance and its accident (Asouzu, *Ibuanyidanda* 253). It also “explores a method and principles for coalescing the real and the ideal, the essential and the accidental into system of mutual complementing units” (Asouzu, *Ibuanyidanda and the Philosophy of Essence* 101).

This is to say “*Ibuanyidanda* ontology attempts to penetrate and grasp being, and with it ultimate reality through mediation or via the instrumentality of mutual relations” (*Ibuanyidanda and the Philosophy of Essence* 102). In line with this complementary system of thought Asouzu defines being as “*that on account of which anything that exists serves a missing link of reality*” (*Ibuanyidanda and the Philosophy of Essence* 103). Within this context, to be is to be in mutual relationship with other existents. To be is not to be alone (*ka so mu adina*).

Thus, being is located within the context of mutual complementarity of all possible relations in the sense of an existent reality having head and tail end (*ihe di, nwere isi na odu*)- the thing that exists has head and tail end. To be is to have head and tail- end (*ihe di, nwere isi na odu*)

To be in *Ibuanyidanda* ontology is to serve a missing link of reality. To say that something has being according to Asouzu, “entails all the processes that enter into grasping the thing in question meaningfully within a complementary framework” (Asouzu, *Ibuanyidanda* 253). Hence, “what we understand as substance in its relation to accident can be grasped not in the mode of the relationship of an abstract isolated concept to a concrete one” (*Ibuanyidanda* 254). In this ontology, both accident and substance are viewed as inseparable dimensions of being, where substance is used to describe the thing that is most important (*ihe kachasi mkpa*), and accident, the thing that is important (*ihe di mkpa*).

Similarly, to be in *Ibuanyidanda* is to be in control (*ima onwe onye*). Invitalizing the value of *ima onwe onye* (being in control), Asouzu says “in all life situations, all attempts at upholding an authentic existence can be seen as a continuous process of complementary reawakening, conscientious or re-habitualization” (Asouzu, *Ibuanyidanda* 330).

The Idea of Nothingness

We live in a world of contraries, of opposites and so forth. When we talk of being (*ihe di*), our critical minds quickly reflect on what is not (*ihe na adighi*). Hence, the idea of being connotes the opposite idea of non being or nothingness. Once we affirm that there is something (*onwere ihe di*), we on the other hand are confronted with the possibility of nonexistence (*ihe na adighi*).

From the *Ibuanyidanda* ontology so far understood, “any type of ontology begins with identifying contraries as missing links that are in mutual complementary, comprehensive, future-oriented relationship to each other” (*Ibuanyidanda* 262). According to Asouzu, we go beyond saying that “something is” (*odi*) to “underline the fact that it has a head” (*onwere isi*). When this is done, we grasp being as something that has meaning (*onwere isi*) and thus state unequivocally that “it is”.

The above approach, for Asouzu, is applicable when we wish to emphasize that it (existence) is meaningless and as such has no being or existence. We do this by positing that it has no head and tail-end (*onwegi isi, onwegi odu*). That is, we affirm existence by upholding that it has head and tail-end (*onwere isi na odu*). Asouzu argues thus:

Ihe di, nwere isi na odu (thing that exists has head and tail). Hence, to be is to have head and tail-end (*ihe di, nwere isi na odu*) as to have full meaning. To exist is virtually the capacity to have head and tail-end (*ihe di, nwere isi na odu*). (*Ibuanyidanda* 254)

By implication, where it has no head and tail-end (*onwegi isi na odu*), it has no meaning and therefore does not exist-it is nothing. Hence, for Asouzu, something exists if it has meaning in so far as it serves a missing link. Thus Asouzu notes “*within this context, being is understood as that because of which anything that exists serve a missing link of reality*” (*Ibuanyidanda* 251). Therefore it

follows, if existence is negated through meaninglessness (*onwegi isi*) then there is non-existence or nothingness in so far as no missing link is served.

Another way to understand nothingness from *Ibuanyidanda* perspective is to look at existence from its relevance to “other perceiving subjects” (Asouzu, *Ibuanyidanda* 254). First, we designate the thing that is most important (*ihe kachasi mkpa*), not in the abstract, abstruse, exclusivist sense but one existent reality whose being can be grasp in relation to all missing links in reality. *Ihe di kachasi mkpa* (substance) do not stand in “isolation” otherwise it runs the risk of not being known even if it does exist. That is, it cannot be perceived by other subjects. Complementarity demands that a being according to Asouzu “must be perceived by any of the units with which it constitutes a complementary whole relationship” (Asouzu, *Ibuanyidanda* 254), otherwise this brings it to the status of non-being (*ka so mu di*). On the surface, this approach is like the Berkelian claim of “*esse est percipi*” (Omoregbe, *Epistemology* 88) because non existence or nothingness arises when something is not in any perceptible mode as to be in mutual relationship with other beings.

Nothingness can likewise be inferred from the idea of being articulated within the context of “relations” (Asouzu, *Ibuanyidanda* 259) as we apply the methodological approach. For Asouzu, being loses its significance as that which is outside of this relationship disposition. *Ihe nwere isi na odu* (what has head and tail-end) in its existential mode of being serves a missing link where they are mutually inclusive (related). Thus, Asouzu opines “to be is to be in mutual complementary relation (*ka so mu adina*) and its negation is to be alone (*ka so mu di*) and nothing” (*Inaugural Lecture* 42). Being is as such dynamic and in mutual service to each other. Outside this essential rational mode, it has no head and tail-end (*onwegi isi na odu*) because it does not serve a missing link. It follows that such a being does not exist.

Nothingness can moreso connote not being in control. According to Asouzu:

Wherever and whenever the ego has lost the capacity to be self-conscious and assert itself positively in this manner, it has also lost grips of being; it can even be said to have lost sense of its own existence, even if the subject imagines that the contrary could be the case. This loss ensues from the fact negating any missing link in the process of its own self-affirmation entails negating what has head and tail-end (*ihe inwe isi na odu*) in this case, the ego is negating meaning, and in negating meaning, it is directly also negating being, the foundation of its own existence. (*Ibuanyidanda* 332)

Furthermore, nothingness can be inferred from Asouzu's attempt in his complementary reflection to rehabilitate the idea of being in a way to salvage it from Aristotle's bifurcation. According to Asouzu, "the complementary ontology wishes to bridge the artificial chasms, and overcome all forms of barrier which the mind imposes on the relationship between substance and accident" (*Ibuanyidanda* 252). From the above quotation, it is clear that substance and accidents are viewed as inseparable constituents of being, where substance is used to designate the thing that is most important (*ihe kachasi mkpa*), and accident, the things that are important (*ihe di mkpa*). Both substance and accidents do not exist independent of each other, they exist side by side. Hence for them to exist independently implies non-being or nothingness.

4. A Critique of Sartre's Notion of Being and Nothingness from the Perspective of Ibuanyidanda

This section is concerned with comparing Sartre's ontology and Complementary Ontology, and the idea of nothingness: Sartre versus Asouzu.

The Notion Being: Comparing Sartre and Asouzu

The notion of being which constitutes a metaphysical problem in philosophy is believed to be bifurcating and polarizing in nature. It is this problem that Sartre desired to overcome as he argues that:

The dualism of being and appearance is no longer entitled to any legal status within philosophy. The appearance refers to the total series of appearance and not to a hidden reality which would draw to itself the existent... being will be disclosed to us by some kind of immediate access-boredom, nausea, etc., and ontology will be the description of the phenomenon of being as it manifests itself; that is, without intermediary. (*Being and Nothingness* xxi, xxiv)

By this Sartre is saying that there is no distinction between being and its appearance and no demarcation between being and its manifestation. This is to say the objects of phenomenon are beings and do not point to or represent being.

Notwithstanding this good move of Sartre to present a notion of being devoid of bifurcation and polarization, he falls into the same problem by asserting that being is purely that which manifest itself, that is, he restricts being to the physical aspect of being devoid of any spiritual aspect. This is like Aristotle's bifurcation of being into substance and accident and identifying being with substance devoid of accident. But the distinction between Sartre and Aristotle is that while Aristotle identifies being with substance which is an abstract entity, Sartre identified being with concrete entity without anything abstract. This notion of being as already stated is bifurcating and polarising since it elevates an aspect of being (concrete) over the other (abstract). This, for Asouzu, cannot be true connotation of being. For Asouzu, being is located within the context of mutual complementarity of all possible relation in the sense of an existent reality having head and tail-end (*ihe di nwere isi na odu*). Hence, to be is to have a head and a tail-end. Just like Asouzu criticized and reconstructed Aristotles' bifurcating and polarising notion of being by positing that "what we understand as

substance in its relation to accidents can be grasped not in the mode of the relationship of an abstract isolated concept to a concrete one” (*Ibuanyidanda* 254). Therefore, in this ontology, both substance and accident are viewed as inseparable dimensions of being, where substance is used to describe the thing that is most important (*ihe kachasi mkpa*), and accident, the thing that is important (*ihe di mkpa*). This can likewise be used to critic and reconstruct Sartre’s notion of being wherein the concrete aspect of being is what is more important (substance-*ihe kachasi mkpa*) devoid of the abstract aspect of being-what is important (accident-*ihe di mkpa*). In the opinion of Asouzu, this is not true since being is that which consists of substance and accident which are in mutual complementary relationship to each other, it follows that being is that which is composed of abstract and concrete dimensions of being that is in mutual complementary relationship. Thus, just as Asouzu holds that being consist of head (*isi*) and tail-end, (*odu*), wherein the head may be Sartre’s concrete aspect of being and the tail-end may be his abstract aspect of being, there is no how that one can talk about the concrete aspect of being without conceiving the abstract aspect of being. This can also be explained using Asouzu’s principle of integration which reads thus: “anything that exists serves a missing link of reality” (*Ibuaru* 221). This two dimensions of being are not just in mutual complementary relationship but are complementing each other in order to be meaningful just as Asouzu posits that a thing is only meaningful when it has head and tail-end (*onwere isi onwere odu*). Hence, in the reconstructing of Sartre’s notion of being using Asouzu’s thought it can be said that being is that which comprises of essence (*isi*) and appearance (*odu*).

Sartre also bifurcates being into two parts as he notes that being is of two kinds, namely, being-in-itself and being for itself. Not only did he bifurcate being, he also elevates an aspect of being (being - for -itself) above the other aspect (being-in-itself), by saying that being-in-itself is massif, full, unconscious and inactive whereas

being-for-itself is conscious and active. Hence, he articulates all his philosophical, metaphysical and ontological thought on being-for-itself. It is worthy of note that according to Sartre, being-in-itself is complete and therefore do not need being-for-itself for it to be complete. This implies that it does not serve a missing link of reality and does not exist in mutual complementary relationship with being-for-itself. This, in the view of Asouzu is not true, for if anything is in isolation, it stands a risk of not being known or not having any meaning (i.e., it becomes meaningless). Hence, following Asouzu's notion of being of which to be is to be in mutual complementary relationship, for being-in-itself to exist or be in existence it must be in mutual complementary relationship with being-for-itself. This is the only time when being-in-itself can be said to be meaningful.

Furthermore, Sartre's elevation of being-for-itself above being-in-itself contradicts Asouzu's truth and authenticity criterion which states that "never elevates any world immanent missing link to an absolute instance" (Ibuaru 197; Ikwa Ogwe 219). What Sartre has done is that he has elevated being-for-itself to an absolute instance and therefore sees it as what is more important (*ihe kachasi mkpa*). This cannot be, for Asouzu, since one cannot conceive what is most important (*ihe kachasi mkpa*) in a vacuum, it must be conceived in relation to what is important (*ihe di mkpa*). Hence, being-for-itself must be conceived in relation to being-in-itself in terms of mutual dependence.

5. Nothingness: Sartre versus Asouzu

Following traditional ontology, when one talks about being what comes next into mind is non-being or nothingness. This is probably due to the fact that we live in the world of contraries, opposites etc. Being is believed by traditional ontologists to be opposed by nothingness. This is to say being and nothingness are contrary and opposed to each other. This position of traditional ontology leaves a question of whether nothingness is found outside or inside of

being? Many ontologists hold that nothingness is outside of being since it is the negation of being. But both Sartre and Asouzu hold a very different position that nothingness is not found outside of being; it is inherent in being. Nothingness cannot be seen as the negation of being but involves the negation of being.

For Sartre, nothingness is identical with being i.e., being-for-itself (human being). It is the human being. It is what differentiates human being...human being is not the same as the rest of being but is distinguished from it by a separating nothingness (Barnes, Sartre's ontology – Cambridge. Org/extrac%3fid%3Dcc...). This nothingness, for Sartre, does not exist outside a conscious being. Hence, he notes, "human reality is being in so far as within its being and for its being is the unique foundation of nothingness at its heart" (Sartre, *Being and Nothingness* 78,79). By this Sartre is saying that nothingness is a reality that exists within an isolated being.

The above position of Sartre on nothingness is on the surface closely related to Asouzu's notion of nothingness. It is glaring that for Sartre nothingness is at the heart of the isolated being-for-itself; it is found within it. But for Asouzu, who defines being as "to be is to be in mutual complementary relationship (ka so mu adina) and its negation is to be alone (ka so mudi)" (*Inaugural Lecture* 43). Nothingness or "non-being will mean to be alone" (Ozumba, *Integrative Humanism and Complementary Reflection* 151). This is to say, for Asouzu, to be alone (*ka so mu di*) is not to be in mutual complementary relationship. Following Asouzu's remark closely, being, "the act of existing (*Idi*) (is) misunderstood as the capacity to be alone (*ka so mu di*)" (*Ibuanyidanda and the Philosophy of Essence* 95), for Sartre. In other words, isolated being-for-itself, which Sartre argues that exist through negating the existence of other being or reality, cannot exist. This is because no being can exist outside the context of "relations" (Asouzu, *Ibuanyidanda* 259).

Thus, Asouzu further remarks that “being is that on account of which anything that exists serves a missing link of reality” (*Ibuanyidanda* and *Philosophy of Essence* 103). If anything does not serve a missing link it cannot be being. For, it cannot be meaningful since it is outside the context of serving a missing link of reality. This is what Sartre’s being-for-itself, which carries nothingness within it depicts. Sartre’s being-for-itself is a being that does not serve a missing link of reality; such a being is meaningless according to Asouzu, it is nothingness or non-existence in so far as no missing link is served by being-for-itself. Also, such a being cannot be known since it is in isolation, even if it does exist. This is because for Asouzu, being “must be perceived by any of the units with which it constitutes a complementary whole relationship” (*Ibuanyidanda* 254). This lack of being-for-itself being perceived by other being due to its negating power brings it to the status of non-being (*Ka so mu di*). This is to say non-existence or nothingness arises when something is not in any perceptible mode as to be in mutual relationship with each other. Going by Asouzu’s notion of nothingness which is built on the negation of his definitions of being such as: “being in mutual complementary relationship”, “serving a missing link of reality” “having meaning within a context of mutual relations” and “being perceived by other being in existence”, Sartre’s being-for-itself cannot exist talk-less of being the source of nothingness in the world. For according to Gorgias of Leontini, nothing comes from nothing. And being cannot arise from nothingness or non-being as posited by Parmenides.

6. Conclusion

It is pertinent to state here that for Asouzu, every discrete existent being is incomplete and insufficient in itself and for itself but is in need of complementation of others in the same whole. It is in this context that it is apparent that no individual can exist alone just as no isolated being can. This view of Asouzu is better captured in the words of Ozumba which reads thus “it seems that the

individual thing – (ka so mu di) to be alone, does not constitute being but only individual in complementary relationship with other individual can constitute being (ka so mu adina). This brings one to the understanding that no one or individual can be considered to be absolute. This is truly what is expressed in Asouzu's truth and authenticity criterion which states that "never elevate any world immanent missing link to an absolute instance" (*"Ibuanyidanda" and the Philosophy of Essence* 105). In this way, one can say that just as being-for-itself should not be elevated to an absolute instance since it is serving a missing link to being-in-itself and vice versa, no individual or group should be elevated as such for there are all serving missing links and are in mutual service to one another. Likewise, all human beings exist in mutual dependence and interdependence. For outside of this nothing exists.

WORKS CITED

Aristotle. *Metaphysics*. Trans. W. D. Ross. Oxford: Clarendon, 1947. Print.

Asouzu, Innocent I. *Effective Leadership and the Ambivalence of Human Interest: The Nigerian Paradox in a Complementary Perspective*. Calabar: University of Calabar, 2003. Print.

- - -. "Ibuanyidanda and the Philosophy of Essence". *Filosofia Theoretica: An African Journal of Invention and Ideas.1.1*. Calabar: Jochrisam, (Dec. 2011). 79-118. Print.

- - -. *Ibuanyidanda and the Philosophy of Essence (Philosophy, the Science of Missing Links of Reality)*. 50th Inaugural Lecture, University of Calabar. Calabar: University of Calabar, 2012. Print.

- - -. *Ibuanyidanda: New Complementary Ontology, Beyond World-Immanentism, Ethnocentric Reduction and Imposition*. London: transaction, 2007. Print.

- - -. *Ibuaru: The Heavy Burden of Philosophy Beyond African Philosophy*. London: Transaction, 2007. Print.

- - -. *Ikwa Ogwe: Essential Readings in Complementary Reflection (A Systematic Methodological Approach)*. Calabar: Saesprint, 2007. Print.

- - -. "Progress in Metaphysics: The Phenomenon of 'Missing Link' and Interdisciplinary Communication" *Calabar Journal Liberal Studies.2.2*. Calabar: University of Calabar, (December, 1990).*** Print.

- - -. *The Method and Principles Complementary Reflection in and Beyond African Philosophy*. Calabar: University of Calabar, 2004. Print.

Barnes, Hazel E. "Sartre's ontology". *The Cambridge Companion to Sartre*. Ed. Christian Howell. Cambridge: Cambridge University, 1992. Cambridge Collections Online. Web. 20 August 2012.

Daugherty, Kenneth F. *Metaphysics: An Introduction to the Philosophy of Being*. New York: Graymoor, 1965. Print.

Iroegbu, Pantaleon. *Metaphysics: The Kpim of Philosophy*. Owerri: International University, 1995. Print.

- John, Elijah Okon. "Sartre the Popularizer of Existentialism" *Critical Essays on Phynemenology & Essentialism*. Eds. G. O. Ozumba, M, Uka & T. E. Ogar. Calabar: Jochrisam, 2010. 147-160. Print.

Olafson, F. A. "Sartre, Jean-Paul". *The Encyclopedia of Philosophy*. Vol. 7. New York, 1967. Print.

Omeregbe, Joseph I. *Epistemology (Theory of Knowledge): A Systematical and Historical Study*. Lagos: Joja, 2009. Print.

Oyeshile. Olatunji A. "Sartre's Ontology and the Subjectivity of the Individual". *The Great Philosophers*. Ed. Godfrey O. Ozumba. Vol. 11. Aba:AAU, 1997. 182-202. Print.

Sahakian, Willam S. *Outline-History of Philosophy*. New York: Barnes and Noble, 1969. Print.

"Sartre's Existentialism" [Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy] 13 Oct 2004 www.iep.uy.edu/sartre-ex/ Web. 20/05/2012.

Sartre, Jean-Paul. *Basic Writings*. Eds. Stephen Priest, Taylor Routledge and Francis Group. London: 2001. Print.

Sartre, Jean-Paul. *Being and Nothingness*. Trans. Hazel E. Barnes. Introduction by Mary Warnock. London: Methuen, 1958.

- - -. *Essays in Existentialism*. New Jersey: The Citadel, 1977. Print.

- - -. *Existentialism is a Humanism*, Trans. By Friedmann Bernard, New York: Philosophical Library, 1947. Print.

- - -. *Nausea*, Trans. Lloyd Alexander. New York: New direction, 1964. Print.

Wallace, William A. *the Elements of Philosophy*. New York: St. Paul's, 1977. Print.

Warnack, Mary. *Existentialism*. Oxford: Oxford University, 1970. Print.

Witheral Arthur “The Zero Ontology: David Peerce on why Anything Exist” www.hedweb.com/witherall/zeroontology. Web. 20/05/2012.

www.philo.com/philosophical... Web. 08/06/2012

THE PRINCIPLE OF “REFL-ACTION” AS THE BASIS FOR A CULTURE OF PHILOSOPHY IN AFRICA

Joseph N. Agbo

*Senior Lecturer, Department of Philosophy,
Ebonyi State University, Abakaliki, Nigeria*

Email: jeocoagbo@yahoo.com; jeocoagbo@gmail.com

1. Introduction

This essay is a child of deep and concerned worry that the continent of Africa, the acknowledged “cradle of civilization”, has continued to sink deeper into the myth of the “civilizing mission”. Africa’s cultural fixation has refused to be amenable to both piecemeal and holistic solutions. This paper argues that the concern of philosophy in Africa in the past 3 or 4 decades has centered on the philosophy of culture, but that the greatest challenge facing contemporary philosophy in Africa is for Philosophers and other scholars to develop a culture - “culture of philosophy”. This imperious need for a culture of philosophy would be brought about by the principles of “refl-action” – thinking-to-act! The paper argues that in the philosophy of culture, philosophers have spent time, energy and intellectual resources “reflecting” on culture. However, the paper suggests that the best way to UNDERSTAND all we have done within the sphere of the “philosophy of culture” is to DEVELOP a “culture of philosophy” the essay shows that the type of rot and decay in Africa demands that philosophy bridges the hiatus between violence and passivity in order to motivate the kind of reasoned-action from the citizenry, which would bounce the continent out of inferiority complex social-political fixation, forever. This would make philosophy in Africa to transform from a *discipline* (or a subject) *into a way-of-life*. And what does culture mean but the way of both essence and existence for and of a people?

Philosophy, academic philosophy, is a trapped discipline; trapped in its own vicissitudes. Academic philosophy has become an attempt to enthrone controversy and weirdness in an attempt to remain relevant. Unfortunately for us in Africa, many of us have been caught-up in the spinning web of the theoreticians, while some of those that navigate towards praxis in their thoughts and writings have no idea how that praxis would become practical productive purpose. The saddest part of our scholarship odyssey is that some of us are still trying to outdo the western scholars in clumsy, difficult and unintelligible diction. Unlike the Cartesian desire for “clear and distinct” perception, we have tended to imagine that it is more philosophical when it is more sophisticatedly couched in bombastic words (am I falling into the same pit?)

In his book, *The Method and Principles of Complementary Reflection In And Beyond African Philosophy*, Innocent I. Asouzu captures the need to draw a synergy between ideas and action in the following words:

The ultimate aim of any authentic philosophizing subsists, therefore, in changing ideas such that through the possession of new and better ideas, human beings can affect changes in the world through their actions . . . expressions can easily turn to empty and worn out cliches unless we are able to translate these ideas into action and match words with deeds. (6,10)

There is no doubt that Asouzu here displays, like some of us, that we are students of Karl Marx, who, in the 11th of his *Theses On Feuerbach* had written that “the philosophers have only interpreted the world, in various ways; the point, however, is to change it” (65). If there is anywhere this “change” should transit from “made-point” to ‘carried out action’, it is in Africa, where political, religious, economic, scholarly, in fact, cultural processes and institutions have been deliberately created to encourage (and sustain) a culture of docility, indifference, ignorance, surrender

and fear. For over four decades, philosophizing in Africa has been a battle over/with/about culture, especially Africa's own cultures. While we lamishly accepted western cultures as their philosophies, it took time, excruciating efforts and energy to bring our own to the lofty pedestal erected by academic philosophy. This essay would briefly look at some of those things we had to do in order to "show" or "prove" that Africa "has" a philosophy. Our discussion thereby would not submit that it was unnecessary while it lasted. Rather our interest would be to note that what Africa needs now is no longer a philosophy of culture (a philosophizing on culture), but a culture of philosophy. This desire and demand for a culture of philosophy is given a fillip by the cultural ("culture" understood in its totality) fixation and quagmire which Africa finds herself, and (more importantly) by both the perpetrating and the victims. Their lamentations there so been have permeating and recurrent that they have almost acquired the status of being solutions *as such!* It has become such that to solve a problem in Africa, all you need is to complain and lament about it!!! It has become a refrain in the dirge over Africa-he acknowledged cradle civilization.

Of course, a part of this essay will (unfortunately, inevitably, and painfully) capture some of what we have called "cultural fixation". But the difference is that it would do so by looking at the institutions, processes, structures, and occurrences that have conspired to maintain this state of affairs in Africa. The aim of the seeming rehash of what we all know, and which gnaws at the liver of the citizens of Africa is to note specific areas and issues which make a culture of philosophy inevitable. David Walsh, in his paper, "Reflections on the Nature of Modernity" writes about 'making efforts to break free of the tyranny of conventional perspectives. "Without such detachment we run the danger of misreading or disrespecting the prolific historical studies available to us" (107). And the truth is that the

tenacious hold of “conventional perspectives” on our psyche has been overbearing. Some of our musings in this essay may appear unconventional, even unorthodox, but they are geared towards motivating actions, actions grounded on practical attitudes. Like the postmodernists, we call for a thousand flowers to bloom; we call for pluralism; instead of subjecting ourselves to the hegemony of modernity.

After capturing in brief the characteristics and content of the philosophy of culture, we shall proceed to expose and explore the cultural fixation in Africa. We believe that the philosophy of culture, we shall proceed to expose and explore the cultural fixation in Africa. We believe that the philosophy of culture has circulated around the truncated activities of *interpreting* and *analyzing* our cultural fixation, when we believe that only a clear statement of *what to do* and *how to do it* is required to bounce us out of inferiority complex, forever. We equally believe that philosophy is (obviously and inevitably) crucial in this attempt. However, for philosophy to play this role successfully, it must transit from its questioning and interrogating of culture to become a culture as such.

However, while the philosophy of culture has largely been undertaken via reflection, the culture of philosophy is anchored on our novel philosophizing principle of “refl-action”, the “think-to-do” principle. This principle is not absolute, but it is ultimate enough to constitute the basis for the type of conscious action required for *change* in our condition. We hope to significantly get the African to “think downwards”; that is, to think towards his hands and legs. In other words, to think actionable thoughts, instead of just lamenting. This paper discusses the strategies and the institutions that can help create this culture of philosophy/philosophizing in Africa. Refl-action harmonizes and bridges the lacuna between idea and matter. In the process of reflection on idea and matter, a hiatus usually appear in the sequence; refl-action

transforms (or better still, transfers) the former into the latter, and makes the former a concrete objectivized reality. On the other hand, refl-action enables matter to provide for idea a basis/ground/focus for thought, without which thoughts would not only be concept-less, but equally content-less.

2. Philosophy of Culture

In a recent essay, “A Re-Evaluation of the Relation Between Culture and Philosophy”, we have ruminated on (questioned) the ground upon which we stood to make the usually sweeping statement: “culture is not philosophy”. Our hermeneutic and phenomenological analysis of this expression showed that if we swallow that position, hook-line-and-sinker, if we accept it without modification and exception, while of course, agreeing with the proposition that “philosophy can be culture”, we could find ourselves, in many instances, with the bizarre conclusion that “philosophy cannot be philosophy”! The relation between culture and philosophy has been the subject of philosophical reflection for a long time, especially in Africa, during the dawn of the famous Great Debate on the possible existence of African philosophy.

The understanding of “philosophy” in terms of an academic discipline that arrived in Africa only via the ship of colonial education, helped to both encourage and discourage different perceptions of the relationship between culture and philosophy. In an attempt to prove to the Caucasians that philosophy is not an academic discipline, that philosophy is a critical reflection on the problem of existence in any and every society, some African philosophers were compelled to beat a sort of intellectual retreat to pristine Africa in search of philosophical specimen, which would show that traditional Africa, uninterrupted by slavery and colonialism, also “had” or “did” philosophy. And in doing so, cultural elements became readymade conceptual tools. It was a response to the exigency of the time. However, the results were not absolute truths!

On the other hand, the return to traditional Africa in search of philosophy by the modern professional philosophers led to the rejection of cultural elements from yore by the analytic modern African philosophers and western philosophers, on the ground that they were mere myths, legends and dynastic fables.

Olusegun Oladipo was one African philosopher that tried to bridge the divide between the “traditionalists” and what he called “the analytic challenges. In his book, *The Idea of African Philosophy*, he argues that although the African should not surrender to ‘cultural imperialism’, he should also recognize the fact that his culture could be assessed with alien frameworks. He separates two issues relating to the attitude of the African philosopher to his people’s heritage. For him:

The two issues which the traditionalist conflate are the question of whether modern African philosophers should be engaged in the study of the traditional beliefs of their people and that of whether there is any justification in employing so-called alien criteria in assessing these beliefs. (52)

He grants the traditionalists the right to pursue the first issue, but on the second, he argues that traditional beliefs/ cultures should submit to assessment by alien conceptual criteria. Of course, the former relates to philosophy as a cultural particularity and philosophy as a universal activity.

However, Oladipo’s insistence that African culture submit to alien assessment meets with a paradox: the attempt to bring African philosophy into a universality by allowing it submit to alien evaluation is not done via a universal criterion/criteria; the evaluation is carried out by another philosophy “born of” another culture; that is, it is done with a particular cultural framework. However, this paradox is not a condemnation to the radical relativism that makes communication and dialogue impossible. What we reject, because of the conflicts which regimentation has

engendered globally in the past is a situation where one culture becomes a measuring moral ruler for the others. Assessment, appraisal and evaluation are better done by each culture, but on the basis of our common humanity.

We have decided to behave like postmodernists and save ourselves the torture of definitions, especially of philosophy and culture. We may, like Socrates, feign ignorance and say that we do not know what both philosophy and culture mean, but that we have ideas of what they may mean, which we can only lay bare in the process of our discussion. Culture is so total (and totalizing) that it appears to embody everything. Do we go way back to 1871 and to Edward B. Taylor's conception of culture as a "complex whole" (7, *Primitive Culture*)? Or should we go with Clyde Kluckhohn and Alfred I. Kroeber in their conception of culture as "patterns, explicit and implicit, of and for behaviour acquired and transmitted by symbols, constituting the distinct achievement of human groups . . ." (357, *Culture: A Critical Review of Concepts and Definitions*)? But our interest is not really to join the infinite horizon of definition and understanding of what the term "culture" is. That would be an endless search. In the paper, "On the Question of Culture: A Critical Examination of the Odo and Ezeugwu Cults in Enugu State, Nigeria" as well as in the book, *Odo Occultism in Enugu State: Confronting A Contrasting Culture*, I have tried to capture some of the nuances in the conception of culture. However, according to William Sweet, in his "Human Rights, Social Responsibilities, and the Preservation of Cultures".

By "culture" I do not mean just the artistic and intellectual work of a group, or ethnicity or race; culture also includes that group's customs, its mores and moral principles, its laws, its manner of educating its citizens and its understanding of the nature of the spiritual life. Moreover, culture is not simply that which exists in a group or society at a particular moment. It is something that refers

to the past, characterizes the present, and which normally is open to a future and thus is dynamic and growing. (20)

Our interest here is to note the fact that philosophy in Africa has been a battle with and over culture. Isaac Ukpokolo states it obviously when he titles his work *Philosophy Interrogates Culture!* Of course, his main purpose is to show that philosophy is the standard meter for measuring reality, and if it can “interrogate” culture, of all totalizing realities, it means it can as well interrogate the present by forwarding and *backwarding* to the future and the past, respectively. Or doesn’t philosophy interrogate divinity? And even absurdity? To “interrogate” is to “question closely and aggressively”, and it creates the mental picture of a boss “demanding” immediate, unequivocal answer from a subordinate. But philosophy did not just interrogate culture in Africa; African philosophy had to fight a war of survival, not just interrogation, with its western variant. The latter vehemently argued that the former became possible when it (the latter) arrived via the instrumentality of colonial education. Or have we forgotten so soon that E.A. Ruch, in his popular essay, “Is There An African Philosophy?” had spoken of “a more future-oriented philosophy, based on past history and traditions . . .” (19) that would create the possibility of an African philosophy, rather than what he derogatorily referred to as “the details of ancient myths and anthropological peculiarities of African rituals and social structures . . .” (20).

The “why” and “how” of the idea of culture (philosophy of culture) created a gigantic edifice of philosophizing that dissipated a lot of energy on concepts/terms, with each trying to outdo and out pace the other, in a bid to present the best interpretation and understanding of the various issues that occupied our thoughts and demanded attention. For e.g., in his “Phenomenology and the Exposition of African Traditional Thought” Barry Hallen notes how the concept of “Traditional society” was a problem to those

caught up in the web of the phenomenology of Husserl's type. He examines the role that the descriptive tilt of the phenomenologist could play "in helping to describe or characterize traditional thought" (68). With his examination of the transcendent universalism inherent in Husserl and the idea of *experiencing* as the universal and necessary characteristics of every one categorized as "human being", which is characteristic in existentialist phenomenology, Hallen concludes that "by combining these with other phenomenological methods, it is possible to produce a novel and potentially valuable approach to the exposition of African traditional thought, and indeed all human beliefs. This approach is provisionally called "*cultural thematics*" (69, italics Hallen's). Of course, we see here that, although Hallen is trying to speak for the so-called "traditional thought", we notice a heavy dose of westernization in this attempt. Again, it does appear that the distinction between "thought" and 'philosophy'" was of imperious necessity then.

This is the nature of the *philosophy of culture Africana*: a descent (or is it degeneration?) into playing with words, a "battle" of some sort, over culture. In a relatively recent conference (2010) Hallen, again continues the battle with concepts, especially in relation to Africa. In his presentation, "More than the Sum of its Parts: Holism in the Philosophy of Emmanuel Onyekwere Osigwe Anyiam-Osigwe", he battles an explication of words like holism, globalization, etc., in an attempt to consider whether Africa is tilting towards individualism, *a la* West.

No wonder, in his interesting essay, "The Need for Conceptual Decolonization in African Philosophy", Kwasi Wiredu calls for an avoidance or reversal of what he (negatively) referred to as "the conceptual frameworks embedded in the foreign philosophical traditions that have had an impact on African life and thought"; while on the positive side, he sees the idea of conceptual decolonization as "exploiting as much as judicious the resources

of our own indigenous conceptual schemes in our philosophical meditations on even the most technical problems of contemporary philosophy” (22). Listing a plethora of about 58 concepts, Wiredu gives a recipe for decolonization to the African: “Try to think them through in your own African language . . .” (23). But unfortunately, as he notes, many African thinkers are not competent in their own indigenous languages!

There are several expressions of such battles over culture via the philosophical axis, but our interest is that over and above the philosophy of culture is the need, an urgent need, to develop philosophy itself into a culture; that is; to develop a culture of philosophizing in Africa, which would affect the entire gamut of culture itself-politics, economy, religion, etc. However, before this, we have to (painfully and briefly) capture certain of the conditions in Africa that have made the development of a culture of philosophy inevitable.

3. Africa’s Cultural Fixation

How I wish I do not have to write this section! This is because Africa’s cultural problems have become the refrain of a dirge song in (dis) honour of a ravaged continent. But should we not continue singing this song until we see definite changes in the destiny of the “cradle of civilization”? That Africa is in social, economic and political quagmire is very much obvious. Also, certain reasons have been advanced for this state of affairs — some sociological, some historical, some philosophical, some even biological and religious.

Of course, all the “whys” for Africa’s deplorable condition does (and indeed should) depend on what Stephen Korner, in his, *Metaphysics: Its Structures and Functions*, calls “immanent metaphysics”, which refers to the principles to which propositions about the world must conform to for acceptability. The desire to transform the beliefs of one’s subjectivity into intersubjectivity

constitutes one's "transcendent metaphysics". I do not intend to offer any explanation, interpretation or (understanding that will essay to be intersubjective, or to be truth. The important thing is that it is acceptable to me; and if it is acceptable to the "other", or "some other", it would only make it more acceptable and not more truthful. After all, in *Anarchy, State and Utopia*, Robert Nozick had written that "the usual way of presenting philosophical works puzzles me. Works of philosophy are written as though their authors believe them to be the absolutely final words on their subjects" (xii). If what I am saying is understood, whether accepted, believed or rejected, my job would have been done. But I hope to transfer them from subjectivity to intersubjectivity.

The historical reason for Africa's state of cultural fixation is hinged on the twin humiliation of slavery and colonialism. These two stages Africa's existence have become ready-made "romanticized" excuses for why we have not been to (and sometimes will not) go beyond our present state. But how long will this lamentation last? Are we the only people who are always in a "learning process", but who never learns anything? Will someone who remains in Class 1 after ten years be still seen as being in a learning "process" or was India not colonized? Although, these two epochs had (still have) monumental impact on Africa's mental and physical development, we must note that they (especially slavery) did not just "happen" from without. They were propelled and standardized by accomplices from within. In *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa*, Walter Rodney captures this in the following words:

The question as to who and what is responsible for African underdevelopment can be answered at two levels. Firstly, the answer is that the operation of the imperialist system bears major responsibility for African economic retardation by draining African wealth and making it impossible to develop more, rapidly the resources of the continent. Secondly, one has to deal with those

manipulated the system and those who are either agents or unwitting accomplices of the said system.. None of responsibility for development form the shoulder of Not Africa only are there African accomplices inside the imperialist system, but every African has a responsibility to understand the system and work for its over throw. (33-34)

To continue our current spate of lamentation is to join the betrayal of some of our fathers. Unfortunately, about 40 years after Rodney wrote these lines, we have not only “not overthrown” the “system”, we have joined in building it into a fortress. This construction has been boosted by the activities of the “black skin, white mask” (apologies to Frantz Fanon) who took over leadership, nay rulership, at the dawn of- independence in almost all African states. For Chinweizu, in *The West and the Rest of us*, backwardness and weakness are man-made. And the contributions of Africans, past and present, to our backwardness today cannot be honestly and fruitfully erased from consciousness and our polemics” (399).

In my paper, “The Crisis of Identity and the Quest for Development in Africa: The Place of Leadership in creating in Creating a Culture”, I had laid the fault of the lack of development in Africa squarely on the type of those that politically manage African States. Citing examples with the founding fathers of the United State of America (Washington, Jefferson, Adams) and Abraham Lincoln (the civil war leader) as well as the Meij Dynasty of Japan, I noted how sheer leadership skill and commitment to the future bounced the two nations out of looming underdevelopment. The leadership question in Africa is made critically worrisome by the “imported” democratic system we operate. In fact, it is impossible for the democratic system to throw-up the type of leadership that is required to arrest the cultural decay bedeviling the continent; not with leaders who are changing their countries’ constitutions to enable them return to the

era of the Bandas, Mobutus, Eyademas, etc of yesteryears, not with leaders who siphon their countries resources abroad, not with leaders who deliberately create situations of injustice and then turn around to vote billions for security, not with leaders who have privatized governance in order to corner the profits there-from in the manner of Democracy's twin brother, Capitalism. In my essay, "Mercenaries in Governance: Towards a Philosophy of Punishment for Africa's Development", I had argued that the level of decay in Africa requires a Leviathan-like leader to arrest it, since the level of "kleptomanism" in Africa and the culture of impunity that characterized political and beaureacrat servants are similar to (if not worse than) the situation in the Hobbesian "state of nature" I further argued that the manipulative irrationality of democratic majority would ensure that attempts at "democratic arrest" would always crumble. I therefore, following my principle of maximum self-preservation, suggested that capital punishment for corruption should be retained in Africa. The crucial need for visionary and just leaders comes to the fore when we remember that people do not live life with the kind of rational rigor we express in philosophical works. So, it is the leaders that articulate the heart-beat of the people. Ike Odimegwu, in his book *Philosophic Foundations of Politics* captures this thought when he says that:

A cursory search among the midst of men may discover that few men are mostly aware with the awareness that is conscious of itself Some men are mostly aware with an awareness that is unconscious of itself Most men are mostly unaware with an unawareness that is unconscious of itself— regarding the philosophic principles that form the ground of their lives generally and their politics in particular. (112)

It might be that the people that constitute the first group in Odimegwu's characterization are the ones with the volitional dexterity to follow abstractions, to see what others are not seeing;

in a word, they are the leaders of men. Where are the Martin Luther King Jnr's of our world, who would stand at the Lincoln Memorial on August 28, 1963 (before the famous "March on Washington D.C".) and "Have A Dream" of Barrack Obama in 2009 as the first Blackman to occupy the White House as President of the U.S.A.

4. Between Democracy and Capitalism

In fact, the link between democracy and capitalism is known by any scholar who dares to visit the libraries and devour the literatures available. In my paper, "The Ontological Basis for the Failure of Liberal Democracy in Africa: A Phenomenological Rescue", I had argued that: one, democracy, especially the liberal variant, would continue to fail in Africa because it foists the individualist ontology of the West on the egalitarian, communalist ontology of Africans; and two, that the clamour for Africa to "democratize or be doomed" is actually a subtle way of telling the continent to continue to be "capitalistic or be capitulated"! Democracy has never been and will never be the best form of government — that is if there is anything like the "best" form of government.

The idea of the "best" form of government may have begun with Aristotle's classification of governments into 3: Monarchies, Aristocracies and Democracies. He, however, observed that the issue of which is the best is both cultural and experimental since it must depend on how the men (and women- even though Aristotle didn't believe women should rule) who carryout daily governmental power exercise it. No wonder, in his "Is there a 'Best' of Government?" Karl Loewenstein, argues that the works of sociologists such as Mosca, Pareto, Michels and Weber have shown that "no connection whatsoever exists between form of government (institutional arrangements) and social forces (the objectives for which they are, or can be used).... Both Monarchy and republic, as regards social determinants of political power, can

be and are — militaristic, phitocratic, capitalistic, bureaucratic, oligarchic, feudal” (320). African leaders have fallen for the blackmailing intimidation that democracy is not only the “best” form of government, but a *conditio sine qua non* for development — a position and claim which the Asian Tigers and Japan would debunk with understandable jocularity! As far as I am concern, Liberal democracy and capitalism are veritable sources of Africa’s current cultural grounding. Our continent has become a theatre of economic and political amusement. Imagine this: leaders, deceived by the bogos claim of democracy, turn around and deceive the people, steal the resources that are meant to take care of them, and then turn around to buy up state- owned corporations in the name of privatization and commercialization — two viruses of monopoly capitalism. If everyone would be rational in looking at democracy and capitalism, no one would touch them with a 10-foot pole.

In C.S. Momoh’s syndicated piece, “Critique of Democracy”, he jeered at democracy, by calling it unnatural. For Momoh; In the entire gamut of social relations, matters and issues, democracy seems to be the odd man out. Who talks of democracy in a family or marital relationship? Who talks of democracy in cult matters? Is there any democracy in religion? Where is democracy in employer-employee relations? May be the military can boast of democracy? Or can anyone take a vote to bluff hunger, ageing and death? Even nature is not democratic. (24)

What we are doing is to point out and paint picture of institutions, ideas and practices that have put Africa in a fix which has necessitated the call for a culture of philosophy in the continent. The desire to find solutions to Africa’s ailing existence must go beyond practices because these practices have been founded upon certain ideas and propelled by certain institutions perceived as sacrosanct.

5. The State and the Society

The challenge of capitalism, democracy and leadership appear to centre around the state, while the synergy between it and the society is ignored. Everyone wants to control the state which is in existence for a few people. The Marxists have continued to insist that the state is an instrument of class oppression. And despite the anarchical nature of the Marxist interpretation of the origin and function of the state, their analysis appears, indisputable when we look at the economic situation on ground in Africa. The state has become a “necessary evil”. In Ludwig Feuerbach and *The End of Classical German Philosophy*, Frederick Engels writes that:

The first ideological power over mankind appears to us in the form of the state. Society creates for itself an organ for a safeguarding of its common interests against internal and external attacks. This organ is the State power. Immediately after its birth, this organ makes itself independent vis-à-vis society, and indeed increasingly so, the more it becomes the organ of a particular class and the more directly it enforces the rule of that class. (53)

There is, therefore, a tilt away from society that has become inimical to national integration. The strength of traditional, pre-colonial Africa was societal. In fact only from within the domain of the “societal” can a “culture of ...” anything be created. Only within society is the cultural meaningful and useful. This is why in his *A Matter of Principle*, Ronald Dworkin argues that members of a culture have “a shared vocabulary of tradition and convention” (231). As far as we concerned, the state is a subjective (mental) attempt to describe the “out there” of society. A state apparatus poorly organized and exercised usually would have that poverty revealed by societal forces. These societal forces emerge against negative values created by the state. This is why Frederick Engels, in *Socialism: Utopian and Scientific* writes that “[t]he forces operating in society work exactly like the forces of nature — blindly, violently, and destructively, so long as we fail to understand them and take them into account” (92). Part of the

cause of the crisis within African states is the utter neglect of society, from where and within which the state emerged and thrives, respectively.

6. Pretentious Religiosity

One of the greatest problems facing Africa today is the preponderance of the spirit of religion and the docility which it breeds. The misinterpretation of the place of religion in our society has led to monumental error, deception, and passivity. The error emanates from many religious leaders who patronize government houses, collect cars, land allocations and “brown envelopes” (money), and then keep quiet in the face of unimaginable maladministration. They forget that Jesus had to call Herod a “fox”, not “Your Excellency” (Luke 13:32). Jesus was so annoyed with what he saw in Jerusalem that He did not just try to “pray them out” (like we pretend to do in Africa), He had to take a whip to drive out those merchandising in the Temple (Matt. 21:12-13). It was not just by “preaching” and teaching” that Reverend Martin Luther King Jnr changed America. After preaching and teaching, Luther would normally mobilize Americans non-violent demonstrations and marches. Although, Luther abhors the use of violence, he does not accept docility either. In a paper written before and which appeared shortly after he was assassinated by James Earl Ray in Memphis, Tennessee, on 4th April, 1968, titled “Showdown to Non-Violence”, Luther wrote:

...violence is not only morally repugnant, it is pragmatically barren. We feel that there is an alternative, both to violence and to useless timid supplications for justices. We cannot condone either riots or the equivalent evil of passivity. And we know that non-violent militant action in Selma and Birmingham awakened the conscience of white America and brought a moribund, insensitive congress to life... we are taking action after sober reflection. We have learnt from bitter experience that our government does not correct a race problem until it is confronted directly and

dramatically. We also know, as official Washington may not, that the flash point of Negro rage is close at hand. (65)

The quotation above reveals that the idea of “showdown”, “militancy”, “confrontation”, etc are not strange bedfellows to non-violence. There is nothing that says that Africans must be violent in order to bring about change. All they need, as Luther’s words and works showed, is adequate planning and the preparedness to suffer some degree of inconvenience, or even death. Or, didn’t Luther pay the supreme prize?

Religious deception is used by leaders to cover-up their corrupt activities. Why should religion, a purely private affair, become a state concern? What do all these Pilgrim Boards exist to do? Why must leaders spend public money on pilgrimage? Why are our leaders stealing in the name of God? The result is that the citizens are cajoled into docility and passivity. They are told to “pray” and do nothing else! We are told to “pray for our leaders” and then allow God to punish them! The size of our religious spread is a million kilometers wide and only an inch deep! Religion is used to massage and opiumize our ego and we groan to the gavel as our exploitative rulers jockey for positions and our God-endowed commonwealth. But where are the Elijahs, Isaiahs, John the Baptists, Desmond Tutus, and Tunde Bakares, of Africa? Where can we find the religion of liberation? And the theology of liberation?

However, it does look like there is something religious, something mystical, mysterious, unphysical, other-worldly about Man. The problem does appear to be man’s application, conception and exploitation of that “something”. Walter Rodney argues that “the Christian Church has always been a major instrument for cultural penetration and cultural domination” (32). One of the most shocking observations I ever made was at the Emma Castle in Cape Coast, Ghana. This Castle was the final point from where

millions of Africans were shipped to Europe after being abducted from their land. Yet, high above the Castle was a Church, where the slave masters from Europe pretentiously “worship” God. But have we seen what men do under and in the name of God? Again Rodney puts it clearly when he says:

The Church’s role was primarily to preserve the social relations of colonialism, as an extension of the role it played in preserving the social relations of capitalism in Europe. Therefore, the Christian church stressed humility, docility and acceptance. Ever since the days of slavery in the West Indies, the church had been brought in on condition that it should not excite the African slaves with doctrines of equality before God. In those days, they taught slaves to sing that all things were bright and beautiful, and that the slave master in his castle was to be accepted as God’s work just like the slave living in a miserable hovel and working 20 hours per day under the whip. (32)

In the midst of all these cases and dimensions of cultural fixation, what should Africa do? How do we forge ahead?

7. A Culture of Philosophy

What does it mean to develop “a culture of...” anything and what would be the goal of such developing? To develop a “culture of ...” anything would, of course, require time, institutions and processes. A culture of philosophy will integrate and reiterate our communalist ontology by ensuring that society does not continue to exist in both isolation and overdependence. In this position, we are not imagining that communalism is exclusive to Africa, rather, it is predominant. To create a culture of philosophy is to make philosophy a “societal” affair. But for those who have been weary of the numbness of philosophy, this philosophy (which culture we intend to create) is a “practical” philosophy.

We shall briefly sketch out what is meant by a “culture of philosophy”, then we shall look at the method(s) through which that can be achieved, and finally, we will discuss the Purpose or goal of this “culture”. To create a culture of philosophy is to diffuse the idea, knowledge and content of philosophy or the philosophical throughout a society. This may not be a call for a single culture, but one calling for the domination of a philosophy culture. Here, we are talking about the predominance of philosophy via cultivation. *The Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary, 5th edition*, captures the type of “culture” we mean in the phrase “a culture of philosophy”, when its 3rd understanding of culture renders it as “development through regular, training, exercise, treatment, etc”. This offers us an interpretation of culture that is both localized and broad. It is localized because it is in this context that we talk about, for e.g., a “gay culture” or “student culture”. However, a “philosophy culture” would, perhaps, be the broadest culture characterization available, because in this sense, the comprehensiveness of philosophy and the philosophical, when it is cultured and nurtured, would cobweb the entire society.

By the phrase “culture of philosophy”, we intend to convey the impression that philosophy should become a “common perspective, custom or ethos” of the society. Considering the intricacies and complexities of our modern world, this conception urges philosophy to diffuse from the Ivory Tower to the town. Ronald Dworkin argues that the United States (U.S.) has a single common culture or what he calls “cultural structure”, which he says is based on a “shared language” (232-3). Although what he says is better understood as dominant instead of single culture, he captures what we mean. What we mean is that philosophy should become our culture. That is to say, we need to create that culture of philosophy. According to Will Kymlicka, “for culture to be embodied in social life means that it must be institutionally embodied- in school, media, economy, government, etc” (76).

8. The “How” of a Culture of Philosophy

Kymlicka’s view takes us straight to a consideration of how we can bring about a culture of philosophy in Africa. Through what medium or media can we create the institutions on which a culture of philosophy can be anchored? The school is a potent medium through which the “spirit” of philosophy can be spread. The creation of a culture of philosophy could (for obvious reasons) begin within the schools through the “studying of the discipline called “philosophy”, but it cannot be circumscribed or localized within that discipline, in particular or the schools, in general. In other words, it is neither constitutive nor exhaustive of a school or discipline. In the book, *Philosophic Foundations of Politics*, Ike Odimegwu says that “the fact should be noted that philosophy is, in some sense, not just a subject of study, but also (quoting A.E. Health’s “Introduction” to H. Hawton’s *Philosophy of Pleasure*) “a way of studying all subjects” (33). Our concern, however, is not the studious nature of philosophy, both of itself and other disciplines, but the fact that philosophy does not have to be “studious” in the sense of “bookish” or “schoolish”! For example if we remember that Gabriel Almond, in *Politics of Developing Area*, defines “political culture” as the “psychological dimension of the political system” (253), we understand this to mean the attitudes, beliefs, values, propensities which we develop towards, in and around politics. Philosophical culture, consequently, would refer to the attitudes and beliefs we have about the philosophical. A culture of philosophy involves the development of a certain mindset or attitude towards the philosophical; the later itself referring to the critical, the holistic and the presuppositionless.

However, creating a culture of philosophy from the schools is an inevitable option. But we need to go beyond the level of “General Studies”. Some years ago in Nigeria, the National Universities Commission (NUC) introduced two courses in philosophy which every undergraduate in any Nigerian University must pass in order to graduate. They are GST 102 (Philosophy and Logic) and GST

104 (History and Philosophy of Science). However, owing to certain a pecuniary interest, the latter (GST, 104) has, in many Universities, been hijacked by the Faculty of Science, defeating, in the process, the philosophic (critical) purpose for which it was introduced. Unfortunately in Nigeria, for example, all the students encounter “philosophy” for the first time at the tertiary level. But if we must create a philosophy culture, we need must, at least, begin at the post-primary school level.

Martin F. Asiegbu, for e.g. has wondered why there is such a limited number of Courses dealing with African Philosophy in many Philosophy Departments in Nigeria. He argues, in his paper, “The Paradigmatic Status of Western Philosophy in Africa: Hindrance to the Contextualization of African Philosophy” that the study of African realities are seriously undermined in these Philosophy Departments. But Asiegbu’s worry is of little size! For how many Universities in Northern-Nigeria have Departments of Philosophy? And why do they not have them? The answer is not too far-fetched: philosophy would give the monarchical North a radical jolt, which the conservative society is not willing to accept, accommodate or promote. The implication of this is that to desire, demand and declare a culture of philosophy is to get ready for intellectual and physical battles.

The single most influential institution in our world today is the media. The battle for the institutionalization of a culture of philosophy must equally (and mostly) be waged at the media level—radio, television, telephone, print, internet, etc. Someone once said that the Cable News Network (CNN) has made it impossible for a man and his wife to converse in the privacy of their room! This is a hyperbole expressing the permeating nature of the media. Philosophy in the media would lift the fear of examination prevalent in the schools and then create a free and relaxed atmosphere for the impartation of philosophical knowledge to the citizenry. The idea is to keep invading the citizen’s privacy

through the media with philosophical knowledge until it becomes a way of life. Anita Frankline and Ray Love, in their paper “Whose News? Control of the Media”, says that, “what is considered worth knowing about the world is defined and controlled by the West. And the Media in all its globalized form can be seen as an agent in this enterprise” (546). At least, we can, to some extent, control what goes on air in our media in Africa today. If we remember that the acquisition of knowledge by our post-independent leaders was the singular most-important motivation for decolonization, we see that this point is very germane.

They may not be many in comparison with the population, but the Priests of the Roman Catholic Church are crucial in the creation of this culture. When we check the number of people that listen to them daily and realizing that they all have at least first degree in philosophy, they must be part of this indispensable army of philosophy sensitizers. This would be a more significant mission and goal to pursue, instead of cajoling the people into docility and passivity, and struggling to go for Pilgrimage in Jerusalem with an intensity that dwarfs the desire to go to heaven. No where is in dire need of a theology of liberation more than Africa. Interestingly, the term “Liberation Theology” was first used in 1973 by a Peruvian Roman Catholic Priest, Gustavo Gutierrez, and the whole idea was for the Gospel of Jesus Christ to arise to confront the poverty and oppression that was ravaging Latin America. Although some people in the church rejected the idea of a Theology of liberation they all appear to agree that something sinister is going on in today’s unjust economic and social conditions created by industrialized societies. In their paper, “Towards a New Paradigm for Christian Education in Nigeria”, J.C.A. Agbakoba and Emmanuel Ibuot underscore the central role played by the Catholic Priests in the early missionary days, for the evolution of both Christian and secular education in Nigeria, both at the formal and informal spheres. For them, the Christian education process “ideally aims at building up the totality of the human being,

enabling the individual to function effectively, spiritually, morally, socially, politically, scientifically an according to that person's capabilities" (141). Our contention is that the philosophical dimension of this education; both formally and informally, should become a cardinal part of their preaching, for we need to survive on earth first before going to heaven. These priests should exploit the influence and respect they enjoy from their followers to spread the philosophy "fever" and create the culture of it.

If the priests reach out to those who are within the high and low rungs of the society, the teachers (University lecturers) are saddled with the task of raising the men and women that would control the machinery of the state in the nearest and farthest future. And so, what these youths imbibe while in school will determine, to a large extent, how they would relate to society using the state instrument. They imbibe these things from what we say to them and how we relate to and treat them. Vincent

Harding, writing an "Introduction" to a 2009 edition of Walter Rodney's magnum opus, *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa*, tells us that "with Rodney the life and the work were one, and the life drives us back to recall the essential themes of the work... Rodney envisioned and worked on the assumption that the new development of Africans and other dependent peoples of the 'periphery' would require what he called 'a radical break with the international capitalist system'..." (xii,xiii). Our values must reflect in words and actions, so that the young people can get out of school to rebuild a polity yawning for salvaging. We must not cheat what we teach! We must make our listeners and readers politically aware, sensitive and active. We must get them to get involved, to "do something"!

9. Refl-action and the Culture of Philosophy

This leads us to consider the crux of this paper — the purpose for a culture of philosophy. A culture of philosophy is necessary because the philosophy of culture has been “interpreting” culture, but for us in Africa, we need to “change” culture! The culture of philosophy is built around the practical philosophical principle of “refl action”. To “refi-act” is to think to act. It is to “think-downwards”, not to “think upwards”! It is a commitment to think-out a practical solution, to think of what to do, how and when to do it. Refi-action is not to think before acting, neither is it unguided action! It is an admission that thoughts without action or thinking without acting is docility while acting without (simultaneously) thinking is foolhardiness and arbitrariness! In his book, *The Method and Principles of Complementary Reflection*, Innocent I. Asouzu writes that the goal of any philosophizing or philosopher is to be “capable of translating changed ideas into action..., in changing ideas such that through the possession of new better ideas human beings can effect changes in the world through their actions”(6).

The crucial role “refl-action” would play in developing the type of philosophy culture through which Africa would change for the better, becomes evident when we remember Heidegger’s musings on “thinking”. For Heidegger, in his “What is called Thinking”? Heidegger argues that sometimes, it may happen that “man wants to think, but can’t” (345). It is the desire to “act”, to “do something” that gets us thinking. Our interest, however, is not just on “what is called thinking” but on “what calls for thinking?” What calls for thinking is actionable things, issues, experiences, etc. written between (1944 and 1945) at a period when the world was at war (World War II 1939-1945), some of Heidegger’s thoughts are explicitly relevant for us in Africa today! For him:

What is most thought-provoking? How does it show itself in our thought provoking time? Most Thought-Provoking is that we are

still not thinking- not even yet, although the state of the world is becoming constantly more thought-provoking. True, this course of events seems to demand rather that man should act without delay, instead of speeches at conferences and international conventions and never getting beyond proposing ideas on what to be, and how it ought to be done. What is lacking, then, is action, not thought. (346)

From the above, it is obvious that this is what is facing Africa today, how to go beyond meetings, conventions, grand-speeches and more thoughts, to articulate actions.

The *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary*, 5th edition, defines “reflect” in various ways but it is the 4th definition that is important for our discussion: “to consider or think deeply about something”; and goes on to define “reflection” as “long and careful consideration of something”. In the “philosophy of culture”, we have been involved in a tortuous and long consideration of the challenges in Africa. We have been in “deep thoughts”, without results. It does appear that these thoughts have been what they are – just thoughts, mere speculating thoughts about the nature, dimension, causes, etc of Africa’s crisis. It is time, therefore, for us to move from “refl-ection” to refl-action”, i.e., to “think -to-do”! This should be the dawn of a “culture of philosophy”.

The major difference between philosophy in Africa and in, say the West or East is in the way in which theory finds expression and application in practice in the latter duo. An average American President, no matter the Party or ideological orientation, would always remember, recognize and pay allegiance to the legacies of John Locke, Benjamin Franklin and the Pragmatist-trio of John Dewey, Charles Sanders Pierce and William James. In France, Rousseau and Voltaire loom larger than life! Only a development of “refl-active” (active thinking) can lead to the emergence of a

culture of philosophy, which will in turn make us to distil what crosses our social, economic, political (in a word, cultural) space. “Refl-action” would lead to the exertion of popular pressure, without which our leaders would continue with “business as usual”. Our leaders always get terrified whenever the word “revolution” is mentioned. In Karl Marx, revolution is the means through which the modern proletariat would smash the oppressive capitalist machinery, seize the means of production from the bourgeoisie, transform it into public ownership and then liberate the entire society in the process. In Frantz Fanon, the African revolution was to free Africa from the shackles of colonial and imperial domination.

Today, Africa is in dire need of another kind of revolution, a revolution that would liberate them from themselves and the bondage and burden placed on her by her own children, acting as agents of the capitalists in the West. Our leaders are always afraid of revolution because they don’t want their claws to be dislodged from where they have dug them into the people’s resources and psyche! They blackmail us with peace and the evils of violence, yet they don’t count the number the people who die because they have stolen the money meant to equip our hospitals, build roads, provide clean water, etc. How many people die on the road because the man who was given the contract embezzled the money? In an earlier paper, -“The End of History and the Crisis in Marxism: What Future for Ideology Revolution?” I had been skeptical of both the possibility and need for a bloody revolutionary uprising in the world because of what happened to the Marxist movement. However, in Africa today, as we see our leaders alienate themselves more and more from society and subject the people to avoidable pauperism (in the midst of plenty), the idea of forcefully sweeping these cabals out, has become not only possible, but needful, urgently needful!

In that paper I had penned down the following thoughts: “...violent revolution-not strictly for socialism and capitalism-can, and in fact should, occur in the developing countries, especially in Africa, where the masses are continually getting tired of decades of economic deprivation and wealth siphoning by their so-called political leaders, nay, rulers...” (90). About 15 years after I penned down these thoughts, the revolutionary sweep that is now known as the “Arab spring” began in Tunisia (December 2010) and consumed Tunisia’s sit-tight ruler, Zine Abidine Ben Ali on January 14, 2011. In my paper, “An Orthodox Marxist’s Interpretation of the Revolutionary Dynamics in North Africa”, I had ex-rayed these developments, from Tunisia to Egypt, from Libya to Syria, and concluded that although these revolutions do not classically “Marxist”, they have proved that revolution do not have to be dressed in Marxist toga to be given a hearing. Africa’s corrupt and/or sit-tight rulers need to be swept away by masses-led revolutionary tides!

It is easy to call the Niger-Delta militants, in Nigeria “terrorists”, but those who have ravaged their land and stolen their oil wealth are “honourables”, honourables who would (within one week) pass bills allocating funds to themselves long after they have finished “breathing down our necks”, yet they would not (in 8 years) pass the Freedom of Information (FOI) Bill. Let no one blackmail as again with democracy and peace. Ghana is sober today because of the action of John Jerry Rawlings. This is what all the states in Africa needs. Now, even if the violent change is not implemented, its possibility must be seen to be in the air. It would keep our leaders on their toes. That was exactly what the MAD (Mutually Assured Destruction) Game achieved during the period of the Cold War between the U.S.A and the then U.S.S.R. The fear of a nuclear confrontation produced a balance respect that ensured that the two super-powers never acted with impunity. And aside from the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan in 1979 and the U.S. invasion of Grenada in 1983, no major incidents occurred between them. We

must project the spectre of revolution to make our leaders realize that we are infuriated by what is going on in the society.

In *The West and the Rest of Us*, Chinweizu captures the need for militancy when he says that it was the foundation of what we now, enjoy as “independence”. He says that although up till World War II, anti-colonial struggle was basically an elitist “genteel petitioning”, but after 1945, another generation emerged that promised to be “aggressive”, and combative like all ranks and files, they promised to be impatient, rowdy and loud, to be militant and even violent” (115). I don’t know why our present day generation should not arise and threat these agents of neocolonialism that call themselves our rulers the same way Mau Mau treated the colonial rulers in Kenya.

The truth is that this is no time for speculative philosophy. It is a luxury we cannot afford in these days and occurrences. We must “refi-actively” think of what to do, and immediately. We refuse the romanticized reforms that they are offering us in order to placate the poignant pounding of our pulses. Writing an “Introduction” to George Bull’s translation of Nicolo Machiavelli’s classic, *The Prince*, Anthony Grafton writes that “Machiavelli’s political life, in other words, began and ended in revolution. No wonder he saw the political order as so fragile, and insisted that its preservation must take precedence over the scruples of tender, traditionalist minds (xx). This is share conservative, traditional recession. It is this traditional backwardness that made some paid Oghara youths in Delta State, Nigeria to rise up in defense of James Ibori, the ex-governor of the State who was wanted by Nigeria’s EFCC (Economic and Financial Crimes Commission) to answer charges of corruption! Unfortunately foe the Oghara youths, their sponsored protests could not affect the British authorities who had jailed not only Ibori but equally his wife for corruption.

Everyone does agree that Africa does need urgent socio-political surgery, but just what to do appears to be the big issue. For those who may wonder why we cannot go by, say, Mahatma Gandhi's "satyagraha" (non-violent struggle), we can only respond by saying that the principle of "refi-action" is not rigid. If non-violence would dislodge the cabals that are running Africa like a capitalistic business, then no problem. But it is highly improbable, unless we are not interested in arresting the decay. For according to E.K. Ogunrowole, in his book *Echoes of Social Change*:

A social reform plays a negative role, especially if it intends to disunite the radical social groups in the society, twist their political consciousness, divert them from social-political struggle. Experience shows that the ruling group in any society always strive to give that type of direction to social reforms. Such is the nature of their reform traps! (33)

But despite the urgency of the need, "refl-action" insists that thinking-acting must avoid opportunism, since it has the capacity to disrupt what has been set in motion. Opportunism is the exercise of subjectivity without a correlation with objectivity. Indeed we cannot understand nonviolence unless we can also (simultaneously) articulate the concept of "violence".

It is necessary at this point to say few words about the non-violent solution that has been proposed to save the Nigerian state, which the powers that "be" do not want to accept. This non-violent but revolutionary approach has come in the form of the suggestion to re-federate the country and enshrine resource-control, though the convening of a Sovereign National Conference (SNC) that would draw a new Constitution (charter of existence) for the federating units. I have tried to look at the issues involved in this concern in my paper, "Transforming the Formless: the Inevitability of a New Constitution for the Survival and Development of Nigeria".

Those who reject the idea of an SNC argue that the National assembly constitutes “the sovereign” in Nigeria. They argue that the SNC is not tenable. But the issue is: has the National Assembly become “the Sovereign” in Nigeria or is it the People? And, why should Nigerians be compelled to accept the National assembly’s existence when the basis and grounds of their emergence and existence has not been justified? Or do we have to accept the measurement brought about by a ruler, when we are still questioning the validity of the ruler used for the measurement? How can we be “mouthing” *transformation* when we have not been properly *formed* (Constituted)? How can the Nigerian people be told to amend (or emend) a constitution they did not author? Who are the beneficiaries of what Deputy Senate President in Nigeria calls “feeding-bottle federalism”? Are we running a federal or a central Republic? In his paper, “Constitutional Transformation without the People” Roposekoni wonders how a President that calls on all Nigerians to be security officers would exclude the people from making the constitution by which they would live. The truth is that those who, using the powers of the state, deny the people the chance to re-federate are all the ones that hate Nigeria. We cannot continue to patch the leaking Nigerian state by a combination of deceit, blackmail and force, and expect that Nigeria would continue surviving. Or have we forgotten the Soviet Union, and Winston Churchill’s metaphor of an “iron curtain”? The SNC is a revolutionary demand. Can the National Assembly give us fiscal federalism?

A culture of philosophy would diffuse philosophical thinking from philosophy departments to departments of history, sociology, political science, communication, agriculture, medicine, literature, anthropology, etc., where they would begin to question the values, practices, mores, etc by which we have lived, not only when they are studying for Ph.Ds, but at all times. A culture of philosophy would make philosophical knowledge move from schools to homes, offices and religious organs and groups. In “refi-action”,

belief and intention receive external expression. For too long we have ruminated on the philosophy of culture; now, as historical needs demand, its time to create a culture of philosophy. And our society is waiting! I have made evaluations by looking at what I believe is the problem of Africa that has thrown up a challenge for philosophy or philosophically-minded scholars: the challenge of social thinking through what I have called “refi-action”. After all, didn’t C. Wright Mills, in, *The Sociological Imagination* say that “to detect practical problems is to make evaluations? (102).

10. In Lieu of a Conclusion

In this conclusion, I am lost for words. And so I leave you in the inquisitive mind of Vincent Harding. Reflect on his questions and then “refl-act” on his declarations: He says:

Beginning with ourselves, beginning where we are, what must we tear down, what must we build up, what foundations must we lay? Who shall we work with, what visions can we create, what hopes shall possess us? How shall we organize? How shall we be related to those who raise the same questions in South Africa, in El Salvador, in Guyana? How shall we communicate with others the urgency of our time? How shall we envision and work for the revolutionary transformation of our own country? What are the inventions, the discoveries, the new concepts that will help us move toward the revolution we need in this land? Neither rhetoric nor coercion will serve us now. We must decide whether we shall remain crippled and underdeveloped, or move to participate in our own healing by taking on the challenge to re-develop ourselves, our people, our endangered nation and the earth. No one can force us toward this. By conventional measurements, there are no guarantees of success- as the blood of our martyrs and heroes, known and less known, like Walter Rodney and Frantz Fanon, Ruby Doris and Fanny Lou, Malcolm and Martin, fully testify. But there is a world waiting for us: indeed, many worlds await us. One is the world of our children, not yet born, of just beginning, but wanting to live, to grow, to become their best possible selves. This

will not happen unless, as Walter suggests, the center is transformed and fundamentally changed. That will not happen unless we are transformed, re-developed and renewed. The future of our children depends upon these rigorous transformations. (xxv) It is amazing how we have succumbed to what Segun Oladipo calls “cultural surrender”. We do not believe that we could re-address any part of our cultural quagmire. We have completely succumbed to the myth of the “civilizing mission”. All that we care about are foreign direct investments (the well-known FDIs) in human and financial resources. Capital, financial capital, criss-cross the continents faster than the speed of light. The way we in Nigeria celebrates the coming of the “white man” to Nigeria with the so-called “investments” makes we wonder if we ever leaders that think at all, let alone have vision.

The level of economic recession in Europe is so deep that Europe is invading the so-called “Third world” in search of opportunities to make capitalistic investments in order to salvage, no matter how minimally, the depression in her economy-which have resulted in monumental loss of jobs. Does Africa think that Western governments are representatives of “Father Christmas”, who have been dispatched from the North Pole to give to the continent monies for lustful consumption? The way Nigeria’s Information Minister, Labaran Maku, was relishingly celebrating the fact that 79 foreign companies bided for electricity distribution in Nigeria, as a proof that Nigeria is still an “investment haven”, smacks of palpable ignorance. Of course, why won’t Nigeria be an investment haven, when it is a country of impunity, an amusement park of some sort, where people do as they please, where companies, including foreign ones, do not pay taxes?

According to Rodney “The things which bring Africa into the capitalist market system are trade, colonial domination and capitalist investment... the investment in the African economy has been increasing steadily in the present century (30). Over 40years after Rodney penned down these words, the issue of western

investment in Africa is no longer discussed in terms of “increase”, but in terms of a “wholesale take over” of Africa’s economy. “Refl-action” is not just about thinking of what is do-able in principle; rather, it is a principle of not just what is do-able or can be done, but what should be done. It is a manifestation of an immanent metaphysical attitude of practicality.

WORKS CITED

- Agbakoba, Joseph C.A and Ibuot, Emmanuel J. "Towards a New Paradigm for Christian Education in Nigeria", in Alam, Edward J. (ed.) *Christianity, Culture and the Contemporary World: Challenges and New Paradigms* Louzaine, Lebanon: Notre Dame University Press, 2009.
- Agbo, Joseph N. "An Orthodox Marxist's Interpretation of the Revolutionary Dynamics in North Africa", paper Presented at the 2011 UNESCO World Philosophy day @ UNIZIK, Awka, Nigeria.
- . "Mercenaries in Governance: Towards a Philosophy of Punishment for Africa's Development", a Paper Presented at an International Conference on the Development Philosophy of Osigwe Anyiam-Osigwe, Theme: A Holistic Approach to Human Development", held at University of Ibadan, Nigeria,
- . *Odo Occultism in Enugu State*. Lagos: Covenant House Publishing, 2005.
- . "On the Question of Culture: A Critical appraisal of the Odo and Ezugu Cults in Enugu State, Nigeria", in, *Ogirisi. A New Journal of African Studies*, Vol. 8 (Fourth coming)
- . "The Crisis of Identity and the Quest for Development in Africa: The Place of Leadership in Creating a New Culture", in, *UNIZIK Journal of Arts and Humanities*, vol.12, no.2 (2012).
- . "The 'End of History' and the Crisis in Marxisim: What Future for (2 Ideology and Revolution?)" in, *Ebonyi Journal of Humanities*, vol. 1, no 1 (2001).
- . "The Ontological Basis for the Failure of Liberal Democracy in Africa: A Phenomenological Rescue", paper presented at an International Conference in Intercultural Philosophy at the University of Cape Coast, Ghana, February 2-5, 2010.

- . “Transforming the Formless: The Inevitability of a New Constitution for the Survival and Development of Nigeria”, Paper Presented at a Conference in the Faculty of Management Sciences (FMS), Ebonyi State University, Abakaliki. Theme: “Transformation for National Development in Nigeria”, Date: July 10-12, 2012.
- Almond, Gabriel and Coleman, J.S. *Politics of Developing Areas* Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1960.
- Asiegbu, Martin F. “The Paradigmatic Status of Western Philosophy in Africa: Hindrance to the Contextualization of African Philosophy”, presented at the conference on Intercultural Philosophy, University of Cape Coast, Ghana, February 2—5, 2010.
- Asouzu, Innocent I. *The Method and Principles of Complementary Reflection in and Beyond African Philosophy* Calabar University of Calabar Press, 2004.
- Blackburn, Simon (ed.) *Oxford Dictionary of Philosophy* Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996.
- Chinweizu, Ibekwe. *The West and the Rest of Us*. London: NOK Publishers, 1978.
- Dworkin, Ronald. *A Matter of Principle*. London: Harvard University Press, 1985.
- Engels, Frederick. *Ludwig Feuerbach and the End of Classical German Philosophy* Peking: Foreign Language Press, 1976.
- . *Socialism: Utopian and Scientific*. Peking: Foreign Language Press, 1975.
- Franklin, Anita and Ray Love. “Whose news! Control of the Media”, in, *Africa in Review of African Political Economy*, vol. 78 (1998).
- Hallen, Barry “More than The Sum of Its Parts: Holism in the Philosophy of Emmanuel Onyekwere Osigwe Anyiam-Osigwe” A Paper Presented at an international Conference on the Development Philosophy of Anyiam Osigwe, “Theme” A

- Holistic Approach to Human Development, November 28-30, 2010.
- . "Phenomenology and the Exposition of African Traditional Thought", in Oluwale S. P. *Readings in African Philosophy* Lagos; Maastech Publishers, 1989.
- Heidegger Martin. *Basic Writings: From Being and Time to the Task of Philosophy*. Krell, David Farrell (ed.) New York: Harper and Row, 1977.
- KLMJA Testament of Hope: The Essential Writings and Speeches of Martin Luther King JR ed. By James Melvin Washington New York: Heper Collins Publishers, 1986.
- Korner, Stephan *Metaphysics: its Structures and Functions* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984.
- Kroeber, Alfred L. & Kluckhohn, Clyde *Culture: A Critical Review of Concepts and Definitions* New York: Kraus Reprint; 1978 . . . Oladipo Books 2000 . . . UNIZIK UNESCO 15-16 November, 2011-Ibadan Anyiam-Osigwe Conference Date's October 22-24, 2010.
- Kymlicka, Will *Multicultural Citizenship* Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995.
- Loewenstein, Karl "Is There A 'Best' Form of Government", in, Curtis, Michael (ed.) *The Nature of Politics* London: Haper and Row, 1968.
- Machiavelli, Nicolo *The Prince* trans. By George Bull London: Penguin Books, 1999.
- Marx, Karl "Theses on Feuerbach", in Engels, Frederick, Ludwig *Feuerbach and The End of Classical Philosophy*, Peking, Foreign Language Press, 1976.
- Mills, Wright C. *The Sociological Imagination* Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1959.
- Momoh, Campbell S. "Critique of Democracy", *The Punch*, March 16, 1994; *Daily Times*, April 5, 1994; *Nigerian Observer*, April 11, 1994.

- Odimegwu, Ike F.H. *Philosophical Foundations of Politics* NP: Lumos Nigerian Limited, 2008.
- Ogundowole, Kolawole E. *Echoes of Social Change* Lagos: John West Publications Limited, 1991.
- Oladipo Olusegun, *The Idea Of African Philosophy*, Ibadan, Hope Publishers, 2000.
- Rodney Walter How *Europe Underdeveloped Africa with an introduction by Vincent Harding* Abuja: Panaf Publishing (c) 2009.
- Ruch, E. A. Is There An African Philosophy? In Oluwole, Sophie B. (eds) *Readings in African Philosophy* Lagos: Maastech Publishers, 1989.
- Sekoni, Ropo “Constitutional Transformation without the People” *The Nation on Sunday*, November 27,2011
- Sweet, William “Human Rights, Social Responsibilities and the Preservation of Cultures”, in, Alam, Edward (ed.) *Christianity, Culture and the Contemporary World: Challenges and New Paradigms*. Louzaine, Lebanon: University of Notre Dame Press, 2009.
- Taylor, Edwards *Primitive Culture* VIII London: Cambridge University Press, 1965
- Ukpokolo, Isaac *Philosophy Interrogates culture* Ibadan, Hope Publishers, 2004.
- Walsh, David “Reflections on the Nature of Modernity”, in, Chavchavadze, N.Y. *et al* (eds), *National Identity as an Issue of Knowledge and Morality*, Washington D.C.: The Council For Research in Values and Philosophy, 1994.
- KLMJA Testament of Hope: The Essential Writings and Speeches of Martin Luther King JR ed. By James Melvin Washington New York: Heper Collins Publishers, 1986.
- Kroeber, Alfred L. & Kluckhohn, Clyde *Culture: A Critical Review of Concepts and Definitions* New York: Kraus Reprint; 1978 . . . Oladipo Books 2000 . . . UNIZIK UNESCO

15-16 November, 2011-Ibadan Anyiam-Osigwe Conference
Date's October 22-24, 2010.

**THE THEMATIC CONTRADICTION IN THOMAS
AQUINAS' CONCEPTION OF THE STATE: AN AFRICAN
(NIGERIAN) PERSPECTIVE**

Olúkáyòdé R. Adésuyì
Department of Philosophy, Obáfémi Awólówò University
Ilé-Ifè, Nigeria.
olukayus@gmail.com

1. Introduction

A dominant feature in the medieval philosophy is the fact that the thoughts at that time were influenced by church men, especially the doctrines of Christianity. For any theory to survive it had to gain the support of the church men; otherwise, such would cease to flourish.

The political theories in the medieval periods were not exceptions. There was the presence of the relationship between the spiritual and the temporal powers.¹ Given this, the political theory of Thomas Aquinas and some medieval philosophers, who came before, during his period and/or after, had the same characterizing factor.

In the Medieval political theory, there were two types of society, the church and the state.² This was the idea in the medieval period. Aquinas' political thought, especially about the state, had this feature as well.

This paper attempts to examine Thomas Aquinas' conception of the state and its implication(s) in the post-colonial Africa, and Nigeria as the reference point. This shall be done by looking critically, but briefly, into the various conceptions of state of some of Aquinas' predecessors, to serve as background to Aquinas'

political theory. It shall also argue that Aquinas' theory is self-defeating, given what obtains in the Nigerian religious groups

The paper shall show that the themes in his conception of the state are contradictory, factually not acceptable and logically absurd given the situation Nigerian religious entities are found.

2. Conceptual Analysis of State

There have been various definitions of the state by scholars. Each of the definitions is to suit the purpose for which it is meant. According to Weber it is;

A compulsory political with continuous organisation, whose administrative staff successfully upholds a claim to the monopoly of the legitimate use of political force in the enforcement of its order.³

This is in line with the Hobbes' conception of the civil society, in which its formation was as a result of the problems inherent in their former place (state of nature). It also defines the state to be solely a tyrannical conception. In this regard, the citizens let events be, not that they are satisfied but that they have little or no power over the leaders. This can also be said to be defining the state in terms of unitary system of government, especially under the military.

Azelama conceives it as "an independent political unit recognised internationally as exercising sovereignty over a particular area of the earth surface."⁴ This definition considers an aspect of the state neglecting the other aspect. It is a definition based majorly on geographical location; not defining it in line with its end. This will not be tenable, when the interests of the citizens are to be considered. As far as the state is concerned, it is known as the state, if it is preoccupied with the common good of its citizenry, at least, in the context in which I want to look at it.

Hitler's conception of the state is a fictitious one. In his view, it is imagined as the living organism of a nationality but which, by further training of its spiritual and ideal activities, leads to its highest freedom.⁵ This conception of the state may not come to reality. There are equally some problems involved, the concepts living organism and nationality are not clearly explained, therefore creating some problem. He is trying to equate nation with state, which has always been the thought of some people. There is a clear difference between nation and state.⁶ Nation is referred to as those "whose peoples share a strong linguistic, religious, and symbolic identity,"⁷ while state as "relatively centralized, differentiated and autonomous organizations successfully claiming priority in the use of force within large, contiguous and clearly bounded territories."⁸ It is the coming together of nations that make a state and not otherwise.⁹ It is however discovered that these definitions are defective in one way or the other.

I will rather define a state to mean the togetherness of different people from different ethnic backgrounds having similar goals in common, some identical phenomena and identified to occupy a specific geographical location.

There have been different types of political theories, especially theory of state. These were attempts to establish the real picture of state with the theories. Of the theories propounded, some shall be discussed, in attempt to see which suits the Aquinas' theory of state.

One of such is the absolutist theory of the state. This theory recognises the monarch.¹⁰ It is as old as the genesis of any specified community. Its features are, among others, religious in nature; the personality identified with this represents what such a state is; absolute sovereignty; the power is rotational, but among the acclaimed members of the royal family, which 'royal blood flow in them.' Since it is religiously inclined, it is believed that whoever becomes the leader is divinely chosen. There is the belief that the monarch has divine rights.¹¹ This is an old practice in some parts of the world.

There is the constitutional theory of the state. The constitution is a guiding principle that sets limits on the scope of authority. In this regard, some people are selected to be representative, with some specified terms. The state is the guardian of the constitutional order.¹² The laws are binding on every member of the community irrespective of the position being occupied by anybody.¹³

Yet another theory is the class theory. This view is expressed to mean that the state is dichotomized. The relationship between the classes is always vertical and not horizontal, as it might be in some other theory. There is always the oppressor and the oppressed. The means of oppression is in the hand of the ruling class. This ruling class is in “control of economic means of production.”¹⁴ In this case, oppressors are the capitalists, who own the means of production.¹⁵ The class theory of the state is explained in terms of class composition. This theory is linked with Marx, who was believed to have propounded the theory.¹⁶

There is the pluralist theory. This lays emphasis on the individual’s loyalty to the group he belongs. Simply put, he owes allegiance to the group he belongs. What this implies is that, in a particular state, there are different groups. Each member is, therefore, loyal to that which he/she belongs. This could be ethnic, tribal, religious, social, or political group.

I shall try to relate, in due course, which of these conceptions suits Aquinas purpose, with reasons and why others seem not to suit his purpose with reason.

3. Theories of State

In the political theories of some scholars, there have been some theories of state. How did the state come about? Why did it come up? And what necessitated these states was equally enumerated. In all, there is the general consensus that the formation of state is a gradual process, a piece meal arrangement and not all at a go.

According to Locke's theory of formation of society, the society is that of conjugal.¹⁷ The first society is the union of man and wife. The cordial relationship of this, which is described by Locke as the voluntary compact between man and woman, serves as a cause of which the effect, that is, the end of it is procreation and continuation of species.¹⁸ These species are further classified into different categories, for instance masters and servants.

Becoming a member of a society, especially by birth, is without any choice. According to Sarah, "every person is born within a given human and cultural milieu without any choice."¹⁹ A person is therefore called to be inserted within a family, a religious group and the people at large. He/she is trained and fashioned by the cultural milieu into which he is born and he/she contributes (privately or publicly) alone or with others, to the enrichment of that same milieu. The family, which is the first place of man, has its own role to perform. Its role is to be "the cell in which man receives his first formulative ideas about truth and goodness, and learns what it means to love and to be loved, and thus what it actually means to be a person."²⁰

The relationship between the society and the individual can be likened to the relationship between a play and its parts or a team and its players.²¹ In this sense, it can be explained, even from the structuralist point of view, that for the whole to be known, it must be a thing of necessity to study the components/compositions of the whole. It is when the compositions are understood that the whole can be understood and meaningful contributions made.²² The essence of this study is to see how the society can be developed collectively by members of it, since "every real society is a process in time."²³ It is equally believed that phenomena are structured by "laws of compositions"²⁴ and structuring which is "essentially a system of transformation"²⁵ is what is to be used for the betterment of such phenomena. The phenomena referred to can be likened to the societies. The members of the society are counted upon to this meaningful contribution. As explained by Parsons;

The personalities of members of the society are also parts of its environment in the sense that society must be able to count on its members to societal functioning.²⁶

The interest of the society is, therefore, the totality of the interest of the several members that constitute that society.²⁷ The implication of this is that one cannot talk of the interest of the community without first understanding the interest of the individual. Therefore, the basis of the existence of the state is primarily the existence of the individual person.

From the above, at least, two further implications can be drawn. First, the society must be able to maintain some control over the personalities of its members in order to ensure that these personalities assume roles in society without undue strain. When this is guaranteed, it will bring about the second implication, which is that the majority of the personalities that make up the society must not be alienated.²⁸

The formation of the state can be summarised thus: It is the combination of conjugal family members, from the genesis which is man and his wife up till the society; societies form a nation and nations finally form the state.

The state is an umbrella, bigger and more self sufficient than its institutional components. Some of the componential institutions that are under the umbrella of the state are religious bodies, political institutions, business organizations, educational institutions. As earlier pointed out, these institutions, which serve as parts of the whole (state) put together, define the state's self identity.²⁹ In this case, there is a relationship between the state and its componential parts, and this is reciprocal. This portrays the thesis of the communitarian. The belief that "the individual exists in function of the group to which he/she belongs and to which

everything is permitted”³⁰ can further be expatiated to mean that each society exists in function of the state to which it belongs and which its contributions are permitted.³¹ This is why the ontological dictum “I am because we are” is said to be a logically valid dictum. It is equally understood and reasonably expressed to mean that of dependence without any suppression.³²

Conceptions of State

Thomas Aquinas’ conception of the state serves as a response to some preceding theories either to further support them, with some additional ideas, or to make some amendment in such theories, if found with some inadequacies.

According to Bentham, mankind is governed by two basic things; pain and pleasure, which are regarded as sovereign masters on their own.³³ It is, therefore, rational to jettison the former and embrace the latter with any rationally ethical means. One of the aims of the state is to promote good life, and a means to achieving this good life is to avert pain for the citizens.³⁴ For this to be achievable one must not be alone and not being alone necessitated the formation of a state. It follows, therefore, that the state is a necessity. This is the claim of the scholars, who have propounded some theories about the state, though with different arguments.

Plato conceives of the state, as that which grows out of the nature of the individual.³⁵ The existence of the state is rooted in the individual; its origin is as a result of the individual needs. Naturally, no one has everything or capable of possessing every need of his. He asserts that “a state, I said, arises, as I conceive, out of the needs of mankind, no one is self sufficing, but all of us have many wants.”³⁶

Man needs some other person to contribute into his life. For each need, there must be a skill. Take, for instance, as it is generally believed that the basic needs of human beings that are of necessity are food, clothing and shelter. It is obvious that a single sector of human endeavour may not be able to provide the services for these. This necessitates a division of labour,³⁷ meaning that men need

themselves for survival and fulfilment.³⁸ If there are no individuals to be concerned with each of these sectors, it may turn out that, when there are lapses, even the existence of the individuals is problematic. For this to be avoided, Plato feels that the coming together of individuals to become societies and the togetherness of the latter to become state is necessary.

Apart from the basic necessities, which are basic for lower animals as well,³⁹ some other luxuries are needed.⁴⁰ The yearnings of people who need these must be satisfied. Every individual is expected to be preoccupied with one thing or the other. People desire for more. Two factors are responsible for this, the increase in population and the unsatisfactory nature of people with what they have at hand, necessitating preference for replacement of better services. The desire for more will exhaust the resources of the community, as noted by Plato.

When this continues, people tend to pass their boundaries, invading into the property of fellow people. This leads to war⁴¹ even among the states. This implies that, according to Plato, desire for more serves as the basis of war. Provisions must be made to avert the invaders from attacking the people or state, and this necessitates the emergence of the army.⁴² From the generality of people, another class will emerge, which is the class of the guardians, and from the guardians, then, the ruler. The most trained guardian becomes the ruler.⁴³ So for Plato, citizens are to be divided into three classes; the common people, the soldiers and the guardians. The guardians alone are to have political.⁴⁴

The state is a universal set with subsets in which the category of the guardians is one. The guardians are seemed to be chosen by the legislator, after which they will succeed by hereditary. However, there is always an exemption to this. There are some cases in which promising child may be promoted from one of the inferior classes to attain the position of the powerful people, while among the children of the guardians, a child or young man, who is unsatisfactory, may be degraded. There may be the fear that there will be some problems if those to assume leadership roles are not

properly trained, that they may not be able to govern. As a result, the rulers must have undergone some training at different age range and stages in/of life. Having done all of those, they can then become the ruler at fifty years of age.⁴⁵

Aristotle sees the state as a creature of nature. Human beings are, by nature, social and political animals. Based on their nature as social beings, no man can exist alone. He must be, as a matter of necessity, influenced by his environment.⁴⁶ Man must necessarily live amidst others and be influenced by them. He, who sees no reason to live in a state, is regarded as either a beast or god.⁴⁷

Aristotle's view is that the establishment of the state is for a duty, which is preservation of life for families and communities, who are members. The family, a subset of the community, preserves life for members of the family; while the state as an all encompassing phenomenon, preserves life for the families and the communities. It makes sure that the economic ends of the people are guaranteed, and also supreme good, which includes moral and intellectual life.⁴⁸

There must be a system of rule/government adopted by a state. This further characterizes the state as to which type it is. For Aristotle, there are two forms of government and in each; three types of state can be deduced. The forms, according to him, are true and perverted forms. In the former, the rulers seek to achieve the good end for all. While in the latter, the rulers seek their own private gain. Under the true form, there are monarchy, aristocracy and polity.⁴⁹ The major difference among them primarily, is the number of rulers each has. A government can have its rulers one, which is a characteristic of monarchy; few, a characteristic of aristocracy and many, a characteristic of polity.

These can, however, turn to be bad rulers, if perverted. Monarchy can turn to tyranny, aristocracy to oligarchy and polity to democracy. But Aristotle's preference is aristocracy, for he believes that these few are rational.

Saint Augustine is another philosopher, whose contribution to political thought, especially in the medieval period, cannot be overlooked. Unlike Plato and Aristotle, Augustine's political thought was influenced by his Christian doctrine. It is not surprising seeing him prioritizing religion over and above political institutions.

For Augustine, there are two kinds of society, which human race divide themselves into, the state and the church.⁵⁰ This necessitates the division of those who love God and those who love themselves and the world. Based on this, there are two different cities; City of God, for the former and City of the world for the latter.⁵¹ To further clarify this, these two cities are not identical, strictly in my opinion, with the church and state. The more reason why they are not identical is in respect to the fact that members of these cities cut across the state and church.⁵² He, however, gives superiority to the church over the state. According to Augustine,

a society cannot be ideally founded unless upon the basis and by the hand of faith and strong concord, where the object of love is the universal good, which in its highest and truest character is God himself and where people love one another with complete sincerity in Him, and the ground of their love for one another is the love of Him from whose eyes they cannot conceal the spirit of love.⁵³

Society is “an assemblage of rational beings associated in a common agreement as to the things it loves.”⁵⁴ It is no longer a problem tracing the relationship between the state and the societies. It is to be noted that societies make a nation and nations make a state.⁵⁵ According to Augustine, therefore, a state is a

group of people of various societies and nations united in their natural love of mutable, temporal goods necessary for human life, of which peace is taken to be the loftiest and inclusive.⁵⁶ But its origin is as a result of the Original sin⁵⁷ and later sins.

A church is perfect and sovereign in the spiritual order of peace and salvation while the state is in the corporeal order of peace and harmony.⁵⁸ This is not to say that there is no cordial relationship between the two. The state is, according to Augustine, considered to be an offshoot of Original Sin. The church is necessary for the citizens, and the state at large, for 'redemption'. In a nutshell, Augustine sees sin as nature of man. The sins necessitate the establishment of the church, since it is believed that God is the creator of everything. Everything depends on God, who is the ultimate source of legitimate authority and the author of nature, for he gives kindly power on earth to the pious and impious.⁵⁹ It is equally God that can cure any of His creatures of any ailment. So the church serves as orthodox for the ailment of the state.

4. Thomas Aquinas' Conception of State

Saint Thomas Aquinas' political theory is influenced by the theories of some of his predecessors discussed above, but two of these have prominent influences on his theory. One is Aristotle's and the other is Augustine's. Aquinas combined Aristotle's works and the doctrines of Christianity to suit his purpose. There are similarities between Aristotle's and Aquinas' political theories. There are, however, some differences. There are also some similarity and difference in Augustine's and Aquinas' political theories. While both have Christian flavour, which serves as the major similarity, they disagree on the origin of state. It has been explained above that Augustine's conception of state is in respect to the Original sin. Aquinas' conception of state is however not the same.

Aquinas conception of state is in line with Aristotle's that the state is founded on man's nature as social animal. In reaction to Augustine's position that the state is an effect of the original sin, Aquinas says that it may be the offshoot of Original Sin, but the state would still have necessarily existed if there was no sin. The meaning is that there is no cause and effect relationship between the state and Original Sin or any other sin. So even if people were innocent, there would still have been a state, because people would have been members of a society.⁶⁰

Aquinas political theory is modelled on his ethics and the latter modelled on Aristotle's Nicomachean ethics. Aristotle identifies the ultimate goal of human life with happiness, and that happiness cannot be equated with pleasure, riches, honour or any bodily good. Happiness must consist in activity in accordance with, especially intellectual virtue.⁶¹

The intellectual activity that is in line with Aristotelian requirements for happiness is found perfectly in contemplation of the essence of God. So according to Aquinas, happiness is to be found only on the soul of the blessed in heaven.⁶² This, therefore, means that those who believe in God and follow his parts will receive more happiness, even when they get to heaven.

There are two types of life; the contemplative life and active life. Even in the Nicomachean ethics, "the contemplative life orders seek to spend time on God alone, the active life orders seek to serve the needs of their fellows."⁶³ The contemplative life involves some activities such as preaching and teaching, which shows that it is a religious life. This is considered to be the best life, because it is a religious life that includes teaching and preaching.⁶⁴

Aquinas' conception of the state is patterned towards these types of life. The church serves as the contemplative life, which is the most important and the state represented the active life. This is

why it is claimed that Christianity is assumed to be a teaching. Aquinas political philosophy, especially the importance, relevance and superiority of the church over and above the state, are in line with Christian teaching.⁶⁵

In his view, and for some other medieval philosophers, especially the Christian Medieval philosophers, there is a connection between the church and the state. This connection is to prove that faith and reason are not contradictory, as had thought. In this regard, there exist two truths; truths of faith and reason.⁶⁶

Though, the existence of the state is necessary for human society, whether or not there was Original Sin or that sins are still being committed. It does not mean that the state is autonomous. What this means is that the state does not have absolute power. The state can only make provisions for the natural ends of man. It, however, cannot take care of spiritual end, which is the ultimate end.

For a state to be governed there should be a specific form of government to be adopted. As noted by Hobbes, there are many types of political systems among nations of the world.⁶⁷ As earlier explained, Aristotle adopts aristocracy as the best form of government. Similar to Aristotle's form of state and the end result of good rulers, Aquinas classifies form of government into three; monarchy, aristocracy and law abiding democracy and the corresponding deviations, which are tyranny, oligarchy and irresponsible democracy. His own preference is monarchy blended with other forms. This means that one man will be at the realm of affairs and assisted by few elites and democracy helps in choosing the ruler.

Aquinas' choice of monarchy, as his best form, is not unconnected with his religious training, as a Christian and his beliefs in the doctrines of scripture of the religion. It is obvious

that the religious people always appeal to the scripture in some matters. So Aquinas' case is not an exemption, he appeals to Ezekiel chapter 37 verse 24. The belief and his adoption of monarchy are further supported by the fact that the only power that is sovereign is that of God, and through His intervention, leaders are chosen. It is in this respect that considering the conceptions of the theories of state earlier enumerated, Aquinas conception will fall under the category of absolutist conception of state.

From all that have been discussed, one can say that the discussions and conception of political philosophy and theories have to do with best regime; its location, formation or a formulation, which includes the type of government and the kind of people to be in charge and what to be used to govern and the kind of people governed.⁶⁸ For this best regime to come to fruition, at least, in Aquinas' view, his adopted form of government must be accommodated. But this can only be done again by introducing something else, which is law. There are two categories of human beings based on their characters and behaviours, 'hard and proud' and 'good and just'. For the first category, the law is like an instruction to help them fulfil what they intend to do. It is only the good and just people that can presumably see the goodness of the law if presented for their consideration. They see the law as solution to solving a real problem or puzzlement.⁶⁹

But because of the fact that that the function of the state is to see to the good life of the citizens, and there is the possibility of the people going against this. This could be either by frustrating the efforts of those at the helm of affairs or that when they commit any offence, it may be difficult for them to be apprehended. The feature could be found amidst the hard heartened and proud people. Once this is the case, power is then necessary, as noted by Hobbes, that "the power of any man is his actual means to obtain

some future apparent good.”⁷⁰ There are various kinds of power, their contributions and features.⁷¹

Having explained that Aquinas adopted the monarchy as the best form of government, it therefore means that the kind of power he would adopt is that which is compounded of powers of most men united by consent in one person. This kind of power is, according to Hobbes, the greatest of human powers.⁷² This power could be natural, as it is in religious circle or civil. This power combines some other ones, just the way it is explained by Aquinas that monarchy is to be blended with other forms.

When the power has been got, it is expected of the state to work for good life of the human group. The citizens must therefore benefit from the economic and social development, which must have been realized by the totality of the hard of the members of the state.⁷³ In other words, the citizens are expected to be beneficiaries of political, economic and social life, which are all elements of good life.

Aquinas adopts monarchy as his own best form of state, which is categorized under the absolutist theory of state. This amounts to the fact that a man is at the helm of affairs. The implication is that in one way or the other, it becomes the function of that individual in control to work out modalities that would assist him carry out the duties expected of him. The individual works out these modalities from a historically and socially constructed framework, world view or conceptual frame work. These are set of beliefs, values, attitudes and assumptions which explain, shape and reflect the view of the individual and that of the state.⁷⁴

Some human beings by nature are not static in some respects, character wise and some other things, and can construct a conceptual frame work. He can construct a frame work, which can change. The reason is that individual understands and constructs

what he perceives, knows and values through some other conceptual framework. Some conceptual frameworks may be good or bad, depending on their effects on citizens. Given their relativity, some are oppressive and the affected ones are the lower classes, the subjects. Some of the conceptual frameworks are value-hierarchical thinking, either or thinking, logic of domination.

The value-hierarchical thinking gives room for dichotomy. The relationship is always vertical, which is not a good relationship. Some are up while some are down. The ‘downs’ are given smaller value, while greater ones are given to the ‘ups’.

Either or thinking accommodates the exclusion of some people and inclusion of some. In this sense, there are two classes, which ordinarily are expected to be complementary, but instead are oppositional. The inclusive class enjoys at the expense of the exclusive class.

Logic of Domination is in a form of reasoning usually used by the ‘up’ class to prove and justify the superiority of some people of some others. They always give argument to support their claims.⁷⁵

Each of the conceptual frameworks shows that it is favourable to one class and not to the other. When this is the case, the citizens may lose interest in the state/government. As observed by Obadan, it is only “when citizens have the belief that their government operates on their behalf in an open accountable manner will government be able to obtain their willing cooperation.”⁷⁶ Obadan has, in his view, brought to the discussion the issue of public morality⁷⁷ as they relate to governance.⁷⁸ Once it is perceived that the morals expected of the state are lacking, and the belief and trust reposed in them are no longer there, the next thing is for the citizens to turn against the government representing the state. In this kind of state, some things will happen.

One of the problems that the state will face is that of anarchy. This may happen when “institutions collapse, when existing institutions are not fulfilling people’s basic needs and when satisfactory alternative structures are not readily available.”⁷⁹ Some other problem that may arise, as argued by Irele, is that it will lead to the difficulty of eliciting the loyalty of the people. The reason for this is the alienating nature of the social system, where people do not seem to be gaining anything in terms of dividends of governance in the state.⁸⁰ It is therefore evident that a state will not be problem free and there exists in such a state lack of effective statehood.

If the problems persist, the state is left with some alternatives. One of such alternatives is either to allow the problems persist and continue to “revel in anarchy and a prolonged period of chaos and crises, or to splinter into a number of mini-states.”⁸¹

These alternatives are not without problems. It is obvious that no rational being will want to choose the first one. Given Aquinas’ religious background, as a Christian and the doctrine of church against war and the preaching of loving one’s neighbour as oneself, the first option will have to be discarded. The second option is also not a better option, because of the belief in the togetherness of the state as a body. If it is divided into a number of mini-states, there is the possibility that the mini-states will divide and may continue until it gets back to the basis, that is, family clan alone. The problem inherent in this is that each family will not be as strong as the state. This may result to invasion, oppression or even to the Hobbes’ state of nature, where there would not be morality, law etc. From this, there is the possibility that members there die untimely.

To solve the perceived problem, something external must be the solution. The solution therefore, according to Aquinas, is the church. This is where the church is a necessity. The church is to be

the last resort, if the citizens are suffering in the hands of those in charge. Even if the state is doing well by performing its functions, providing the good life for the people, the church is still needed to give what the state cannot do. What is this that the state cannot provide, according to Aquinas, is the ultimate end, which is salvation.

Salvation, an age long phenomenon, is found in religions (Christian and some others). Salvation has been interpreted to mean so many things. One of such is that it is an act of saving preservations from destruction and death. It could be said to be the saving of man from the powers and of sin. This includes the deliverance of man from the condition of spiritual isolation and estrangement to a reconciled relationship of community with God, fellow men, redemption from spiritual lost to religious fulfilment and restoration to the fullness of God's favour. It could also mean deliverance of the soul from sin or the spiritual consequences of sin. In other words, it is the saving of person's soul from eternal punishment.⁸²

Saving the souls or having a good relationship with God could only be manifested by the help of the religious institution, a componential part of the state, whose duty is to ensure man's eternal happiness, which can only be found in the church. As pointed out by Plato, there are different people with different occupation and duties to perform. There is the reflection of that even in Aquinas' thesis, the members of the church performing what others cannot do, based on the fact that their service is necessary. This service is a means to man's end, which is eternal happiness, ultimate end, salvation.

However, it does not mean that anybody can get this eternal happiness by accident. For someone to get this, at least, two conditions have to be met, they are repentance and faith.⁸³ These conditions cannot equally be met without the help of the church.

This is the sense, in my view, in which Aquinas portrays the church as a necessity.

Does it then mean that it is only in the church that salvation, an eternal happiness, can be got? This question has been answered by Kung that salvation can be got outside the church.⁸⁴ In his argument, Kung claims that all religions are ways of salvation and as far as some religions are concerned, there are some religions, whose salvation is based on work. Salvation in this sense is interpreted to mean 'salvation at work'. He says that "all religions seek to interpret the world, to find, in practice, a way of salvation out of the mystery and torment of existence."⁸⁵ Work in this sense includes obedience to the law, profession of faith, prayer etc.

In Kung's conception of salvation, it is not applicable only to the church, but to all other religions. To buttress this point, Omoregbe explains that God has no favourite language, culture, race etc, so does he not have any favourite religion. In any case, whoever does God's will and lives a good life is acceptable to Him.⁸⁶ This, if looked at, is not similar to Aquinas' conception of the church as a basic means to achieving salvation. In a nutshell, salvation is needed by the citizens and the state cannot provide this salvation, it is the duty of the duty of the church.

5. Implications of Thomas Aquinas' Conception of the State for the Nigerian St

It is assumed that any theory, idea or any other related matter conceived by a figure should be universally applicable/acceptable in any given context. In other words, it should not be spacio-temporally conditioned. Such idea should be suitable at all times. Thomas Aquinas view on the state is an exception. While conceiving the idea, perhaps, he would have assumed that it would be a welcome idea, theory or conception. But as I shall show, this is not the case for Nigeria.

Nigeria is a multi-religious and ethnic state. “The state system in Nigeria was a deliberate creation and a [by-product] of British imperialism.”⁸⁷ That Nigeria is made up of diverse ethnic nationalities with different historical, geographical, political, religious and socio-economic specificities and peculiarities, as further noted by Alao,⁸⁸ proves or shows that Aquinas’ conception of the state is not a universally relevant idea. His idea, therefore, will not be meant for a state with these features. Aquinas’ attempt to situate this idea and make it fit into any organized society is like following the school of thought of Parmenides. However, as evident in Nigeria, and as rightly expatiated out by Alao, Nigeria is a Heraclitean state, where people experience changes all the time; hence, there have been dynamics of the evolution of the Nigerian State since amalgamation and political transformation till date.⁸⁹

Aquinas resorts to monarchy as a preferred form of government in his conceived idea of a state as earlier explained. Nigeria, as noted above with diverse cultural heritage, does not have an all embracing traditional political system; different ethnic groups with their systems of traditional government. There are some ethnic groups/communities that have their monarchs being hereditary; this is the commonest. However, there are few exceptions with their monarchs being elevated; an instance is Ibadan in Oyo State, Nigeria.

The leader in this category is that born into the hereditary position recognized by custom and tradition. According to Ekong, “his leadership status is therefore ascribed rather than achieved.”⁹⁰ This kind of leader has authority by virtue of the tradition of the community. The tradition also affords him/her an unlimited loyalty and unquestioned obedience from members of the community.⁹¹ He is a divine ruler who has control over people and group. However, his powers could be checked by his chiefs and the people he governs.⁹² A candidate for a monarchy position emerges from a particular royal family, or ruling house. Royal families in a

town are limited, although, there may be many branches as to the number of male children, that is, princes. “As the families expand in numbers, the problem of choosing a successor becomes compounded and acrimonious.”⁹³

Today, the traditional rulers are not as powerful as before. Their powers were reduced first with the introduction of colonialism, and later with subsequent contemporary governments. Afolayan and Afolayan have noted that the greatest blow of the traditional government was their disempowerment through colonialism.⁹⁴ The post colonial times have not been the best era for traditional rulers. They face “more direct confrontations, intimidations and occasional humiliations from, not only the modern day “main stream” secular political establishments, but worse still, from members of their own immediate communities.”⁹⁵

Kingship institution, especially in the South-Western part of Nigeria, has been experiencing unpleasant challenges. There is the unusual power tussle, or what I can call ‘power for relevance’ among the subject. One of the factors responsible for this, as pointed out by Afe and Adubuola, was the introduction of indirect rule brought by colonialism.⁹⁶ With this, the traditional rulers have lost their political authority; the much revered *Kábíèsí* (the unquestioned) is now being questioned on many issues by higher authority.⁹⁷ What they now have is pseudo-authority; at the same time, they can best be described as ceremonial rulers over their subjects. However, people still struggle to get the so called “nominal authority and recognition.”⁹⁸ Among the monarchs, there are perceived atrocities, except for some few towns with checks and balances⁹⁹, these traditional rulers have absolute monarchy. The implication is that if the monarch is the type that does not care about the subjects, then the subjects suffer. This cannot be the monarchy conceived by Aquinas for it is purely a contradiction of his idea.

Another perceived problem is that of hereditary. Nobody sees any problem with this primary criterion of becoming a traditional ruler, and I do not think it is posing any serious challenge. Where the problem lies is the capability or otherwise of the chosen candidate, and whether or not the candidate is loved/liked or otherwise by his subjects. There have been cases of monarchs not liked by the subjects but since they not have any choice, they grudgingly accept the 'offer'.

Now that Nigeria is governed by leaders different from the monarchs, and that the monarchs are themselves subjects under the new organized government, it means, the state is to be looked onto for the needs of the people. One of the basic needs of the citizens is social justice. By social justice here, it is implied to mean social morality. The social morality here is expected from both the state and the citizens; but more from the state. In this case, there is a kind of relationship between the state and citizens. As described by Akpekpe,

The relationship between a state and its citizens is bi-dimensional in nature. The consequence of this is that for the people to achieve good life, it requires the state to provide the enabling milieu necessary and sufficient for that purpose.¹⁰⁰

Citizens, therefore, believe that their needs can be gotten from the state, and not from religious groups. They prefer to face the government of the state to going to meet the clerics for these needs. But where the state fails to meet the needs of the citizens, the citizens resort to going to religious bodies for divine intervention. Those in government equally patronize the religious bodies for religious intervention. But one cannot say whether they go there in the genuine sense of it or camouflage. Although, there is the constitutional provision that prohibits the state from adopting

a particular religion as that of the state,¹⁰¹ yet government officials still go to them under the pretence of going to God. Although, they have not declared a particular religion a state religion, but they have not been able to adequately balance the equation between the religions found in the country.

Going by Aquinas' religious background, no need of any further interpretation to know that he chooses Christian religion as the foundation for his theory and that is why he chooses the church as the saving ground. This cannot be implemented in Nigeria given its multi-religious background, otherwise, the 'relative' peace in some parts of the country may not be found. The consequence of this may be the age long conflict between some of the religious groups, especially practitioners of Islam and Christianity.¹⁰²

It must be noted, however, that these religious bodies have not been up to the task. They have been romanced by government of the day. They perform more of civic duties than religious duties assigned to them. They equally commit more sacrilege than before. Therefore, to use Aquinas' term the "Church" cannot be of help to the citizenry.

6. Conclusion

The conception of the state by Aquinas and others that have been discussed can be referred to as political naturalism. The major theme in Aquinas conception of the state is the necessity of the church, as a means to salvation. Aquinas discussion of the state is supposed to be an ideal one, in which case, the church or simply put, the doctrines of the Christian, which can be found majorly in the Bible, serve as flavours in his conception of state. So for Aquinas, the Christian doctrines are to be the guiding principles for the state.

As noted, the church is a religious institution and of course a componential institution in the state. But according to Aquinas, the church is superior to the state, which makes it impossible for the

state to be absolutely autonomous. In other words, the autonomy of the state is context bound. How can it be said that a part is superior to the whole, when in the real sense, it should be otherwise? It may be argued, using the analogy of the human composition and for the sake of argument, that the heart, for instance, is an essential part of the body. When the heart stops working, the entire body (both internal and external) ceases to exist. Can this be said of the church that when it is destroyed, the entire state ceases to exist?

There can be a further question, that is it then the case that other componential institutions of the state are not necessary, such that even when they do not exist the church does and the state's existence is guaranteed? This can be viewed from Jemiriye's perspective on salvation, that salvation could also mean the socio-economic well being of man on earth.¹⁰³ This has further introduced two levels of salvation; spiritual and physical levels. The point is that, according to Aquinas, importance is given to the spiritual level over and above the physical level of salvation.

It is possible for a person to attain the two levels, if one goes by the account of Augustine that there are two societies for the citizens, especially the Christian. In this case, his citizenship is to both church and state. It is equally possible for a person to be a citizen of either. If this holds, looking at this from the exclusive point of disjunctive analysis, it will mean that if he belongs to one of them he gets salvation, but different level. If he belongs to the church, he gets spiritual salvation but if the state, then, socio-economic salvation. Does it then mean that one will want to forget one for the other? It may be argued that one may forfeit one for the other in this sense. But the question is which of the salvation, the spiritual, which will amount to eternal torment, though not with absolute certainty? Or the socio-economic, which amounts to poverty, that makes him an unequal fellow in the society? What becomes the fate of this kind of person spiritually or/and socio-economically?

Aquinas conception is religiously inclined. But it is assumed, for the sake of argument, that the theory is expected to be true irrespective of space and time. The conception can be said to be a Christian doctrine, but influenced by Aristotelian philosophy. The perceived problem is that since it is a Christian oriented theory, it may not be a universally acceptable theory. In this case, I want to use Kung's analysis of salvation, where one is a universal salvation and the other is strictly Christian salvation. The universal recognises salvation in the other religions and Aquinas' salvation is to be found strictly in the Church. If this holds, it means that for those whose salvation is not guaranteed because of their non-belief in Aquinas (Christian) conception of salvation, would not have a place. Given this, Aquinas' conception is not tenable.

Is it not possible for some people not to be preoccupied with spiritual salvation, that whether there is salvation or not they do not know and are not concerned? I want to assume that there is a possible state with members. Is it not possible for members of the society not to be interested in salvation? If there are some people that are interested in it, then, the Church may still be necessary. On the other hand, if all members of the state are not interested in salvation, it, therefore, means that the establishment of the Church will not be necessary. This refutes the thesis of Aquinas, making the Church as a basic necessity, as not a tenable thesis.

In the conception of the state, the theory that suits Aquinas is absolutism, which is in line with monarchy. The monarchy/absolutism can develop into what will later become problem for the state. The monarchy is not the perfect form; it may turn to tyranny, where the head uses his power to acquire wealth at the expense of the citizens. Solomon, in the bible, was a monarch, but used his position, as the King to marry wives and had concubines, proving the fallibility of humans. He can even go ahead and come up with his own conceptual framework that will favour him alone.

There is also the tendency of this theory changing to theocracy. This will cause problem among those that do not believe in religious doctrine. This may eventually lead to conflict of interest, where people fight over ideologies to be used to govern the state. This may result to crises, wars. At the end, lives of citizens, which are supposed to be preserved, are taken prematurely. So, what is expected to be solution turns to be a problem. In another way, there may be more than one religious group. The problem of relevance of the other perceived religious groups are raised.

Given all these, one can say that Aquinas conception of the state with the importation of the Church will not be a tenable one. Though, one should not be surprised that that was the practice in the medieval period, but it does not, however, mean that it is acceptable and adequate. Therefore, his theme of necessitating the Church and even making it more powerful indirectly is not a convincing one.

It is thought that the church is supposed to serve as control measure for immorality. However, it is to be noted that immoral acts are perpetrated even in the same church by ‘members’ of the church. My use of church here represents religion as a whole. Those to guarantee salvation for the citizens, if salvation is considered universally, and not restricted to a particular sect or religion, are not working towards getting for themselves first. There are abundant examples from Nigerian religious societies, especially the two dominant religions in Nigeria – Christianity and Islam.

In Christianity, people are found now establishing churches at different locations all in the name of salvation. Their claim is usually that they have been called by God. The question is, if truly they have been called by God, which is a subjective claim, is it a crime to deliver the messages to their initial companions in their initial churches? Is it necessary to go out of the initial churches to

deliver such 'divine' messages? The churches that are expected to serve as salvation domain for church members are now places of doom for them. Prosperity is now preached as against salvation as enshrined in the philosophy of Aquinas. In this Christianity as well, other numerous evils are perpetrated which the church cannot curb.

In Islam, although, Mosques are not individually owned, even if personally built by one's effort, the builders do not expect money coming from the mosques into his purse. However, *Imams* and other prominent figures are chosen for to govern the affairs of the mosques. By this, it means that these leaders are not to lead in prayers alone; they are also to preach, and teach morals. The irony of the whole situation is that these people that are to teach morals lack morals. Is it then possible for a person without a thing be able to give out what he/she does not have? In a nutshell, they equally lack morals and, as a result could not give salvation to their people.

Therefore, given the Nigerian context, Aquinas claim that the church, which I prefer to refer to as religion as whole, cannot solve the problem of their people. In a sense, his theory is self defeating.

Notes and References

¹ See Copleston, F. C., *Medieval Philosophy: An Introduction*, Mineola, New York: Dover Publications Inc., 2001: 166. This is an abridged republication of a standard edition of the work originally published in London: Methuen and Co. Ltd, 1952.

² Copleston: 166

³ Weber, M., *The Theory of Social and Economic Organization*, New York: Oxford University Press, 1947: 154.

⁴ Azelama, J., *An Introduction to Political Science*, Benin City: MACADAMS Publishers, 2002: 32

⁵ See Oommen, T. K., *Citizenship, Nationality and Ethnicity*, Cambridge: Polity Press, 1997: 136.

⁶ See Barker, E., *National Character and the Factors in its Function*, London: Methuen and Company Ltd, 1948: 126

⁷ Tilly, C., “Collective Violence in European Perspective” in Graham, H. O. and Gurr, T. R. (eds), *Violence in America*, New York: Bantam, 1969: 3

⁸ Tilly: 43.

⁹ An example is Nigeria. On this analysis, Nigeria can only be referred to as a state and not a nation as some would rather call it.

¹⁰ See Idowu, W. O. O., “Citizenship Status, Statehood Problems and the Political Conflicts: The Case of Nigeria” in *Nordic Journal of African Studies*, 8, 2, 1999: 75

¹¹ These divine rights and some other things inherent in this kind of rule are supported by the laws of the religion practised in that kind of a state. In Saudi Arabia, for instance, this is what is practised. So for them, the reference point is the Qur’an. For instance, Qur’an 2 verse 41-42 which says “And believe in what I have sent down. . . And mix not truth with falsehood, nor conceal the truth.” In which case one of such messages sent is found in Qur’an 3 verse 26 which says “.Say, O Allah! Possessor of the kingdom, You give the kingdom to whom you will, and You take the kingdom from whom You will. . .” in the Christian fold, an example was Solomon. Some backup can be found in Romans 13 verse 1-7. In the old Yoruba political system, the same was apparent. They used Ifa divination as a reference point. Though, the Ifa divination is still used, but not to select a monarch for a state, rather for a community in a state. See Salami, Y. K., “The Democratic Structure of Yoruba Political-Cultural Heritage” in *The Journal of Pan African Studies*, 1, 6, December 2006: 69-70

¹² Idowu, W. O. O., *Citizenship Status, Statehood Problems and the Political Conflicts: The Case of Nigeria*: 76

¹³ There are various forms of this, but the commonest example is Democratic state, which could be either presidential or parliamentary system.

¹⁴ Idowu: 76

¹⁵ It is to be noted, however, that this kind can be found in some other theories of the state. An example is constitutional. In a sense, therefore, one can say that it is inherent in some of the theories. Those who have this will be said to have had both political and economic power.

¹⁶ But according to Idowu, Marx did not, in concrete terms, develop and articulate a distinct theory of the state. The class theory came to be associated with him due to the influence his idea of class conflict and antagonism had on latter Marxism. Idowu: 76

¹⁷ Locke, J., *Two Treatises of Government: A Critical Edition with an Introduction and Apparatus Criticism by Laslett, P.*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1960: 337.

¹⁸ Locke: 337

¹⁹ Sarah, R., *Culture, Democracy and Development in the Light of Centesimus Annus*, Nairobi: Paulines Publications Africa, 2004: 14.

²⁰ Sarah: 45

²¹ Oyeshile, O. A., "The Individual-Community Relationship as an Issue in Social and Political Philosophy" in Oladipo, O. (Ed), *Core Issues in African Philosophy*, Ibadan: Hope Publications Ltd., 2006: 103.

²² See Rosman, A., "Structuralism as a Conceptual Framework" in *African Studies Review*, 13, 1, April 1970: 71.

²³ Leach, E. R., *Political Systems in Highland Burma*, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1954: 5

²⁴ Maranda, P., "Structuralism in Cultural Anthropology" in *Annual Review of Anthropology*, 1, 1972: 335

²⁵ Maranda: 335

²⁶ Parsons, Talcott, *The Evolution of Societies*, Englewood, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 1977: 7.

²⁷ Bentham, J., "Happiness is Seeking the Greatest Pleasure for the Greatest Number of People" in Gould, J. A. and Mulvaney, R. J. (Eds) *Classic Philosophical Questions*, Eleventh Edition, New Jersey: Pearson/Prentice Hall, 2004: 349.

²⁸ Oyeshile, O. A., The Individual-Community Relationship as an Issue in Social and Political Philosophy: 103

²⁹ Oyeshile: 104.

³⁰ Sarah, R., *Culture, Democracy and Development in the Light of Centesimus Annus*: 6.

³¹ This is the view of those who hold onto communitarianism, that there is a close relationship between the community/state and the individual. There are two types of communitarianism, the radical and the modest. While the former holds the claim that individual cannot do without the community, the latter claims that though individual belongs to a society, but still can do some things

without solely being influenced by societal norms. For a detailed analysis of communitarianism, see Gawkowska, A., “Neutrality, Autonomy and Order: Amitai Etzioni’s Communitarian Critique of Liberalism Under Scrutiny” in *A Decade of Transformation, IWM Junior Visiting Fellows Conferences*, 8, 4, Vienna 1999: 1-34, Gbadegesin, S., “Individuality, Community and the Moral Order” in Coetzee, P. H. and Roux, A. P. J. (Eds), *The African Philosophy Reader*, London and New York: Routledge, 1998: 292-305.

³² See Gbadegesin: 295.

³³ Bentham, J., Happiness is Seeking the Greatest Pleasure for the Greatest Number of People: 349.

³⁴ See Boule, John, *Hobbes and His Critics: A Study in the 17th Century Constitutionalism*, 3rd Edition, London: Frankcass and Company Ltd, 1969: 40.

³⁵ Stumpf, S. E. and Fieser, J., *Socrates to Sartre and Beyond: A History of Philosophy*, 7th Edition, New York: McGraw-Hill Higher Education, 2003: 65.

³⁶ Plato, *The Republic*, Jowett, M. A. (trans), New York: Vintage Books: 60.

³⁷ Plato: 62.

³⁸ Odunsi, D. M., “The Ideal End of the State and Its Basic Duties: A Challenge to Nigerian Society” in *Enwisdomization Journal: An International Journal for Learning and Teaching Wisdom*, 3, 1, 2006:73

³⁹ Lower animals cannot survive without food, their hairs, feathers, scales or any other thing perform the function of clothing, while their abodes are equivalent of shelter. That is why any animal that leaves its abode to another animals abode will not survive. For instance, goat cannot leave land for river, likewise fish cannot leave river for land or desert. This is a perfect explanation of Darwinian Evolution Theory, which explains the adaptation and survival.

⁴⁰ Plato, *The Republic*: 65.

⁴¹ Stumpf, S. E. and Fieser, J., *Socrates to Sartre and Beyond*: 65. This is a perfect illustration of the Nigerian predicament. The resources are not enough, while the available ones are not evenly distributed. The fact is that everybody wants to be satisfied by whatever means. There are two options to be provided with these needs; even distribution of available common wealth or they search for themselves. Since the first option has failed, at least for now, they are left with the second option. But by this, they may be said to be committing a false dilemma fallacy.

⁴² Hobbes idea of the state of nature is similar to this, only that in that state, it’s law of nature that made the people act the way they did. But unlike Plato, the solution to anarchy in Hobbes’ state of nature was to form a civil society. The civil society would be represented by a sovereign power.

⁴³ This sounds like a perfect description of military government where the most senior Army officer, who is assumed to be the most highly trained guardian,

becomes the Head of State. This will only happen when there is the need for that and in ideal Army setting.

⁴⁴ See Russell, B., *History of Western Philosophy*, London: Routledge, 1946: 125.

⁴⁵ Stumpf, S. E. and Fieser, J., *Socrates to Sartre and Beyond*: 66-67.

⁴⁶ See Shields, C., *Aristotle*, London and New York: Routledge, Taylor and Francis Group, 2007: 353-354.

⁴⁷ Stumpf, S. E. and Fieser, J., *Socrates to Sartre and Beyond*: 94. Only these can naturally live alone without being influenced by other creature.

⁴⁸ Stumpf and Fieser: 94.

⁴⁹ Shields, C., *Aristotle*: 365.

⁵⁰ This does not mean that the individual belongs to either; instead it is believed that people share dual identity. This is why, especially for those that belong to one denominational church or the other, they are members of the church and state.

⁵¹ Augustine, Saint, *City of God*, <http://personal.stthomas.edu/gwschlabach/docs/city.htm> [accessed 05/03/2010]

⁵² This is to say that members of either of the cities can be found in either of the societies, that is, state and church.

⁵³ Quoted from Stumpf, S. E. and Fieser, J., *Socrates to Sartre and Beyond*: 140

⁵⁴ Augustine, *City of God*, <http://personal.stthomas.edu/gwschlabach/docs/city.htm> [accessed 11/04/2010]

⁵⁵ A clear example is the Nigerian state that comprises many nations, given the feature of a state.

⁵⁶ Augustine, *City of God*

⁵⁷ A sin considered to be the first sin committed by Adam and Eve.

⁵⁸ See Aspell, P. J., *Medieval Western Philosophy: The European Emergence*, Washington: The Council for Research in Values and Philosophy, 1999: 37.

⁵⁹ Augustine, Saint, *City of God*

⁶⁰ Stumpf, S. E. and Fieser, J., *Socrates to Sartre and Beyond*: 180. The implication of this is that, Adam and Eve, the acclaimed first parents, were in a society before they sinned; so if they had not sinned, the society would still have grown and the population of such society would, perhaps, have increased.

⁶¹ See Kenny, A., *An Illustration Brief History of Western Philosophy*, 2nd Edition, Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2006: 159.

⁶² Kenny: 159

⁶³ Kenny: 162.

⁶⁴ Kenny: 162

⁶⁵ See Strauss, L., *Persecution and the Art of Writing*, Westport: Greenwood, 1952: 7-21.

⁶⁶ If it said that they contradict, then, it will mean that there is the introduction of split into the human nature and human search for the whole/reality. See Strauss, L., “How to Begin to Study Medieval Philosophy” in Pangle, T. L. (ed.), *The Rebirth of Classical Political Rationalism*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1989: 207-226.

⁶⁷ Hobbes, T., “Monarchy is Best” in Gould, J. A. and Mulvaney, R. J. (Eds) *Classic Philosophical Questions*, Eleventh Edition, New Jersey: Pearson/Prentice Hall, 2004: 504.

⁶⁸ Schall, J. V., “The Right Order of Polity and Economy: Reflections on Saint Thomas and Old Law” in *Cultural Dynamics*, 7, Nov. 1995: 427-440.

⁶⁹ The law here can be likened to the constitution of any state. In this case, the constitution is consulted, when there are problems arising. This same constitution is used, together with some Acts to battle with offenders, hard hearted, if there are.

⁷⁰ Hobbes, T., Monarchy is Best: 505.

⁷¹ For detailed descriptions and explanations of power, See Hobbes, T. Monarchy is Best: 505.

⁷² Hobbes: 505.

⁷³ Sarah, R., *Culture, Democracy and Development in the Light of Centesimus Annus*: 15.

⁷⁴ Idowu, W., “Feminist Epistemology of Law: A Critique of a Developing Jurisprudence” in *Ife Juris Review: A Journal of Contemporary Legal and Allied Issues*, 1, 2004: 4.

⁷⁵ See Idowu: 4-5

⁷⁶ Obadan, M., “The State, Leadership, Leadership, Governance Economic Development” Presidential Address Delivered at the Annual Conference of the Nigerian Economic Society in Kano, July 22-24, 1998: 25.

⁷⁷ This morality is all inclusive, as accountability, transparency, equity in judgement and some other things will be part of the morality.

⁷⁸ See Omotoso, F., “Morality and Accountability in the Nigerian State” in *African Journal of Stability and Development*, 1, 2, August 2007: 83.

⁷⁹ Snyder, J., “Nationalism and the Crisis of the Post-Soviet State” in *Survival*, 35, 1, 1993: 12.

⁸⁰ Irele, D., *Alienation and the Problem of Loyalty in African*, Ibadan: Options Book and Information Services, 1993: 7.

⁸¹ Idowu, W. O. O., “Citizenship Status, Statehood Problems and Political Conflicts: The Case of Nigeria” in *Nordic Journal of African Studies*, 8, 2, 1999: 79.

⁸² Jemiriye, T. F., “Salvation: A Critique of Kung’s Position” in *JOPRED: Journal of Philosophy and Related Disciplines*, 2, 2, July 2004: 20.

⁸³ Jemiriye: 19.

⁸⁴ Kung, H., *On Being a Christian*, Quinn, E. (trans), London: Sheed and Ward, 1963: 91.

⁸⁵ Kung: 92.

⁸⁶ This is equally to settle the problem of religious evil, an effect of religious intolerance, which arises out of the claim that a religion is better and more acceptable to God than some others. See Omoregbe, J. I., "God Has No Favourite Religion: Christianity, Islam and ATR in Dialogue" in Momoh, C. S. et al (Eds), *Nigerian Studies in Religious Tolerance, Vol. IV: Philosophy of Religious Tolerance*, Lagos: CBAAC/NARETO, 1988: 348-365.

⁸⁷ Alao, A., "The Evolutionary Travail of the Nigerian State and Political System, 1914-1999", *1st Professor S. O. Arifalo Public Lecture Presented at the Department of History and international Studies, Adekunle Ajasin University, Akungba Akoko, Ondo State, Nigeria*, September 17, 2008: 1

⁸⁸ Alao: 2

⁸⁹ Alao: 9-28. Note that even before amalgamation, the Yoruba nation, for instance, had diverse cultural, political and religious peculiarities. This could be found among other nations and ethnic groups that make up the present Nigerian State.

⁹⁰ Ekong E. Ekong, *Rural Sociology*, Third Edition, Uyo: Dove Educational Publishers, 2010: 110

⁹¹ Ekong: 110

⁹² A. O. Y. Raji and H. O. Danmole, "Taditional Government" in N. Lawal et al (eds.), *Understanding Yorùbá Life and Culture*, Asmara: Africa World Press, Inc., 2004: 259

⁹³ Raji and Danmole: 69

⁹⁴ Afolayan, M. O and Afolayan, P. O., "Obas in Contemporary Politics" in N. Lawal et al (eds.), *Understanding Yorùbá Life and Culture*, Asmara: Africa World Press, Inc., 2004: 288

⁹⁵ Afolayan and Afolayan: 290

⁹⁶ Afe, A. E. and Adubuola, I. O., "The Travails of Kingship Institution in Yorubaland: A Case Study of Isikan in Akurẹ land" in *Nebula*, 6, 4, 2009: 114

⁹⁷ The cases of erstwhile *Obas* that have been dethroned are instances to buttress this point. There are others that are being tried in law courts of alleged offences. For *Obas* that had been deposed, countless examples could be cited. In Ondo State, there was the case of the then *Ọlọwọ* of *Ọwọ*, Sir Olateru Olagbegi in 1965, the then *Ọlọba* of *Oba-Ile*, Ilesanmi Bayode, Orioge II in 1980, the then *Deji* of *Oluwadare Adesina Adepoju* in 2010 etc. The case of *Alowa* of *Ilowa* in *Obokun Local Government of Osun State*, *Oba Adebukola Alli* being tried in a law court of alleged rape of a corper. For the report on the case of *Alowa*, see *Alaroye Tuntun, Idi Ketalelogbon* (Vol. 33), *Eyo Karun un* (No. 5), May 31, 2011: *Oju iwe keji* (2)

⁹⁸ Afe, A. E. and Adubuola, I. O., “The Travails of Kingship Institution in Yorubaland: A Case Study of Isikan in Akure land: 114

⁹⁹ An instance is the traditional Oyo political set up in South Western Nigeria.

¹⁰⁰ Akpekpe, S. O., “Moral and Political Rights of Citizens” in Nemeke, A. D. and Erhagbe, E. O. (eds.), *Nigerian Peoples and Culture*, Second Edition, Benin: Department of History, University of Benin/Mindex Publishing Company Ltd, 2002: 181-2

¹⁰¹ See Section 10 of the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria.

¹⁰² See Adamolekun, T., “Muslim-Christian Encounter in Modern Nigeria since 1914: A Historical Perspective” in Babalola, E. O. (ed.) *Christian-Muslim Encounter in Modern Nigeria*, Lagos: Eternal Communications Ltd., 2002: 2002: 58-69.

¹⁰³ Jemiriye, T. F., Salvation: 21.

**METAPHYSICS OF KOLA NUT: TOWARDS AN
AUTHENTIC AFRICAN IGBO COMMUNION; A
CHALLENGE TO CHRISTIANITY**

*Obiajulu Mulumba Ibeabuchi
Department of Philosophy
Nnamdi Azikiwe University Awka
Anambra State*

1. Point of Departure

Apart from economic and medicinal importance of kola nut, its metaphysical significance especially among the traditional Igbo Africans, calls for more exposition. In this paper, within the context of Igbo Africans' worldview, we shall expose the nature, existence and reality of kola nut especially the traditional Igbo specie called 'Oji Igbo' botanically called 'cola acuminata' or 'atrophora'.

Oji Igbo is commonly held to be ontologically sacred to the extent that certain taboos are hedged around it. It is not an ordinary tree and so not rampantly seen like any other trees. This scarcity portends a signal that it is exclusively created for a purpose which Igbo generally construed to be a sure key to unlock the hearts of men and gods¹. Further for Igbo Africans, it signifies clean mind, pure intention...¹ These and other issues related to 'Oji Igbo' functionality we are going to treat in the entire paper. Again, we shall consider whether the metaphysics of Oji Igbo and its functions thereof qualify it as a veritable ingredient to be used as an authentic Igbo African communion. We may like to compare and contrast sharply the Igbo African kola nut as Holy Communion and the Communion of Wine and Bread as used in established churches throughout the Christendom.

On the whole, we shall see the possibility of kola-communion as one of the bases for authentic African communion, a challenge to enculturation. In this way, it becomes possible to penetrate Christian religion into our culture. This paper will signify an invitation to indigenize, Africanize, Nigerianize and even Igbonize Christianity while retaining its essence.

Oji Igbo, 'Cola acuminata' is quite distinct from others in that it is used traditionally for rituals, for marriage ceremonies, title taking, offering of prayers at traditional ceremonies, to welcome visitors and to introduce very important discussions and requests¹.

Kola nitida 'Oji Awusa' is broken and consumed but not acceptable for any form of rituals. It is not ritualistic and cannot be a mere substitute in itself unless adequate form of prayer of transubstantiation is said over it, requesting the god's permission and people's consent to use kola nitida in place of cola acuminata perhaps, because of the immediate unavailability of the latter.

Among Igbo Africans, the aspect of communalism are celebrated with kola nut which is both a spiritual and physical symbol of unity. 'Ofeke', or the excommunicated or the unqualified or the socially stigmatized does not partake of the communion of kola. A condition of admittance is Igba Oriko a banquet of togetherness, a celebration indicating that the ostracized or the rejected or the excommunicated person is now free to relate with his brethren and enjoy the common wealth in sharing love and responsibility. No ceremonies are started without the breaking of kola (Iwa Oji) which all present are expected to partake¹.

It is assumed that all present are worthy members of the community as unworthy and unqualified are formally, not invited. In such communal celebration of brotherhood, the departed members of the community, especially the ancestors, are invited to

partake spiritually hence the belief that every gathering is done in respect of the ancestors whose blessings are sought always before commencing any activity.

2. Kola Nut and Sacramentals

There is nothing, absolutely nothing called sacrament or sacramentals in nature that is held sacred as a result of its privilege of co-naturality. Sacramentals are originally mere artistic impressions of conventional pictures or images of holy persons or sacred objects before appropriate words are proclaimed over them to produce desired effect.

In other words, sacraments and sacramentals are not capable of independent existence; they are objects of intension or adhesion. They are better called accidents and so lack objectiveness of substances as one cannot find them in nature. They are effects of certain kinds of words proclaimed over a person or objects for specific reason and perhaps, under some specific circumstances. For the sacramental, these forms of word make them what they are, and what they started becoming at a certain moment. Until this moment, they were mere objects of artistic impressions. Even after the forms of word proclaimed over them, their appearances remain the same.

Ordinary appearances, which include looks (structures), tastes (bitterness), smell (indescript) and felling (hard) deceive, yet it has experienced transubstantiation. The accidents of sacramentals deceive the unwary into taking them as mere objects. Their substantial nature now is invisible.¹

The sacrament of Holy Communion is made what it is by selected words of consecration used by an ordained priest of the church. Two conditions must be fulfilled before a sacrament becomes holy and acceptable: there must be an ordained priest celebrating a holy

mass who has the faculty to consecrate the mere wafer bread and the medicated wine into the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ.

There is nothing in nature of the bread and wine, or their combined nature after commingling that presents their pictures as having the proclivity of becoming the communion exclusively. Article 267 of the Traditional Catechism' says "*The bread and wine are changed into the Body and Blood of Christ by the power of God, to whom nothing is impossible or difficult*"¹. The same change can be brought to bear on any other matter if the power and authority of God is sought for. If sacrament is an outward sign, any matter can be conventionally chosen and the conventionality of the material makes it a variable factor, whereas the form consists of the words.

“This is my body”; This is the chalice”

The choice of the matter is conventional and historical, while that of the form (words of consecration) is biblical. The consecrator is the authority who is bestowed with the faculty to proclaim the adequate words of consecration as Christ did in the Last Supper (Matt. 26: 26-28). While the essence of consecration remains unchanged, there are other variables that are not so essential as to remain unchanged. After all, the bread and wine used today in consecration are not of the same species used by Jesus Christ in the last Supper, yet the essence of the consecration still endures.

The efficacy of transubstantiation depends exclusively on the words of consecration which begin with the prayers before consecration, the prayer for the church and ecclesiastical authorities, invocation of the saints, commemoration of the living, oblation of the victim to God, consecration of the host. The efficacy does not depend on the disposition of the priest, but on the authenticity of the priesthood. Its efficacy does not depend on the

species being transubstantiated but there must be something, a sacrifice of praise, gifts or presents which must be of necessity the handwork of man existing as the indices to be transubstantiated. This being the case, nature has endowed humanity with a lot of natural indices with ontological potency of being transubstantiated. The bread and wine were quite relevant in the times of Christ and the commonest foods for satisfying immediate thirst were to serve this very purpose. The Europeans chose another form of bread and wine which served their common dinner as the species to use in the consecration.

Even though we were Christianized or better Europeanized, that should not served as a strong point of argument for us to use the species that are foreign to our culture. Today to Christianize is no longer appropriate but rather to incarnate Christ in different cultures of the world in order to make Christianity relevant to every culture. In this period of new era of evangelization, effort should be made to see Christianity as part of our culture not as a foreign religion that is imposed on the people. Christianity should not be seen as a burden. In order to penetrate Christianity into our culture and in a bid to make Christ more relevant to us in this part of the world, we have to indigenize, Africanize, Nigerianize and Igbonize Christianity while retaining its essences.

The essence of the Communion (Eucharist) lies in its substance, to wit, a principle by which a thing is said to be there, and this principle is lost in invisibility. The principle by which a Eucharist is in existence lies in the powerful words of transubstantiation and not in what is being transubstantiated.

If with words of transubstantiation the bread becomes the body; the wine, the blood, and we know there is nothing, absolutely nothing, in the natures of mere bread and medicated wine that makes them capable of changing into new and entirely different substances of

body and blood, except by mysterious power of the words of consecration; such powerful words without conditions can be used on any other materials to get the desired effect. This change does not obey the metaphysical principle of “*Agere sequitor ess*”. This change is not accidental but substantial. If this change is substantial exclusively, it therefore can be predicated of any other material species. Since there is nothing for which a substance is a predicate, it becomes reasonable to think that this substantial change has no boundary in application. If substance ‘A’ changes into ‘B’ by using a constant form, it follows that ‘B’ can change into ‘C’ if the same formula is applied. By logical and mathematical application, if $A \rightarrow B$, $B \rightarrow C$, therefore, $A \rightarrow C$, unless we can argue that there are some necessary and sufficient conditions for the efficacy of the words of consecration, part of such condition would be the choice of the specimen, in which case “the ontological powers of the words of consecration becomes a mere claim”¹ but this cannot be true. If it cannot be true then our indigenous choice of materials like sacred kola nut and Up-wine (Nkwu enu-Palm wine) can equally be consecrated and transubstantiated into body and blood of Jesus.

3. Igbo Respect for Kola

The Igbo respect for kola nut and Up-wine (Palm wine) is predicated on the understanding of their values and inherent sacredness and sanctity. The simplicity of the appearances of the kola nut metaphysically connotes sublimity with which the Igbo regard its various appearances. It is not by chance that some kola nuts ‘*Cola acuminata*’, *Oji* Igbo, are dicotyledonous. Dicotyledonous kola nuts have obvious repulsive implications, ‘it is neither eaten by any titled man – Nze nor by a woman’¹. ‘The significance of tricotyledonous kola-nut is good omen; it is otherwise called *Oji Ikenga* — kola nut for men who have distinguished themselves in noble deeds’¹. The most acceptable is the four cotyledonous kola nut because the four cotyledons are

indices of the acceptance and approbation of the assembly by the gods of the four market days - Eke, Orië, Afọ and Nkwọ'.¹ When the acuminata bears five cotyledons, even though, it is rare, it is an index of productivity and wealth'.¹ The debut of such kola nuts is announced thus: Ojì nke a gbara ise' — this kola nut has five cotyledons! Everybody claims the blessings which are promised by this kola. Thus, signs and symbols are part and parcel of Igbo culture and tradition. No wonder Igbo appreciated Christianity because of their common shade of understanding behind both religions.

It is symbolic that Christ chose to be born in a Stable in a most humiliating manner. By coherent theory of truth, it cannot be said to be out of place if he should leave his sacramental presence in the most common species of our local kola nuts and up-wine, the two essential ingredients in our custom and tradition following an adequate words of consecration.

Kola nut is a revealer of hearts ... it pacifies and cements social cracks... it is a sure key to unlock the hearts of men and the gods'¹. For M. N. Okonkwo, mgbe ọbụla mmadụ chọrọ inye nna ya ma ọbụ nna nna ha nwurụ anwụ ihe, o bupụta okpei ha goọ Ojì were mpekere Ojì tọgbọchaa n'elu ha kelee ha,¹

He went further to say:

'a chọọ iriọ ndinwuru anwụ aririọ ọbụ Ojì ka aga-eji riọ ha n'okpesi ha'¹

In the above, Okonkwo explains the centrality of kola nut in Igbo spiritual life.

4. Logic of Igbo Kola Nut as Communion

The present species of bread and wine used in consecration are not so cheap and derogatory compared to the universal king's humility in choosing his birth circumstance and making his debut as a human person. Even his departure from the mortal world was

characterized by humiliating and *infradig* circumstances not worthy of a Messiah.

Even the reasons for reserving the Eucharist outside the mass do not justify the choice of the wafer bread and industrial medicated wine as species to be consecrated. In terms of durability, our local species endure more and do not ferment easily as the wafer bread and medicated wine. In terms of divisibility, our kola nuts are more divisible into smaller particles than the conventional round bread, our local wine is more available in quantity than the ‘Twelve Apostles’. In terms of relevance, our local species are more relevant as traditionally they are already being used at the banquet of love and togetherness which is what the communion stands for. For viaticum our kola nut has inherent sacredness and sanctity and is easily transferable.

An attempt to take more seriously the cultural background of our people in discussing and imparting religious doctrines is necessary to make Christianity much relevant to us. In the light of the above B. Okolo says:

We cannot really deepen the understanding of truth in our people unless the church in Nigeria is really and unconditionally serious about inculturation as a growth and deepening process of the church herself¹.

He went further to say:

we have to be serious about inculturation, or Africanizing the church in all its ramifications ranging from church structures and mode of running the church which are largely western and foreign... even the materials for the Holy Eucharist, for example¹.

Christianity is dynamic and always seeks for an up-to-date renewal in all spheres which had previously been influenced by European culture. Christianity is trans-cultural and so should be incarnated and incardinated in every culture.

Owing to the exigency of having Christianity in African soil, Christianity in Igbo land, I advocate for a Christianity that can be interpreted in an African context. Seeking for an Igbo rites in liturgical worship should not be seen as a strange demand for granting such rites should not introduce ideas which change the meaning and substance of the Christian message.

As an entry point, I advocate for the replacement of wafer bread and medicated wine by Igbo kola nut and palm wine for consecration during Eucharistic celebration. Our local oil should replace the oil of catechumen and chrism used by the priests and Bishops in administering sacraments. If sacraments are outward signs of inward grace, any species can conventionally be used as indices for the grace in question.

Among the Igbo Africans, the aspects of communalism are celebrated with kola nut which is 'both a spiritual and physical symbol of unity¹. Just as the sinner does not partake of the communion until he makes an adequate sacramental confession, the 'Ofeke' (the excommunicated) in Igbo context should not partake of the communion of kola. A condition for admittance is 'Igba Oriko' (a banquet of togetherness), a celebration indicating that the excommunicated person is now free to relate with his brethren and enjoy the common wealth in sharing love and responsibility.

No ceremonies are started without the breaking of kola (Iwa Oji) in which all present partake. It is granted that all present are worthy

members of the community as unworthy and unqualified ones are formerly not invited. In such communal celebration of brotherhood, the departed members are also invited to partake spiritually, hence the belief that every gathering is done in respect of the ancestors whose blessings are always sought before commencing any activity.

In the breaking of the kola nut, just as in the breaking of the bread on the altar, the unity of the faithful who are expected to be worthy recipients is sought, and in communion all who are expected to be worthy receive the same spirit of unity in the unfragmented body of Christ.

Even in praying over the gift (the kola nut) certain *Epiclesis* is used inviting God to come and bless the gathering and the particular intention for which people are gathered. *Anamnesis* is also used to call to memory the good works of our ancestors after whom the living relatives generally believe they are ever in communion with the living. Even in Holy Mass, there is usually an invocation of the saints who are equally our ancestors in faith.

From the foregoing analogy, we observe and are bent to respect this, that the sacredness and sanctity inherent in our traditional kola nut could be likened to that of the blessed bread in the churches. At this level, they cannot be equiperated but if they cannot both be taken to be true, then they are otherwise false.

As the Eucharist is the centre of the whole Christian life, so the kola nut is the centre of Igbo life celebrations. Hence,

It is a sure key to unlock the hearts of men and gods... used whenever the spirits of the ancestors are being conjured or after libation has been poured in order to pacify a particular deity that is injured¹.

As the priest is the only person qualified to consecrate the host, so is the eldest (Nze n'ozo priestly caste) the only persons qualified to bless the kola and pour libation. The subtle difference lies in the kind of matter (species) used to achieve the same effect. The Christian communion appears under two species of bread and wine, the traditional Igbo communion of kola nut appears equally two: 'Oji' (Kola nut) and 'okwaose' (peppery paste of groundnut and spices). It is either received in one kind or both kinds (both species) just as the communion of wafer bread can be received under both species.

It is our belief and theology that whether received unicamerally or bicamerally, that is, in each kind or both species, Jesus Christ, true God and true man, is replete in all his existential totality and completeness.¹

5. Kola Communion and other Kinds: Metaphysical Difference

The sacredness of kola nut is co-natural with its nature whereas the English wafer bread as an industrial product is not sacred in its nature. The Holy Communion enjoys, or is infused with, the sacredness and sanctity of existence, due to the transubstantiating power of the words of consecration carefully used by the priest, an 'alter Christus'. This being the case, the transformation power of the consecration can equally be brought to bear on sacred Igbo kola nut and its peppery paste to achieve the same result.

It becomes necessary here to point out that the efficacy of words of consecration in transubstantiating a substance does not depend on the nature of the substance. This suggests that the possibility of arriving at the same effect while using other correlates is not doubtful.

However, it is germane we point out here that our kola nut whether blessed or not, maintains its ontological and co-natural respect in Igbo cosmetology, whereas the mere appearance of wafer bread and ‘Twelve Apostles’ does not in any way suggest the presence of what should be termed the ‘communion’. Its usefulness does not manifest in its appearance:

The presence of Christ under the species is called ‘real’ not in exclusive sense, as if the other kinds of presence were not real, but par excellence¹.

The sacramental presence of Christ is by invocation whereas the sacredness of kola nut which is a spark of divine sanctity is infused in it. On this note, the successful invocation of Christ to take another sacramental form is not doubtful and Christ’s responsiveness to this invitation cannot be placed on the bargain table.

If sacraments are outward signs of inward grace, the communion being a sacrament shares in this definition. If the sign and the signified are equal, the presence of Christ in the communion is fully domiciled in the communion. To wit, the presence of the communion is both the sign of, and in actuality contains the body and blood of Jesus Christ. If Christ is God and God is spirit, the spirit which Christ himself is, cannot only be represented in one form alone. This form of representation would place a serious limitation which is unhealthy for our understanding. This representationalism may be conventional in outlook, and perfunctory in practice. So it becomes an object one chooses as he wants. If convention applies in matters of sacrament, out of the same convention another communal species may be chosen, consecrated, transubstantiated into the sacred body and blood of Jesus Christ. And this is possible. I mean plausible if the choice of

the species has no incidence in the sacredness and sanctity of the communion.

6. Evaluation

We have come to the age when we shall Christianize our culture and inculturate our Christianity to make Christ incarnate in our own native soil. But let us be reminded that the reality of communion is not strange to Igbo Africans. What is strange is the possibility of changing a substance into the body and blood of Jesus. Coherently and correspondently, if our faith is unwavering in believing its possibility with English wafer bread, the same mystery can be extended to our local substance 'kola nut'.

The choice of the substance has no incidence on the efficacy of the word of transubstantiation as the change is meant to be substantial and not accidental. The choice is both accidental and circumstantial. Transubstantiation does not occur on secondary qualities of a thing such as taste, colour, size etc and this is why every thing looks the same after the change.

The functional relevance of kola nut in Igbo cultural milieu makes its choice uncontestable as the most fit and qualified of all the local ingredients to substitute the western bread. The existential totality and completeness (reality) of God can be felt, represented and anthologized in any culture or religion.

There is absolutely nothing in the nature of the English bread and wine, or their combined nature after commingling that makes them possess extra being of becoming the communion exclusively.

The choice is conventional and historical, while the essence of the consecration remains unchanged: there are other variables that are not so essential as to remain unchanged. The efficacy of transubstantiation depends exclusively on the form (words). This

being the case, nature has endowed humanity with a lot of natural indices with ontological potency of being transubstantiated.

7. Conclusion

If it is doubtful whether our local kola nut (and upwine) can be consecrated to get the desired result, we should equally reject out rightly, without any fear of commission or omission, the potency of the words of consecration, which efficacy does not depend on the choice of the species. We should in addition, reject the wafer bread and medicated 'Twelve Apostles' as foreign and too artificial and inadequate for the type of man and God Christ is.

God may be unhappy to leave himself in a sacramental condition better than a Manger (stable) in Nazareth where his incarnation was consummated. The essence of Christ is not lost if he leaves himself in a condition worse than Nazareth manger. Yet our kola nut is better and more sublime than the manger.

THE DIMENSIONS OF AFRICAN COSMOLOGY

Kanu, Ikechukwu Anthony (OSA)
Department of Philosophy
University of Nigeria, Nsukka
[*ikee_mario@yahoo.com*](mailto:ikee_mario@yahoo.com)

1. Introduction

In an attempt to understand the meaning of 'African Cosmology' and its constituent elements, it would be worthwhile to first explore the concept 'cosmology'. Etymologically, it is from the Greek words: *cosmos* and *Logos*, meaning 'universe' and 'science' respectively. Put together, it is the 'science of the universe'. Thus, in this paper, *cosmos* and universe will be used interchangeably, and by universe it is meant worldview. For a further and profound enquiry as to the meaning of worldview, there is a copious cache of literature available in this regard. One needs to glance at the works of eminent scholars like Wambutda (1986), Ejizu (1986), Achebe (1986), Onuoha (1987), Metuh (1987), Ubesie (2004), Madubuko (2004), Madu (2004), Ezenweke and Kanu (2012). Very significant to their analysis, is an underlining principle that speaks of cosmologies as basically religious, which gives a sense of purpose and direction to the lives of people and enables them to act purposefully and exercise a measure of control over their environment. It is in this regard that Metuh (1987) maintains that cosmology answers fundamental questions about the place and relationship of man with the universe. This cannot be done outside the ambience of supernatural power or powers and thus religion.

What then is African cosmology? It is simply the way Africans perceive, conceive and contemplate their universe; the lens through which they see reality, which affects their value systems and attitudinal orientations; it is the African's search for the meaning of life, and an unconscious but natural tendency to arrive at a unifying base that constitutes a frame of meaning often viewed as *terminus*

a quo (origin), and as *terminus ad quem* (end). This cosmology is the underlining thought link that holds together the African value system, philosophy of life, social conduct, morality, folklores, myths, rites, rituals, norms, rules, ideas, cognitive mappings and theologies.

The idea of African worldview must be understood in a general sense and in a restricted sense, because what we call African worldview is not one shared by all Africans in its totality but rather some characteristic features of the common elements among African worldviews. According to Madu (2004), an investigation into the nature of African cosmology would beg a couple of fundamental questions that determine its course:

- i. What is the nature of the African universe?
- ii. Who is the maker and sustainer of the African universe?
- iii. What is the nature of the beings in the African universe and the interactional network within the African cosmic order?

These questions shall guide our inquiry into African worldview.

2. The Structure of the African Universe

The African universe has the physical and the spiritual dimensions (Edeh 1983, Abanuka, 1994, Ijiomah 2005, Unah 2009, and Chimakonam 2012^a). At the spirit realm, God represents the Chief Being, and seats at the apex of power. In the physical world, man dominates, occupying the central position in the scheme of God's creation. In the contention of Onunwa (1994), the African cosmos is like an isosceles triangle, God (the Supreme Being) is at the apex. The ancestors are at the base of the triangle, with man at the centre. The primacy of the human being in the African universe is due to the central place he occupies within the universe. The triangular imagery suggests that human beings form a "microcosm" on which converge the innumerable forces that inhabit the other arms of the universe.

Ijiomah (2005) avers that the African universe consists of three levels: they are the sky, the earth and the underworld: “the sky is where God *Chukwu* or *Chineke* and angels reside; the earth is where man, animals, natural resources, some devils and some physical observable realities abide; and the underworld where the ancestors and some bad spirit live” (p. 84). Ekwealor (1990), corroborated the above view when he described the African universe as consisting of three encircled levels, namely: *Elu-Igwe* or sky, *Alammadu* or the world of the living and *Alammuo* or the land of the spirits. Chimakonam (2012^b) in his paper “God and Man in Igbo Traditional Religion” produced graphical drawings of these views and demonstrated the equivalence of Onunwa, Ijiomah and Ekwealor’s conceptions of Igbo universe.

Thus, the African worldview consists of both spiritual and physical realms, which despite their separate existence interact. Thus Ekwealor (1990) avers that “It is important to note that although the Igbo universe is divided into these three broad structures, there is the possibility of certain elements to move from one structure to another to commune with other elements” (p. 30). In this interaction, man communes with God, the divinities, the ancestors and vice versa. The African world is thus an interactive universe.

3. God in the African Cosmos

God in the African universe, according to Quarcoopome (1987), from his names and attributes, is a reality and not an abstract concept. Idowu (1978) avers that he is a personal being with whom one can enter into communion and communication. He is approachable in all occasions of life. In societies where there is hierarchy of power, from the king to the chiefs and common people, the idea of God is also presented within the frame of a hierarchy. This is evident in the Yoruba, Benin and Akan concepts of God. However, where such hierarchies are not well developed, the idea of God is presented in plain terms, as among the Nupe and Tiv. Among some cultures, he is conceived as masculine, as

among the Yoruba, Mende and Akan; in some others as feminine, as among the Ewe; in some others, he is conceived as both male and female, as among the Gas.

The Igbo call him Chukwu or Osebuluwa (Great God or sustainer of the universe)

The Yoruba call him Olodumare or Edumare (The King of heaven)

The Edo call him Osanobua or Osanobwa (Creator and sustainer of the universe)

The Nupe call him Soko (The supreme deity that resides in heaven)

The Ijo call him Temearau (The creatress of all things –feminine term-)

The Tiv call him Aondo (The power above that creates and rules all things)

The Ibibio refer to him as Obasi Ibom (The God who lives above the earth)

The Akan call him Odomankoma and Nyame (full of mercy and the God of fullness respectively)

The Mende of Sierra Leone call him Ngewo (The eternal one who rules from above)

The Kono of Sierra Leone call him Meketa (The Immortal or eternal)

From the meanings of these names of God from different African cultural backgrounds, his attributes already begin to emerge.

4. The Attributes of God

Not minding the differences in the concept of God among Africans, which Oguejiofor (2010), argues is based on the epiphenomenal of the global condition of life of the people under consideration, Idowu (1989), avers that there are unifying attributes of the African Ultimate Reality. These attributes according to Awolalu and Dopamu (1979) are words or phrases that speak of the traits, properties, qualities or characteristics of God and what is believed to be his role in relation to the world and

man. These attributes bring down the divine from the high mountain of the metaphysical and abstract to the level ground of the real and concrete.

- i. **God is Real and Active:** For instance among the Igbo, he is called: *Chineke* (the God who creates), *Chukwu* (the great God), *Osebuluwa* (the sustainer of the universe), *Ekekereuwa* (he who created the world), *Chi-oke* (God that apportions lots), *Nna-di-Ebube* (the awe-inspiring father), *Odogwu-nagha* (victorious warrior), *Ome Mgbeogharike* (actor in times of difficulty). From these names, God is real and not just real, but active. And if he fails to respond as expected, the Igbo would ask “*Chukwu I no nura*” (God are you asleep).
- ii. **God is Unique:** By unique, it is meant that he is different from other creatures. In his graphical representations of Ijiomah and Onunwa’s conception African universe, Chimakonam (2012^b) shows that God occupies a unique place, high and above all other creatures as the creator. He is transcendent, sovereign and possesses absolute power.
- iii. **God is the absolute controller of the universe:** The African God is not a withdrawn God; he has full control of the universe. The Igbo would refer to him as *Osebuluwa* (the sustainer of the universe). He did not just create the world but actively sustains it. All other creatures are in being for the reason that he is also in existence. He is neither a Remote God (*Deus Remotus*) or a Withdrawn God (*Deus Otiosus*). He is both transcendent and immanent.

- iv. **God is One:** Among the Igbo, there is only one God called *Chukwu*, even though the nomenclature is contested, he is regarded as the God and creator of the whole universe. Thus, African Traditional Religion has come to be understood, though lately, as a monotheistic religion because it recognizes only one God.
- v. **God is Creator:** Africans have the belief that God either created the world or delegated some divinities to carry out some assignments as regards the creation of the world. According to Oduwole (2010), Yoruba scholars agree that the human person is made up of three basic elements: *Ara* (body), *Emi* (breath) and *Ori* (soul). Idowu (1962) avers that the body is the creation of *Orisha nla* (Arch-divinity). He was assigned by *Olodumare* (the Supreme Being) to mould the body of human beings. It is only the Supreme Being that puts the spirit into the body so as to give it life. Thus even when a divinity is delegated, it does not take the place of God.
- vi. **God is King:** Most African traditional societies speak of God as King. This attribute is related to that of God as the controller of the universe. Generally, the idea of God as king speaks of him as the sovereign controller of the universe. Among the Mende, he is “The Chief”; among the Yoruba, he is *Oba Orun* “The King in heaven”; among the Igbo he is *Eze Enuigwe* “The King of Heaven”.
- vii. **God is Omnipotent:** In recognizing that God creates and sustains all things, the African implicitly recognizes God’s Omnipotence. Since there is no limit to the being of God, and every being acts according to its nature, it would imply that His power is without limit. He does everything possible, even the ones we sometimes

consider impossible. A God without this attribute fails the first test of deity. Among the Akan of Ghana he is Otumfoo (The Mighty or Powerful One); The Yoruba concept of God as *Olodumare* and the Igbo concept of God as *Chukwu* also speak of the omnipotence of God.

- viii. **God is Eternal:** Eternity is the total simultaneous and perfect possession of life without limits. This implies that God has no beginning or end. He made us who abides forever and is always the self-same and His years do not fail. Indeed, the very substance of God is eternity. It is in this regard that the Yoruba refer to him as *Oyigiyi Ota Aiku* (The mighty immovable, hard, ancient, durable rock that never dies).
- ix. **God as Judge:** The African believes that all his actions will be judged, rewarded or punished. God is the impartial judge who will either reward or punish him for his actions, both private and public actions.

5. The Divinities in the African Universe

As already indicated, in the African world, there is only one God, who is high and is expected to be reached through intermediaries. These intermediaries are called divinities and share aspects of the divine status. Most Africans believe that they emanate from God; as such, it is incorrect to say that they were created by him, but more correct to speak of them as offspring of the Supreme Being; it is therefore not surprising that the *Abosom* of Ghana, *Orisa-nla* of the Yoruba, *Olokun* of the Edo and *Ojukwu* of the Igbo are referred to as sons of the Supreme Being.

Divinities are responsible to God for whatever act they perform in their relationship with human beings. Their function is to ensure that God is not bothered by petty problems from the earth; they are not ends in themselves but means to an end, and everything they

do is dependent upon God's approval; this does not in any way change the fact that they are a powerful set of spiritual beings. They are functionaries in the theocratic government of God, sometimes referred to as his messengers and at other times as his sons. Awolalu and Dopamu (1978) refer to them as the executive heads of various divine departments in the Supreme Being's monarchical government.

Each of these divinities has a name, usually describing its function: as we have *Ala* among the Igbo meaning earth, which speaks of the earth-goddess. Or *Olokun* in Yoruba, *okun* meaning ocean, and the god, the god of the sea. Arinze (1970), speaking on divinities from the Igbo perspective declares that:

God is the Supreme Spirit, the creator of everything. No one equals him in power. He knows everything. He is altogether a good and merciful God and does harm to no one. He sends rain and especially children, and it is from him that each individual derives his personal 'chi'. But this supreme spirit has made many inferior spirits who are nearer to man and through whom man normally offers his worship to Him. (p. 10)

The difference between these divinities and the Supreme Being is very obvious. They are inferior spirits, while God is a superior spirit. They vary in number from place to place, however with more among the Yoruba where one can get as many as 1700 of divinities. No matter their number, they are a group headed by the arch-divinity as we see in the case of *Orisa-nla* among the Yoruba. It is an arch-divinity and the head of all divinities among the Yoruba.

6. The Categorization of Divinities

Awolalu and Dopamu (1978) categorized divinities into three divisions. These include:

1. Primordial Divinities:

These are divinities that dwell in the heavens since they were with the Supreme Being during the creation of the universe. Like the creator of the universe, their origin is also not known. An example of this kind of divinity is *Orishanla* (Arch-divinity), which Idowu (1962) avers was given the responsibility of creating the human body.

2. Deified Ancestors:

The deified ancestors are human beings that lived extraordinary or mysterious lives and as such were made divinities after their death. This is very common among the Egyptians and the Romans. Among the Yorubas, we have Sango who was a former powerful king of Oyo. With the deification of the ancestor, he ceases to be an ancestor and takes up the qualities of a divinity.

3. Personified Natural Forces and Phenomena:

The African universe is made up of myriad of spirits. And these spirits have their abode on mountains, hills, rivers, seas, oceans, trees, roads, markets, caves, brooks, lakes and forests. Their abode also determines the place where they are worshipped, and also the residence of the Priest of the deity. It is a common story in Africa to hear of spirits causing accidents on bridges, these are spirits that dwell in water, often called mummy water. Some spirits dwell in trees and cause road accidents, often interpreted as sacrifice to the divinity in question. There are sociological factors that affect the positioning of these divinities, based on the principle that man is a social being who operates in the society. For instance, people in the riverine areas worship water spirits. People who live in places where there is forest worship the forest spirits. People in mountainous areas worship spirits that dwell on the mountain.

For the purpose of this study, we shall concentrate on divinities among the Yoruba of Nigeria.

Divinities among the Yoruba of Nigeria

1. Orisa-nla: It is also known as Obatala (which means king of whiteness or the Lord of white cloths), the creator divinity and arch-divinity. As already indicated, the body is the creation of *Orisha nla* (Arch-divinity). He was assigned by *Olodumare* (the Supreme Being) to mould the body of human beings. He also created solid earth and equipped it. While he creates the body, the Supreme Being puts the soul in the body. It lies within his department to make a human being beautiful or ugly. In its shrine must be clean, everything used is white in colour, and the water used at *Orisha nla's* shrine kept clean; water from its shrine is fetched very early in the morning and given to pregnant women so that the children they carry in their womb may be properly moulded; those who are physically challenged are also healed with this water. It is in fact regarded as the god of purity or the holiness of God and its worshippers are expected to be pure as well.
2. Orunmila or Ifa: It is the divinity of wisdom, prognostication and foreknowledge, and in fact the oracle divinity of Yoruba land. After God had made the human soul and sealed its destiny, it is believed that *Orunmila* was present and knows its secrets, that it why he is always consulted before undertaking an action, say marriage, war or a journey, to give information about the past, present or future of man. His priest is called *Babalawo*, which means 'the father who has the secret'.

3. Ogun: It refers to the god of iron and war. As the god of iron, he appropriately becomes the patron god of blacksmiths, hunters and warriors and is symbolized by Iron. Like the Igbo Amadioha, he is the messenger of God's wrath. Because of the fear it evokes, people go to him to seal their covenants, as fear of him brings about the fulfilment of your own part of the covenant. He is not just the messenger of God's wrath and judgement, he also grants success to warriors and hunters. Even in our time, travellers turn to him for protection from accidents.
4. Esu: As the Igbo Ekwensu was misunderstood by missionaries and new converts to Christianity as the biblical devil, Esu has also been misunderstood as the Christian devil. He is the god of mischief and could make things difficult for people. He is always present as an inspector in matters of rituals and conduct, among divinities and human beings. Having inspected a ritual, his recommendation determines if the Supreme Being will accept the sacrifice or not; he stands before the Supreme Being accusing both human beings and divinities, especially when he is not properly fed with sacrifices; however, when he is given his due, he can be benevolent in terms of protection. He is feared by both men and divinities and could be unpredictable. Awolalu and Dopamu (1978) illustrated this thus, "Once Sango, the thunder divinity of Yorubaland, boasted that there was no divinity he could not subdue. But Esu asked him promptly whether he included him, and Sango immediately replied apologetically that he could not have been included" (p. 83).
5. Sango: Just as the Igbo Amadioha is the god of thunder and lightning, Sango is the Yoruba god of thunder and lightning, with his presence manifested in thunderbolts and lightning. He was one of the kings of Oyo kingdom, an

Alafin of Oyo. And his reign was tyrannical and could spit out fire during feats of anger. When he was deposed as king, he committed suicide by hanging himself. He is highly dreaded, and punishes offenders through thunderbolts. Thus periods of lightening and thunderbolts are terrifying moments for offenders. When it strikes a human being, the person is not mourned; when he strikes a building, no body sleeps there until a special sacrifice is done.

6. Sopofo: He is the god of the disease of small pox, which is seen as a manifestation of the wrath of God on offenders. Like Songo, he is also dreaded. When it attacked liars or other offenders and its leads to death, they are not to be mourned.
7. Osun: She is the wife of Songo and the goddess of the river of Osun. She is a benevolent divinity, evident in her name, the goddess of children. She specializes in restoring the fruitfulness of barren men and women. Water from Osun River or stream to drink. Since streams and rivers are her abode, gifts to her are thrown into the river or stream. Although she specializes in child giving, she could also be approached to solve other problems.
8. Oya: Oya is a female divinity, referred to as the goddess of the River Niger. If Sango was an Alafin of Oyo, Oya is believed to be his first wife, who wept after his death, weeping so severely that her tears formed the River Niger. She could neutralize the anger of Sango. Whenever he spits fire during his feats of anger, Oya neutralizes his anger with rain. Like Osun, she is also worshipped in rivers and streams.

9. Buruku: according to the tradition of the Yoruba, Buruku is a god brought from Sabe, in Dahomey; brought as a Supreme Being but worshipped as divinity among the Yorubas. It is referred to as Buruku Omolu, meaning “the child of the Supreme Being”. It is believed that it is responsible for deaths, illnesses, catastrophes and other human miseries; however, he is also capable of blessing and protecting worshippers. Worshippers must placate its anger through sacrifices. During worship, small children, pregnant women and menstruating women are a taboo to Buruku

10. Ayelala: Like Songo, it is a deified ancestor. According to Awolalu and Dopamu (1978), “She was originally a slave woman brought from Ekitiland to Kisoso in Okitipupa of Ondo State, and offered as a substitutionary sacrifice for peace between Ileja and Ijo who were at war with each other” (p. 90). Keko from Ileja slept with the wife of chief Temetan, and ran away to Ijo to avoid being killed. When the case was being settled, it was agreed that if Keko must live, a substitute is required to die for him; it was at this time that Ayelala, the slave woman was offered as a substitutionary sacrifice. Through her death she brought peace between the peoples of Ileja and Ijo, and so was worshipped by both Ijo and Ileja.

Divinities among the Igbo of Nigeria

- i. *Anyanwu* (Sun): It is the son of *Chineke*, and sacrifices that are made to *Chukwu* are made through *Anyawu*, because of the special and close association of the sun with the Supreme Being.
- ii. *Amadioha* or *Igwe* (Sky): It is also the son of *Chineke*, and sometimes referred to as the husband of Ala. Just as a husband fertilizes his wife so does *Amadioha* fertilize his wife Ala through rainfall. It expresses its power in

thunderbolts and lightening. He is an agent of *Chukwu* against undetected crimes. Through his intercession *Chukwu* nourishes the green vegetation of the earth, sees to the health of the living, lightens up the world and gathers evidences as well as bears witness for good deeds and against evil deeds of men. It ensures that the natural order as set by *Chukwu* is not upset. Its principle is simple, ‘eye goes for an eye and a tooth goes for a tooth’. Whatever one sows, he will reap”. The question that arises here is this: if *Amadioha* is the son of *Chukwu* and *Ala* the daughter of *Chukwu*, how come the two of them are married? Or does the Igbo world encourage incest? It is true that myths are not concerned with coherence but with conveying truths, but again the instrument for conveying this truth determines the value of the truth.

- iii. *Ahiajoku* (god of agriculture): Farmers offer sacrifices to this deity for a bountiful harvest.
- vi. *Ala* (Earth goddess): It is the most important deity in Igbo public and private cults. She is the sole daughter of *Chukwu* and is believed to have made the ground and the vegetable kingdom. The earth goddess has the function of exposing those who secretly commit evil and the evils they commit. It is in this regard that the Igbo say: *Ani tukwa gi* – may the earth expose you. *Ani bokwa gi ji n’aja* – which literally means “may the earth put yam and sand on your head”. This means, “may the earth goddess render you miserable and expose your shame”. *Ani jukwa gi* (may the earth reject your corpse). In Igbo land, the earth is holy plane from it God produces all living things including human beings. It is also through this earth that human beings rejoin their maker – *Chineke*. When a man therefore, commits a crime, he is said to have “*Meruo Ala*” (defiled the earth). If such a person dies without having

“*Mejuo Ala*” (pacified the earth), the earth goddess whose function it is to expose people’s atrocities will reject the corpse of such a person. When the person is buried, the earth goddess throws up the corpse out of the belly of the earth. In this case, the bereaved are left with the option of cremation. The implication being that the soul of the person is destroyed and will never reincarnate. For such a soul, the Igbo would say: “enu erughi ya aka, ani erughi ya aka”, meaning (he has no share in the sky nor earth). They end up as wicked spirits.

- vii. *Chi-omumu* – (the goddess of children). It is her responsibility to ensure the continuity of human and animal life. Those who seek children pray to Chukwu through her.
- viii. *Nmuo Mmiri* or *Nne Mmiri* (sea goddess): she is the sustainer of sea life, the bringer of hope, provider of help and protection, the bringer of gifts and exotic things. Indeed, she is said to hold the key to the gate that leads to the world of solutions. Thus whenever the Igbo man prays he does not forget to add *ka ije anyi buru ije mmiri* which means, “may our journey follow the path of the seas”. It is she who guides people to exotic lands, and chooses to permit human beings to travel and reach their destinations on top of the sea.
- ix. *Ekwensu* (god of warriors): Missionaries have wrongly identified *Ekwensu* with the Christian concept of devil. According to Metuh (1991), *Ekwensu* is infact the spirit of violence and patron of warriors and not the Christian devil. Isichie (1969), records that among the Igbos of Asaba, there was a festival called *Ekwensu* festival, and it constituted their major annual feast, during which they displayed their military prowess.
- x. *Agwu* (the god of divination and healing): It is the chief messenger of the Almighty God. Nwankwo (1987)

recollects and records his conversation with *Agwu* – when *Agwu* was asked about himself, he replied: I am the spark of Divine Essence charged with the responsibility of providing man with tools of existence ... I hold the key to those secretes of creation which man is expected to know and reveal such secretes as are necessary for the advancement of mankind ... in the study of science, philosophy, religion, occultism, mysticism, I am the first port of call. Intelligence, wisdom, knowledge and power is bestowed on those who have received the blessings of the agent of the Almighty God. These privileges are nevertheless without a price and it is that you shall be clean before God at all times of your life. (p. 69)

One only needs so little a demonstration as close his eyes, stand barefooted on the earth, open wide his arms and solemnly echo: *Agwu gosi m ike gi!* (*Agwu* show me your power) to experience the awe of *Agwu's* divine aura.

- xi. *Ibinokpabi*: It is the divinity of *Arochukwu*; a female divinity. According to *Awolalu and Dopamu (1978)*, It has the power “to identify sorcerers, witches, poisoners. People also believe that she can make barren women fertile, and give success in trade, fertility of crops and victory in war” (p. 94).
- xii. *Ojukwu*: Like the Yoruba *Sopono*, *Ojukwu* is the god of smallpox. It afflicts sinners with smallpox; and its victims are not given normal burial, as they are buried in the evil forest.

7. Spirits in the African Cosmos

The African universe is made up of a myriad of spirits. Death is not understood as the final end of man. After death, the soul *nkpulobi* goes back to *Chukwu*. The after-life for the African is a life of continuing relationship with the living dead. Life in Africa

is cyclic: birth, death and rebirth. Those who lived good lives and died at ripe old age, receiving the appropriate funeral rites, in relation to their status, go to the spirit-land (*Ala-mmuo*), where they continue to live until they reincarnate. On the other hand, those who lived bad lives and died bad death, like in accidents and before one reaches a ripe old age, are sent to an intermediate state, between the spirit-land and the land of the living where they live frustrated, as wandering and restless spirits in Igbo worldview, they are referred to as *Akalogeli* (bad spirits).

Apart from the *Akalogelis*, we have the ancestors. Metuh (1991), argues that they are under the presidency of the *Ala* deity. They are the guidance of morality and the owners of the soil. They occupy a very significant place in Igbo life and religion. Uchendu (1965) avers that ancestors are the invisible segment of the Igbo lineage. Their world and the human world are very similar, just like in the human world, they have their farms, their roads, their markets; the only difference is that while our world is visible, theirs is invisible. They are honoured and not worshipped. The honour given to them is anchored on the principle of reciprocity and philosophy of reincarnation: having been honoured, they are expected to reincarnate and do for the living members what they did for them. Nyamiti (1984) distinguishes two elements that characterize the African concept of ancestorship: *natural relationship*, which usually exists between the ancestor and his relatives, either as parent or brother. It can also be founded on common membership of a clan, tribe, religious sect or society. It can therefore either be consanguinous or non-consanguinous. There is also the *sacred or supernatural* status of an ancestor, which is the consequence of his death. Following the African traditional moral standard, a good life is very significant here, since the ancestor is like a standard for the living.

8. Man in the African Cosmos

African religion and thought is anthropocentric. Man is at the centre of the universe, more central than God. According to Mbiti (1969), “Man is at the very centre of existence and African people see everything else in its relation to this central position of man... it is as if God exists for the sake of man” (p. 92). Corroborating with Mbiti, Metuh (1991), avers that “Everything else in African worldview seems to get its bearing and significance from the position, meaning and end of man” (p. 109). The idea of God, divinities, ancestors, rituals, sacrifices etc., are only useful to the extent that they serve the need of man.

The analysis of the Yoruba idea of a human person as *eniyan*, reveals the African concept of man as a being having its origin and finality in the Supreme Being. This implies that man in the African universe is best understood in his relationship with God his creator, to whom, from the Igbo perspective, he is ontologically linked with through his *chi*, the spark or emanation of God in each person. Man’s coming to the world cannot be understood within the Western category which sees the human person in mechanistic terms. Man in African worldview has a purpose and mission to fulfil; he comes into the world as a force amidst forces and interacting with forces. Good status, good health and prosperity are signs of the wellbeing of a person’s life-force, and man struggles to preserve it through an appropriate relationship with the spiritual forces around him.

The goal of every human person is to achieve his *akara chi*, the destiny imprinted on his palm by his *chi*. He is not just an individual person, but one born into a community whose survival and purpose is linked with that of others. Thus the human person is first a member of a clan, a kindred or a community. According to Oduwole (2010), Yoruba scholars agree that the human person is made up of three basic elements: *Ara* (body), *Emi* (breath) and *Ori* (soul). This is also true of the constituents of man in Igbo ontology: *Obi* heart or breath, *Chi* destiny, *Eke* or *Agu* ancestral

guardian. Idowu (1962) describes the body as the concrete, tangible thing of flesh and bones which can be known through the senses. As regards the *Emi*, he describes it as spirit, and this is invisible. It is that which gives life to the whole body and thus could be described through its causal functions: Its presence in the body of a person determines if the person still lives or is dead. According to Ebunoluwa (2010), the body is the creation of *Orishanla* (Arch-divinity). He was assigned by *Olodumare* (the Supreme Being) to mould the body of human beings. It is only the Supreme Being that puts the spirit into the body so as to give it life. Yoruba philosophy on the human person does not end with the body and spirit, there is a third element called the soul. The soul affirms that the human person already has individuality in the spiritual world before birth. From this understanding, life does not begin with birth, it begins as soon as one acquires the soul which defines a person's individuality. The soul of the human person begins to live even before there is a body for its abode.

Although the human person comes from God, his birth is not a separation from God. He still relates with the divine in a community of ways: Through **libation**: which are prayers usually said in the morning time or during ceremonies, meetings and gatherings using *oji* (kola nut) and *mmanya-oku* (hot drink), the food and drink of the gods. Ijiomah (2005) avers that in prayer, "the Igbo man tries to normalize the relationship among the three worlds ... libation is made to God through the agency of the ancestors and other deities" (p. 87). **Through divination**: which involves a process of inquiry. People who wish to know why certain things happen, how to solve certain problems and so on, go to diviners.

9. Conclusion

The foregoing research reveals that the African worldview is a unified reality. There is a strong interaction between the spiritual or unseen and the physical or seen worlds. The interaction of the

two worlds instils a greater sense of the sacred in the African because he sees and feels the presence of the Supreme Being, divinities and spirit beings (ancestors) always present. And since the sacred is permeating in everything, he gives a place to the divine in all he does: in politics, in his social life, in his business, in the laws he makes. It is such that when these laws are broken, it is not just settled between humans, the divine is also appeased. This further explains why J. S. Mbiti would argue that the African is notoriously religious. Furthermore, there is a sense of community in which all the inhabitants of the cosmic order exist for each other. Thus, no being exists for itself, but exists because others exist. However, at the centre of this universe is man, and the preservation and enhancement of his life is a prime value. The divine elements exist to preserve man; and man relate with them to preserve his life as well. The divine have relevance only to the extent that man's life is preserved.

References

- Arinze, F. (1970). *Sacrifice in Igbo religion* Ibadan: Ibadan University Press.
- Chimakonam, O. J. (2012^b). “God and Man in Igbo Traditional Religion”. O. E. Ezenweke and I. A. Kanu (Ed). *Issues in African traditional religion and philosophy*. Jos: Fab Anieh.
- Edeh, E. (1983). *Towards Igbo metaphysics* Chicago: Loyola University Press.
- Ekwealor, C. C. (1990). The Igbo world-view: A general survey. E. Oguegbu (Ed.). *The Humanities and All of Us* (pp.29-33). Onisha: Watehword.
- Ijiomah, C. (2005). African philosophy’s contribution to the dialogue on reality issues. *Sankofa: Journal of the Humanities*. 3. 1. 81 – 90.
- Nwankwo, N. (1987). *In defence of Igbo belief system – A dialectical approach*. Enugu: Life Paths.
- Onunwa, U. (1994). The individual and community in African Traditional Religion and society. *The Mankind Quarterly*. 34. 3. 249 – 260.
- Unah, J. (2009). Ontologico – epistemological background to authentic African socio-economic and political institutions. A F. Uduigwomen (Ed.). *From footmarks to landmarks on African philosophy* (264 – 278). Lagos: O. O. P.
- Wambutda, D. N. (1986). The interplay between cosmology and theology: A. matrix for African theologizing. In A. Oduyoye (Ed.). *The state of Christian theology in Nigeria, 1980-81*, (38-49). Ibadan: Day Star.
- Ejizu, C. I. O. (1986). *Igbo ritual symbols*. Enugu: Fourth Dimension.

Kanu, I. A. (2012). A metaphysical epistemological study of African Medical practitioners. In O. E. Ezenweke and I. A. Kanu (2012). *Issues in African traditional religion and philosophy* (227-240). Jos: Fab Anieh.

Onuoha, E. (1987). *Four contrasting world-views*. Enugu: Express.

Metuh, E. I. (1987). *Comparative studies of African Traditional Religion*. Onitsha: Imico.

Madu, E. (2004). *Symbolism in African cosmology: The Igbo perspective*. Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka, Anambra State. Lecture Note.

Quarcoopome, T. N. (1987). *West African traditional religion*. Ibadan: African Universities Press.

Oguejiofor, J. O. (2010). The resilient paradigm: Impact of African worldview on African Christianity. In U. U. Bede (Ed.). *God, Bible and African Traditional Religion* (99-112). Enugu: Snaap.

Oduwole, E. (2010). Personhood and abortion: An Africa perspective. M. F. Asiegbu and I. C. Chukwuokolo (Ed.). *Personhood and Personal Identity: A Philosophical Study* (pp. 97-106). Enugu: Snaap.

Idowu, B. (1962). *Olodumare: God in Yoruba belief*. London: Longman.

Uchendu, V. C (1965), *The Igbos of South East Nigeria*. London: Rinehart and Winston.

Nyamiti, C. (1984). *Christ as our ancestor: Christology from an African perspective*. Zimbabwe: Mambo.

Metuh, I. E. (1991). *African religions in western conceptual schemes*. Jos: Imico

- Isichie, E. (1969). Igbo and Christian Beliefs: Some aspects of theological encounter. *In African Affairs*. 68. 124.
- Marshall, I. H. (1988). Myth. In S. B Ferguson (Ed.). *New Dictionary of Theology* (pp. 449-451). England: Intervarsity.
- Madu, J. E. (2004). *Honest to African cultural heritage*. Onitsha: Caskan.
- Achebe, C. (2008). *The things fall apart*. England: Heinemann.

AFRIZEALOTISM AS A THEORY IN AFRICAN PHILOSOPHY

Innocent Chukwudolue Egwutuorah

Doctoral Candidate

Department of Philosophy, Imo State University,

Owerri, Nigeria

1. Introduction

When the Europeans came to Africa, they had the bible and Africa had the wealth. They gave Africa the bible and took Africa's wealth to develop their home land. They scrambled for, and partitioned Africa. The end result was imperialism, colonialism and neo-colonialism. Many Africans became Europeanized or westernized. Afrizealotism addresses the issue of returning to authentic African life characterized by black dignity, black nobility, black power and black consciousness. Afrizealotism awakens the African from his slumber and makes effort to liberate Africa from the shackles of imperialism, colonialism and neo-colonialism. Hence, the Salvation of Africa must come from Africans through the Spirit of Afrizealotism.

Since Africans' contact with Europeans, there are many cultural and ideological problems arising from conflict of culture. Many Africans became Europeans in attitude as a result of the Afro-Euro contact. The outcome of this contact was a cultural ideological conflict. The efforts made by the Africans to liberate themselves from the shackles of European imperialism and colonialism gave rise to Afrizealotism. Afrizealotism is a vision and an attitude to life which originated due to the dehumanizing situation of oppression that characterized the African continent in the post contact era. Afrizealotism therefore, is a revolutionary movement that intends to project a synthesized African culture that is free

from European bondage. Afrizealotism is the philosophy of self re-discovery embarked upon by the modern Africans to ensure adequate re-integrations and a possible synthesis for a new way of living as authentic Africans. In order to realize the above objective, the following issues are considered.

- i. The dilemma of synthesis and the Aesthetics of self choosing
- ii. The structure of Afrizealotist Revolutionary movement

2. The Dilemma of Synthesis and the Aesthetics of Self Choosing

The cultural and ideological clash created by Afro-Euro contact has placed Africa in a dilemma of how to synthesis and realize cultural harmony. In describing the dilemma, “Ekwuru, observed that; the bewildering variety of cultural ideologies imported into most of the African cultures complicates the nature of the conflictual ‘battle’ between the traditional African cultures and western culture¹. The view of Ekwuru expressed above point to the fact that different cultural ideologies have mingled with the African culture and the result was clash of culture or cultural conflict which has thrown the human mind into confusion as two cultural worlds exist in the same mind, hence, the dilemma. In stressing the dilemma of synthesis, Ekwuru further echoes the views of Frantz Fanon and Ali Mazrui by saying; “The African is divided between choosing himself and losing the West and vice versa. He nurses both attitude of love and hate for both cultural representations². J. O. Chimakonam contends that the problem that results from this is far deeper than readily obvious. It concerns thought system and logic. “The reason for lack of viable development in Africa is that the tutored African who reasons within the framework of the strange Western logic radically loses touch with his environment and its realities. He therefore thinks without action, and where he acts at all, he acts without thought”³.

Colonialism, slavery, neo-colonialism and cultural imperialism which saw African native cultures replaced with the colonialist cultures has dealt a heavy blow on the status of African identity. Commenting on the writings of W. E. Du Bois, J. O. Chimakonam states:

So we understand Du Bois as affirming our concern here that Africa and the African have lost their identity. For those in America, this would be due to the geographical uprooting from Africa to America during the time of slavery and the consequent implantation into a strange culture area. While for those in Africa, it would be due to colonialism which saw the native culture and thought system replaced with the strange western versions. Thus the African of the post colonial era is neither an African nor a westerner; he feels the strange twoness none of which is now actually his true identity.⁴

The opinion stated above is the core of the African crises of identity. This is why Chimakonam again argues that "...it can be argued here, that the worst crime the west committed in the modern time was not the slave trade...it is essentially the destruction and erosion of the African cultural framework"⁵. The major difficulty of cultural synthesis is found in the dilemma of choosing between the West as the epitome of all that is good and Africa as original roots. Africans are highly receptive and have the natural tendency to behave as foreigners even in their own culture, hence, most of the postcolonial Africans enjoy being called a Westernized African or Black European. This tendency according to Chimakonam as cited above is due to logical brainwash.

Africa is in a cultural confusion created above all by social pressure. In order to get out of this confusion, the African must make a decision of choice. He must harmonize the elements of the

imposed western Culture with the existing African culture. The result of the harmonization removes the dilemma and produces authentic African identity different from the colonial identity. Ekwuru joins other African authors of the colonial and postcolonial period in emphasizing the need for authentic Africanness characterized by self realization and self-rediscovery. This rediscovery for Chimakonam must begin from the native African Cultural values⁶ and must have its base in African native logic and thought system⁷.

3. The Structure of Afrizealotist Revolutionary Movement

Afrizealotist movement is a movement that seeks to promote the great name of Africa and restore the beauty of the black race. Through the movement, the dignity and pride of every African is restored. According to Ekwuru, “Afrizealotists are not men motivated by one form of selfish ideology or the other; they are moved by a lived experience of an urgent practical need for their people’s total liberation”.⁸ The basic aim of Afrizealotism is to liberate the African from every form of slavery, poverty and backwardness. In trying to achieve the objectives outlined above, the movement shall concentrate mostly in three areas of great need. The three areas are:

- i. Conscientisation for the change of mental attitude.
- ii. Conscientisation for peace and social justice.
- iii. Conscientisation for new framework of civilization.

Conscientisation for the Change of Mental Attitude

There is the great need for a change of mental attitude by all Africans. Conscientisation and re-orientation of the African is very necessary if we must realize Afrizealotism. A return to Afrizealotists movement is essentially demanded because of the long period of colonial rule and domination which has done reasonable damage to the African mental framework. According to Asiwaju:

African States must consider themselves to have now reached the stage at which the Eurocentric and generally outmoded notion of sovereignty, which at their inception led independent states to insist dogmatically on maintaining their territorial boundaries, should be seriously questioned.⁹

The most desirable solution for the change of mental attitude is to be persuaded to view Africa like any other continent in the world. The need for this has already been recognized. Change of mental attitude is necessary as the history and activities of several multinational and bilateral organizations operating in Africa has shown. It is generally believed by most Africans that the long period of colonial domination has done a great damage to the Africans' mental framework. Many African scholars including those in diasporas such as; Blyden, Du Bois, Chimakonam, Oyebola, Senghor, Nkrumah, Mazrui and Chinweizu believe that colonialism is not just a political and economic conquest and domination of Africa. Thus they called for a change of mental attitude.

In support of the above view Ekwuru writes:

Colonialism, conquered, destroyed, and made nonsense of every bit of African cultural world of established universe of meaning. It has been discovered in retrospect that we have been colonized so much to the point of not only losing ourselves, but of losing our concrete touch with reality. We were colonized and brain washed to the extent of not only hating ourselves, but also anything that is associated with our own nature.¹⁰

Conscientisation for change of mental attitude is therefore, very necessary because African history through the centuries has

accumulated much of confused teaching and orientations from external influences. African past witnessed a conflicting and confused experience at the hands of the colonial imperialists and others who are against African traditional values and ideals. The situation was worsened by the deceptive presentation of African history as a story of European adventure and the Africans acceptance of such incoherent history. Afrizealotism uses eclectic principles to achieve the conscientisation for change of mental attitude. The basic aims of Afrizealotism were indirectly echoed in consciencism of Kwame Nkrumah. The book consciencism is a forerunner of Afrizealotism. According to Nkrumah:

Consciencism is the map in intellectual terms of the disposition of forces which will enable African societies to digest the western and the Islamic and the Euro-Christian elements in Africa, and develop them in such a way that they fit into the African personality ... that philosophical stand point which taking its start from the present content of the African conscience, indicate the way in which progress is forged out of the conflict in that conscience.¹¹

Thus conscientisation for a change of mental attitude is a way of achieving Afrizealotism. This was foretold indirectly by many African scholars as well as scholars of African descent in America and the West Indies. The main theme of their activities was the encouragement of Africanness (African identity), that Africans should be proud of their heritage which should not in any way be assumed to be inferior to the European culture. Afrizealotism as a philosophical concept was articulated because consciencism and negritude as philosophical concepts have not thrived nor created the required mental disposition for an authentic Africanness.

Conscientisation for Peace and Social Justice

There is the urgent need to redirect, convince or conscientise Africans to see the importance of peace and social justice among Africans and in Africa. The arbitrary division or balkanization of various African people brought Africans of the same linguistic and cultural groupings under different European domination. The tendency is hatred of fellow Africans and the championing of European culture and civilization. The Europeans scrambled for, and partitioned Africa thereby planting the seed of disunity and hatred among Africans. The lack of peace and social justice caused by the European invasion and the subsequent occupation of Africa is expressed by Ekwuru in the following words:

Through various forms of political intrigues, Africans have been made to hate one another for the benefit of colonial nations. During the colonial invasion and conquest, Africans were used to fight and conquer their fellow Africans out of ignorance. Later on, during the full swing of colonial occupation, Africans were employed to suppress their fellow Africans. This did not end with colonialism, but continued with the various forms of neo-colonialist intrigues.¹²

Even after independence, Africans were still being used against Africans. Most civil wars in Africa were set-ups to delineate Africa. The balkanization of Africa and the colonial policy of divide and rule provided grounds for hatreds resulting in the secessionist movements that sprang up in several African States. Buttressing the above points, Asiwaju notes:

The Congo (now Zaire) saw strong secessionist sentiment among the Bakongo in the 1950s. After

coming to independence in 1960, it had to content with Katanga's attempt to secede. Ethiopia has been troubled by the secessionist stance among its Somali population in the south, and among the Eritrean population in the north-west. In Ghana, the Ewe claimed the right to secede and join their brethren in Togo. In the Ivory Coast, the Sanwis rose in 1959 and claimed the right to secede. On the eve of independence in Kenya, sentiment in the Coastal province favoured separation and union of Zanzibar, and in addition a strong secessionist movement existed among the Somali in Northern Kenya. In Mali, the Tuareg rose in revolt in 1963 and refused to recognize the government's authority. The Sudan was torn to civil war... Uganda's unity was threatened both before and after independence by separatist sentiment among the important Baganda people.... In Nigeria, the Igbo people tried to secede and establish the abortive "Republic of Biafra".¹³

This view of Asiwaju above show that crisis of civil wars and dissension have continued to trail Africa since the colonial era and the entire continent continued to disintegrate and deteriorate. Most African States are in one dispute or another. Some of them are internal while some are international. In fact, most African countries are at daggers drawn. The question then arises; can there be peace and social justice in Africa? The answer to the above question is found in Afrizealotism. The revolutionary conscientisation of Afrizealots will definitely bring peace and social justice to the entire continent of Africa. Afrizealots will act as messengers of peace and at the same time dedicate their live to ensuring peace in Africa. Afrizealots will have the basic function of redirecting, reshaping, remolding and concientizing fellow

Africans to see and appreciate peace and social justice. Ekwuru observes that “the most radical mission of Afrizealots is to see to the end of any form of oppression in the continent and to defend the cause of the downtrodden throughout the world”.¹⁴ Afrizealotism has an African origin but will carry its programme of emancipation of the down trodden beyond Africa. According Ekwuru:

Their message will not be one of hate and retaliation as would have been expected from the disfigured and downcast faces they wear, the soulless bodies they resemble, and the fettered legs of their colonial slavery. Instead their message will be one of creative love and redeeming universal brotherhood. Such great message is not going to be cast on empty words and based on false diplomatic rhetoric formulae, but on concrete facts.¹⁵

The realization of the above situation or condition by Afrizealotist movement will obviously and definitely give rise to peace and social justice in Africa and beyond.

Conscientisation for a new civilization framework

The new civilization framework for the realization and achievement of the basic objectives of Afrizealotist movement is a return to the root of our Africanness and ensure cooperation among States. Senghor outlined the framework for a new African civilization in these steps:

The first step is the bringing to light the traditional civilization as the root of African socialism: the second step should involve the study of the colonial impact of African civilization: the third step should be the synthesis resulting from the interfecundation

between African socialist roots and the values assimilated from European civilization.¹⁶

This synthesis if achieved would affect the development of African social, economic, political and cultural life and further achieve a new world civilization. Ekwuru observes authoritatively that the framework for Afrizealotist (Afrizealotism) movement is black consciousness epitomized in black nobility, Black beauty, black dignity and black power. These concepts are the things that are guaranteed by a new civilization. He pointed out that in the historical evolution of some of these concepts, black consciousness has always been linked to them. From the foregoing, one notices that the achievement of a new civilization, there is need for a strong awareness of our situation as Africans and equally accepts our Africanness (Identity) with pride. Afrizealotism becomes a tool for the creation of the awareness and the proudly re-acceptance of our condition. Afrizealotism is not violent rather it is radical in its approach to issues as they affect Africans. Its major aim is to create awareness and consciousness as road maps for achieving authentic African life (Africanness)

4. Conclusion:

Afrizealotism is a movement designed to assist the Africans to return to an authentic African life with pride. Afrizealotism is meant to awaken the Africans from their slumber and enhance unity and solidarity amongst African states. Afrizealotism shall promote more vigorously and religiously greater intra African cooperation, interaction and solidarity¹⁷. This is necessary because only in the unity of purpose created through Afrizealotism that the Africans can achieve their cherished objectives and totally eradicate colonialism and neo-colonialism, remove ethnicity and tribalism. Finally, Afrizealotism provides grounds for the

accomplishment of national integration and unity, patriotism and national greatness.

Notes

¹Ekwuru, E.G., *The Dynamics of Afriraciogenesis, the dialectics of Afrizealotism*, Owerri: Totan Publishers, 2011, P. 423

²*Dynamics of Afriraciogenesis*, P.428

³ Chimakonam, Okeke Jonathan. “Principles of Indigenous African Logic: *Toward Africa’s Development and Restoration of African Identity*”. Paper presented at the 19th Annual Conference of International Society for African Philosophy and Studies [ISAPS], ‘50 Years of OAU/AU: Revisiting the Questions of African Unity, Identity and Development’. Department of Philosophy, Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka, Anambra State. 27th – 29th May, 2013. P.1

⁴Ibid. p. 24

⁵ Chimakonam, Okeke Jonathan. “Africa’s Restoration: Rediscovering the place of African Cultural Values in an Ichabodded History”. G. O. Ozumba and Elijah O. Okon (Ed.) *African Political Philosophy*. Uyo: El-Johns, 2012. P. 107

⁶ Ibid

⁷Chimakonam, Okeke Jonathan. “Project on African logic, From Thought System to Algorithmic Model: Impact on Science, Technology and Human Development”. *Paper Presented at the Second International Conference and Home Coming*. Department of Philosophy, University of Nigeria, Nsukka. Nov. 30- Dec. 3, 2011.

⁸*Dynamics of Afriraciogenesis, P.434*

⁹Asiwaju, A.I., (Ed) *Partitioned Africans, ethnic relation across Africa's International Boundaries 1884-1984*, Lagos: Lagos University Press, 1984, P.13

¹⁰The dynamics of Afriraciogenesis, P. 437

¹¹Nkrumah, K., *Consciencism*, London: Heinemann education books, 1964. P.79

¹²*The dynamics of Afriraciogenesis P. 442*

¹³*Partitioned Africans, P. 226*

¹⁴*The dynamics of Afriraciogenesis P. 445*

¹⁵*The dynamics of Afriraciogenesis P. 445*

¹⁶Senghor, L.S., *What is Negritude* in M.I. Nwoko, *basic world political theories*, Ibadan: Claverianum press, 1988, P. 212.

¹⁷Eluwa, G I C., et al, *Africa and the Wider World since 1800 A.D*, Enugu: Africana First Publishers Limited. 2005, P. 229

Title: IBUANYINDANDA (COMPLEMENTARY REFLECTION) AND SOME BASIC PHILOSOPHICAL PROBLEMS IN AFRICA TODAY

Author: Prof. Innocent I. Asouzu

Discipline: Philosophy/ African Studies

Category: Metaphysics/Philosophy of Social Science

Publisher: Litverlag Dr.W.Hopf, Berlin, 2013

ISBN: 978 – 1 – 643 – 90316 – 7

Price: N500

Pages: 124

*Reviewer: Peter Bisong Bisong
Department of Philosophy
University of Calabar
Nigeria*

Reality presents itself in different ways to different people. While this in itself is not bad, it remains the main source of error, ethnocentric reduction, divisiveness, intolerance and other problematic that stem from our tendency to exalt our own unique perception of reality to an absolute instance – ignoring and downgrading the other’s viewpoint. Asouzu sees this tendency to negate the other, and raise oneself to a superior stand, as the root of most problems in inter-personal relationship and in philosophical discourse. This tendency he believes, is occasioned by the basic presupposition of Ibuanyidanda philosophy – *ihe mkpuchi anya* (phenomenon of concealment) and our ambivalent laden experience of reality.

Innocent Asouzu, a super-heavy weight African philosopher – the founder of the fast spreading school of thought in philosophy, I prefer to call *Ibuanyidandaism*, in this book *Ibuanyindanda (Complementary Reflection) and some Basic Philosophical Problems in Africa Today*, attempts to highlight in his usual

eclectic style, the impact of *ihe mkpuchi anya* and our ambivalent laden experience of reality on our consciousness. He believes these constraining mechanisms or phenomena impact on the way we judge, act, will and philosophize. He seeks through his Ibuanyidanda philosophy to neutralize the effect of these constraining mechanisms on our consciousness; so that at every instance we may be able to grasp the *Ibuanyidandaness* of every reality.

In chapter one, Asouzu argues that every human being (both educated and uneducated, religious and irreligious) is subject to an ambivalent tension which is occasioned by our rationality being prised apart by our instinct of self-preservation. This means that the world present itself to us in double capacity. But because of the operation of *ihe mkuchi anya* we are blinded from seeing the world in this double capacity. We rather see the world in a unilateral mode and thereby we fall prey to irrational judgement of our experiences, interest, choices et cetera. This is why according to Asouzu, people tend to pursue only those things that interest them, concealed to the fact that those that do not interest them are also important and could impact negatively on them if not attended to. The phenomenon of concealment, would blind some politicians to loot public treasury to foster their prized interest, ignoring the ambivalent side (negative impact) of this action to themselves. These constraining mechanisms - *ihe mkpuchi anya* and our ambivalent laden experience of reality, according to Asouzu further explains why we accept most descriptive statements as true and valid. He believes that descriptive statements like *ibu anyi danda* (no task is insurmountable to danda the ant) are not always true and valid in all cases. If we take the statement *ibu anyi danda* to be true in all cases, Asouzu maintains, we would most likely be compelled to conclude that whatever is valid for the ant is also valid for humans as well. He calls this, “error of transposition and picture-type fallacies (15). This error is evident when we assume

that because somebody is from Yoruba, he/she must certainly be dirty. Or because somebody is from Efik he/she must certainly be sexually promiscuous. This sort of error of reasoning, Asouzu believes leads us to turn the hypothetical maxim: “the nearer the better and safer” to a categorical maxim. This for Asouzu amounts to existential fallacies, since the nearer may not always be better and safer. Seeing reality in terms of the nearer the better and safer, Asouzu argues is the root cause of ethnocentric commitment and other extremist and discriminative tendencies in our world today. It is important to mention here that in October 2011 Jonathan O. Chimakonam published one of the most incisive criticisms of Ibuanyidanda theory in a paper titled “Dissecting the Character of Danda the Ant and Neutralizing the Philosophy of Missing Links: An Egbe n’Ugo Conundrum”. *Journal of Complementary Reflection: Studies in Asouzu*. Vol.1 No.1. pp.41-52. In this paper he raised some issues which Asouzu in this 2013 book appear to tackle ebulliently. One of such issue is the correspondence of danda phenomenon to human phenomenon. As shown above, Asouzu admitted that what works for danda the ant may not always work for humans. He calls this error of transposition and picture type fallacy but it was Chimakonam in his criticism that first observed this error when he asked: “is there a reasonable proof that a philosophy that works for ants can work for mankind and indeed for all beings in their world immanent variations? The answer is No!”(46). Chimakonam took time to dissect the character of Danda and the circumstance of its existence and showed why Ibuanyidanda theory might be fundamentally in error. His rhetoric question afterwards is “A man neither has the same character as danda nor shares the same circumstances, how can a philosophy that works for danda work for man?” (47). Generally, the insightful observations in that critique are to my view relevant for onward development of Ibuanyidanda theory.

Chapter two of the book x-rayed the impact of these constraining mechanisms, *the mkpuchi anya* (phenomenon of concealment) and our ambivalent laden experience of reality on the way ontology is being done in Africa and the world today. He accused Aristotle of letting in this tension into ontology through his dichotomous treatment of the subject of being. Aristotle separated being into substance and accident. Substance, he held, subsist independent of accident and therefore is essential and indispensable. Accident on the other hand depends on substance for their existence and are thus inessential and dispensable. Asouzu believes, this divisiveness that was set in motion by Aristotle has percolated through the length of the history of Western philosophy and has also caught up with Africans through education, indoctrination and socialization by the West. Through the working of this mindset, most stakeholders according to Asouzu are constrained to see the world in opposites – the one essential and indispensable (substance) and the other inessential and dispensable (accident). Following this divisiveness, the West perceives themselves as the essential (substance) and the rest as inessential (accidents). Tempels according to Asouzu popularized this mindset by his ‘vital force theory’. In this theory, Tempels portrayed the Africans (Bantu) as not capable of separating the transcendental notion of being from its accident like the West. According to Asouzu, if the Bantu are only capable of grasping the accidental notion of being (force), then they are inferior to the west who are capable of separating the accidental from the substantial and thereby able to grasp the two. He regrets that, this debased notion of conception of reality as formulated by Tempels, that reduces African world-view to that of spirits, witchcraft, magic et cetera., is now taken by African scholars as the definitive feature of African philosophy. He quoted Momoh a leading African philosopher’s assertion that “any work that claims to be an African philosophy, is not an African philosophy, if it is actually not in harmony and congruence with the spirit of Africa, which reality is primarily spiritual” (66).

Reasoning like this Asouzu argues is at the root of the formation of theories concerning African science, African philosophy, African ethics, African logic et cetera. For him, both the West and Africans have inherent moment of oscillation between transcendence and world immanence, as a dimension of the ambivalent tension to which all human experiences of reality are subjected. To claim one for Africa and the other one for the West is a function of the constraining mechanisms, *the mkpuchi anya* and our ambivalent laden experience of reality that beclouds are reasoning. For Asouzu, the categories – static and dynamic are not mutually exclusivist, there could be made to coexist in mutual complementation, if the method of Ibuanyidanda is imbibed. Ibuanyidanda ontology conceptualizes being as that on account of which anything that exist serves a missing link of reality (71). It seeks at reversing the divisive trend in ontology so that both the substance and accident would not be caught in a disharmonized and dichotomized relationship but as missing links existing in a harmonized framework. In this harmonized framework, substance is made to affirm the being of accident, and accident is made to affirm the being of substance. It is only with this mindset that being could be truly grasped. This mindset could however, be attained through a positive pedagogy, Asouzu calls, '*Noetic propaedeutic*'. *Noetic propaedeutic* as conceptualized by Asouzu is the training of the mind to conceive beings not in fragmentary modes but as existing as missing links of reality. Here again we comment that it would probably be realistic if Asouzu realizes that Aristotle's discriminating framework stems from the native Western thought system just as the non-discriminative framework he projects stems from the native African thought system. But this would speedily slide him down to chronic positions held by scholars like Chimakonam who has stated without equivocation that the discrepancy of thought system among the races of the world is an indubitable fact (see *Introducing African Science: Systematic and Philosophical Approach*. Bloomington Indiana:

Authorhouse, 2012. pp. 3-4, 13-18). Asouzu thinks such a position is hunted by the phenomenon of *ihe mkpuchi anya*. Also, Asouzu's interpretation of Momoh above is slightly incorrect. That reality in African philosophy is primarily spiritual does not suggest that it is solely spiritual. As a matter of fact, it means that there are secondary realities but that the spiritual ones are superior. Clearly, this Momoh's position does not equate with Tempels' view as Asouzu presented it in the book.

In chapter three Asouzu showed, that the impact of *ihe mkpuchi anya* (phenomenon of concealment) and our ambivalent laden experience of reality is not only limited to interpersonal relationship and issues of ontology, but also the way we do epistemology in Africa and the world at large. Asouzu believes that these constraining mechanisms concealed from us the truth, that an individual "raw primary cognitive ambience" is not sufficient to convey the highest level legitimacy in matters of knowledge and action (80). The raw cognitive ambience for Asouzu is the ambience that is real to the actor – it constitutes those things and institutions we are likely to accept as true without questioning. Asouzu believes this to be the domain where our constraining mechanisms are active – it is the domain where ethnocentric reduction and imposition reign supreme. To attain truth, Asouzu believes we need to transcend this ambience to what he calls, "a complementary cognitive ambience". This is the ambience we share with all missing links of reality – without operating at this level, Asouzu believes, all stakeholders would raise their raw primary ambience to absolute fragments – they would see the impression that comes to them through their raw cognitive ambience as the whole truth. Asouzu sees this kind of mindset as the driving force behind "the Black Athena Debate, Afrocentricism, the Philosophy of Stolen Legacy, Copy Cat Philosophy et cetera. Asouzu believes that, holding the view that Africa is the sole originator of philosophy as the philosophy of the

stolen legacy argues, would tantamount to negating the raw primary cognitive ambience of other geographical areas – this is the handiwork of *ihe mkpuchi anya* (phenomenon of concealment) and our ambivalent laden experience of reality, which make us negate the claim and idea of others as constitutive of the origin of philosophy. Asouzu holds that the question of the origin of ideas (which has also been the burden of empiricism and rationalism) could not be tied to one discrete cognitive ambience. All matters dealing with origins of ideas and thoughts are thinkable only within a complementary comprehensive context.

Asouzu dedicates chapter four and five to a discourse of the problematic inherent in logical reasoning as a result of the constraining mechanisms *ihe mkpuchi anya* and our ambivalent laden experience of reality. He believes these mechanisms make our reasoning to be in disjunctive mode. That is, we are restricted by this mechanism to, ‘either this or that’ kind of reasoning. Relating to the world in this arbitrary disjunctive mode according to Asouzu makes us intolerable to differences and otherness. He believes this to be the character of our logic today. Because of the influence of the constraining mechanisms, logic is being conceptualized in ‘this or that’ mode (that is, either African or Western logic). This kind of logic is what Asouzu calls geographical logic – which sees geographical differences as a valid reason for building arguments and drawing conclusions. Geographical logic according to Asouzu inhibits the mind, causing it to relate to the world in categories like: Western science, African science, Chinese medicine, Western logic, Eastern logic, Southern logic, African logic et cetera. For Asouzu, this logic of geographical categorization conditions the mind to act after the super maxim of the nearer the better and safer, and is vulnerable to the fallacy of over generalization, *reduction ad absurdum*, and *argumentum ad infinitum*. The logic of Ibuanyidanda, Asouzu argues seeks to grasps at all missing links beyond the limit

imposed by geographical categorization (95). This logic, Asouzu claims, seeks to instil the disposition needed to have a harmonized type of reasoning needed to embrace missing links in the comprehensiveness of their interrelatedness. He believes that for any logic to achieve the type of correctness, validity and truth expected of it, it must conceive all realities as missing links of realities (92). Conception of reality this way makes room for the coexistence of opposites. Here again, Asouzu addresses and clarifies the logical concerns which Chimakonam had raised in his criticism of Ibuanyidanda (44 - 46) making clear even some of the issues Chimakonam may have misunderstood. Ironically, the logical clarification Asouzu presented tallies with the system of the so-called African three-valued logic which Chimakonam so far has been the major architectonic builder. The very logic he recommended for Ibuanyidanda in his words “again and most importantly, he (Asouzu) should move his theory from the problematic single-valued logic to a three-valued logic of African thought system. In this I think, the theory of complementary reflection shall find a suitable interpretation (51).” Although, Asouzu did not employ the words “three-valued” and “African” to characterize the logic of his theory, the structure is almost the same with Chimakonian logic.

Asouzu in this beautifully written book has laid bare the foundation of the problems in Africa and the world at large – the problems that have kept philosophy in a tortuous movement over eons of years. This problem *the mkpuchi anya* (phenomenon of concealment) and our ambivalent laden experience of reality as he laboriously showed are resolvable, if all stakeholders suck up the method, principles and imperative of Ibuanyidanda philosophy. Of more importance is that he has in this book taken the theory of Ibuanyidanda further by addressing some of its loopholes. Even his most rigorous critic as far as I am concerned, J O. Chimakonam had to agree that Asouzu’s theory is courageous and exceptional in his words: “I find in Asouzu’s works, discussions, articulations and

conceptualizations that one seeks in vain in the works of other philosophers from this part of the world” (51).

At this point I have no choice than to say a ‘big well done’ to professor Innocent Asouzu for this brilliant articulation. I would say a bigger well done, if in his next publication, he elaborates more vividly on the place of God and Devil in this his missing link conceptual framework.