

# THE GLOCAL IMPLICATIONS OF CHIMAKONAM'S EZUMEZU LOGIC FOR THE UNDERSTANDING OF AFRICA'S ONTOLOGICAL HERITAGE

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## **Abstract**

No people can lay claim to possessing a philosophic tradition without a clearly formulated method, and no method is possible unless anchored on a background logic. This is the bold and revolutionary purpose pursued in Jonathan Chimakonam's book *Ezumezu: A System of Logic for African Philosophy and Studies*, which sought to provide the basis for settling the nagging question of the criteria for the Africanness of a philosophy. This paper, in the spirit of logic, undertakes to examine the implications of these positions for thinking globally and acting locally in the context of Africa-centered/concerned/focused philosophy and studies. Consequently, this paper defends a set of mutually inclusive theses. First, that the systematization of *Ezumezu* gives it the global fervor typical of philosophy as a specific human activity; second, that by the plethora of new concepts and refreshing neologisms inherent in the conception, a solid foundation is laid for a context-dependent and culture-inspired, ethnological African scholarship; and third, that *Ezumezu* logic ultimately provides a justification for the communalist ontology, an ontology that is indeed African. Employing expository, analytic, and hermeneutic methodologies, the paper submits that now that the *Ezumezu* book is being translated into some international languages, and the *Ezumezu* Logic is being taught in some universities within the intellectual North, there is no doubt that this is the logico-ontological heritage that Africa is exporting to the world, which she birthed her civilization. The paper carries out an analysis of the double trilogies of MDU (Method-Difference-Unity) and LOL (logic-Ontology-Language) to explain the multidimensional and multifaceted issues integrated within the *Ezumezu* system. The paper concludes with a discussion of how the *Ezumezu* System grounds the communalist ontology.

**Keywords:** African philosophy, Jonathan O. Chimakonam, *Ezumezu*, glocal, logic, ontological Heritage.

## **Introduction<sup>1</sup>**

The search, discovery, and maintenance of the dialectical relationship between the past, the present, and the future cannot be ignored or downplayed by any society or culture that wants to sustain progressive development. Although there has been a massive increase in the investigation of Africa's past (and even its present), there is a need to sustain that interest. Again, when it is noted that a lot of recent interest in African heritage is coming from outside the continent, from those whose scholarly forebears declared that Africans possessed "pre-logical mentality", that Africa had no history and no philosophy, it makes it necessary that Africans should relish this epoch and dig even deeper to unveil what lie in the "cradle of civilization", in the birthplace of homo sapiens.

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Jesse Uneke, for example, discusses with excitement the way some health experts from Europe came to Abakaliki, Nigeria, to investigate what is responsible for Africa's relative survival of the COVID-19 pandemic. According to him, the experts wanted to know how it happened that the millions of deaths from the coronavirus projected to occur in Africa did not happen. This is placed side-by-side with the poor health system in Nigeria (UNEKE 2021). It is necessary to note that this can only be possible owing to certain climatic, biological, or socio-cultural heritage inherent or peculiar to Africa. By their very nature, heritage is about a people's personal past, such as works of art, customs, celebrations, religious observances, and (especially) well-known heritage sites. Yet there is intangible heritage such as skills, knowledge, beliefs, and philosophies. In fact, the United Nations celebrates April 18 every year as "World Heritage Day". The theme for the year 2024 was "Sustainable Tourism and Heritage Conservation", while the theme for the year 2025 is "Heritage Under Threat from Disasters and Conflicts Preparedness and Learning from 60 Years of ICOMOS Actions."

The synergy between heritage preservation and development is explored in this paper. This is further underscored by the intricate connection between heritage and identity, with the latter being indispensable for development. This work takes a philosophical tilt by examining Africa's ontological heritage. Jonathan O. Chimakonam's (2019) ground-breaking book, [Ezumezu: A System of Logic for African Philosophy and Studies], provides the foundational basis for our discussion. The central claim of the book can be reduced to two mutually and logically inclusive statements: one, that no culture, society, or people can claim to possess a philosophic tradition without a clearly formulated method of investigating reality; and two, that no such method can be formulated without a background logic upon which it would be anchored. It is these two propositions that succinctly adumbrate and later clearly unveil the many new ideas, concepts, and refreshing neologisms that make up the Ezumezu logical system.

It is the contribution of this paper that the Ezumezu logic is not strictly another logic, that is, another concern with logic as one of the traditional branches of philosophy. Rather, Ezumezu is a philosophy that sprouts from a local African pedestal, yet with the actual possibility of, and more importantly, capacity for, a global thrust and application. The plethora of ideas and concepts that unveil the Ezumezu system makes it almost impossible for any single paper to address it with comprehensive exhaustiveness.

To delineate the scope of this paper, I will show how the Ezumezu system has both local and global implications for the exchange of philosophical ideas in Africa and the global community. I will point out the place of the trilogies of Method, Difference, and Unity (MDU) as well as Logic, Ontology, and Language (LOL) in the development of the Ezumezu system and in understanding Africa's ontological heritage.

One of the major concerns of this paper is to show that Africa has an ontological heritage and that the Ezumezu system is a mechanism for understanding that heritage. And in the true spirit of logic, I shall draw implications of the basic claims of that system for philosophy in Africa and other cultures within our globe. Sense implication, as a concept, involves the direct stating of what has been indirectly stated, I will show how the Ezumezu logical system is ultimately an onto-logical one and how it addresses some fundamental challenges that confronted Contemporary African philosophers at the dawn of what Uzodima T. Nwala (2009, 55) later referred to as the "Great Debate" on the existence of African philosophy as a genre of philosophy.

However, before delving into the major concerns of this paper, I will first carry out some ground-clearing analyses of the meanings of heritage, Ontological Heritage, Africa's ontological heritage, and implications. I will also provide conceptual clarifications and the theoretical anchor for this paper.

## Ontological and Conceptual Clarifications

Before going into the main concerns of this paper, it would be necessary to state the ontological base of our discussion briefly and, at the same time, clarify one or two concepts (apart from "heritage" that would be discussed in full later) employed in this work. As noted earlier, our theoretical anchor is ontology, not as a branch of philosophy but as philosophy-as-such. Ontology, as an investigation into Being or the existent (that which Is), provides the fundamental ground upon which any reality could be accessed, interpreted, or understood. This conception of ontology is Heideggerian, and it is deliberate because there is something African and thus, communalist about Martin Heidegger's understanding of Being (AGBO 2018b; WANG 2020).

Heidegger's burning desire to break with the past led him to give ontology a new meaning and task. He rejected the view that ontology is a branch of metaphysics and insisted that ontology is the basic preoccupation of philosophy, with Being as its theme. In his words:

The task of ontology is to explain Being itself and to make the Being of entities stand out in full relief. And the method of ontology remains questionable in the highest degree, as long as we merely consult those ontologies which have come down to us historically or other papers of that character. (HEIDEGGER 1962, 220)

In the history of philosophy, all forms of ontology proceed through some analysis. However, Heidegger's analysis is unique in that it focuses on a phenomenological analysis of that Being (*Dasein*) by whom and for whom the investigation is possible.

Although Chimakonam, like many other scholars, sees ontology as a "branch of metaphysics" (CHIMAKONAM and OGBONNAYA 2021, 11), a hermeneutic reading of Heidegger's concept of *Dasein* as a being in the world and a being with others shows that it is a communal being. This is why it is justified to understand ontology as philosophy-as-such (*philosophia generalis*) in a work that undertakes an ontological interpretation and understanding of Ezumezu logic. If it is argued that "every system rests on a given logic and ontology" (NWEKE 2014, 23), then this justifies examining Ezumezu logic in symmetry with ontology. As is well known, not just within philosophical circles but across all scholarly circles, any ontological grounding and understanding of reality provides a comprehensive, clearer, and deeper perspective on that reality.

The term "glocal" is a technical term employed to describe or capture any concern or issue that has both local and global perspectives or aspects. A theory or an idea, whether philosophical or scientific, is glocal when it has a cultural foundation from where it sprouts and on which pedestal it rests, while at the same time possessing the possibility or capacity for global or intercultural applicability. Of course, such global or intercultural applicability depends on the theory or idea in question having inherent elasticity to assimilate, or at least associate with, the ontological nuances or distinctiveness of cultures outside its conceptual birthplace.

The concept of implication would not be meaningfully discussed without logic. There is something about the idea of implications that requires that inferences be drawn, that deductions be made, which may not be available on the surface. To be able to show a proof that something implies something else, one would need to go beyond what appears obvious, to provide a deeper interpretation, meaning, or understanding of the phenomenon or phenomena in question. For instance, if I said that  $p$  implies  $q$  ( $p \supset q$ ), it is obvious that  $P$  is not  $Q$  in any direct sense. The onus, therefore, falls on me to show how  $p$  is  $q$  in an indirect and/or interpretive sense. Surely this involves inferential reasoning, which falls within the domain of logic.

In his monumental book, *Introduction to Logic and the Fundamentals of Formal Reasoning*, Uduma Oji Uduma writes that:

The truth or falsity of material implication is determined by its relation to the facts in the case. The truth or falsity of a logical implication, however, is not dependent upon facts, but upon meanings. The former is contingent; the latter is necessary. The material implication merely happens to be true; the logical implications or entailment, is of Necessity True. (UDUMA 2008,56)

What this means is that for real implication to be drawn, meaning must be sought, discovered, and displayed. Beyond what the book *Ezumezu* has come to represent as a massive textual contribution to the genre of African philosophy, this paper attempts to uncover and elucidate the deeper meaning of both the work and the system for Africa's communal ontological heritage and its glocal thrust.

### **On Africa's Ontological Heritage**

Before I discuss Africa's ontological Heritage, I will briefly explain what heritage is. Heritage can be regarded as great legacies of a family, an organization, a people, a culture, a community, or a society that have been distilled, preserved over time, and transferred from one generation to another. According to Jennifer Welsh (2014,1), “simply put, heritage is the past made present. Heritage is anything valued by people today that was also valued by previous generations. Heritage is what we have accepted as gifts from those who came before us. Heritage is our inheritance of land, language, ecosystems, knowledge, and culture.” Heritage can be physical artifacts or monuments, cultural practices, historical events, or intangible essences such as skills, knowledge, beliefs, etc. They provide the basic Foundation that enables a society or a people to connect the past to their present and subsequently, to the Future. Heritage, whose meaning is only in the present contemplation of the past, without focus on the future, would not be very valuable for societal development.

Robert Hewison, for example, writes about the danger of over-concentration on a glorious past by Britain and how she is “a country obsessed with its past and unable to face its future”. He then goes on to aver that “if the only new thing we have to offer is an improved version of the past, then today can only be inferior to yesterday” (HEWISON 1987, 10). However, the beauty of the *Ezumezu* system is that it constructs a logical foundation from a reconstructed ontological past, anchoring it on concepts and neologisms drawn from the present African (Igbo) cultural and linguistic context.

The critical importance of heritage stems from its inherent capacity to foster a sense of continuity, identity, and value for any people. Identity and values are critical for any society that wants to continue its trajectory of development. Indeed, development in any society cannot even begin and would certainly be stalled, if it ever begins, without a sense of identity and values, dialectically provided by heritage. This explains why, ever since the American Declaration of Independence of 1776, the value of Liberty has become an identity that defines the United States of America. This ontological value is so fundamental that a monument, the Statue of Liberty, that towers over New York City, had to be erected to act as a physical reminder of this ontological ground upon which the people's hopes and aspirations rest.

There are many types of heritage: cultural, natural, physical, and intangible. Customs, traditions, dress codes, language, etc., can be examples of cultural heritage. Natural heritage may refer to mountains, rivers, waterfalls, caves, ecosystems, biodiversity, and other natural entities found in the environment where people live. Of course, physical heritage would include historical sites, artifacts, monuments, etc. There are, however, intangible heritage that are domiciled in the realm of skills, knowledge, philosophy, religion, beliefs, etc., and this is where our concern is in this paper. No doubt, Africa has an ontological heritage. And I contend that

the Ezumezu system took a giant leap in capturing, articulating, systematizing, and presenting that heritage with logical, ontological, and linguistic originality.

I need to expatiate on what I have called 'Africa's ontological heritage'. Having explained earlier the different types of heritage, it is necessary that I provide insights into the nature of this ontological heritage. That is the best way to appreciate the huge contributions of Ezumezu in unveiling that heritage with greater originality. Surely, the glocal place of the Ezumezu logical system would be even more appreciated when we grasp the importance of heritage in promoting cultural diversity, unity, and exchange, together with the mutual cross-cultural respect and Peace that would be engendered therefrom and thereby.

The driving force behind this paper is that the Ezumezu system has provided both local and global insights into understanding Africa's ontological heritage. And now that we have explained what heritage is, we need to understand what ontological heritage is, what Africa's ontological heritage is, and how the Ezumezu system provides a great textual, intellectual, and scholarly foundation for understanding that heritage.

How do people exist? That is, what is the way of being of people in any organized society? How do they understand the world around them? These are the fundamental questions whose answers would explain or define the concept of ontological heritage. What is Africa's way of being? How do Africans understand the world around them? According to Greg Ekeh:

African ontology refers to the traditional African metaphysical convictions about the nature of beings that inhabit the African World. The African worldview is generally based on this ontology.... There is an interaction of all beings and forces. The idea of a separate substance is alien to African ontology. (EKEH 2020, 89)

Chidozie J. Chukwuokolo, for example, argues that rationality is usually enhanced by logic and its applications. He goes on to posit that the epistemic worldview of a people, which deals with the predominant conception of Truth among such people, is very critical in determining the trajectory of development in such a society. He, therefore, concludes that “the epistemological and metaphysical outlooks of societies are fundamental to perception of human nature which underpin the development process and initiative of any social group” (CHUKWUOKOLO 2007, 11).

Writing in his paper, *An Appraisal of Some Cardinal Elements of Igbo Worldview*, Morris Izunwa (2009) argues that a worldview represents a condensed abstract of the people's perspective to life, the understanding of the world around them as well as patterns of their modes of expression and interaction within the world and relationship among themselves and with others. Focusing specifically on the Igbo people, he states that the communitarian and pragmatic nature of the Igbo emerged directly from the Igbo worldview. Accordingly, he states that “world views comprise the entirety of a people's assumptions, involving values, attitudes, beliefs and concepts which assist them in understanding events” (IZUNWA 2009, 2). Chimakonam and Lucky Ogbonnaya (2021, 6) concur with these positions when they declared that “[i]ndeed, every metaphysical system or epistemological theory represents some ways of perceiving reality or acquiring knowledge.” As a matter of fact, in this perception of reality and acquisition of knowledge by any people, ontological heritage is usually transferred from one generation to another.

### **A Brief Unveiling of the Ezumezu Logic**

Although the main purpose of this paper is not to carry out a review or critique of the Ezumezu Logic, it would be impossible to present what we have called *the glocal implications* of that system (to an understanding of Africa's ontological heritage) without a brief restatement of the basic claims of the Ezumezu Logic. However, before this is done, it is needful to state *ab initio*,

that Ezumezu is not nor should be conceived as a logic that is distinctively African! Rather, it is a bold attempt to present a system of logic as a typology from an African cultural and linguistic Milieu. In this case, the culture and language are Igbo, a people, Nwala notes, who have been described (by Amy Chua) as one of the 10 greatest races in the world (NWALA 2010).

Chimakonam's ingenious and dexterous employment of the Igbo language term Okwu, on the way to an Okwucentric conception of reality, again brings to the fore the well-acknowledged symbiotic relationship among ontology, logic, and language. After all, before the publication of Ezumezu, Linguist and self-trained philosopher, Catherine Acholonu-Olumba, and her monumental and revolutionary book, *They Lived Before Adam: Prehistoric Origin of the Igbo, The Never-Been-Ruled*, historically, scientifically, and linguistically shows the world how the Igbo language is at the root of all Global Languages, including English, French, Latin, German, Greek, etc. (ACHOLONU-OLUMBA 2009).

In my book, *Igbo Phobia: A Cursory Analysis of the Historical, Political, and Economic Conditions of Ndigbo in Nigeria*, I discussed the popular three theories of Igbo origin. These theories argue that the Igbo have Egyptian, Hebrew, and autochthonous origins (AGBO 2018, 18-24). The autochthonous argument holds that Ndigbo are literally “children of the Earth”. Similarly, in a recent book [Centuries of Igbo Civilization: Origin Cosmology and Epistemology of Igbo People], Obi Okere (2025) writes about “the origins of a people who have long described themselves as Ndi mbu (the first ones) ...”, noting that the Igbo heritage is “a heritage steeped in cosmic wonder, profound philosophy and the enduring struggle for dignity” (OKERE 2025, xv). When one combines this autochthonous historical origin with Acholonu-Olumba's Igbo linguistic heritage, one will better understand and appreciate Chimakonam's onto-logico-linguistic anchor of the Ezumezu system within the Igbo cultural world.

Before unveiling Ezumezu as a prototype of a distinct tradition of philosophy in Africa, Chimakonam first dispelled the challenge posed by the universalists and Ethnophilosophers who, at the time of the great debate, dissipated a lot of energy trying to prove that Africans can philosophize exactly like the West and in defending some geographical or intellectual territories of Africa, respectively. The result was the emergence of a copycat philosophy that was devoid of originality. Yet what Africa needs is an approach that is more phenomenological and pragmatic, in the sense of being practical.

Staying true to the Postmodern attitude, Chimakonam refuses to provide what could be called a definition of African philosophy because, according to him, such a definition would face many challenges. According to him, “we cannot define African philosophy satisfactorily. We simply cannot even if we want it so desperately... (Because) The genetics of African philosophy is on combat on all sides by possible controversies” (CHIMAKONAM 2019, 80). He, therefore, thought it better to delineate the scope and provide a prototype of any philosophy that could be branded “African”.

Drawing from the intellectual fervor promoted by postmodern thinking, Chimakonam tilts toward the view that “postmodernism like modernism is more than an attitude, it is a movement of logics” (CHIMAKONAM 2019, 6). Chimakonam, however, calls for caution in the way African philosophers pander with the postmodern to avoid getting stuck with the last stage of the dangerous universal march of logos, which he calls logomania. He argues that there is perhaps no other word in the history of intellectual tradition that possesses the plethora of meanings and indeterminacy of translation as the word “logos”, which at the same time means God, son of God, soul, mind, logic, being, light, word, speech, and reason.

For Chimakonam, “[l]ogic is the thematic study of the principles of correct reasoning” (CHIMAKONAM 2019, 48). He distinguishes between logic relativity and logic relativism. He says that the latter makes logic culture-bound while the former, which is where African

logic belongs, shows that logic is culture-inspired. He, therefore, declares that "any genuine logic tradition must be influenced by the native intellectual culture and mind view of a given people" (CHIMAKONAM 2019, 48).

As the domain in which human thinking is shaped, logic is indispensable to the progressive development of human societies. In the logical shaping of our thoughts, concepts are employed, and these concepts are products of words, which are the basic units of language. Thus, both logic and language are grounded in ontology, understood as the fundamental basis of all that is or can be. After all, Chimakonam rejects logos on the ground that it is ontologically Eurocentric and branded by the epistemologies of the North and had dragged reason off course on its journey in African philosophy (CHIMAKONAM 2019).

In a manner similar to Innocent Asouzu's dexterous employment of the Igbo language expression *Ibuanyidanda* on the path to creating a new complementary ontology (ASOUZU 2007), Chimakonam offers an ingenious conceptual analysis of the Igbo language word *Okwu* as an existential and unbranded replacement for logos, with its essentialist, branded, and displacing character. He captures the distinctive nature of *okwu* in the following words:

Unlike logos, *okwu* is not essentialist because it is not an active principle; it is simply a raw material for thought. It has neither the capacity to polarize nor the propensity to dichotomize and discriminate as logos. It is not thought; it only has a sense and that sense is fixed. In the hands of a philosopher, *okwu* is like clay, formless and shapeless. It falls to the philosopher of any persuasion to turn it into thought. The place of *okwu* as a philosophical center from which thoughts could be developed can be appreciated when we observe that it is from *okwu* that words are formed. A collection of words makes a sentence and sentences with elementary linguistic (syntactic and semantic) rules make a language ... And by *okwu* I do not mean any specific terms or concepts, those would be *okwu* already structured by some sets of linguistic rules. *Okwu* is in a raw state, formless and shapeless and like clay only molded into specific words or terms or concepts following some linguistic rules as to be used to form sentences in a language. In other words, *okwu* does not translate to 'word' in English language. So, 'word' is not a cognate for *okwu*. *Okwu* has no cognates; it is and will remain *okwu*. It is the primary philosophical material. The philosopher never truly needed logos and all the conflicting list of baggage it carries. (CHIMAKONAM 2019, 15-16)

In this sort of analysis, both logic and language gravitate at the altar of ontology.

### **MDU and LOL: Two Trilogies of the Ezumezu System**

A careful perusal of the book, *Ezumezu*, as well as a proper and profound understanding of the *Ezumezu* logical system, would reveal the presence of a double trilogy which, when explicated, lays bare the 'spirit' behind both the book and the system. When these two Trilogies are understood, it would explain why *Ezumezu* is a system of logic for both African philosophy as well as African Studies. Thus, he states:

In any system, whether academic or not, three prominent features hold it together: logic, methods and doctrine. While logic lies at the foundation and represents the laws and general principles that guide thinking in that system, methods are diverse ways of applying the same laws of that logic, and doctrine represents the thematic deployment of those methods. (CHIMAKONAM and OGBONNAYA 2021, 4)

The first trilogy is captured as Method-Difference-Unity (MDU). The second one is Language-Ontology-Logic (LOL).

This double-trilogy provides driving Force and dimension that give quiddity to the Ezumezu system. The MDU trilogy is anchored on the belief that only a difference in the method of investigating reality can create a difference between or among different philosophical systems or traditions. Without identifying this method of investigation, it would not be possible to distinguish one philosophical system from another. It is after these differences are identified that Unity can be conceived or fostered. The MDU trilogy is so significant and critical to the Chimakonam system that it had to be stated right at the "Preface" to the Ezumezu book, where he states that:

Without method, difference in philosophical thinking cannot be established. Without difference, unity of ideas cannot be asserted.... Universality is something obtained or created from diversity and not the other way round. In other words, diversity is necessary for universality. (CHIMAKONAM 2019, vii)

It is, however, needful that we make an observation on the idea of “and not the other way round” (CHIMAKONAM 2019, xi) as stated by Chimakonam. For indeed, unity is also necessary for any consideration or conception of difference. The difference between two culture-sensitive philosophies becomes possible to contemplate precisely because both are philosophies. A shared foundational category — philosophy — provides the necessary unity for identifying meaningful differences. If, for instance, someone was asked to identify the differences between Jonathan Chimakonam and Edison Arantes Do Nascimento (Pelé), the task lacks a coherent basis for comparison. While both are prominent global figures, their shared identity as human beings is too broad and generic to serve as a meaningful point of unity. Without a unifying category of comparable specificity, such as “philosopher” or “athlete,” the search for difference becomes arbitrary and unjustified. But if the difference between Pele and Lionel Messi is sought, there is something that unites them: Football. Thus, we also see that unity is necessary for any consideration of difference.

It is important to note that the emphasis on Method is critical when we remember that what gave modern science in the West its capacity to exert the unfortunate tenacious hold on the intellectual history of humanity, was that it claims to have something that is called "the scientific method" which, when followed by any reasonably intelligent person, would lead to the discovery of the Truth. And for many centuries, the six methodological steps identifiable in Newtonian Mechanics remained the locus classicus of scientific methodology. At this intellectual daybreak of humankind, we now know that there is a plurality of methods.

Chimakonam (2017a) posits the Conversational method as the appropriate method for the Ezumezu system. We had earlier observed that the plethora of new concepts and neologisms inherent in the book, as well as the systematized nature (in the true Spirit of logic) of the work, make it almost impossible to discuss the book meaningfully without focusing on specific area(s). Conversational thinking or method has also been further developed by Chimakonam in many other works (CHIMAKONAM 2017b; CHIMAKONAM and OGBONNAYA 2021). Re-presenting the method of conversational thinking here would require an explication and discussion of the major parts of that method, such as arumaruka, ohakarasi, etc., as well as the laws of Nmekoka, Njikoka, and Onona-etiti (CHIMAKONAM 2019). Suffice it to restate the position that “[c]onversational thinking then is decolonial for prescribing a method based on a logic that marshals ideas from the African perspective”. (CHIMAKONAM and OGBONNAYA 2021, 4).

The three symbolic ideas in MDU are then given expression and anchored in three other inevitable concepts that constitute another trilogy: LOL (Language-Ontology-Logic). It is

within this latter trilogy that Ezumezu emerges as the ontological expression of authentic African philosophy, with the Igbo language providing its linguistic content and a three-valued logic its formal ground. The ontological base of Ezumezu manifests in logic and expression in language. Thus, Chimakonam states, *inter alia*: “Whoever has logic has idea. It is almost impossible to create a new idea if one has no logic. It is now time for Africa to rise up and systematize its own logic in order to manifest its own natural creative originality.” (CHIMAKONAM 2019, xiii).

Responding to the challenge thrown by C.S. Momoh (2000) for African philosophers to pick up the gauntlet of producing authentic African logic in artificial language, Chimakonam, in the Ezumezu system, goes beyond the apologetic and polemic African logic writings of some contemporary African philosophers to demonstrate and construct an alternative logical system, from an African (Igbo) cultural and linguistic context, that made the idea of African logic to move from possibility to actuality. I believe that his discussion of the categorization of logic into “classical/non-classical”, “standard/non-standard” and “Western/non-western” (CHIMAKONAM 2019, 3.2) clearly shows that Ezumezu is an ontological Justice for those cultures that have been pushed to the peripheral cliff of intellectual racism from the North. It is not just for African philosophy and studies, but for any culture that applies the same principle in its context. Chimakonam then correctly argues that until a logical system is developed to ground the methodology of African philosophy, that genre of philosophy has not yet arrived (CHIMAKONAM 2019). That is why in another work, Chimakonam and Ogbonnaya clearly state that:

The two basic principles of the African systems of thought are the notion of *nmeko* that underlies methodology and the three-valued logic orientation that justifies inferences in African philosophy and studies. *Nmeko* translates to relationship or communion. This relationship is not a dialectical one but an *ohakaristical* one. (CHIMAKONAM and OGBONNAYA 2021, 5)

This position clearly points to the communal character of Africa's ontology. This provides a way to distinguish between African philosophy and the philosophies of other cultures.

### **The Glocal Implications of Chimakonam's Ezumezu Logic: Understanding Africa's Communalist Ontology**

Chimakonam presents a compelling perspective on how the Ezumezu logical system grounds certain theories in African philosophy. Some of the theories considered include complementary ontology, consolation philosophy, Ubuntu philosophy, etc. However, I doubt whether any of the theories is more grounded in Ezumezu than the ontological theory of communalism, which he prefers to call Afro-communitarianism. For instance, in discussing the *ohakaristical* procedure in the structure of the Ezumezu logical reasoning (the other procedure being *arumaristical*), he argues that instead of the movement from universal to particular inherent in western deductive logic, *ohakaristical* argument instead is from the center to the periphery. For him, this movement is in line with "the Afro-communitarian orientation of communion or relationship among variables" (CHIMAKONAM 2019, 145).

The communalism inherent in the Ezumezu system is obvious, comprehensive, and profound. It is obvious from the linguistic employment of Igbo words that profound logical and ontological concepts were developed and analyzed. It has to be pointed out, too, that the glocal character of the Ezumezu system is made manifest in these concepts.

For those of us who understand the Igbo language (the first-language situation), these words explain and express communalism in a simple way. However, the fact that in the profundity of the analysis, non-Igbo speakers (including those who may not have heard about

the language before) can understand, appreciate, and even embrace Ezumezusystem is a testimony and acknowledgment of its intercultural capacity, content, and context.

Among the Igbo language speakers, there is hardly anyone who will not understand the communality; that is, the individuality and other/social-directedness, inherent in words such as arumaruka (debates or arguments, usually by individuals), ohakarasi (the people have said), Nmeko (relationship), Njikoka (getting together is better), and Onona-etiti (the one in the middle).

Interestingly, the arumaristic communication or interaction takes place between variables known as nwa-nju (the one that questions) and nwa-nsa (the respondent). In a bid to provide a resolving complementarity, nwa-izugbe would appear on the scene. In line with the dynamic character of African logic, the variable that questions can also become the variable that responds, and vice versa. Everything depends on the context. Of course, nwa-nju and nwa-nsa, as communicating or relating variables, can be individuals, groups, cultures, etc.

The three metaphysical principles undergirding the Ezumezu logical system are “contextuality”, “relationality”, and “complementarity” (JO CHIMAKONAM and AE CHIMAKONAM 2023), which are communalistic or, to use his preferred concept, Afro-communitarian. Within the context of human existence, communalism is a way of being; that is, of existential relationship, of complementation, since nothing in reality can permanently and eternally exist in isolation.

In fact, it has been argued that communalism is African because it is human; and since it is no longer in dispute that Africa is the home of the first human, the major questions that should be asked should not be how African is communalism? (OGUEJIOFOR 2007), or how communalist is Africa? (ODIMEGWU 2007). Rather, the question should be: when and why did societies in the North lose their communalist foundation to embrace the abstract, austere individualism, an ontology which they are now paying heavily for, by way of individualism that is destructive to society? (AGBO 2018b; AGBO and NWINYA 2022). The inherent communalist ontological composition of humanity manifests in society as solidarity, in politics as socialism, in governance as welfarism, in the capitalist economy as bailout funds, in international relations as ECOWAS, AU, EU, ARAB LEAGUE, NATO, UNO, and other such collectivist bodies put together by human beings for integrative purposes. Without bothering about some other underground reasons for the establishment of these organizations, they simply reflect the bare fact that humanity or reality cannot exist in isolation. That is why it has been argued that those who treat the concept of globalization as a product packaged by some cultures, countries, or societies against others forget that globalization is a process driven by the natural tendency of the human species to relate, interact, communicate, or commune (AGBO 2019).

The dynamic nature of the Ezumezu logic is expressed in its context-dependence. Thus, Chimakonam writes that:

It is important to highlight above all else, the important place of context in Ezumezu logic. It is because of it being context-dependent that the principle of complementarity is prioritized over the principle of contradiction. Thus, the inherent logic of African communitarianism does not place the community first and the individual second as it is the case in the unqualified version discussed in the West, it rather upholds the independent identity of each. (CHIMAKONAM 2019, 162)

This type of independent identity differs from that expressed in Leibniz's windowless Monads, where communication or interaction is impossible.

## Conclusion

The concern with Ezumezu in this paper has not been a nostalgic focus on a romanticized past. This paper has shown that there is nothing anachronistic or obsolete about a people's language and ontology. The paper has clearly displayed how Ezumezu book and system provided a deeply, glocal philosophical system that gives credence to the view that philosophy is a universal activity that exists within all cultures, languages, and villages. No wonder Chimakonam has called for the villagization of knowledge.

The interest being shown in Ezumezu logic by scholars within the intellectual North is amazing. Yet, this interest should ordinarily be displayed more by African and Africanist scholars. Africans should be more interested in showing how Ezumezu system projects African philosophy further.

This paper has tried to show that the Ezumezu system did not just settle the nagging question of which written text, idea, theory, or thought can be both "African" and "philosophy" at the same time; it also argued that, in the final analysis, African philosophy has Communalism or Afro-communitarianism at its foundation. This foundation is articulated in the conversational method and in the logic background of that system. Consequently, this paper has attempted to show that the Ezumezu system is more than a book or a concern with Logic; as an activity of human reason. Rather, it unveils something ontological about Africa as the natural habitat of the human species.

## Declarations

\*The author declares no conflict of interest or ethical issues for this work.

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