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To advocate a return, as it were, to the rock from which we were hewn is a charming thought, but we are faced with contemporary problems, which have arisen from political subjugation, economic exploitation, educational and social backwardness, increase in population, familiarity with methods and product of industrialization, modern agriculture techniques. All available evidence from socio-political history discloses that such a return to a status-quo ante, is quite unexampled in the evolution of societies. There is, indeed, no theoretical or historical reason to indicate that it is all possible.²⁷

This breakthrough will only come when we do not regurgitate all the colonial influence in a futile attempt to recuperate the past, but to advance a gradual process of acculturation that is in consonance with the cultural psychology of mutual borrowing for mutual benefit.

So when we society meet another, the observed historical trend is that acculturation results in a balance of forward movement, a movement in which each society assimilate certain useful attribute of the other. Social evolution is a dialectical process; it has ups and down but on balance, it always represent an upward trend.²⁹

This paper is calling for a gnoseological rebirth in African. There are natural and theoretical scientists of all status in Africa yet unless the foreign scientist tell us the values hidden in our mother continents, we don't discover them. African scholars should not think that the west has done it all for them. African scientific pathology is due mainly to laziness, lack of creativity, fear of engaging in African question and the name mentality that the west has done it all.

African scholars must learn to engage in research works. They must battle laziness in order to undertake meaningfully in scientific engagements with the continents formal and natural resources. African medicine, technology, theology, anthropology, psychology, sociology, politics, agriculture can hardly develop if there is not through study of the both the spiritual and material spheres of the African lifestyle.

There cannot be a technological rebirth when there are no research centers because African science cannot develop in abstracto. The theoretical sciences requires libraries containing written experiences on philosophy, theological library, sociological and anthropological issues. The technological sciences requires research laboratories for experimental and observation purpose. Mere oral lectures can hardly drive down the right message. Also technical students need objective experience touching to the area of their professions.

The academic body need to encourage and persuade the government to encourage studies in African perspectives by helping to establish research centers on African studies and patronizing them financially.

There is need for gnoseological rebirth that will realise that it is when the thesis of the unified framework of African culture is merged with the antithesis of western culture for the emergence of a true gnoseological synthesis. When there is a healthy mixture of essential of two cultures will reconstitute into one substantial formula of culture expression. There is a need for a gradual withdrawal of the weight of western dependence. African in confrontation with high technological frame of western culture must not throw away the substantial humanistic, axiological, historical and anthropological ethical element of traditional culture for the sake of embracing a new progressive one, when this is done it will result in a cultural death as we are witnessing today. Rather there should be an attempt to retain the essential element of the traditional past and must decide to stay clear of any affection with western culture, such an attempt will not be possible and will be highly unrealizable. To this we must heed the timely warning of Nkrumah

the non-material order that exist in us and among us: Man's respect for himself, and environment, this government must have spirituality, it must be non-racial, it must accommodate other cultures and must be submissive to that invisible force that is uniting Africa.²⁵

A look at African of Igbo Origin it will observe that they have an original republican system of government which Iroegbu terms *Ohacrcy* and I believe that this system of government is worthy trying and Experimenting. Ohacracy means community rulership. In this government, it is the council of elder that form the corpus of leadership, probably because of their experience and political mastery. Ohacracy gives each member of community opportunity to contribute to the administrative and legal order and welfare of the community. And each member consulted his people and the totality of the consultation decision that would govern the land.²⁶

In this assembly, there is the consensus philosophy of *Igbokwenu, yaa*, which is the form a recognition of the full freedom and right of each individual within the village confined of the republican set up and underscore Igbo philosophy of consensual vote of the majority.

According to Ekwuru

Thus the symbolic resources of Igbo-kwenu is a vocal recognition of assembly of the *Umunna*, The highest ruling and decision –making body in the Igbo-socio political structure, constitute by certain democratic principle. It exhibit therefore the vocal character of a rudimentary republican society that enjoys the maximum level of freedom of speech. In this case, it is highly expressive of the type of dialogic republican character of the *Umunna*, which allows the full deliberative and consultative participation of every adult for decision making.²⁶

is therefore the challenge of other scholars to take a cue from Iroegbu to develop other systems and ideologies. Other ideologies like Zik's welfarism, Senghor's Negritude, Nyerere's Ujamaa, etc are all stepping stone in a right direction. But we must develop a system that is suitable for Africa and Africans.

A suggestion on the Africanization of curriculum comes from Fafunwa. One can only hope it sees the light of the day. Fafunwa says;

That the curriculum of the African Universities will continue to be flexible until the time when the African scholars themselves assume familiar with their countries problems and challenges, and will therefore be in a better position to determine what role higher respective countries.²⁴

Quest for New Ideologies and Government

The world is clamoring for leadership in all spheres of endeavors especially in government to lead her multi-racial, multi-color, multi-religion environment. Democracy has been pointed out as the best form of government at least for now but over the years, its incapability of satisfying the yearnings of greater number of persons due to the peculiarities of their environment. It has been noticed that democracy is never an objective and perfect government but rather an evolutionary and unfinished product. It is assumed that no two democracies are the same within the same civilization but they all aspire to achieve a balance between humanism and liberty.

Makgoba made a demarcation between two general kinds of democracies the classical western democracies and alternative democracies of the east. These democracies have their own challenges ranging from the fact that they are not geared towards dealing with other population, groups, cultures or identities except as subordinates or people to be assimilated in their value systems. According to Makgoba, their most challenges apart from the above orders on race, a reduction of human values, materialism, an expansionist mentality, disdain for morality and spirituality, an over-emphasis on the individual above the community and profound crisis of authority.

Both the classical western and alternative democracies have not fared better. The two democracies are under pinned by single civilization and they have struggled unsuccessfully to deal with the issues of multi-race, multi-cultures and multi-language. It appears they were not designed for multi-racism and multi-culturalism. They have equally ignored people values and cultural system especially in African cultural values. African Scholars are challenged to look inward for an original ideology and government that is made in Africa, for the African by the African. This form of government must have humanist concern, caring and compassion and should emphasize respect for

When considering course to be offered for history of philosophy for instance, It would be assumed that courses in ancient, medieval, modern and contemporary philosophy will take care of that area of philosophy. Logic will have its usual and true honored place, from introduction to logic to symbolic logic at the upper level of undergraduate program. Appropriate courses will be offered in Epistemology, Metaphysics and value theories to round off the curriculum. Except for few token concessions to the emerging African consciousness in philosophy, more of which later, which might be referred in one or two courses offered for the first degree might have been intended for American or European department of Philosophy.²²

The present concern of African scholars should not be on who is qualified to be African or the existence of African philosophy or who is qualified to teach African philosophy. The concern of African scholars should be on how African philosophy should take its root in Africa and the world, focusing on its issues, concerns and traditions. African philosophers should busy themselves more on reflecting on the age long traditional wisdom of African people, reflecting on her values, ontologies methods of approaching realities and so on.

The Igbo templates of kolanut which does not hear or speak foreign languages should be a rudder for African scholars. The indigenous concepts should be entrenched in our curriculum to make sure they are wholesomely integrated. The curriculum implication of such a programme should act as a catalyst and challenge to our university egg leads towards at least to work towards integrity our past and present knowledge system.

Our curriculum should less cover a greater percentage of our indigenous knowledge from kindergarten. This will make the children learn the original and indigenous thought of our people and hasten natural transition from known to unknown and take us back to our roots where we have been cut off. This exercise should be extended to our secondary and even to the university education.²³

can lead to the development of science. In order to develop a body of knowledge one must take the result of others, develop them and build upon them. Iroegbu's timely warning is instructive

African thought in a foreign language is not fully African thought. African philosophy in a foreign language is not yet authentically African Philosophy. Until philosophy is written and taught in an African language, African Philosophy may turn out in future to be nothing but western philosophy in African guise... But a deeper search for the roots is called for, not only to address fundamentally constituting influences, but above all to guarantee its genuineness and autonomous identity. African philosophy must be definitionally i.e. constitutively African.²¹

African scholars have to take it upon themselves in developing a unifying continental language(s) which is capable of being used in teaching the younger ones in school. Just like Europe who does not have one language like African but they were able to co-operate and understand themselves in studying each other's languages. They enjoy the break thought of translating the scientific achievements into the respective languages.

Quest for African Backed Curriculum

It is the task of African scholars to take measures and harness steps for gradual stoppage of repeating western scientific categories. It makes African depend comfortable on the western scientific templates. If Africa can become truly African both in theory and practice, there would be no temporization handling African affairs by African intellectual. It behoves on scholars to take up the burden in contextualizing African education so that African scholars can respond to African scientific exigencies from African context. The urgent need to draw up an African orientated curriculum is needed at such a time as this. It is however demoralizing that our curriculum personnel draw them from their familiar western background at the exclusion of our indigenous courses. The content is replete with western oriented courses at the exclusion of African indigenous philosophy. This is seen in our department of philosophy all over Africa. Etuk Udo described this unpleasant circumstance this way:

gradually release themselves from the bondage of these colonialists. Countries like Tanzania have fortunately embraced Swahili while some are still at the cross-road on whether to abandon or to keep theirs as languages of instructions while others are yet to reach a consensus on the issue. Busia's warning is timely to African scholars that to loose one's vernacular is to impoverish one's culture .The awareness that people's culture cannot be fully expressed fully in no other languages except its own should make African Scholars up on their toes.¹⁹

A clue should be taking from these philosophers who painstakingly worked in transcribing western concepts into original concepts to give them African foundations.

Kagame on his part attempted deriving a conceptual system from African languages. He believed in the existence of a unified and immutable collective Bantu thinking, but he also realized that all European philosophy can be reduced to its African foundations, which is the Aristotelian-Tomistic philosophy. He elaborated this theory first on the basis of his mother tongue, Kinyar wanda, in his dissertation in 1955, named *La Philosophic Bantu-Rwandaise del'etre*, and later in his impressive work, *La philosophie Bantu comparee* where he goes to give the language form of the general structuring of being of the Bantu, as he derived its originally from Kinyarwanda, for large number of Bantu languages.²⁰

As similar joint effort were made by Hallen and Sodipo who based on linguistic evidences, the usage of some carefully chosen words by the *Onisegun* to arrive at the Yoruba and English conceptual system and are able to compare them as well as to reach certain common philosophical conclusions. They did a major researches in the field of Yoruba epistemology starting with Quine's thesis of the indeterminacy of translation they chose to compare the English and Yoruba conceptual system as far as the use of epistemological modalities of believing and of knowing and the corresponding Yoruba concepts of *mo* and *gbagbo* have concerned. Hallen and Sodipo find thus the Yoruba epistemological system more reflective, more theoretically attuned, more skeptical and more empirical than had previously been entertained and even they marvel at the fact that the English epistemological system infact passed a lot of second hand information without verification as knowledge. They exposed at least a part of system, their terms and their usage in the entire net of the languages system with its inner connections and relationships. Their efforts made the epistemological system of the Yoruba to be brought to light. From the effort of these scholars and others like Ayode ,Oluwole, we can strike originally in telling our scientific stories in our indigenous languages or in one developed language. Their efforts are helpful and necessary presupposition that

The Role of African Scholars

Quest for Indigenous Languages Development

Language is an important aspect of culture because it helps to give identity and history to a person. Through languages a culture finds expression and spreads to other areas where it was hitherto not known. An extinction of a culture is an as a result of a neglect of a language. Unfortunately, Africans do not have effective indigenous languages to showcase their *onataluchi*. That is why African science when compare to other continents is in a seriously coma and needs a quick resurrection. This anthropological poverty of languages was well articulated by Nkafu Nkemnkia thus.

There have been a number of attempts on the part of Africans themselves to write articles but they encounter a fundamental problems; that of the language. They have found difficulties in expressing African thoughts and concepts in writing because some African languages do not have written form. Not all African languages are studied in a scientific manner at an advanced level.¹⁶

Even though some African languages like Igbo language were acknowledged to be rich in phonoaesthetic system of essential tonal combination and multiplication of basic words, it is regarded however iconic. It is believed to have deficiency in precision of lexical accuracy due to the lack of necessary words for certain new ideas and expressions.¹⁷

The above perceived deficiencies may be unconnected with the reason why Africans who graduated in other foreign cultures and languages express themselves both in speech and writing feely in these languages better than the indigenous languages.

The perceived superiority and accuracy of the colonialist languages like English stem from their high technicality, scientific and domineering in their role in aspect of science and technology. Also the coherence of its lexical structures and the richness of its vocabularies and distinctions of its phonetic patterns are the traits that marked these foreign languages garishly attractive as an effective medium of communication and for research conviencies.¹⁸

There must be this consciousness and agreement by Africans and their intellectuals on the needs to

rudimentary, our arts primitive, our crafts, non-existent.¹²

Slave trade on its part obviously reduced the numerical strength of African villages, it also put African economy directionless and without shape. It traumatized the imaginations of our people and awash our principle and ways of life. Revolutions in religion, trade, morality, law system, technology, urbanization, and communication, these contributed to our complete cultural estrangement/alienation. This alienation is seen in:

New laws, strange new values which have come to dominate our world to an extent hitherto unknown. Today we take for granted speaking in foreign languages, wearing foreign clothes, driving cars in a mechanized road, dancing with a partner of the other sex, eating in at hotel, using radio and television. Our markets are literally flooded with foreign ware.¹³

Colonialism is a major distortion of Africa's pre-colonial and continental textured science because it bereft African's their identity and confidence to depend purely on western model. African indigenous knowledge has exponentially stopped to be anchored on African foundation because of western ideologies and values. African schools are making the matter worst by detaching from social thought, cultural tradition and livelihood of African societies.¹⁴

Our Indigenous languages have been metaphorically referred as one that is in coma. Colonization replaced African languages with either French or English. They were brainwashed to accept the foreign languages as far better to their mother tongue and so Africans took it as a mark of elevation to speak the Whiteman's language than theirs. It is because of this that an attempt to develop new indigenous vocabularies is now a herculean task because of want of interested audience. This self-defeatist mentality is even witnessed among philosophical circle where virtually all western trained philosophers today, think teach and write philosophy either in English or French languages or other foreign languages.¹⁵

and the process, this shows that Africans can develop serious technological masterpiece. Recently the project development Agency (PRODA) at Enugu (Eastern Nigerian) made a technological breakthrough in the Automobile industry by manufacturing an indigenous Nigerian car. Not Quite long Innoson Automobile industry also had taken it upon himself to manufacture his own "made in Nigerian car to suit African environment."¹¹

This shows that there are numerous talents in abundance in Africa and also technological artifacts. There are brains, hands and talents in their natural and yet unrefined to their optimum. But where the problem lies in Africa and among African is the area of harnessing, developing and taking off the scales of "rawness."

The Missing Point

With the abundance of natural and human resources prevalent in African, it is still a huge surprise that Africa is still at the receiving end of any epidemic and natural mishap. In spite of these gifting, Africa still suffers from hunger, disease and technological backwardness. Scholars have fingered colonial rule and slave trade as the genesis of this redundancy, laziness, lack of creativity and general over dependence prevalent in Africa today. This contact led to the oppression of African industry and their cherished culture. The superiority posture of the colonialists over African's indigenous culture caused its gradual and early extinction. With the Victorian complex, the colonialists looked down on African culture and so:

Our people were regarded as cultureless, as history less and if they were accepted as fully human, still toddling at the lowest rung of the evolution ladder among the experts on the African way of life, that is to say among the anthropologist, our society earned such epithets as backward, barbaric, pre-logical, primitive, savage and a whole battery of other derogatory qualifications where the European civilization was played up at the apex of human achievement, our religion was dubbed as superstition, our medicine as charlatanism, magic and quackery, our language were qualified as incoherent dialects, our music was termed

of some species of crops.

These expertise also were employed in selection of medicinal herbs and poisons that give the herbalist his awful power of good and ill. Also the palm wine tappers apply this knowledge in preservation of his tree top brew. Even the preparation of lowly cassava from fermentation to *foufou* required the application of knowledge.

The mastery and skills of Africans captured Okere's fancy when he asked:

Has anyone observed the blacksmith at work? Has anyone see the combination of brain and brown, the puffins of the ballows, the beating of the red hot iron into any combination of geometrical shapes to finally produce the finished article? This is knowledge at work. The same combination of art and function on and the same mastery, the same mastering of the imposition of forms on matter is in evidence in the ancient Okigwe pottery.⁹

The same sentiment was echoed Okere again in the art of rainmaking and native medicine, thus:

Is it acceptable that we should still continue to be in doubt whether rainmaking in Igbo land is a genuine craft, a technique based on sound but secret knowledge or empty magic and illusion masquerading as craft and technology... is it possible that the resilience of native indigenous medicine, its thriving, prospering existence or even its competitive advantage over western medicine in modern Nigeria/Igbo land is accounted for only by the economic improvement of the people forcing them to resort to cheaper medicine or quacks as they are as they are called.¹⁰

During the Nigerian-Biafran civil war, Biafran engineers successfully manufactured an indigenous shell mortar (*Ogbunigwe*) that did a lot of havoc to the opposing forces with that type of challenges

endeavors. Borrowing Okere's words, "the west has become as it were, the measure of all fathers is quantifiable as knowledge with or without a western imprimatur."⁶

When we take a look at history, it will be realized that even our pre-colonial Africa were buoyant in scientific gifting and they made some break-through scientifically. We can all agree that civilization started in Africa and the Greeks agreed that they borrowed their technology Philosophy, sciences from Egypt.⁷

The first tool making industry started in East Africa around 2.5 million. Egypt took the lead in education with the finding of Alexandrian Library in Egypt around 295 BC. They equally played host to Astronomy developing around 365 day 12 month calendar. In agriculture, the donkey was domesticated in Egypt i.e. (Red Sea Hill and Horn of Africa) while the wild grains began to be collected as source of food in the cataract region of the Nile of Egypt. Egypt also took the lead in Architectural design; they built the oldest step pyramid in Saqqara.

The Sub-Saharan African, were not left behind, in metallurgy, they accepted independent development of the use of iron around 2500 BCE. In agriculture, yam was domesticated 800 BCE in West African. Pearl millet, gourds, Watermelons, and beans and farming herding practices were spread westward across South Sahara. Textile practice existed as people used cotton in making cloths to protect the body. In commerce, Sub-Saharan African Majored greatly in intra and extra African commerce. The Ghana, Mali and Songhai empires were major exporters of gold, Iron, tin Spears, Javeling Arrows, bows, Ships of Hippo hide. The third oldest canoe in the world and oldest in Africa was discovered in Nigerian by Fulani herdsman near the Yobe Rivers in the village of Dufuna. They equally manufactured bows, poisonous arrows and spears for belligerent undertaking.⁸

Gnoseologically, Africans created meanings by making brilliant abstractions. These abstractions were done by observing natural environment very carefully and turned empirical data into moral principles. All proverbs came from close empirical observation of the world of men and animals. They got numerous pool of knowledge which was stored as ideas and as proverbial wisdom, i.e. knowledge internalized and personalized.

We can also see gnoseological breakthrough in the work of weaving of the simple basket, *ngiga*, *ubu* and the fishing net. It can also be found in architecture of the simple dugout canoe, in the choice of building material, in the choice of crops to culture, the purpose and techniques of double harvesting

inferior to the whites. There never was a civilized nation of any other complexion than the whites, nor even any other complexion than the speculation. No ingenious manufacturers among them, no art, no sciences.⁴

But these enlightenments philosophers unfortunately knew very little of the Africans whose innate abilities and inabilities they often generalize. Their conclusion and arm chair description have often based on hearsay based on superficial acquaintance and led eventually to invidious comparisons. Some gather these conclusions from travelers, poor illiterate framers and peasants in Africa who lack academic decorum and syllogistic tendencies.

This paper aims at debunk those misrepresentation of Africans as mental dullards and misfits and present African native wit which can make them stand shoulder to shoulder with their western counterparts. This paper equally aims to bring to bare the roles of African scholar in achieving the necessary gnoseological renaissance in this 21 century.

Gnoselogoical Breakthrough of Africa

It should be observed that Africans have and possess their own native with their made them survive in their environment .the did not depend on any borrowed sciences.They respond to their intellectual needs without any foreign scientific aid. Amaku captures this self-sufficiency this way:

They relied on the philosophy of culture resilience. Through their industrious spirit, instead of borrowing, they were rather contributing to the world economy by exporting their product to the rest of the world. Their production was informed by the philosophy of what was needed for their contextual survival. Thus, African was not devoid of philosophy, morality, religion, politics, technology and culture as Hume and his European brothers blindly asserted.⁵

Africans were not so to say inferior in mental capacity as Kant tend to portray only that what their ancestors achieved were written in the light of the present western dominance in almost all fields of

Introduction

The gnoseological promise of philosophy is to aid humanity in the realization of its being i.e a being of one family with many faces, versions, edition, one destiny, aiming for better, more acceptable and yet finite and revisable articulation of the human condition.¹

In reality, this gnoseological promise of philosophy is far from being realized, hardly do cultures exchanges ideas in a serious scale. What we see is a domination of one philosophy to the utter extinction of the other cultures/ philosophies considered primitive or inferior. In this quest for gnoseological domination and supremacy, Africa has been at the corner and a pawn in the world order. The supremacy battle has seen her sidelined in major earthquakes of history and this is seen as weakness and slavery. Dukor likens this fights as a chess game where

The cacophony of power politics at international level is like a chess game .In the chess game of power and supremacy, the permanent members of the pawn community include first and foremost African and most underdeveloped countries. The West symbolized in the U.S has consistently plays the role of game "king" in the game, where the roles of the queen and Bishop status of the king in the game had been and always been the coveted ambition of the Arab league.... But Africa Unfortunately had always ensconced on the comfortable, dominant, stagnant and cross-ridden discomfort and enslavement.²

Some anthropological scholars have justified this dormancy and stagnation to the common fallacy in anthropological literature where they equate logic and literacy to the west and opined that certain so called "primitive" tribes which where or still pre-literate must a fortiori be pre-logical.³

Enlightenment Scholars like David Hume, Kant and Hegel head their quest and placed Africa at the lowest ebb of civilization. Hume wrote about the Negroes:

I am opt to suggest the negroes and in general ail the other species of man (...) to be naturally

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**GNOSEOLOGICAL CATALYST TO AFRICAN RENAISSANCE: THE ROLE OF AFRICAN
SCHOLARS**
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Abstract

The awareness level of contemporary African scholars of the inescapability of the truly African renaissance, on what is truly African, has begun to gain cogency among thinkers of different backgrounds within and beyond the shores of the continent. This renaissance in all spheres of life of Africans, albeit for the world to know that Africanness is not identical with dullness of the intellect, rediscovers and repositions the new Africa as one that is mentally liberated from the incarcerative influences of western thought system. This revival portends a total and absolute abandonment of Africa's dependency on foreign ideologies for a conspicuous and overt return to original system which, ultimately, will orchestrate and showcase their primordial intellectual excellence, formerly in form of native wit, for which Africans were known. This paper examines, inter alia, the commitment of productive African intellectuals using African projects, in the spirit of 'metanoia' to return to things that are natively African, to secure equal platform for intellectual excellence in science, technology and inventions. In this way the relevance of Africa to global welfare will not be placed on bargain table.