



Creating More Space for African Philosophy: Problems and Prospects

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Introducing the Little Worry

When the invitation note came to me and defined the focus of this conference to read: “Repositioning African Heritage and Philosophy in the Contemporary Era.” my immediate little worry was that this title is amphibolous. This is to say that it has two possible interpretations. On one aspect, one may say that the organizers of this conference want African heritage and philosophy repositioned; and on the other hand, they want the present locus and modus of the said African heritage and philosophy deposed. This means further that the organizers want to depose in order to reposition same so that African heritage and philosophy may after now fit into the currents of the contemporary era- that is to say produce new chart-bearing for African heritage and philosophy that must first be deposed in order to reposition. To this effect therefore, it has become very necessary for this paper to take a position and chart a course for a presentation. This is therefore why this paper has come up with the above title which hopefully, may create a common vision for this conference.

On the grounds of the above position, permit that the little worry of this paper be presented through the backdrops that immediately come to mind and are hereby captured by the means of the following block of questions. They are:

- i. Is African Philosophy and/or African Heritage really 'De-positioned'?
- ii. Who De-positioned African Philosophy/Heritage and with what instrumentalities?
- iii. Are the so-called 'Science Wars' still on course?
- iv. Are the so-called intransigencies of apathy and fix-logy through established orthodoxy still operational?
- v. Are Africans and others still parading in the equivocations of anti-alterity-epistemologies?
- vi. Who is still asking the question whether there is any philosophy called 'African Philosophy' and why?

It is possible to go on and on with similar questions.

On account of the directions of the organizers of this conference, this paper feels very strongly that this conference arrangement is to trace possible roots and reasons for the said deposition of 'African Philosophy' and consequently chart part ways for possible suggestions and auctioneering modalities that may help plough back African Philosophy into the universal-mainstream market of philosophy and sustain same exercise.

A fact that has to be fixed here immediately is that this paper is not going to answer the above question one by one because this presentation believes that the problems inherent in them are completely inter-twined. Based on the above, this paper has first of all selected three main sources of strong grounds that may have affected the possibilities of the de-positioning actions of African Philosophy. The following issues are to occupy the first grounds for our reflection:

- A. Forced migration;
- B. The fear of alterity in knowledge constructions;
- C. Equal-validity: The epistemic principle of Language;
- D. Epistemic Principles in Compositionality and Language Shift;

A. Forced Migration

Migration is one, if not the major interest in human history. It is obvious that man is a factor of change and at the same time a victim of change. This fact may be the popular reason why Charles Darwin in his teachings on evolution projects that it is not the strongest among the species that survives, nor the most intelligent, but the one most responsive to change. Man has always maintained a transitory character in his ecology. Researches in population genetics have shown that migration may be an individual or collective movement and history has always recorded such facts and factors especially through records of relationships between communities and settlements, routes of wars, environmental, economic, cultural, religious factors etc. Research has also shown that there are so many types of human migrations and all factored and typified on the grounds of the 'primitive needs of humans in existentialism.'

Generally, history has always recorded five (among others) as the major types of human migrations that have affected, interpreted and translated human beings in the state of human nature. These among others are:

- a) *Primitive Migration* e.g. the potato famine between 1845 and 1846 in the Irish and German histories;
- b) *Chain Migration* – as a result of strong attractions and information from pioneer migrants to relations and friend back home advertising through 'soft-power-enticements', the benefits in their new-found-lands;

- c) *Mass Migration* – this is in line with the 18th through 19th century European intercontinental movements to the Americas, Asia, Russia, China and of course Africa- our case study.
- d) *Free Migration* – this type of migration is registered among the people who are neither forced to leave their homes nor even attracted to another areas e.g. student movements, missionaries. Such decisions are met freely based on determined evaluations of the risks, incentives and perhaps language and socio-linguistic obstacles. Some of the incentives and implicit consequences may among others include employment opportunities –there abroad and here on return home, better housing schemes, political, soft and hard-wear-transfers (culture and education included).
- e) *Forced Migration* – This type of migration may also be called involuntary migration. This migration is marked by deportation by a more powerful agent. We must also distinguish forced migration from induced migration which is especially recorded by military 'base-to-base' transfers. The best examples of forced migrations include the transfer of Africans from their homelands by the forces of export slave trade and the 1788 and 1867 mandatory settlements of convicts and the Australia history.

Based on the backgrounds of forced migration and also free migration to an extent, this paper registers its main echo and focus to include the consequences of colonial manipulations with serious reference to the mental and conceptual (epistemic-mentifacts/socio-facts) exports and imports (cf. Okonkwo 2001).

From this vintage point, this paper hopes to underscore the tragedies of 'Depositionments of African Philosophy and Heritage'. It is also very important to note that at this point 'the old fox called the science wars has translated and transformed itself to mean an Afro-science wars'. The Afro-science wars, as will be expended in the course of this paper, will be registered, though most unfortunately, as the science-war at all fronts – home and abroad.

B. The Fear of Alterity in Knowledge Constructions

In this section of this presentation, the 'leitmotif' stands out to create a water-mark to link up the above exposed imports and problem fields of migrations (especially forced migration) to the issues of fear-deposits (Ujo na Egwu) inherent in most African intellectuals and the colonial counterparts. This paper feels strongly that the two Igbo concepts Ujo and Egwu compound the indispositions of the 'fear-within and fear-out-there' caused by migrations and colonial enmasculination of the colonized and the left-over of the mentality of the colonized.

In the first place, the concept of 'alterity' implies the language of 'the-other-ness'. Alterity in its compositionality is indicative of the facts and implicit prognosis of the phenomenology of language. Alterity compounds the wider ranges of implicit and explicit indices of philosophical surpluses that contain and cushion ready-made and institutionalized 'symbolic forms'. The fear of alterity means here the expositional conflicts provoked by the imposed non-dialogued contacts of 'symbolic forms' and/or epistemologies. As a keynote to the issues of this fear of alterity, Afigbo (1977:11) presents a direct clue that says:

...There came European colonialism which sought to obliterate their [Igbo/African] culture and separate identity or at least made a determined effort to dam the course of African cultural development and turn it into new channels. This went on until the emergence of a generation of educated Africans who began feeling that they had been severed from those roots by colonialism. It was to re-attach themselves to those roots that they began calling for the revival of things African – African modes of dress, African names, African dances and African traditions in government and politics. Here we recall easily the rise of philosophical movements for Negritude in French speaking Africa and for African Personality in the Anglophonic Africa, and more recently for Authenticity in Zaire. Again each of these was an attempt to erect a (dialogue) bridge across what was considered an unfortunate cultural chasm to get back to the best in the culture of the pre-colonial Africa.

From the above presentation of Afigbo, this paper apprehends three main dimensions of this program of getting back to the best in the culture of the pre-colonial Africa and here marks the beginning of the 'Afro-centric-science wars' at all fronts –home and abroad. These are, among others, the most prominent wars fronts:

- a). the emergence of independent nations and national languages;
- b). the global village syndromes;
- c). cultural alterity as an identity crisis.

In the context of the above problem fields, the obvious fact is that there has been, and to the mind of this paper, there are still hang-overs of observable logics of inferential 'knowledge-seeking-epistemic modes that have called for this conference theme: 'Repositioning and Creation of more Space' for the valid constructions of philosophy as a situated knowledge reflecting the originality of the Africans as the authentic producers of philosophical fruits. The fear (Ujo na Egwu) as expressed in this paper also recalls the position of Boghossian (2007:5) in his book '*Fear of Knowledge: Against Relativism and Constructivism*' which resulted from the identity crisis of the 'post colonial era. In line with above position he says that:

[The] Advocates of colonial expansion often sought to justify their projects by the

claim that colonized subject stood to gain much from the superior science and culture of the West. In a moral climate which has turned its back decisively on colonialism, it is appealing to many to say not only – what is true – that one cannot morally justify subjugating a sovereign people in the name of spreading knowledge, but that there is no such thing as superior knowledge only different [alterity] knowledges, each appropriate to its own particular setting.

What the above position presents is that knowledge is first socially constructed before the knowledge produce can come on board of universality (*Eme-kara-oha*). On this ground, all knowledge indices are socially situated and as such reflect the worldhood and environmentality of the producer and confirms at the same time the effects of certain historicity, geo-material and cultural contexts within the same given time and space (cf. Lennon: 1997: 37). The critical posture painted by Lennon is that all knowledge are socially constructed and therefore *mutatis mutandis*.

To elucidate the impact above, there is need to state that when something is constructed, it implies that the constructed 'thing-hood' was not there ready-to-hand to be found or discovered e.g. as Mungo Park found our Niger, Columbus the Americas etc. but that that 'thing-hood' was made/build (*manus-facere*) and brought into entity-space by an intended facticity of an entity that is not the same manufactured entity. The made entity on this note, claims a societal locus and this is to say that that 'thing-hood' belongs to a group of an organized constitution of people along the lines of their (more or less) collective value-systems, needs, interests etc. (cf. Boghossian 2007:16).

Alterity informed from the above facts therefore, signifies the realities of diversity. Human diversity is part and parcel of our common nature. It is also a statement of fact that without human diversity, ignorance and myopia would dominate human facticity. There is therefore no sufficient reason that philosophy as 'human enterprise' can be bracketed out of this complex reality in being and existence. Therefore, the question whether philosophy is practised in Africa is a question in necromanticism. But there is still an open question about African Philosophy. This question is whether what we call African philosophy is not an intercultural philosophy? This issue will be for another forum.

Philosophy as an aspect of human facticity permits alterity, relativism, subjectivism etc. as rights at all levels of society and individual persons and this may answer the question Asouzu (2007:25) asking concerning the '*unintended ethnocentric intrusions*' in the exercise of philosophy

To cap this section, the idea of Beyaraza (2005:201) comes to mind which says that:

The experience of people in their existential circumstances tends to yield different results. The meaning of things tends not to emanate from the things. It appears to be given by the people who interpret, value and use these things.

In spite of the above position, this paper is in no manner subscribing to any system of

philosophical unilateralism that came as a result of cultural imperialism and became disseminated through the nurtures and natures of Eurocentricisms of forced migrations and the assimilation through the colonial 'mentis' of African subjects. Therefore, the questions about 'Repositioning of African philosophy' is the same genuine question about 'creating more space' for the African philosophical contributions into the global stage of the same exercise.

The fear of knowledge especially when conceived from the initial social 'relativism and constructivism' and also as aspects of unilateral-straightjacket philosophizing, will bear more fruits if replaced by the tolerant parades of alterity. It is also found applicable when it is said in this reflection that meaning resides in 'Use'. This statement also implies that sociality may own a 'use' although it is not acceptable when this 'use' become a patrimony or yardstick-measurement for all that is philosophy. If left and maintained through the local 'usus' only, philosophy will become an exclusive cultivation of knowledge and wisdom rather than the inclusively nature of it as an acceptable exercise.

C. Equal-Validity: The Epistemic Principle of Human Natural Languages

The re-discovery of human language as the one necessary instrument in the main course of philosophy has given this science the correct bearing and nature it deserves. The concept '*Linguistic Turn*' (cf. Roty:1992) is all about the centrality of human language in the exercises and praxis of philosophy. This acknowledgement has been identified as a philosophical method that marks the passage of philosophy from the trends of 'philosophy of nature to the philosophy of language' (Okonkwo 2001: 289-300).

It is now clear within the science of philosophy that it is no longer the material being that is the clue to correct interpretation of cosmic order but more reposes on the human worldhood of language and the totality of symbolic-forms therein. Because of this fact, Ernst Cassirer (1944:111) confirms that we, as human persons must first understand what language and speech mean as the very prime condition for the understanding of the meaning of the universe. In a further stress, Cassirer says that if humans fail to find this approach; we surely must miss the '*gateway to philosophy*'. This gateway to philosophy as presented here, is therefore a projection of epistemological principle which has its root in and must be derived from the most fundamental endowment of man called 'human natural language'. It is through this natural language that epistemology can be called the 'philosophical method of knowledge about knowledge' or better still 'knowing about knowing'. To understand a language is to be equipped with the 'tool' of techniques through which a human person comes to KNOW THAT BEAUTY IS REAL. With this reality as a 'ready-to-hand' instrument, epistemology takes up, with some ease, the problems of universals that invariably will link up ontological relevancies of conceptual thinking and thereof build the principles of classification.

It is therefore no surprise to note that:

Human beings do not live in the objective world alone, nor alone in the world of social activity as ordinarily understood, but are very much at the mercy of the particular language which has become the medium of expression for their society. It is quite an illusion to imagine that one adjusts to reality essentially without the use of language and that language is merely an incidental means of solving specific problems of communication or reflection. The fact of the matter is that the real world is to a large extent unconsciously built upon the language of the group (Sapir 1929:207).

Along the above line of thought, we may recall that in 1980, UNESCO came up with the document titled 'Many Voices One World: Towards a new more just and more effective world information and communication order'. In this document it is stated in clearest terms that:

- a). All languages are equal;
- b). A call for more consciousness for national languages;
- c). A call for more consciousness for national cultures as precious heritages;
- d). Multiplicity of languages as the incarnation of long traditions
- e). Cultural diversities as the expression of wealth and richness;
- f). The disappearance or endangerment of any of the above stand to mean great losses to humanity, philosophy and history;
- g). The preservation of each must be recognized as a consequence of a natural struggle for a basic human right (linguistic rights and linguistic justices) (MacBride 1980:49).

From the above instances provided by UNESCO, we can draw up the facts that 'equal validity' is the most ordinary mode of knowledge-seeking which natural human languages inherently stand to guarantee within the observable, credible and knowable privileges of logic and inferences. For the above reasons Boghossian (2007:5) states as follows:

Equal validity, then, is a doctrine of considerable significance, and not just within the confines of the ivory tower. If the vast numbers of scholars in the humanities and social sciences who subscribe to it are right, we are not merely making a philosophical mistake of interest to a small number of specialists in the theory of knowledge, we have fundamentally misconceived the principles by which society ought to be organized.

Based on the stances of the above reference, this paper confirms that any given natural human language has its onto-linguistic merits (Okonkwo 2002) which are by implication contents of worldhood 'depositum', with the necessary configurations as the showcase of 'peoples' book of history, philosophy, metaphysics etc.

From such concatenations, any given people with their naturally given language

implicitly gained an original register for their epistemic realities. The emphasis is that all existing human languages are equal in dignity based on the consequences of 'function and use'. It is also very important to state that philosophy of language drastically maintains the distinction between 'function and use'. Heidegger, for example acknowledges this distinction through his conceptual applications of 'worldhood dealings' that come within the realms of 'ready-to-hand' and in-order-to' (cf. the hammer project). Natural languages, according to Heidegger, fall within the worldhood character of operation to effect serviceability, conduciveness, usability and manipulation (cf. Heidegger BT: 98).

The consequences of function and use therefore create the three basic common, universal and fundamental content-fores for equal validity conception (cf. Okonkwo 2012 IMSU Inaugural Lecture, Serial No. 6), and they are:

a) Language as an Instrument (equipment) for Thought;

Human natural Language as the 'stuff for use' presents and guarantees referential matrixes and ontological world-space through which the human person as 'Dasein' involves the self in a worldhood circumspective concern. Language functions in this respect as the constitutive project for the totality-matrix for intelligibility and articulation of the human modes of 'being-in-the-world' and further lays bare world structures and their implicit disclosure and signification. On this note we can understand the position of Magda (1964:73) that states:

The world is not a thing, but man himself is worldish: he is, at the bottom of his being, world-disclosing, world-forming, a priori, understands his own being in a relational-whole [alterity], in which and from which he can meet other beings and understand them in their being.

Language from this perspective can be called the equipment or instrument used to talk about language. Based on this fact, we can understand Wittgenstein in the Philosophical Investigations PI (1958) who says that 'the limit of my language is the limit of my world'.

b) Language as an Instrument (equipment) for Communication;

Language as an instrument or equipment for communication explains the states of human affairs through which humans share commonly and mutually intelligible and knowledgeable worldhood concerned attributes of competences and expected performances.

In our perspective and situation as Ndi Igbo, communications work out in various form of artistry and expressions like: verbal arts, dialogue, story-telling, singing, proverbs, corporal expressions, dancing, music, mime, dramatic arts, plays, rituals, visual and graphic expressions, drawings, decorations, costumes, games, rites, gatherings, feasts

(religious/ secular), markets, meetings, ceremonies, musical instruments (Ikoro, Ekwe, Oja, Ogene, Nkwa, Oyo, Igba, Ugene etc), craft tools etc (cf. Okonkwo 1998) With these and more Ndi Igbo can speak of some heritages.

Language, in this case, expresses the human encounters of worldishness and worldhood that form the total summation of relationality. The world in this case becomes a real world only when understood in a 'language-contextual regions of relations'. Philosophically, 'relationality' commands the ontological grounds within which things appear as known signs and significations of elucidation. Therefore, the nexus between language and communication can be call relational elucidation (cf. Okonkwo 2012:14-15, Inaugural Lecture).

c) Language as an Instrument (equipment) for social Identity.

The basic fact about language as an instrument (equipment) for social identity is all about the reference that any human person who has 'competence and performance' in any language will be integrally and inherently identified as a framework and property of that language. If you are, for example, called an Igbo man or woman, it implicitly states that Igbo as a language owns you and you, conversely own Igbo.

The fact remains that language is thus, the possible signification and structural designation that predicates and predicates human existential stigma and blue-prints. Furthermore, language is the human utensil that signifies human local-standing within the social names of relations, environments and totality-matrixes for the underpinning of human background, region and world. Igbo as a language is both the people and their worldhood locality which consist of independent existential facts of formal ontology as autochthonus. The above facts form the contents of 'social identity'.

Having tried to establish the foundations on which equal-validity concepts rests on, there is a problem field that must be mentioned also especially as this very issue forces equality into inequality in language function and use.

This issue is that of what has to be called 'the dominant language games' which make such languages to be an influential tool of violence once in contact with an 'alterity-language'. When a language dominates another, then a battle line is drawn between the different social physics. The battle lines are drawn when we recall, as presented above, that *language and thought (i.e. philosophy-culture) are inseparable, and a disease of language is therefore the same as a disease of thought.*

On this note we can comprehend the main issue and source of the concept of 'depositionality- jargons of African heritage and philosophy. When we also learn from J.L. Austin (1976:5) that the effectiveness of language use is all about the social behavior of doing things with words, then the use of language becomes part and parcel of the

knowledge of language as the '*doing of an action*'. On account of this, every dominant language is a trait to everything concerning the dominated people and their key systems of epistemology (philosophy) and their global book of history in homogeneity (heritage). By this undertone, Elugbe (1990:11) says that unless forced by conquest (forced migration) or by superior number or by socio-economic and political dominance to give up their language, a people can always have their history traced through their language.

Consequently, any dominant language like English French etc. in our case as Ndi Igbo and every other people of African extraction, commands the systems of alienation, discontent, distortion and abortion/ miscarriage of the people's natural rights of equality-institutions and inherent thought systems. The complexities of dominance give birth to the terrible epistemological crisis of language shifts and the resultant fruits of distortions of thought applications. On this ground, this paper would like to examine in very short terms the consequences of 'Compositionality and Language Shift'.

d. Epistemic Principles in Compositionality and Language Shift

Compositionality and language shift are two main components involved in the discussions concerning the ways and means in which and through which any given language like Igbo language, mirrors and reflects the in-depth puzzles residing in the language 'user and the deeply rooted rule-to-rule components-exhibits of the said user along-side the applications of logical structures in the same language. Since language is the gateway to philosophy and also can chart the limits of (my) world, philosophy in the light of such realities becomes an 'activity' (*Tractatus: 4.112*), a critique of language use (*Tractatus:4.0031*) and the clarification of propositions (*Tractatus: 4.112*). There is therefore a point of meeting between philosophy and sociolinguistics.

When sociolinguistics is understood as the science of a socially constituted linguistics and philosophy on the other hand, as the analytic guardian thereof, there is invariably a common 'tally' in the questions about language shift that reflects the levels of language assimilation, language transfer or replacement whereby the speaker or speakers of a speech community like Igbo shifts or shift to speaking another language e.g. English.

Language shift wherever it occurs is the indicator- light that there exists a dominant and more powerful language and such very alive and active in the speech community. In such a situation the original natural language stands projected as inferior and therefore claims a minority status of inequality.

On the above note, the dominant language, and in this case English language, claims and gains a language association of prestige, social status symbol, glamour and social identity of success. It is therefore no surprise that during the colonial and immediate post colonial era of Nigeria, Igbo did not qualify as a language but was fully humiliated and

reduced to the level of mere 'Vernacular' which is the state of using a native language considered 'nonstandard or substandard' as contrasted with a literary or cultured form of language (English Language). It is quite surprising that at the level of Professor Wiredu; 1998:147), he himself reduced his mother tongue (L1) *Akan* to mere vernacular when in his quest to promote intercultural philosophy says:

*I might mention that my approach to the theory of truth has been conditioned by my understanding of the workings of that concept in my **vernacular**, which is called Akan, a language spoken in parts of Ghana and Ivory Coast, and my acquaintance with Western theories on the matter.*

The above fact is the effect of the forced migration as presented above and the implicit and resultant consequences which are manifested in the abandonment of the (L1) the mother tongue. As a result of such a situation, the Igbo/Akan directly or indirectly nurture and nature a mentality of the colonized noticeable by the language praxiology of minimizations in competences and performances of the (L1) while advancing more in competence and performance in the L2 that is English.

The truth of the fact here is that once a language shifts, implicitly the problems of 'reduction' become prominent whereby the 'use' of the L1 reduces, shrinks and becomes less proficient. Reduction focuses on the notion of meaning. It is no longer a surprise that Husserl was concerned also with meaning – the meaning of phenomena, the meaning of intentional acts, the meaning of words, the meaning of sentences and the person when he or she says something (cf. Solomon 2001:24). We may understand at this instance that the real meaning of any given phenomenon stands determined by its parts and the mode of composition. If the laws (rule-following) of compositionality do not apply, how then one can appreciate a sentence like: Milk me Suggest.

On account of this position, every natural language is compositional. According to Fodor (2002:6) compositionality concerns the language feature that best explains the productivity, performance and competence, systematicity, understanding, consciousness etc. in that language and its linguistics. Therefore, compositionality explains 'the essences of conscious use' of the language especially when factors of any given language like the lexical meaning, syntax and variables of linguistic and representational systems become the issues. Reductions can also be called abstentions. Faced by the problems of shifts, reductions/abstentions, in Igbo Language for example, the following problem-fields are ready to hand:

- a) Language breaks down in phonological contrasts;
- b) Language breaks down in language acts of reception;
- c) Language breaks down in morphological genres;
- d) Language breaks down in synthetic and analytic potencies;
- e) Language breaks down in syntactic convergences;

- f) Language breaks down in lexical categories;
- g) Language breaks down in word formations, creativities and productivities;
- h) Language breaks down in stylistics etc.

All the above and more make up the social rules of language use that are applicable in order to have any fitness in epistemic principles and guarantee any worth-while philosophical exercise. The above factors must form the platform on which philosophy works and exists. Further, these factors create the fitness for philosophy to strike the methodic balance that opens the doors of conduct for correct reasoning which is logic.

On account of the above, this paper upholds the basic fact that any application to reposition African philosophy and the heritages thereof must begin by repositioning African 'linguistic rights' and 'linguistic justice'. This, at the same time, stands to state that no amount of 'linguistic freedom' would warrantee the extinction of an 'own-ness ontology' which language stands for (*Nke m bu nke m nke anyi bu nke anyi*). Therefore, any lack of such awareness increases the options of language extinctions or death of a 'non-dominant' language like Igbo.

Prospects and the way forward

Professor Adiele Afigbo (1987:4) noted the crisis of Ndi Igbo and warns as follows:

The generation that represent [primitive Igbo belief], with its ancient laws and customs, has almost died out...The younger generation is learning to read and write and to adopt European ideas and fashion in every detail of life...The younger generation has shed old manners and customs freely, and somewhat hastily. They are ardently grasping at all things new and foreign. Not all, by any means, can discriminate between the wheat and the chaff.

Another application that is very close to what Afigbo has said above is the declaration in the 'New York Times of 19th October, 1971 which states that the poet i.e. philosopher has only one political duty. This duty is: *To defend one's language from corruption*. When a language is corrupted, people lose faith in what they hear, and this leads to violence.

Permit me also on a personal note to add that my father, Mazi Louis Okonkwo had a dictum which says that:

There is a difference between academic knowledge and domestic knowledge and that is the reason why we have today so many foolish doctors and intelligent illiterates.

This paper believes that true and real literacy begins by reading the world and not reading the word. This also marks the reason why Igbo philosophy asserts a terrible distinction between '*Ima Ihe* and '*Ima Akwukwo*.'

Based on the above comments, it is obvious that the underdevelopment of African

philosophy is not necessarily an economic affair or reality. At the levels of African philosophy and cultural heritage, the crisis of 'depositionment' manifests itself majorly by the instrumentalities of language marginalization from home and abroad – a war from all fronts.

We may at this point recall the new-world-order' that maintains that all languages are equal despite the gimmicks of dominant languages. We also recall as presented above, the world-language-renaissance as an attestation to the truths of progressive self-liberation in the game for a universal integration. It is also noteworthy that at the beginnings of philosophy, any person or people who had no mastery of Greek language belonged to the tribes of barbarians and such were consequently condemned to '*mental impotence*'. The Greeks then claimed with their language to have had the only and absolute clues to normative knowledge, understanding and interpretation of the cosmos (*Weltdeutung*) (Okonkwo 2001).

When later the Latin language came on board with this same machination of dominance, non Latin speakers were pronounced '*plebs rustica*' – the rustic-man-culture. Furthermore, the non Latin speaker was relegated to the status of a slave and therefore valued as '*res*' i.e. a material object. And now that philosophy can speak all languages as 'many voices one world', and in so doing, all languages stand equal in projecting the gateways to philosophy and philosophies as an all-inclusive dealing.

Since language maintains the gateway to philosophy, as this paper states above, it is then not possible to do philosophy outside language. This may be the reason why Wittgenstein (1958) says that 'what you cannot speak about you must to pass over in silence'. Therefore, in the real situation whereby African languages are yet to come out of their silent mode and be used in doing philosophy, do we as Africans do African Philosophy with African languages as the '*Fundus*' or 'Intercultural Philosophy' since all we do so far in philosophy anchor on foreign languages?

Based on this 'factum' it would appear that an agenda to Africanize philosophy - Repositioning African Philosophy by Creating More Space - would begin here i.e. with the language games of African languages and background engineering (cf. Prah 1995:77).

Recommendations

Philosophy of sorts is expected to be a product of 'soft-power' and never ever the product of 'hard-power' or 'smart-power' (cf. Nye 2002). The days of 'Western' inalienable right and privilege with the imports of superiority complexes in philosophical dealings are over.

This is precisely the reason why United Nations declared the year 2001 'The Year of Dialogue among Civilizations'. The European Union equally declared 2008 the European Year of Intercultural Dialogue. These are moves that can be called 'Philosophical

Counsels' for the decolonization of philosophical dealings at both – Africa and the West for the guarantee of 'philosophical humanness.'

On the grounds of the above moves for dialogue and mutual considerations of alterity, every Philosophy -African as well as Western etc. philosophies, are moved to appreciate what this paper call '*philosophical self-insufficiency*' which Asouzu (2011) calls '*the science of the missing links of reality*'. This paper recalls Plato's doctrine of the 'great kinds' as the projections of the greatness of diversity for the possibility of a common share of philosophical insights as well as philosophical errors. Paul Ricoeur (1988: 8f) also explored the dialogue of the self as identity in the establishment of interdependence with others (alterity). Husserl (cf. MacIntyre 1984: 215) understood 'oneself as another'. Levinas (1969: 164) understands the 'self as nothing without the other self' and Asouzu (2007) teaches philosophy as dealing in '*complimentarity*'.

The exercises of alterity and dialogue create more space for a universal reception of philosophical panoramic vista which in effect would eliminate philosophical parochial vested interests. African philosophy on this note should divest itself of self-pity and embrace the spirit of boundless philosophical energy of unrestricted and unrestrained desire for an all inclusive 'love of wisdom'. The project of repositioning African philosophy is, in the light of this paper, a spirit of the possibility of correspondence that should trace semiotic and symbiotic philosophical routines beyond the frontiers of self-esteem for an all encompassing enlightenment access. This project holding unto alterity-dialogues as the light-house, will produce a new dynamic synthesis as a philosophical method and such will shun exclusive strangle-holds on the praxis of philosophy and that is to say, holding as 'sacrosanct' territorial languages, social rites, and cultural institutions to become claims of philosophy-emblems. Through the processes of alterity-dialogues philosophical indifferences will give way to philosophical tolerance. In the words of Meilhammer (2007; 249f) this paper appreciates the facts that:

Dialogue, debate, cross-examination, comparative analysis and juxtaposition of theories serve as catalysts. Meta concepts like dialectics, evolution, history and progress provide the intellectual armature. A creative use is made of supposition, conjecture, utopia, make-believe, fiction and the idea of an alternative universe – as an appeal to the human faculty of imagination. Thus a rapid sequence of insight build up to a cognitive and emotional climax, and a quantum leap is accomplished – kick-starting, pushing forward, and sustaining a process of incorporation, aggregation and integration. The singular position turns into plural-diverse, the static becomes dynamic, the within is transformed into the in-between, immanence gives way to transcendence. All along, the underlying insight, and indeed foresight, is that there is no clear-cut dichotomy, contrasting polarity, or unbridgeable gap between apparently (and superficially) disparate points of view. Rather – given time, skill and process, and with the help of perspective, empathy and context – a realization gradually evolves that the connecting aspect supersede those which

divide. The interlocutors in a philosophical exchange become, despite themselves, allies and collaborators in an ever-expanding project that goes beyond their own single point of view.

This paper is recommending alterity-dialogue as a philosophical exploration whereby the individual social constructor of knowledge within any given philosophical geography, will resist the illusions and temptation of wishful thinking and romance that his/her notion is the most correct.

Alterity-dialogue, as presented here, is a philosophical framework/methodology that makes philosophical praxis '*sans Frontiers*' and in consonance with the rules of the game of philosophy – logic, truth and wisdom. With this method, the fancies, fantasies and the vainglories of colonial unilateral-one-way-philosophical traffic, will give way to philosophical entropic reciprocity (Okonkwo 2012:15).

Alterity-dialogue can be called the method of doing philosophy as the knowledge of *brain-sharing* (Arusha/Skovde declarations) for an-all enlightenment and encompassing philosophical morality. The very clear message being transmitted by this alterity-dialogue method is that if meaning lies only in the social constructed ambience where it is the '*usus*', then no one philosophical method can stand out as the yardstick.

Alterity-dialogue is the method of creating a 'linguistic universe' for a process philosophy that should be an ongoing and never-ending feedback and playback of representing and re-representing of the hallmarks and leitmotifs of a 'polylog-tantamount' for the proceedings of philosophy from oneself unto the other (Levinas 1969:299). Wiredu (1998) on this ground advises that:

Whether or not such unification is possible, it would be good if one could be confident that philosophical theories of truth will not become impediments to dialogue. But, to say the least, it is difficult to have such confidence in any theory of truth that places truth somewhere beyond human inquiry, and therefore beyond human communication.

In conclusion, this assembly should note that if you do not say 'I am' no one may say 'you are.' Based on this note, the final submission of this paper is the question why the 'philosophers in Nigeria' have not yet succeeded in producing an NUC approved 'undergraduate/graduate' philosophy programs in 'African Philosophy' while ATR (African Traditional Religion) 'undergraduate/graduate programmes have ever since been leading the way? Once this question is answered, the gateways to the processes of 'Repositioning African Philosophy' will be flung open.

In all, the most important factor impeding African Philosophy is the silence of African languages while claiming philosophical dealings called African philosophy. If language is the gateway to philosophy then every African philosopher needs a re-think and define his/her placement in the deal of philosophy vis-à-vis the local indigenous language. This is a teething problem for a further visitation.

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