

IKE IGWEBUIKE: AN AFRICAN PHILOSOPHY OF INTERSUBJECTIVITY

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Abstract

This piece has studied the power of Igwebuike philosophy developed by Knau Ikechukwu Anthony. It was this philosophy that made Africans what they were, a people united for the sake of the collective good. The current prevalence of selfish divisions and continuous waste of blood powered by selfish interests across global religions, economies and politics must be conquered by Ike Igwebuike. The only consistency and time tested phenomenon amidst divergent views lies in the unity of any situation. The tripartite religion of Christianity, Judaism and Islam all agree in the unity of God as one and all powerful creator of the best universe ever created; thus the fermenters of all left descending ideologies are working against the unity of the human species. Man in his deceptive cleverness has deviated from the principle of Igwebuike and built a money triggering wall around them. Egocentrism breeds selfishness and destruction but the power of unity dispels all thought of evil. For the purpose of this study the Igwebuike method of research was employed.

Keywords: Ike, Igwebuike, African, Philosophy, Intersubjectivity, Kanu Anthony.

Introduction

The information that prompted this reflection on the philosophy of Igwebuike was cheering and thought provoking. Fr Ikechukwu Kanu no doubt is a post contemporary African philosopher as a living philosopher he has championed a fast growing Association for the Promotion of African Studies (APAS). Like the African proverb goes “it is during the washing of hands that one can tell the man who will rush the food”: the one that washes faster without cleansing the hands is a bad glutton but the one that washes his hands clean will eat with elders. Kanu a promoter of Igwebuike philosophy has not only washed his hands clean but did that faster not to be a bad eater but to be able to eat with elders, eat faster in order to attend to other issues that the elders spend their evening on.

The African elders spend their evening discussing the issues that plague their society. Nigeria today is faced with so many difficulties, ranging from insecurity, poverty and poor health challenges. In discussing Ike –Igwebuike in the light of Ikechukwu Kanu’s renewed Igwebuike Philosophy; we shall adopt the phenomenological methodology. This is because it allows information to flow and manifest their true nature without imposing one’s own thoughts. Hornby (2015) defined the term phenomenology as a branch of philosophy that deals with what we see, hear, feel etc. in contrast to what may actually be real or true about the world (P.1150).

According to Ejizu (2013) phenomenology as a composite word is from two Greek nouns: phenomenon meaning “something seen” and logos meaning words/study or inquiry, literally the words refers to the study of that which is seen”.

Madu (1997) define the term of phenomenology of Religion as one that accepts as the subject matter of its enquiry all data presented by religion in beliefs, cults and morals. He went further to describe the business of phenomenology of religion as one that makes an analytic description of these data presented by different religious tradition in order to find out where they converge or separate.

Essein (1975) in Madu (1997) explained that phenomenology is a careful, analytic description it lets one to see that which shows itself (namely the phenomenon) by removing as far as possible concealments, distractions and whatever else might prevent us from seeing the phenomenon as it actually gives itself. (P. 59)

The Igbo term (Ike) means power this term is used to describe strength. The term Igwebuike is synonymous to the East African term mbutu. The religion and government of the colonized Africa has its centrality and confirmation in the ideology. In all an African does, the interest of the objective generality come up *primus* before any personal interest. Every individual success is geared towards the extended needs of all in the community. The individual chi ‘*personal god*’ (Achebe 1975) helps one to think of issues that will better the society.

An African proverb has it that when an individual prepares a meal for the community, the entire community can finish the food but when it’s a case of the community cooking for the individual then the said egocentric man or woman cannot contain the prepared meal. This proverb entails that individual’s will, success and totality of achievement should be for the good of the society. However if the community finds such an individual as dubious and anti-community then there is a problem brewing. This Igwebuike spirit is part of the

positive aspects of African culture that have been waned down as been primitive. It was within the territorial boundaries of Africa that some of the key elements of the present western civilization were developed. Paradoxically, Africa still maintains some of the most traditional and primitive cultures.

The Religion of Igwebuike: The ideology of Igwebuike has a strong root in African culture and religion. African Traditional Religion is a religion that advocated unity in the community. Religion as already expressed by many African classics permeates every aspects of man's existence in the universe, be it politics, social, cultural or economic life of the people (Mbiti 1975). During festivals in Africa everybody is called upon to participate except for the ostracized. Ostracization is the fate of anyone who commits atrocity against the spirituality or religion of Igwebuike. Certain values like chastity, truth, respect for elders, communalism etc express the bound of Igwebuike. As Mbiti (1975) had earlier noted these values are also seen as the religious values of the African people, thus religion permeates the life of every African.

Igwebuike and security: In African societies were traditional community policing is still effective, one hardly finds a criminal as everyone is known in the community and none will be ready to defy the Igwebuike spirit. As noted by Offiong (1980:32) in his *Imperialism and Dependency*, Religious leaders in some cases make statements to **specifically appeals for peace** in particular circumstances, however, on other occasions they have also published more **comprehensive statements** on the need for peace and the means of achieving it. As people do struggle with life of uncertainties, powerlessness and insecurity, African religion in the spirit of Igwebuike provides answer to the things that threaten people's life and survival.

Igwebuike and Poverty: In the spirit of Igwebuike, people farm together to ensure that they provide enough food to meet the needs of everybody in the community. The Igwebuike philosophy/Religion fights against poverty. Religion bounded people together to wade off poverty. As noted by Johnson (1996:232) religion not only provides responses to enduring human problems and questions but also forms the basis for social cohesion and solidarity. A major role of religious bodies is to hold the society together as a form of "social glue". In the opinion of Rodney (1972), Africans were religiously strong and had a better piloted society before the advent of Europeans. African Religious leaders serve as a social bond that held the society together. It strengthened the basis belief and values of the society. Okafor (2004) had earlier observed that Africans are no longer unity thus the reason for increased poverty.

Igwebuike and Health: Every traditional African society had men and women who are gifted with healing powers. When a member falls sick, he is usually cured free of charge from African bio-diversity since it is a free gift. African healing is influenced by natural cycles of days, seasons and natural occurrences and the accepted realities of the physician. African culture acknowledges that real healing lies, not in a synthetic pill but in recognition of our true position on earth and in bringing our actions into respectful balance with the natural world intent upon God and his pantheon of divinities.

Recommendation

In the midst of political rivalry facing our society today, the world needs to be united against all forms of evil in the society.

The spirit of Igwebuike is made manifest in moments of individual weaknesses, when an individual is weak the Ike-Igwebuike manifests. Years gone when it is time for farming the community gather to help the weak or sick among them to farm.

In a period such as this in our national life, we are called to look beyond what divides us of which religion is the utmost and seek after what unites us in the spirit of Igwebuike.

Conclusion

This little discourse on the power of unity (Ike-Igwebuike) has brought out the force that made Africans what they were, a people united in thought for the sake of the collective good. The current prevalence of selfish divisions and continuous waste of blood powered by selfish interests across global religions, economies and politics must be conquered by Ike Igwebuike.

The only consistency and time tested phenomenon amidst divergent views lies in the unity of any situation. The tripartite religion of Christianity, Judaism and Islam all agree in the unity of God as one and all powerful creator of the best universe ever created; thus the fermenters of all left descending ideologies are working against the unity of the human species. Man in his deceptive cleverness has deviated from the principle of Igwebuike and built a money triggering wall around them. Egocentrism breeds selfishness and destruction but the power of unity dispels all thought of evil.

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