

RELIGION, FAITH AND PHILOSOPHY IN AFRICAN MODERNITIES

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Abstract

The broad theme of Religion, Modernity and Postmodernity: The African Development Discourse highlights an area of major conflict in the cultural identity of postcolonial peoples and nations. That is the crucial area of social and identity construction in neo-colonial African states in the broad contexts of religion, belief and education. It is presumed throughout this paper that we really cannot unravel the concept of postmodernity in Africa without first examining the postcolonial basis of our development experience. The paper, through the definition and problematizing of such concepts as tradition, religion, faith and postmodernity, the complexities and conflict in the cultural definition of our human condition are highlighted. It is the contextualization and analyses of these contradictions that precipitate the grey areas of underdevelopment among postcolonial African nations. The paper contends that if we are able to unravel or logically understand these conflictual areas of the two or more cultures we have inherited in the modern world, we will be better able to put more rational methods of development in the construction of our living spaces. The paper uses three contemporary fictive and historical narratives in two African nations – Kenya and Nigeria to illustrate the conflict between religion, belief systems and civic responsibility to navigate our identity and heritage in a complex, multicultural world. It then concludes on what may be the way forward for the future and evolutionary development of our societies in the context of the postcolonial and the postmodern.

Keywords: *Postcolonial, Postmodern, Tradition, Religion, historical narratives.*

Introduction

The adaptation of terminologies or concepts often require definitions, delimitations and the setting of boundaries as well as the understanding of ideologies as individual and corporate ways of representing our concepts, and our world irrespective of what others might think of us. Two eminent scholars of African Traditional Religion in affirming the validity of their studies highlighted two thought provoking definitions of Religion by two scholars early in the twentieth century. But before delving into these controversies, we shall like to make a few preliminary definitions of key concepts which will throw some light on our subsequent field illustrations in the paper.

Religion: is generally defined in two forms:

- a) Man's expression of the acknowledgement of the divine
- b) A system of beliefs and practices relating to the sacred and uniting its adherents in a community (Longman Modern English Dictionary, 1968, 1980).

We are able to note from the second definition, the attempt to cultivate a group instinct. By virtue of its communal institutionalization, it has a pattern and a system. Methodologically and by pure ratiocination, every religion or faith has a liturgy and a doctrine. Doctrines are ideological and have a strong hold on the mind of their propagators and adherents.

Faith: derives from creed or doctrine. Articles of faith assist our belief in the historical truthfulness and proposition of a doctrine.

Modernity: is a historical period following the Middle Ages. It is often characterized as a post-traditional era that is recognized by innovation, change and dynamism. The institutions of modernity are among the following:

- a) Industrialism and the transformation of labour. It is also marked by the transformation of nature and of the environment.
- b) Information technology and control. Some authors like Chris Barker (2008), represent it as surveillance. This phenomenon is fictionally represented in George Orwell's *1984*.
- c) Militarization or the control of the means of coercion by the industrialization of war.
- d) Capitalism or the accumulation of wealth through labour and product markets. Karl Marx, in the *Communist Manifesto* (1848) described the process which marked capitalist modernity as the subjection of nature's forces to man and to machines. The application of chemistry to agriculture and industry; steam engines, railways and electric telegraphs... (Marx and Engels, 1967: 12). In modern terms, modernity would encompass nuclear power and space travels. Giddens, in *The Consequences of Modernity* clearly represents it thus:
The dynamism of modernity derives from the separation of time and space and their recombination in forms which permit the precise time-space 'zoning' of social life; the disembodiment of social systems...and the reflexive ordering and reordering of social relations in the light of continual inputs of knowledge affecting the actions of individuals and groups. (Giddens, 1990: 16, 17)

In conducting transactions between persons and things across time and space, Modernity engenders or foregrounds relationships between others that are literally 'absent' although conceptually present. As in religious determinism, time and space are mutually and reflexively connected even when not co-terminus with each other.

Postmodernism: is a late twentieth century movement characterized by broad skepticism and subjectivism or relativism (localization). Postmodernism has a general suspicion of established values and reason. It also has an acute sensitivity to the role of ideology in reinforcing political and economic power. Postmodernism does not recognize the claims of objective truths or an objective natural reality. One of its practitioners Jean-Francoise Lyotard (1984: 60 – 61) argues that there is no unity of language but that each language system is governed by its own intrinsic rules not translatable into those of others. This means that meaning and references are peculiar and cannot be universal in application as is often presented by modern knowledge systems that rely on grand narratives and metanarratives. As summarized by Chris Barker: ‘The postmodern condition involves a loss of faith in the foundational schemes that have justified the rational, scientific, technological and political projects of the modern world.’ (2008:195). Postmodernism seems to have eradicated the foundations of traditional epistemology because it believes that all truth is culture-bound. This is because all claims to truth are formed within particular language discourses (Gergen, 1994). For Bauman, postmodernism always had the potential to give room to difference, diversity, efflorescence and change. Because of this diffusionist intellectual appeal, many theorists and scholars are identified as postmodernists: Jacques Derrida, Gilles Deleuze, Fredric Jameson, Emmanuel Levinas, Slavoj Zizek, Richard Rorty and Jean Baudrillard. Some others dispute that Michel Foucault is modernist rather than postmodernist. We would however like to uphold the verdict as Giddens (1990, 1991) and Habermas (1987, 1989) have proposed that modernity is still an unfinished project and that the elements that have been proposed as postmodern are also characteristically modernist (cf. Barker, 2008: 197 – 200). This is very true if we agree that at the core of the postmodern ‘structure of feeling’ are:

- Fragmentary and uncertain nature of living
- The awareness of contingency or uncertainty
- A general recognition of cultural difference
- A general growth in the pace and level of existence

In the context of our understanding of the historical reality of colonial and postcolonial societies, issues of faith, philosophy and religion are often contingent in ways that sometimes challenge orthodoxy and rationality. Aspects of traditional religious practices find their ways into our practices of modern religions. Our poetry, music, art and linguistic translations have been brought into modern religious expressions in ways that have created an ethos or perception of the characteristically or culturally postmodern. There are very pertinent examples of how Pentecostal Christians now name their children at christening ceremonies where Traditional Indigenous or Hebrew, Roman, Yoruba, Bamileke, Luo or Igbo names are superordinated as hypernyms such that names like Stephen, Peter, Luke, James, Felix, Olusegun, Nonyelum become Heritage, Favour, Promise, Shekinah, Shalom, Beauty, Praise, Goodluck, Irawo, Imole etc. Certainly it is not meant to ridicule or despise like a rebel who might choose to name his dog or cat after a Prime Minister or a Chieftain. However, the mere semantic, linguistic or imaginative strain is as extraordinary as to be ingeniously postmodern.

Though on a completely different level of experience, but not quite dissimilar, is the shocking experience that some new converts to Christianity had in Yoruba land, in the 1940s, when they attempted to incorporate indigenous musical instruments such as ‘talking’ drums and *sekere* (gourd rattle) into church music to boost *mellisonance*, festivity and inspiration. Some of them were driven out on the allegation that they were introducing pagan instruments into Christian service and were guilty of profanation. Yet a generation later, the same instruments became the vogue which

brought such great innovations to church music and worship as to boost the attraction of converts and greater devotion to their faith.

At yet another level, some of our poets syncretized the sensibilities of indigenous and Christian modes of worship into their poetic compositions and renderings. Here we shall take four fragments from Christopher Okigbo's poetry to illustrate this tendency:

I *The Passage*

BEFORE YOU, mother Idoto,*

Naked I stand

Before your watery presence
a prodigal

leaning on an oilbean,
lost in your legend.

Under your power wait I
on barefoot,
watchman for the watchword
at *Heavensgate*;

out of the depths my cry:
give ear and hearken...

*A village stream. The oilbean, the tortoise and the python are
totems of her worship.

II *Initiations*

Scar of the crucifix
over the breast
by red blade inflicted
by red-hot blade,
on right breast witnesseth

mystery which I, initiate,
received newly naked
upon waters of the genesis
from Kepkanly*

.....

so comes John the Baptist
with bowl of salt water
preaching the gambit:
life without sin, without

.....

*A half-serious, half comical primary school teacher
of the late thirties.

IV Lustra

So would I to the hills again
So would I
To where springs the fountain
there to draw from

And to hill top clamber
body and soul
whitewashed in the moondew
there to see from

So would I from my eye the mist
So would I
Thro' moonmist to hilltop
there for the cleansing

Here is a new laid egg
Here a white hen at midterm.

V Newcomer

TIME for worship –
Softly sings the bell of exile,
The angelus,
Softly sings my guardian angel.

Mask over my face –

my own mask, not ancestral – I sign:
remembrance of calvary,
and of age of innocence, which is of...

Time for worship:

*Anna of the panel oblongs,
protect me
from them fucking angels;
protect me
my sandhouse and bones.*

Christopher Okigbo's entire poetry written between 1961 and 1965 are collected and published under the title *Labyrinths* (Heinemann, 1971). They are in five main sections, each section with a group title. Though the poems had been individually published in various journal outlets, it was after his tragic death that they were published as he had collated them. The first section from where we chose these four illustrative poems is titled *Heavensgate*. This is what he himself says of this section of the anthology:

Heavensgate was originally conceived as an Easter sequence. It later grew into a ceremony of innocence, something like a mass, an offering to Idoto, the village stream of which I drank, in which I washed, as a child; the celebrant, a personage like Orpheus, is about to begin a

journey. Cleansing involves total nakedness, a complete self-surrender to the water spirit that nurtures all creation. The various sections of the poem, therefore, present this celebrant at various stations of his cross. (1971: xi).

You will notice that he brought various mythologies together to express this complex sensibility: Igbo, Greek, and Judeo-Christian. Here is a postmodern representation. There are other sections of the anthology where he makes references to Catholicism but the example from the first section is sufficient for our present purpose. It is also interesting, for purposes of comparative research, to indicate that in his own representation of the concept of 'Chi in Igbo cosmology' (1975: 93 - 103), Chinua Achebe had discussed the place of duality in Igbo representation of deity. Hence, he affirmed the Igbo aphorism which says that the Igbo republican view does not support dictatorship or absolutism; rather, they believe that where one thing stands, there another stands also. In other words, essence and existence always appear as binary pairs:

It is important to stress what I said earlier: the central place in Igbo thought of the notion of duality. Wherever something stands, something else will stand beside it. Nothing is absolute. *I am the truth, the way and the life* would be called blasphemous or simply absurd for it is not well known that a man may worship *Ogwugwu* to perfection and yet be killed by Udo? The world in which we live has its double and counterpart in the realm of spirits. A man lives here and his *chi* there. (p. 94)

At the very basic, one might be tempted to say that the Igbo are polytheistic and have a supreme being called *Chukwu* who lives far above the pantheon of deities. The Yoruba are very much the same. The safe point to maintain is that Modernism or Postmodernism is always contextual and relative, especially as each culture and

civilization predicates its own epistemology on its peculiar historical or anthropological foundations. To further buttress this point, we shall like to point out the peculiarity of two fieldwork experiences on African Traditional Religion (ATR) by two pioneer scholars of ATR: Geoffrey Parrinder and Bolaji Idowu. First, E.G. Parrinder.

In trying to study the notion and belief in the concept of the Supreme Being, God, in West Africa, Parrinder found a comparative reference in the definitions of the Greek philosopher Euhemeros of Macedonia (320 – 260 B.C.). Euhemeros believed that the gods were departed chiefs and warriors who were venerated in their lifetime and became deified and worshipped after their death. He deduced that they were human ancestors who had a history behind them. He concluded, therefore, that ancestor worship is the basis of every religion. In Ghana, Parrinder came across the writings of the Ghanaian statesman, J. B. Danquah (1895 – 1965) who claimed that the Akan Supreme God is a deified and primordial ancestor of the tribe (1954: 31). This view has been widely disputed and laid to rest.

In the case of Bolaji Idowu, this second book was not his attempt to define the concept of God but to define what Religion was in the life of the individual in his or her society. He sought out so many but singled out the definition by H.G. Wells as cited in Bouquet (1933):

It seems to me that this desire to get the complex of life simplified is essentially what has been called the religious motive, and the manner in which a man achieves that simplification, if he does achieve it, and imposes an order upon his life, is his religion (1973: 2).

The emphasis here is the attainment of order in life and the ability to be able to be at peace with oneself in life. In theoretical, fieldwork and scholarly terms, we could posit the fact that these two approaches to the conceptualization and definition of religion are

both attempts on the statement of the problem as well and the establishment of a functional methodology in the pursuit of its knowledge. This moves us to the utilitarian function of religion in modernist and postmodernist societies.

Field Example 1: The Otieno Case of Kenya

The context of this report relates to a controversial court case in regard to a burial rite which occurred in Kenya between December 1986 and the June of 1987. This case began when S. M. Otieno, a Luo and a prominent Nairobi lawyer, passed on. At his widow's behest, Mrs. Virginia Wambui Otieno, a Kikuyu, her husband should be buried on his Upper Matasia farm on the outskirts of Nairobi, outside of Luo territory. Barrister Otieno's uterine brother, Mr. Joash Ochieng'Ougo, objected to the plan. A dispute ensued. He was supported by the Umira Kager clan, to which they both belonged. Their objections were based on the custom that the Luo, especially when they become prominent citizens prefer to be traditionally buried within Luo territory. Ideologically, there is an attachment to their primordial land or earth.

Mrs. Otieno, however, being legally the famous Barrister's next of kin, filed a suit in the Kenyan High Court seeking custody of the body of her late husband. The high court, through Mr. Justice Frank Shields, handed down the ruling that the Umira Kager clan had no *locus standi* (legal standing) to claim Mr. Otieno's body contrary to the deposition of his next of kin. As a result of the judgment, the primordial kin filed an appeal in the Court of Appeals of Kenya, and were subsequently given joint custody of the body with Mrs. Otieno to bury the body at Nyalgunga within Luo territory. Mrs. Otieno objected, claiming that as the sole "next of kin" duly recognized by extant laws, she was entitled to bury the body on their property in Upper Matasia, according to the statutes in the Law of Succession of Kenya. The Court of Appeals heard Mrs. Otieno's petition, but

allowed the earlier ruling to stand. Neither Mrs. Otieno nor her immediate family attended Mr. Otieno's funeral in Nyalgunga.

Field Example 2

This second example is concerned with an ancient burial rite in regard to a member of the cabinet of a prominent Yoruba monarch. On Tuesday, 19th December 1944, the Alaafin of Oyo, Oba Siyanbola Ladigbolu 1 died after a reign of thirty-three years. The keeper of his stable, Olokun Esin Jinadu, who had enjoyed unparalleled privileges in the lifetime of the king, was expected to accompany his principal and Royal majesty to the grave by an act of ritual suicide. On the day of the King's death, he had borne a message from the king to a suburban town of Ikoyi hardly realizing that his master would pass on before his return. About two weeks later on the 4th of January, 1945, bedecked in a symbolically white apparel, he returned to the streets of Oyo and danced towards the home of Oyo's Prime Minister, Bashorun Ladokun. This ritual dance was always the prelude to the act of ritual suicide; the immolation necessary for the royal obsequies. But the inevitable happened. A new twist was given to the ceremony and the course of history in Oyo tradition. The British colonial officer ordered that Jinadu should be apprehended and detained at his residence. The reason for this being that under His Majesty, George VI of Great Britain, there could be no concept of ritual suicide. Suicide was murder! Soon as the news made the rounds that Elesin Oba could not fulfil his patriotic obligation, his youngest son, Muraina, killed himself to avail the family honour. This, of course, became a double tragedy for Jinadu, the head of the king's stable of horses. There arose an impasse in Oyo traditional constitution, which resulted in the abolition of this practice of ritual suicide from 1946. The inability to fulfill the rite as prescribed had precipitated a constitutional crises and eventual amendment. This ideological conflict between the colonial master and his subject brought the sun to set on a peculiar time-honoured practice, and by the resultant tragedy, on the putative intellectual superiority of the colonial

master. Instead of one death, the imposition of his legal instrument caused a double loss resulting in the death of a father and his son and heir apparent. In these matters, the logical or historical rationality of the principles at hand had been relegated to the background in the face of the pragmatic essentials.

Field Example 3

The Nigerian novelist, Chinua Achebe presents two classic examples of a complex issue of conflict of interest in regard to patriotism or nationalism that has helped to further theorize Peter Ekeh's principle of the complex multiple publics in postcolonial and postmodern societies. In his short story, "The Voter" (1977), a typical Nigerian voter finds himself torn between the factional interests of two political parties from which he had received bribes and swore to an oath, which he can only break on pain of death. The voting is by secret ballot. At the same time, he is worried for his personal safety in case the oath is potent. In the voter's tent, he checks that no one is looking and decides to tear the ballot into two equal halves - one for each ballot box - and thereafter holds the two pieces up for the deity to see that he has been loyal to both parties to obviate the consequences of his oath, saying aloud to himself 'I voted for Maduka'. Besides, he assumes that Maduka's deity whom he greatly feared, and whose money he subsequently took could also hear him.

Religion and Nation Building in Nigeria

Nigeria's third national Development Plan from 1975 – 80 listed five objectives, summarized as follows:

1. As a united, strong and self-reliant nation; that is, a well integrated national community in a free and democratic society wherein divergence of views shall be regarded as an asset rather than a liability
2. As a great and dynamic economy to which every citizen shall not only be expected to contribute his quota but shall

- also be helped to do so. Thus, every citizen shall be called upon to develop a sense of honour and respect for labour.
3. As a just and egalitarian society in which there shall be no oppression based on class, social status, ethnic or religious group or state. A distributive equity shall therefore be an important cornerstone in this programme of reconstruction and social justice for national integration is the worthy objective of balanced development as between different geographical areas of the country with a view to reducing existing disparities although not to cause stagnation in areas which are presumed to be relatively more developed.
 4. As a land bright and full of opportunities for all citizens, the ultimate goal of economic development is the welfare of the individuals. Every citizen shall have equal access to all facilities and the opportunities which could help realize his potential and develop fully his personality.
 5. As a free and democratic society in which everyone shall have right to freedom of speech, worship and profession while conceding to others their right, that is to say, that he shall allow the rights of others to be a limitation of his own rights. A society where its affairs shall be conducted by mutual consultations which breed confidence and peaceful co-existence.

(Vol.1, page 29, 1975)

Lofty and desirable as these aims were then, and are now, the goals have yet to be achieved. Chapter 2 of the fourth national development plan (1981 – 85); under the ‘review of past development’, on page 3 agreed that the third national development did not achieve its aim. Though, cast in a muffled tone, the acceptance of failure was recorded as a Nigerian nostrum with resounding decibel. Here I recall the same:

The third Plan immensely raised the expectations of the generality of the people. This was as a result of the

optimism generated by the unusually favourable financial circumstances in which the country found itself on the eve of the third plan period. Although the execution of the plan recorded a number of significant achievements in various fields of the economy, it was not altogether smooth sailing for a number of important reasons. As a result, the performance, in the end, fell short of the high expectations prevailing at the outset of the plan.

Several other reasons were also highlighted but the gist of it is as reflected in the foregoing statement. The fourth national development plan is more diverse in terms of infrastructure and budgetary outlay. It is also, expectedly, more ambitious and forward looking.

In his inaugural lecture of 30th January, 1986, M.O.A. Abdul brought profound introspection on the implications of religious challenges in national development, especially in developing nations like Nigeria. Abdul observes that the western concept of democracy puts emphasis on the fact that the nation state is a secular state. The concept of a secular state therefore underestimates the contribution of religion to political operations of policies and the crafting of development programmes. He believes that since the laws and constitution of a state is to be operated by human beings, the resulting outcomes would depend on the character or temperaments of the men and women who rule over states or administer the policies of those nations. He is thus strongly of the opinion that religion and morality must come to the front burner in the appointment of state agents and the process of leadership and assignment of responsibilities. For instance, he says in regard to the nature of constitutions:

A constitution is adjudged good or bad, benevolent or tyrannical through the people who operate it. A very good

constitution, if operated by ill-motivated nationals, would turn out to be tyrannical to the citizens, whereas a not-so-good constitution may turn out to be benevolent, if operated by devoted, God-fearing nationals. (1986: 3)

Abdul reminds us that even though Nigerians had operated the parliamentary system of government which the British had used successfully as well as the Presidential system of government which the Americans had equally used for centuries, Nigerians had failed in the management of both systems. It is left to see that Nigerian politicians have not only failed their nations; they have failed the operating systems of government they had put to use.

He observes that Nigeria is a multi-religious society where every state and judicial ceremonies and calendar are always marked by religious pageantry. He opines that these religious ceremonies have been undermined by rivalry and suspicion which have consequently wrecked the spirit of the national constitutions that the ceremonies were meant to uphold. He remarks that the religious practices of Nigeria's two major religions – Christianity and Islam – are sham and bereft of the 'real essence of religion' which aspirants to political offices have not learnt from. He indicates, for instance that both Prophet Muhammad and Jesus Christ were cousins: one descended from Abraham through Ishmael while the other descended from Abraham through Isaac. In spite of this fact, Nigerian adherents of both faiths have been unable to co-exist in peace under the same constitution.

One major reason he adduces to this is that throughout history, religion had always been used as ideologies, constantly abused and misunderstood; 'some use it as a means of exploitation and suppression, as a pretext for prejudice and persecution.' Others 'use it as a source of power and domination over elite and masses alike.' The consequence is that this results in wars where freedom of thought and conscience are oppressed; science is persecuted;

individual freedom of expression denied; dignity and honour are debased and injustice inflicted on humanity in the name of religion. The impartial onlooker observes the contradiction and is probably averse to the idea of religion. In summary, Abdul believes that religion is a spiritual and intellectual necessity that strengthens character and discourages greed. There is absolutely no doubt that what Parrinder and Bolaji have observed as the social purpose of African Traditional Religion conflates with the truths of the revealed religions which have been imported into Africa.

Conclusion: The Future Role of Religion in National Development

In the objectives of the third national development plan enumerated above, Religion is seen as an instrument of cohesion in a diverse, pluralist and democratic society. It is a society that should discourage hegemony, oppression and ill will and breed equity, wellbeing and peaceful coexistence. In Nigeria, there has been religious intolerance, persecution and pogroms. It therefore means that our modernity must invent safeguards against this malaise of the immediate past and redress the injustices of the past which will help to bring the desired kind of society which will, to quote Bouquet and H.G. Wells once again, impose a collective order and peace on the lives of citizens in a nation state. This, especially because only peaceful coexistence can guarantee growth and development.

The fourth national development plan of 1981 – 1985 encompasses a broader spectrum of human activity with broad headings under: Economic sector; Social sector; and Administration. Our basic interpretation of the details is that it exhibits the vision between the very concrete economic and material base of society and its highest conceptual limits of philosophy. It's like the gap between license and repression, represented under three broad headings:

1. Economic Sector
2. Social Sector and
3. Administration

Philosophically imagined, the reference will swing between excessive freedom and severe repression. The range of figures justifies our statistical computation which ranges between single digits for percentages and thirteen figures for fiscal quantities. In a 1981 convocation lecture titled: “Economic growth, Development and Freedom”, Pius Okigbo, imitating Lord Keynes had quoted that “the political problem of mankind is to combine three things:

1. Economic Efficiency
2. Social Justice and
3. Individual liberty

The headings conflate with those of the fourth national development plan except that to add religion from the previous development plan, we would need to add ‘collective liberty’. Okigbo has made the philosophical point that we can quickly paraphrase that because **economic growth relates mostly to things**, it is easy to represent them in figures, but because **development relates to mankind**, it is better to relay them in words (1981: 51 – 52). The common bond between them, however, is that we will have to multiply things in sufficient numbers to understand **the growth** and for us to see man at his best, which is **the development**. He then observes that in the last 150 years, Western societies achieved a rapid rate of the reproduction of ‘things’ which assist man to fulfill himself without losing sight of their essential value systems. However, we in Africa have achieved a rapid reproduction of ‘man’ but not of things such that as in preindustrial Europe, the battle to share ‘things’ has brought out the worst in our character. Like Pius Okigbo, this is what M.O.A. Abdul reflects in his lecture cited above. The religion of the future; our new modernity, must learn to place dignity and development before growth and quantity, where human lives matter beyond ritual and sacrificial elements. We must value our individual

and collective value so that we can match civilization with enlightenment as a race in God's truth and liberty. In summary, and for the time being, Pius Okigbo represents the loss of value like this:

Nigeria ranks very high among the more populous countries of the world, but ranks very low, close to the bottom, with respect to the details known about the characteristics of her population. We are therefore not in a position, and have not been since the 1980s, to answer the basic question: for whom and for how many are we planning? (1981: 52)

Okigbo advocates the concept of man as '*Homo economicus*'. That is, citizens who believe in their rational self-interest. *Homo economicus* uses rational assessments in attempts to maximize utility as a consumer, and economic profit as a producer. Leaders and followers can then make sense of needs, wants and productivity. This is what ultimately can lead to genuine freedom and development. This is when we would then have arrived at the historical point of the true ideals of that ultimate 'post' of the postmodernist in the obsessively postcolonial in Africa's social, ethical and political existence in which we have situated ourselves and our articles of faith.

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