

LOGIC AND THE TRAJECTORY OF INTER-GROUP RELATIONS IN NIGERIA

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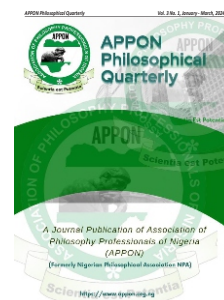
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Abstract

In this paper, we argue that the trajectory of intergroup relations in Nigeria is, for the most part, founded on the prevalent ontology of the West, which is dualistic and is also at the background of Western Two Valued Logic (TVL). This temper of intergroup relations holds that “*if he is not one of us, then he is against us*,” and hence, it has suspicion and distrust in its kernel. This paper found out that this orientation has constituted a clog in the wheel of every attempt at forging and advancing for a united nation while fanning the embers of inter-group conflicts and crises in Nigeria at the same time. The methodology adopted in this paper is conceptual and contextual analysis. The approach involves the analysis of the trajectory of intergroup relations within the context of the varied crisis of attritions in Nigeria and the question of what logic of relations is best for Nigeria in view of the country's heterogeneity. To this end, this paper seeks to argue for intergroup relations that are based on African ontology and to which the complementary nature of reality, and by extension, interpersonal relations, is ubiquitous. Using the philosophical logic of Harmonious Monism (HM), which is three-valued and goes beyond the dualism of the West and the attendant two-valued logical relational orientation that bifurcates reality into two, we argue and hence, conclude that despite the diversity of ethnic groupings in Nigeria, each group can be understood to dovetail into the other in line with the fact that reality in Africa is cyclical and that equilibrium can only be maintained in the universe of things through this process.

Keyword: Logic, Intergroup Relations, Harmonious Monism, Ontology, Conflicts.

Introduction

Historical evidence suggests that intergroup relations existed in pre-colonial Africa in general and Nigeria in particular. These relations, despite being cordial, were not completely harmonious as there were pockets of sour relationships arising from the variations in language, religion, and culture. Baba Yahaya seems to be thinking in the above light within the context of Nigeria when he averred that “all Nigerian groups before colonialism had measures to ensure good relations with one another. Among the most important measures were the recognition of the territorial integrity of other states, the promotion of trade, inter-state tours by the rulers or their representatives, inter-state marriages, and the establishment of diplomatic relations. In some areas, strangers were accepted into lineages where they were not only accommodated but integrated and given land to farm. Secondly, states often agreed to promote peace and avoid wars.”¹ Okpalaeke and Usoro corroborated the above when they averred that:

There exists a plethora of literature depicting the robust relationships that have transpired among various ethnic groups. These inter-group relationships took diverse forms, such as war and diplomatic intercourse, marriages, migration patterns, trade

and commerce, and traditional and religious settings, among others. Whatever dimensions inter-group relations may have taken, it is important to uphold the truism that inter-group relations existed and are still in existence even in contemporary times, as they cut across pre-colonial, colonial, and post-colonial eras.²

The above can be read as arguing for the existence of intergroup relations from pre-colonial through colonial to post-colonial Africa, and this suffices as a rebuttal of the unfounded claims in some quotas by Eurocentric and armchair scholars that African societies were not interactive and were in isolation in the pre-colonial era.³ While intergroup relations in the pre-colonial era, as Baba Yahaya argues, sought to promote peace and avoid wars, historical evidence showed that there were a couple of crises and conflicts of attrition in this period in Africa and what have become known as Nigeria. Post-colonial Nigeria is a multi-ethnic and multicultural country. These multi-ethno linguistic groups, as Ofili argues, also reflect the multi-cultural diversities in the country. These multi-cultural diversities manifest themselves in the nature of relationships that exist between and among these diverse ethno-linguistic groups in the country. The diversity has and is still being reflected in the form and nature assumed in these intergroup relations.⁴

¹ Baba Yahaya “A Study of Intergroup Relations in Central Nigeria Area from 1914: An Antidote to National Integration” *African Scholar Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences (JHSS-6)*. Vol. 18; No. 6, (September, 2020), 2.

² P.C. Okpalaeke, & U. E Usoro, “A View from the Periphery: A Historical Appraisal on Annang-Igbo Inter-Group Relations in Pre-Colonial Times” *African Journal of History and Archaeology* Vol. 2 No. 1 (2017), 31.

³ Lateef Oluwafemi Buhari, in his paper entitled “Implications of Ethnic Frictions and Identity Politics on Inter-Group Relations in Nigeria” While quoting O.O. Emmanuel argued that “contrary to the widely held notion that the peoples of Nigeria had nothing in common prior to the country of Europeans, there are plethora of evidences that depict that from time immemorial, the forefathers of the people who today inhabit Nigeria inter-related in many spheres of life, especially through trade, migrations, marriage, religion, and war. These contact brought the various groups into close contact and understanding with one another” (8).

⁴ Frederick Iwendi Ofili, “Intergroup Relations in Nigeria: The Dynamics and Complexities” *International Journal of Development and Management Review (INJODEMAR)* Vol. 11 (June, 2016), 163.

Intergroup relations in this era have worsened because of the inability to harness multi-ethnic and multicultural configurations. Odum and Alo seem to be thinking in the above line when they argue that,

While the history of ethnicity and ethnic conflicts has been traced to the forceful amalgamation of the Northern and Southern protectorates in 1914 to become the entity called Nigeria today, it remains to be argued that after over a hundred years of this amalgamation and over *six* decades of her independence, Nigerians have not been able to transcend this history and see themselves as Nigerians. Rather, they have elected to conceive of themselves as Igbos, Hausas, Yorubas, Tivs, and Ijaws, just to mention a few.⁵

This has led to tension, contestations, hostilities, and in some cases, violent conflicts among the various ethnic and religious groups in the country. Several attempts have been made to propose solutions to these contestations. The crisis of attrition is fueled by scarce resources and the hegemonic dimension of our political culture. Consequently, he advanced the federal character principle⁶ as the most plausible solution to strained intergroup relations and the intergroup crisis in Nigeria. This and many other efforts that have been put in place and practiced to a large extent have also proven to not be really successful, as there has been an upsurge in and an increased crisis of attritions, intergroup (interethnic and inter-religious) violent conflicts, separatist movements, and agitations for cessation, amongst others, in

the last two decades.

The motivations of this paper are in two fronts: first, an attempt to situate the trajectory of intergroup relations in Nigeria and the logic that is at the background of the same. Secondly, to show the defective nature of such logic and to argue for the fact that logic is responsible for the strained relations, increased distrust, tension, hostilities, and contestations in Nigeria. As a sequel to the above, the paper will advance a new logic of relations for the Nigerian state. This paper therefore proceeds from a preliminary discourse on the trajectory of intergroup relations in Nigeria through a discourse on the logic that is seemingly at the back of such relations to a discourse that advances the philosophical logic of harmonious monism, a new logic of relations for the contemporary Nigerian state.

The Trajectory of Intergroup Relations in Nigeria

In this section, the path of inter-group relation and most definitely, the philosophical orientation at the kernel of intergroup relations in Nigeria will be accounted for. But as one will expect, the question of what is intergroup relations deserves attention in the opening lines of this section. By intergroup relations, interaction and engagements between two or more groups can be delineated. Okpeh O. Okpeh argued in the above line when he averred that “intergroup relations presupposes contacts and interaction between groups, each of which has an identity to make some inputs into the relationship, in short, each of which has some scope and area of autonomous

⁵ E. S Odum and F. C Alo, “Ethnicity and the Quest for Peace and National Development: Extrapolating from the Philosophy of Complementary Reflections” *IGWEBUIKE: An African Journal of Arts and Humanities*. Vol. 3 No 7, (December 2017), 45.

⁶ See A. F. Usman, “Enhancing National Integration and Intergroup Relations in Post-Colonial Nigeria through Federal Character: An Analytical Discourse” *Global Journal of Human-Social Science: Arts and Humanities-Psychology*. Vol. 15, (5), 2015.

action”.⁷ For Ofili, intergroup relation is “the existence of mutually exclusive groups that are in constant interaction with one another. These mutually exclusive groups, due to the mode of their social bond, usually exhibit the 'we' attitude toward members of their mutual group while exhibiting the 'they' attitude to the other members of the out-group”.⁸

Deducible from the above conceptualization of 'intergroup relations' is the fact that it connotes the implications, problems and perhaps, the benefits that comes with the relations between and among different people. These relations as Adakole⁹ argues are inter-marriage, international relations, and inter-state relations, among several others. All these forms of intergroup relations arose as a result of the fact that no human group or community is entirely and island to itself and because of the uneven distribution of resources.

Closely related to and important in the conceptualization of intergroup relations is its dynamic nature. Torese Agena in his discourse on the nature of intergroup

relations argued for the fact that intergroup relations are not static but dynamic in nature.¹⁰ Citing Okpeh O. Okpeh, Torese Agena further argued that “because of its dynamic nature and depending on the changes in nature and character of the material conditions of human existence, intergroup relations is factored on social, economic and cultural conditions...it is viewed as a process within a broad continuum comprising of five broad stages as follows: (a) the stage of contact and interaction, (b) the stage of compromise and co-operation, (c) the stage of competition, (d) the stage of conflict, and (e) the stage of assimilation and integration”.¹¹ A critical look at the current situation in Nigeria within the context of intergroup relations reveals that Nigeria seems to be oscillating between the stage of competition and the stage of conflict. While it is true that there have been contacts and interactions which have dovetailed into compromise and co-operation in the past,¹² the most part of what constitutes intergroup relations in Nigeria as it stands is based on competition and for the most part violent conflicts.

⁷ O. O. Okpeh Jr., “Conceptual and Theoretical Issues Arising from Studies in Inter-Group Relations” in *Inter-Group Relations in Nigeria During the 19th and 20th Centuries*, O. Akinwunmi (eds), (Makurdi: Aboki Publishers, 2006), 12.

⁸ Frederick Iwendi Ofili, “Intergroup Relations in Nigeria: The Dynamics and Complexities.”, 163.

⁹ See S. Adakole, “Regionalism, Party Politics and Inter-Group Relations: A Case of the Idoma and their Neighbours, 1946-1967” *RIMA International Journal of Historical Studies (RIJHIS)*. Vol. 2. No. 1. (July 2018), 134.

¹⁰ Torese Agena *Inter-Group Relations in the Lower Benue Valley Since 1900: What Went Wrong*. (Makurdi: Aboki Publishers, 2011), 4.

¹¹ Torese Agena *Inter-Group Relations in the Lower Benue Valley Since 1900: What Went Wrong*, 4.

¹² In fact, Quadri, L. A. & Oladejo, F. A. in their paper entitled “Intra-Intergroup Conflicts in Sub-Saharan Africa: A Critical Reflection on Indigenous and External Causal Factors” while citing Aae-penugo (2010), argued that “there is a general perception that Africa is trapped in a never-ending cycle of ethnic conflict. The Rwandan genocide, Darfur, northern Nigeria, Côte d'Ivoire, and the violent aftermath of the controversial Kenyan elections, among other cases, seemingly substantiate this perception. As grievances accumulate and are defined at the group rather than individual level, the motivation for reprisals is never ending. The centuries-old inertia behind these animosities, moreover, defies resolution. The seeming implication is that Africa's complicated ethnic diversity leaves the continent perpetually vulnerable to devastating internecine conflict. This cripples' prospects for sustained economic progress and democratization. In fact, ethnicity is typically not the driving force of African conflicts, but a lever used by politicians to mobilize supporters in pursuit of power, wealth, and resources. While the ethnic group is the predominant means of social identity formation in Africa, most ethnic groups in Africa coexist peacefully with high degrees of mixing through interethnic marriage, economic partnerships, and shared values. Indeed, if they did not, nearly every village and province in Africa would be a cauldron of conflict” (123).

J. E. Nukueye and F. C Emeni intimated with respect to the current state of intergroup relations in Nigeria, that “intergroup relations between the different ethnic nationalities are far from being cordial and conducive for national development”.¹³ Chibuzor Nwobueze and James Okolie-Osemene corroborated the above when they averred that “Intergroup relations in Nigeria has become synonymous with hostility perception and assumed debilitating proportions. Notable threats to intergroup relations include ethnic politics, struggle for power and resources, the Action Group crisis of 1962, National Population Census figures, Nigeria-Biafra War, various presidential elections, and annulment of June 12 1993 presidential election”.¹⁴ Arguing for the 'hostility' dimension of intergroup relations in Nigeria, Chibuzor Nwobueze and James Okolie-Osemene further argue that this temper of intergroup relations perceives the 'other' individual or group as hostile “towards one's group, identity, culture to the extent that such perception tends to exacerbate conflict and conflict behaviours. This gives groups the inspiration to struggle for domination and control of “others” in the polity to the extent that they assume their actions are appropriate or justify their responses to other groups' actions... hostility between two groups results from real or perceived conflicting goals, which generates intergroup competition. When groups are engaged in reciprocally competitive and frustrating activities of zero sum nature, each group will develop negative

stereotypes about, and enmity towards the other group (the out-group)”.¹⁵

Citing Ogbogbo *et al* who also lent their voices to the nature of intergroup relation in the post-colonial era in Nigeria, C.C. Nwobueze & J. Okolie-Osemene, stressed that “since independence, intergroup relations (characterized by social consciousness, indifference towards others, protection of socio-cultural values in a competitive society etc.) have remained within the matrix of suspicions and hostility.”¹⁶ And such hostility manifest in various areas across the country, such as power struggle, communal clashes over land disputes, and resource conflicts.

The current state of intergroup relations reveals that from Sokoto in the North-Western fringes of Nigeria through Kaduna in the Maiduguri in the North-East Nigeria, intergroup relations is strained and have led to the loss of life and properties. In South-South Nigeria, the story is no better, in the South-West; tensions still exist between citizens and communities. In the South-East, there are pockets of crisis and the sustained call for independent State of Biafra stems from an apparent distrust and frosty intergroup relations. In the central states of the Middle Belt, there are pockets of communal clashes between and among groups in Benue, Nasarawa, Taraba and Kogi States. The activities of the Fulani herders in the Benue valley and Southern Kaduna who in an attempt to maintain their nomadic lifestyle against all odds have also contributed to the weakening the already fragile fabric of intergroup relations in the

¹³ Nukueye John Edeki and F. C. Emeni, “Addressing Identity Politics-Ethnicity, Intergroup Relations and Religion-as a Means of Tackling the Challenges for Peace and Security in Nigeria for National Development – A Historical Analysis” *Nigerian Academic Forum*. Vol. 26 No. 1, (March, 2019), 5

¹⁴ C. C. Nwobueze & J. Okolie-Osemene, “Hostility Perception: Theoretical Analysis of Intergroup Relations in Nigeria” *International Journal of Peace and Conflict Studies (IJPCS)*, 2017, 4 (1), 2.

¹⁵ C. C. Nwobueze & J. Okolie-Osemene, “Hostility Perception: Theoretical Analysis of Intergroup Relations in Nigeria”, Pg. 2.

¹⁶ C. C. Nwobueze & J. Okolie-Osemene, “Hostility Perception: Theoretical Analysis of Intergroup Relations in Nigeria”, 2-3.

country. Consequently, Akinwumi *et al* argue that, “from the Nigerian civil war to all other internal rancor such as the Ife-Modakeke rifts, the Aguleri-Umuleri conflicts, the Jukun-Tiv Fracas; the Ogoja-Obudu-Tiv crisis, the Zango-Kataf mayhem and several crises around Southern Kaduna, Benue, Nasarawa, Zamfara, Plateau states and elsewhere, are all attributes of a failed heterogeneous system showing up through a fragile intergroup relations.”¹⁷

A detailed and exhaustive chronicle of these crisis and violent conflicts is not considered necessary here. However, the fact is that the country's current situation appears to be more difficult in recent times. This is because these hostilities, crises and conflicts and conflict situations have negated national integration, cohesion, unity and by extension, development. The question yet unanswered in this section is the question of what philosophical orientation or rightly put, logic¹⁸ is responsible for the frosty intergroup relation in Africa in general and Nigeria in particular? While it is true that competition for advantages and the *weaponisation* of tribe and religion by the political class which have been argued to be the bulwarks of crisis and contestation in Nigeria, this paper argues that the logic that is at the background of intergroup relations in Nigeria is the two-valued logic that is basically Western in its orientation. The

logic upholds the principle of bivalence¹⁹ and argues that every proposition is either true or false.

At the background of the two valued logic is the prevalent ontology of the West. Following from the assertion that a people's ontology or reality gives rise to logic and that logic is used to explain reality, one can argue that the Western two-valued logic arose from western metaphysics. In western metaphysic, one finds the division of reality into the world of forms and the sensible world by Plato where the two worlds are contradictories, the bifurcation of reality into act and potency, substance and accident by Aristotle which later influenced Augustine's division of the universe into the city of God and the city of man, Descartes' idea of the duality between body and the soul; and Kant's idea of the *noumena* and *phenomena*. Consequently, Kant argued that the enterprise of logic have reached its watershed in Aristotelian logic and that nothing really has been added to the discourse on logic after Aristotle.²⁰

With this logic as the guiding principle of interpersonal relationship amongst Nigerians, Nigerians now relates with the 'other' as an opposite, a contradiction that cannot be reconciled.

Within this temper, it is either you are for us or against us. The effect of this logic of relations is the continual and increasing polarisation of the Nigerian State with its

¹⁷ Olayemi Durotimi Akinwumi, Emmanuel Ameh, Erunke Canice Esidene. “Engaging Social Resilience as Strategic Framework in Inter-Group Relations: Implications for National Security Drive in Nigeria.” *Journal of Political Science and International Relations*, Vol. 6, No. 2, (2023), 31

¹⁸ Logic according to Chris Ijiomah in his book entitled *Harmonious Monism: A Philosophical Logic of Explanation for Ontological Issues in Supernaturalism in African Thought* is “the science of relation between realities from where correct thinking, argumentation and hence valid and sound conclusion can be reached” (60). He also argues that “reality gives rise to logic and logic turns around to explain reality” (See *The Philosophical Logic of Harmonious Monism: A Refutation of Western Psychometric Skepticism about the African Mind* being the 82nd University of Calabar Inaugural Lecture, (2018), 40.

¹⁹ Darty Emmanuel Darty in his paper titled “The Reduction of Many-Valued to Two-Valued Logic: A Consideration of Some Positions” defines two-valued logic as that logic is “founded on the principle of bivalence which is based on the laws of thought. These laws were considered absolute prior to the development of Lukasiewicz's three-valued logic (L3)” (63).

²⁰ Kant, Immanuel. *Critique of Pure Reason*. (New York: Macmillan, 1964), 17.

attendant crisis of attritions and struggle for cessation. Nigerians sees themselves and members of their ethnic or religious group as both axiomatic and the symbol of perfection while deriding the 'others'. The temper of this logic of relations sees the 'other' both as contradictories and opposites and thus, enemies that should be degraded and does not see any form of inter-relatedness between the units that make up the whole. Explained in clear terms, this logic breeds the idea of 'we' against 'them', 'if he is not for us or amongst us, then he is against us'; and the ideas that 'my god is more god than your god' and 'my tribe is more 'tribe' than your tribe'. This thinking holds that opposites cannot exist harmoniously and that such existence will lead to a contradiction.

The Philosophical Logic of Harmonious Monism

The philosophical logic of Harmonious Monism is of African origin and was propounded by Chris Okezie Ijiomah. At the background of this logic, drawing from the thinking that reality gives rise to logic and logic is used to explain reality, is African metaphysics and worldview. In explaining the African worldview as a background to his logic, Ijiomah presented what he referred to as root paradigms or touch stone propositions which have five beliefs, out of which the second and the third are important for this study. In his presentation of the second and the third paradigm, he argued that beings in African worldview are “conceived as contraries and hence complement each other. Beings do not exist in opposition to one another. They complement themselves because they have

internal power that causes them to yearn for each other. Beings in African ontology are contraries because matter and spirit are on one side existents on the other side, matter occupies the physical space. Reality is composed of material and spiritual existences”.²¹

Ijiomah could be established as arguing that all reality (in African worldview) have both physical and spiritual dimensions. This, is an indicator of a type of dualism which, as Uchenna Ogbonnaya argues, is a “philosophical system that promotes binary opposition. It holds that reality is either spiritual or physical/material, with the spiritual part being superior”.²² In contradistinction to the theory of dualism is duality. Harmonious monism is an example of African duality. According to Uchenna Ogbonnaya, it is a dominant philosophical system in Africa. The difference between dualism and duality (more specifically, African duality) is that while dualism argues that spirit is superior to matter in its analysis of reality, matter and spirit are co- equal important components of reality, what Ijiomah referred to as Harmonious Monism.

The above position does not negate the fact that in African cosmology, the world is tripartite: a world above, the human world and an underworld. The dual nature of the world as Uchenna Ogbonnaya argues is discoverable in the fact that the world above and the underworld or world beneath represents the non-physical and spiritual while the human world is the physical world. In the same vein, in African ontology, the human being consists of physical (*corporeal*) and non-physical (*non-corporeal*) elements and within the context of African duality, the harmony of opposites

²¹ C.O. Ijiomah, *Harmonious Monism: A philosophical Logic of the Explanation for Ontological Issues in Supernaturalism in African Thought*. (Calabar: Jochrisam Publishers, 2014), 96.

²² L. Uchenna Ogbonnaya, “The Question of the Nature of God from the African Place” *Filosofia Theoretica: Journal of African Philosophy, Culture and Religions* (Special Issue: African Philosophy of Religion from a Global Perspective: Deities, Ancestors, Relationality and the Problem of Evil), Vol. 11. No. 1 (Jan-Apr, 2022), 119.

is argued for.²³ To this end, Harmonious Monism is,

African culture-inspired ontological theory holds that everything that is has both physical and spiritual aspects. Ijiomah argues that although some realities might sometimes be thought of as being solely physical or spiritual, they are both physical and spiritual. Here, what is physical has inbuilt spirituality and what is spiritual has inbuilt physicality. Another way to put this is that on the one hand, what is physical has a veiled spiritual aspect. And on the other hand, its spiritual aspect is manifested while the physical aspect is veiled.²⁴

So, Ijiomah argued that “the process of relationship between and among realities in an African worldview involves a dovetailing of realities into one another”.²⁵ By Harmonious Monism Ijiomah meant “a relational expression between two or more elements which combines through the principle of Union (*U*) in 'a class algebra' to bring a unity. In this monism all elements are declared equal in strength. This is because the elements complement themselves in promoting the unity and functionality of a whole”.²⁶ Having accounted for the ontological background to the harmonious monism and philosophical logic of harmonious monism, it remains to say exactly what harmonious monism means.

In his book titled *Harmonious Monism: A Philosophical Logic of Explanation for Ontological Issues in Supernaturalism in African Thought*, Ijiomah formulated his three valued system of logic called the philosophical logic of Harmonious Monism. Here, Ijiomah attempts to validate the tolerance principle by choosing symbols, and geometrical-features like Venn diagrams and mathematical functions of set theory such as *union* and *intersection* to capture the compositional relation of matter *M* and spirit *S* as binary complements of the set reality *I*, which he calls the universe of discourse.²⁷ Ijiomah argued that there are two foundational ontological characteristics of reality in Africa. They are quality and quantity. In terms of quality, a reality may be positive or negative. Within the context of quantity, the reality could cover all or some of the realities and when two realities in reference differ in both quality and quantity, they are said to be in contradiction. But when the realities differ in characteristics but agree in the other, they are said to be contraries and thus can complement.²⁸

Using the square of opposition, Ijiomah showed that *A* and *O* on the one hand and *E* and *I* respectively differs in both quality and quantity and they are contradictories. Concentrating on the outside nature of the square, he argued that in the same square, *A* and *E*, *I* and *O* are contraries since they can lend properties to each other to form a continuum.²⁹ Ijiomah further averred that:

²³ L. Uchenna Ogbonnaya, “The Question of the Nature of God from the African Place”, 120.

²⁴ Ijiomah cited in L. Uchenna Ogbonnaya, “The Question of the Nature of God from the African Place”, 120

²⁵ C. O. Ijiomah, *Harmonious Monism: A philosophical Logic of the Explanation for Ontological Issues in Supernaturalism in African Thought*, 118.

²⁶ C. O. Ijiomah, *The Philosophical Logic of Harmonious Monism: A Refutation of Western Psychometric Scepticism about the African Mind*. Being the 82nd Inaugural Lecture of the University of Calabar, presented on the 22nd of August, 2018. Calabar: University of Calabar Press, (2018), 4.

²⁷ Harmonious Monism, Pg. 128-129; see D. E. Abakedi, “Lessons from Quantum Logic and Ijiomah's Logic of Harmonious Monism: Towards the Axiomatization of African Logic” *Journal of Philosophy, Culture and Religion*, Vol.19, (2016), 9.

²⁸ C. O. Ijiomah, *Harmonious Monism: A philosophical Logic of the Explanation for Ontological Issues in Supernaturalism in African Thought*, 125-126.

²⁹ C. O. Ijiomah, *The Philosophical Logic of Harmonious Monism: A Refutation of Western Psychometric Scepticism about the African Mind*, 74.

Since the relationship depicts realities as fluid and dovetailing, one can assume that their principles of relations are those of inter-communicability, complementarity and hypercyclic archetype, represented with the symbol 'U' union and not 'n' intersection.³⁰

He further adopted and used the principle of class calculus or algebra of classes to show the workings of 'harmonious monism.' This involves the universe of discourse denoted as '1' and a null-class represented with 0; the intersection (n), dot (.), and negation (~) as the signs of non-ontological presence adopted for the purpose of calculating the element of the logic.³¹

Consequently, Ijiomah arrived at the generalized expression called "an algebra of ontology" while stressing that despite using some of the principles of the logic of numbers, it is not an algebra or logic of numbers but a logic of the ontology of contraries in different configuration. Using such postulation of the logic of ontology of contraries as *U* (class conjunction or union), *n* (class disjunction or intersection), = (identical with), *m* (material substance which can complement spirit or be complemented by spirit); *S* (spiritual substance which can complement or be complemented by matter to produce 1, that is, the universe of discourse,³² he argued for 'harmonious monism' and its workability.

Regarding the combination process of the realities and their results, Ijiomah puts forward the concept of union (*U*) and intersection (*n*), given two realities *M* and *S* thus:

$$\text{Union - } MuS = M + S - MuS = 1$$

$$\text{Intersection- } MnS = M \times S = M.S = 0$$

Within the temper of 'harmonious monism,' the union of *M* and *S* are on the other side of the equation without duplicating any of *M* and *S* while the use of intersection will leave only the common elements of *M* and *S* listed in the equation. He made the following remarks to further prove the above,

If *M* = (a, b, c) and the element of *S* are (a, s, t), then the combination will yield (a, b, s, t)... if *M* above has the element (a, b, c) and *S* has the element (a, b, s, t) on the other side of the equation, we will have (a, b) only. If there is no common element, the equation will yield zero. What of the concept of 1, the universe of discourse? Note that because *M* and *S* are contraries, they complement themselves to yield the content of the universe of discourse. Thus $MuS = 1$ but $MnS = 0$ or contradiction.³³

Using two overlapping circles of the similitude of the Venn diagram, Ijiomah showed that when the two circles *M* and *S* overlaps, the third is formed. According to his analysis, the first circle *M*, is complementary and false because it looks for what will complement it. Despite not yet finding a complement, it has the capacity and potentiality of finding a complement. The same goes for the third circle *S* while the second which is the union of *M* and *S* (MuS) is true, stable or determinate because it operates under the principle of complementarity where *M* and *S* are contraries that complement to form 1 (that is, a continuum). In his commentary on

³⁰ C. O. Ijiomah, *The Philosophical Logic of Harmonious Monism: A Refutation of Western Psychometric Scepticism about the African Mind*, 74.

³¹ C. O. Ijiomah, *The Philosophical Logic of Harmonious Monism: A Refutation of Western Psychometric Scepticism about the African Mind*, 75.

³² C. O. Ijiomah, *The Philosophical Logic of Harmonious Monism: A Refutation of Western Psychometric Scepticism about the African Mind*, 76.

³³ C. O. Ijiomah, *The Philosophical Logic of Harmonious Monism: A Refutation of Western Psychometric Scepticism about the African Mind*, 76.

Ijiomah's philosophical logic of Harmonious Monism, Abakedi stressed that “by representing matter *M* and spirit *S* with Venn diagrams, and using the mathematical functions of set theory corresponding to the traditional logical connectives (or, *and*) and the *complement* corresponding the unary operator *not*; Ijiomah shows that the tradition of the mathematization of logic explicated in the tolerance principle must somewhat be preserved”.³⁴

In the same vein, Jonathan Chimakonam and L. Uchenna Ogbonaya are quoted by L. Uchenna Ogbonaya to have gleaned three fundamental principles from the philosophical logic of Harmonious Monism. These principles as L. Uchenna Ogbonaya argues are captured in the following lines,

First is the principle of complementarity, which holds that complements are missing links or opposites that are incomplete and yearn for each other, and they find their completeness within a whole where they complement each other. The second principle is the principle of unification. It states that reality is a result of the unification of opposites. And the third principle, the principle of coexistence, posits that extremes or opposites coexist within a whole.³⁵

As we draw to the end of the discourse in this section which is concerned with the explication of the philosophical logic of Harmonious Monism, it behooves on the present study to show how this logic differs from the western two valued logic and this will be accounted for in the paragraph that follows. First, the background to this logic as well as the ontological basis of this logic is the African worldview which as everyone

will expect differs from the prevalent ontology of the West. Secondly, this logic differs from the western two valued logic in that it argues for the existence of contraries drawing from the analysis of the outer constituents of the square of opposition. Third, this logic, differing from western logic which for the most part is algebra or logic of numbers is a logic of ontology of contraries in different configurations. And finally, in the logic of harmonious monism, two things are equal, not necessarily because they are of the same ontological mode of the same thing but because they possess equivalent complementing abilities in the universe of discourse, this is not the same in western logic.

Towards a new Logic of Intergroup Relations Nigeria: Lessons from the Philosophical Logic of Harmonious Monism

In the penultimate section, we have argued that the logic that is at the background of intergroup relations in Nigeria is the western two value logic which as we have been able to establish here breed the idea of 'we' against the 'others' and leads to distrust, hostilities and violent conflict of diverse sheds. To this end, an alternative logic of relations becomes imperative. It has been argued by Darty and Odum³⁶ that the complementary nature of reasoning in African world-view defies a bivalent conceptual framework and can be considered as one of the reasons that have given rise to the development of an alternative system of logic (such as harmonious monism).

The new logic that is here advanced for intergroup relations in Nigeria and by

³⁴ D. E. Abakedi, “Lessons from Quantum Logic and Ijiomah's Logic of Harmonious Monism: Towards the Axiomatization of African Logic”, 9.

³⁵ Ogbonaya, L. Uchenna “The Question of the Nature of God from the African Place,” 121.

³⁶ Darty Emmanuel Darty, and Sunday E. Odum “Justifications for Relativity In Traditional Logic.” In *Nigerian Journal of Philosophical Studies* Vol. 2, No. 1, (June 2023), 67.

extension, Africa is the three valued philosophical logic of harmonious monism. This logic is considered most appropriate and possesses within its kernel the propensity to alter the trajectory and tapestry of intergroup relations in Africa because of its ontological foundation which is also Africa.

The philosophical logic of Harmonious Monism is here argued for as the logic of intergroup relations because in contradistinction to the western two valued logic which holds that there is no meeting point between two extremes, the three valued logic of Harmonious monism see a meeting point between two extremes and even argues for the fact that it is with the context of the meeting point of these extremes that reality appears to exist. While this logic argues that opposites can combine in the sense of unification rather than intersection and unite without multiplying, it also argues that for the complementarity of opposites. In this sense, the opposite has qualities that the other opposite lacks and vice versa and hence, seeks their completeness in the opposite by combining with the opposite in the sense that they realize themselves and complement themselves.

Consequently, the lessons derivable from the new logic that is here advanced for intergroup relations in Nigerian and by extension Africa, sees all the ethnic and religious groups as opposites that yet combines and unite to form a continuum. One can also deduce from the principle of complementarity that the various ethnic groupings are contraries that are missing links of themselves. To this end, the Igbo should see the Hausa and also be seen by the Hausa as missing link and hence, cannot find completeness without the existence of

the other. When this logic is at the background of intergroup relations in Nigeria, the contestations, hostilities and violent conflicts amongst the various ethnic and religious groups in the Benue Valley and the north central states, in the South-South, in the south-East, South-West, the North-West and even the seemingly intractable religious sectarian crisis in the North-East will fizzle out without any prayers or military intervention.

With the three valued philosophical logic of Harmonious monism at the background of intergroup relations in Nigeria, Christians and Muslims will see each other as a missing link with which they can unite to form a continuum. They will also see themselves as insufficient beings lacking what the opposite have and standing in need of the opposite to find completeness. This thinking is based on the fact that no reality can be compared to itself and that any reality that finds comparism only to itself alone is no reality. In the same vein, the Catholics will see themselves as combining with the other blocks within the Christian religion and the various sects of Islam, whether radical or mild, will see each other as opposites that can combine in the sense of unification to form a continue.

The philosophical logic of Harmonious Monism does not accommodate any form of fundamentalism, extremism, fanaticism and intolerance regardless of whether they are religious or ethic. While we argue that “religious radicalization (and fundamentalism as one may want to add) is not the sole preserve of one religious tradition; rather it is a tendency that cuts across most religions”,³⁷ it is our believe that with the logic of Harmonious Monism at the kernel of intergroup relations in Nigeria, the frontiers of such Christian extremists and

³⁷ K. A Agede, “A Philosophical Appraisal of Islamic Fundamentalism S. A. Laleye (Ed) *AJAPHIL: Akungba Journal of Applied Philosophy*. Vol. 1., No. 1. (2017), 182.

fundamentalists “designation of some churches as “living” and “dead” churches and the looking down on, as well as discriminating against members of the “dead” churches by those who think that they are serving a “living” God and that service to God has reached its watershed in their beliefs. It is also evident in the burning down of shrines and place of worships of practitioners of African traditional religion in the name of cleansing the land, it can also assume the position of killing priest, priestesses and other sacred personage of African Religion in the guise of fulfilling the biblical injunction of not “suffering the witch to live”³⁸ as well those of Islam and African Religion will be pushed back in order to realize and elevate the principle of tolerance that this logic stresses.

That one ethnic group, religious group or sect is superior to the other is not an idea that is supported by the philosophical logic of Harmonious Monism This is because, following from the background of African duality which gave rise to this logic, the elements of reality dovetails into each other despite been opposites and none of the extremes opposites is forced on the other and opposites are always harmoniously in monism. Neither of the opposites is inferior nor superior to the other. The only language that is heard and is supreme as Ijiomah argues is that of logic of reciprocity of talents. It is in this sense that this paper argues that a total fidelity to the Harmonious monism and the apparent adoption of the same as the logic guiding intergroup relations in the only potent remedy to the incessant contestations, crisis of attritions and ethno-religious conflicts that have more

often than not, brought Nigeria on her knees. The above argument is based on the fact that regardless of number, no ethnic or religious group is superior to the other. It is also based on the fact that no one of them will and can survive on its own without the aid of the other groups that make up the whole because, all groups lacks self-sufficiency and hence, yearns and longs for the other in order to attain completeness.

Taken as the logic of intergroup relations in Nigeria, the philosophical logic of harmonious Monism has the tendency of dousing the tension, hostility and the wanton destruction of lives and properties between the Fulani Herders/Farmers crisis. It also has the capacity to resolve the age long crisis between the Tiv/Jukum Crisis in the Benue-Taraba border. The crisis between the cold war between the Tiv/Igede crisis in the Konshisha and Oju Local government area of Benue state just to mention a few. In a related work Darty and Ekefre³⁹ have argued that a fragmented conception of reality is at the root of these conflicts and contentions. The way to overcome this through identifying a system of logic that does not enforce a fragmented conception of reality like the philosophical logic of harmonious monism, and using the tools of education and social reorientation to enforce desirable skills and values in the citizenry. While education can serve the parts of the citizenry that are still learning, those that are out of school can be reached through social reorientation.⁴⁰

When elevated as the logic of relations in Nigeria, Harmonious Monism will prove as a viable framework that will downplay the apparent fault lines of ethnicity and religion which have been argued to be the bulwarks

³⁸ E. Odum, “From Religious Fundamentalism to the Dialogue of Life and the Philosophy of Tolerance in Nigeria” in *PACEM: Journal of Peace and Development* Vol. 1, No. 1, (April, 2018), 210.

³⁹ D. E. Darty, and Ekefre Aniekan “A Comparative Analysis of Tempel's Dynamic Metaphysics and Asouzu's Complementary Logic.” In *University of Uyo Journal of Humanities*, Vol. 26, No. 1, (May 2022), 133.

⁴⁰ D. E. Darty, and Ekefre Aniekan, “The Philosopher in the Marketplace: The Relevance of Logic to Commercial Viability Demands in the Academe.” *Aquino Journal of Philosophy*, Vol. 3, Issue 1, (June 2023), 20.

of contestations and crisis in Nigeria. The logic of relations that is here argued for will as a matter of consequence, lead to the extermination of all forms of intergroup contestations and crisis like inter-ethnic, intra-ethnic, inter-religious and inter-state crisis in Nigeria.

Conclusion

As we draw to the conclusion of this paper, a number of positions have been raised, and a rehearsal of a few of them is here considered necessary. One, we have argued that the logic of relations that have guided interpersonal relations between and among Nigerians is Western-valued logic. We have also argued that western two valued logic stems from the prevalent ontology of the West, and the effects of its adoption within the context of intergroup relations in Africa are intolerance, contestations, the increasing crisis of attrition, and separatist' movements. Moving forward, the paper has advanced Ijiomah's philosophical logic of harmonious monism, which is three-valued, based on the principle of contrariety and the algebra of classes, as the logic that should guide interpersonal relations amongst Nigerians. It must be stated that this logic holds all units to be equal in strength and capacity and works towards the proper functioning of the whole while still maintaining equilibrium in the universe. In view of the heterogeneity and multicultural and religious diversity that Nigeria represents, "it remains to say that no human society can actualize itself outside the framework of unity in diversity. Where this is attempted (as it is in Nigeria), be practiced at the great self-strangulation. This is important because a human being necessarily connotes relations".⁴¹

To this end, the paper concludes that in

view of the prevailing situation of intolerance and conflict that have characterized intergroup relations in Nigeria in the last six decades, resulting from a disoriented view that is fuelled by the either/or approach that has also left Nigeria with a history of loss of lives, properties, and citizens in internally displaced people's (IDP) camps, the African three-valued logic of Harmonious Monism is the logic that can alter the trajectory and tapestry of intergroup relations in Nigeria and usher in a saner intergroup relations that is needed for progress and sustainable development.

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⁴¹ E. S. Odum, and F. C. Alo, "Ethnicity and the Quest for Peace and National Development: Extrapolating from the Philosophy of Complementary Reflections." *IGWEBUIKE: An African Journal of Arts and Humanities*, Vol. 3, No 7, (December 2017), 55.

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