

ON THE FOUNDATIONS OF JUSTICE

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Abstract

God is just, the only Being with necessary existence but who calls all contingent existents up from nothingness into becoming something. We learn from this but has Justice any foundations in the human or material world? This work examines the origins in language and practice in order to access the true import of justice.

Keywords: Justice, Existence, World, Language

Introduction

In this paper therefore, we are dealing with the basis or bases of the concept of justice. In other words, what ideas or ideologies, events, knowledge or life of people that gave rise to justice and still sustains it? Manuel Velasquez et al in their article "Justice and Fairness" maintain that the foundations of justice can be traced to the notions of **social stability**, **interdependence**, and **equal dignity**. As the ethicist John Rawls pointed out, the stability of a society—or any group, for that matter—depends upon the extent to which the members of that society feel that they are being treated justly. When some of society's members come to feel that they are subject to unequal treatment, the foundations have been laid for social unrest, disturbances, and strife. The members of a community, Rawls holds, depend on each other, and they will retain their social unity only to the extent that their institutions are just. Moreover, as the philosopher Immanuel Kant and others have pointed out, human beings are all equal in this respect: they all have the same dignity, and in virtue of this dignity they deserve to be treated as equals. Whenever individuals are treated unequally on the basis of characteristics that are arbitrary and irrelevant, their fundamental human dignity is violated.

Armed with the above, we can search the records that we have with the mind of getting to the base of their ideas of justice. One problem is that justice is not often called by the name and as such becomes implied. For the sake of a systematic study, this paper divides out its researches into antiquities (myths or folklores), ethical, socio-political and religious enquiries for the foundations or bases for the concept of Justice.

Etymology of the word, justice:

Justice in Latin comes from the word *jus* meaning “law, right”.

Jussum means **order**; and *Justus* means “just”

In Greek, Justice shares the same root word with “order”, *dike*. To be *dikaios* is to conduct one’s affair in the order (*themis*) of the god, Zeus. *Deiknumi* means “I show”, “I indicate” and *tithemi* means “I put”, “I lay down”. (This must have been where the lawyers borrowed their phrase of “I put it to you...”). *Dike* is thus showing what is laid down. This portrays the same meaning with the Hebrew *sedāqā* and the Igbo *Akakwuoto*. It is interesting to note that *dikaiosune* is translated as righteousness in the New Testament. Cf 1Jn 3:7.

Nota Bene:

Justice thus has intrinsic connection to right actions or actions in line with the law or order of the land. Thus one who keeps the law is a just citizen because he/she is doing what is right.

Definition of Terms

Foundation:

Encarta Dictionary, 2006, defines foundation in subsection two as the basis of something such as a theory or an idea.

Justice:

1. fairness or reasonableness, especially in the way people are treated or decisions are made
2. system or application of law: the legal system, or the act of applying or upholding the law
3. validity in law
4. sound or good reason
5. a judge, especially of a higher court

Usage examples:

Bring somebody to justice: to arrest somebody to be tried in a court of law

Do justice to somebody or something: to deal with somebody or something fairly to convey the true qualities, especially the merits, of somebody or something

Do yourself justice: to display your own abilities fully or perform to your full potential (*often used in the negative*)

Nota Bene:

Justice is a positive phenomenological response to circumstances since it deals with the truth of the value of what appears in the way it appears. It touches on the integrality of a person. It deals with applying oneself to the truth of the matter.

Antiquities: Myths (Folklores)

Zeus, in Greek mythology, the god of the sky and ruler of the Olympian gods. Zeus corresponds to the Roman god Jupiter.

Zeus was considered, according to Homer, the father of the gods and of mortals. He did not create either gods or mortals; he was their father in the sense of being the protector and ruler both of the Olympian family and of the human race. He was lord of the sky, the rain god, and the cloud gatherer, who wielded the terrible thunderbolt. His breastplate was the aegis, his bird the eagle, his tree the oak. Zeus presided over the gods on Mount Olympus in Thessaly (Thessalia). His principal shrines were at Dodona, in Epirus, the land of the oak trees and the most ancient shrine, famous for its oracle, and at Olympia, where the Olympic Games were celebrated in his honour every fourth year.

Jupiter or Jove in Roman mythology: the ruler of the gods, the son of the god Saturn, whom he overthrew. Originally the god of the sky and king of heaven, Jupiter was worshiped as god of rain, thunder, and lightning. As the protector of Rome he was called Jupiter *Optimus Maximus* ("the best and greatest") and was worshiped in a temple on the Capitoline Hill (Monte Capitoline). As Jupiter Fidius he was guardian of law, defender of truth, and protector of justice and virtue.

Abolishing death in Ibo mythology: This is the story of the dog and chameleon sent to God to ask Him to abolish death on the one hand and to retain it on the other hand. (*Being fair and just to "death"*). The dog has to bear the tiding of abolishing it while the chameleon bears the one of retaining it. The dog is not dependable and so the chameleon reached God first and delivered its message but the dog came as well. Chameleon's case was accepted because it was first to arrive but the dog's message attracted the art of medicine given to man to save life from death as much as possible. This

carries a lot of ideas of fairness, human dignity and relationality between the people and the people and their God.

Nota Bene: The antiquity employed here is both the antiquity of historical records and antiquity of human existence. It really has a touch of human foundations and the driving force for justice is situated in superhuman beings, which serves as a kind of ideal and a challenge to humans. However, it is largely proverbial with no individualizing reality of the figures in the stories. The challenge is thus remote and impersonal.

Ethical Enquiry

Ethics (Greek *ethika*, from *ethos*, “character,” “custom”), principles or standards of human conduct, sometimes called morals (Latin *mores*, “customs”), and, by extension, the study of such principles, sometimes called moral philosophy.

Philosophers have attempted to determine goodness in conduct according to two chief principles, and have considered certain types of conduct either

- A. **Good in themselves**, *summum bonum*, which is desirable in itself and not merely as a means to an end, OR
- B. **Good** because they conform to a particular moral standard.

In the history of ethics there are three principal standards of conduct, each of which has been proposed as the *summum bonum*

- i. **happiness** or pleasure;
- ii. **duty**, virtue, or obligation; and
- iii. **Perfection**, the fullest harmonious development of human potential.

Depending on the social setting, the authority invoked for good conduct is

- i. the will of a deity, the pattern of nature, OR
- ii. the rule of reason.

When the will of a deity is the authority, obedience to the divine commandments in scriptural texts is the accepted standard of conduct. If the pattern of nature is the authority, conformity to the qualities attributed to human nature is the standard. When reason rules, behaviour is expected to result from rational thought.

Ethics, as a branch of philosophy, is considered a *normative* science, because it is concerned with norms of human conduct, as distinguished from the

formal sciences, such as mathematics and logic, and the *empirical* sciences, such as chemistry and physics.

For as long as people have been living together in groups, the moral regulation of behaviour has been necessary to the group's well-being. Although the morals were formalized and made into arbitrary standards of conduct, they developed, sometimes irrationally, after religious taboos were violated, or out-of-chance-behaviour that became habit and then custom, or from laws imposed by chiefs to prevent disharmony in their tribes. The Greek philosophers, beginning about the 6th century BC, theorized intensively about moral behaviour, which led to the further development of philosophical ethics.

Select Stake-Holders in Western Moral Philosophy

In the 6th century BC the Greek philosopher **Pythagoras** developed one of the earliest moral philosophies from the Greek mystery religion *Orphism*. Believing that the intellectual nature is superior to the sensual nature and that the best life is one devoted to mental discipline.

In the 5th century BC the Greek philosophers known as **Sophists**, who taught rhetoric, logic, and civil affairs, were sceptical of moral absolutes. Protagoras taught that human judgment is subjective, and that one's perception is valid only for oneself. Thrasymachus, believed that might makes right.

Socrates opposed the Sophists. His philosophical position may be summarized as follows: virtue is knowledge; people will be virtuous if they know what virtue is; and vice, or evil, is the result of ignorance. Thus, according to Socrates, education can make people moral.

Plato: According to Plato, good is an essential element of reality. Evil does not exist in itself but is, rather, an imperfect reflection of the real, which is good. In his *Dialogues* (first half of the 4th century BC) he maintains that human virtue lies in the fitness of a person to perform that person's proper function in the world.

The human soul has three elements—**intellect, will, and emotion**—each of which possesses a specific virtue in the good person and performs a specific role. The virtue of **intellect** is wisdom, or knowledge of the ends of life; that of the **will** is courage, the capacity to act; and that of the **emotions** is

temperance, or self-control. The ultimate virtue, **justice**, is the harmonious relation of all the others, each part of the soul doing its appropriate task and keeping its proper place. Plato maintained that the intellect should be sovereign, the will second, and the emotions subject to intellect and will. The just person, whose life is ordered in this way, is therefore the good person.

Christian Ethics: The ethical systems of the classical age were applied to the aristocracy, particularly in Greece. The same standards were not extended to non-Greeks. The derogatory term used for them, was *barbaroi* ("barbarians"). As for slaves, the attitude toward them can be summed up in Aristotle's designation of a slave as a "living tool."

The coming of Christianity marked a revolution in ethics, for it introduced a religious conception of the Good into Western thought. In the Christian view a person is totally dependent upon God and cannot achieve goodness by means of will or intelligence but only with the help of God's grace. The primary Christian ethical belief is stated in the golden rule, "So whatever you wish that men would do to you, do so to them" (Matthew 7:12); in the injunctions to love one's neighbour as oneself (see Leviticus 19:18) and to love one's enemies (see Matthew 5:44); and in Jesus' saying, "Render therefore to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's" (Matthew 22:21). Jesus believed that the essential meaning of Jewish law is in the commandment "you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength, and with all your mind; and your neighbour as yourself" (Luke 10:27).

Early Christianity emphasized as virtues asceticism, martyrdom, faith, mercy, forgiveness, and non-erotic love, few of which had been considered important by the philosophers of classical Greece and Rome.

Secular Ethical Philosophies:

A major contribution to ethics was made by the German philosopher **Immanuel Kant** in **Principles of the Metaphysics of Ethics**, 1785. According to Kant, no matter how intelligently one acts, the results of human actions are subject to accident and circumstance; therefore, the morality of an act must not be judged by its consequence, but only by its motivation.

Utilitarianism: The ethical and political doctrine known as utilitarianism came in the 18th Century. In his **Introduction to the Principles of Morals and Legislation** (1789), Bentham explained the principle of utility as a means of augmenting the happiness of the community. He believed that all human actions are motivated by a desire to obtain pleasure and avoid pain. This utilitarianism is geared towards a universal understanding and not just an egoistic view like Epicureanism, its highest good is the greatest happiness of the greatest number of people.

Hegel: Hegel, a German Philosopher In **Foundations of the Philosophy of Right**, 1821, accepted Kant's categorical imperative, but included it in a universal evolutionary theory in which all history is regarded as a series of stages leading toward the manifestation of a fundamental reality that is both spiritual and rational. Morality, according to Hegel, is not the result of a social contract, but a natural growth, arising in the family and culminating, historically with an iron necessity.

The Existentialists: The Danish philosopher and theologian Søren Kierkegaard reacted strongly against Hegel's system. In his book **Either-Or** (1843), Kierkegaard expressed his major ethical concern as the problem of choice. He believed that philosophical systems such as Hegel's obscure this crucial problem by making it seem an objective matter capable of a universal solution, rather than a subjective one that each person must confront individually. His emphasis on the necessity of choice made him a father of existentialism. **Martin Buber** was interested in the morality of individual relationship in his book: **I-Thou relationship**. The German philosopher **Martin Heidegger** maintains that no God exists, although one may come into being in the future. Human beings are, therefore, alone in the universe and must make their ethical decisions with the constant awareness of death. The French philosopher and novelist **Jean-Paul Sartre** was an atheist who also emphasized the awareness of death but while Heidegger's created a chord with one's life, his was annihilation. Sartre also maintained that people have an ethical responsibility to involve themselves in the social and political activities of their time.

Charles Darwin's scientific postulation highlighted on the survival of the fittest as the basic law of nature. This influenced a German thinker, **Friedrich Nietzsche**, who held that so-called moral conduct is necessary only for the weak. Moral conduct—especially such as was advocated in Jewish and Christian ethics, which in his view is a slave ethic—tends to

allow the weak to inhibit the self-realization of the strong. According to Nietzsche, every action should be directed toward the development of the superior individual, or *Übermensch* ("superman"), who will be able to realize the noblest possibilities of life. Nietzsche found this ideal individual best exemplified in the persons of ancient Greek philosophers before Plato and of military dictators such as Julius Caesar and Napoleon.

The Igbo Ethical System: Not much work has been done here except the unassuming research of Prof Nzomiwu (1999) in his book **The Concept of Justice among the Traditional Igbo: An Ethical inquiry**. Here amongst the Ibo people, he observes a close analogy between the just man and truth. He says that truth is a beautiful quality in a person and its absence a marring defect of character. Truth in relationship denotes equality between persons. A man of truth is a man with the *ofo*, which was typical of *Nze na Ozo*, a man of honour on whom the society was ordered.

Nota Bene: One characteristic of the ethical philosophers is that they are speculatively descriptive. You can feel their struggle to realise the founding notions of a group or of people in general. The closer they come to the humanness of the human person, the more acceptable their theories. Some believe that the common integrating factors are elitist sense, common sense, or the good. However, the question looming large in my head is how common is the common sense and how universally accepted is the good they portray? Are all elites? If the study area is a homogenous group, the ethical theories are often more comprehensive and comprehensible.

Socio-Political Enquiry

Aristotle: In his principal work on ethics, the *Nicomachean Ethics* (late 4th century BC), regarded Justice as the norm by which the state, *polis*, is ordered and this norm lacks application outside of the *polis*. Thus once one is separated from the state, one is deprived of justice. He goes further to say that like cases should be treated alike and unlike cases unlikely; equals should be treated equally and unequal unequally.

Augustine conceived of history as a dramatic struggle between the good in humanity, ("city of God," or community of saints), and the evil in humanity, (earthly city) with its material values. His view of human life was pessimistic, asserting that happiness is impossible in the world of the living. He believed further that without the religious virtues of faith, hope, and charity, which require divine grace to be attained, a person cannot develop

the natural virtue of justice. Augustine's conception of justice is only in relation of the soul to God as his origin, his sustenance and goal in society with Him. Nobody is exempt even the unborn, women and children in the *Civitas Dei* except by oneself. Justice leads human beings towards their *teleos*.

Descartes resolved to reconstruct all human knowledge on an absolutely certain foundation by refusing to accept any belief. Ultimately he concluded that the first thing of whose existence one can be certain is oneself as a thinking being. This conclusion forms the basis of his well-known argument, "**Cogito, ergo sum**" ("I think, therefore I am").

In his ethical theory **Hobbes** derived the rules of human behaviour from the law of self-preservation and justified egoistic action as the natural human tendency. In his political theory he maintained that government and social justice are artificial creations based on *social contract* (voluntary agreement between people and their government) and maintained by force. In his most famous work, *Leviathan* (1651), Hobbes justified political authority on the basis that self-interested people who existed in a terrifying "state of nature"—that is, without a ruler—would seek to protect themselves by forming a political *commonwealth* that had rules and regulations. He concluded that absolute monarchy is the most effective means of preserving peace.

Human culture, according to **Marx**, is dependent on economic (material) conditions and serves economic ends. Religion, he concluded, is "the opiate of the masses" that serves the political end of suppressing mass revolution. The state apparatus is a symbol of injustice since it alienates the product of human labour from the working class. Justice is done when the proletariat are in control of what they produce and this can be achieved by rising in revolution to seize power.

John Rawls (1921-2002), American moral and political philosopher, whose major work, **A Theory of Justice**, had a profound impact on ethics and political theory after its publication in 1971.

The principles of justice, Rawls argued, determine how the benefits and burdens of society are to be distributed among individuals in a fair manner. Thus for Rawls, **justice is fairness**. Yet how can people determine what is fair, especially in a society of great inequalities and diverse interpretations of the good life? Rawls theorized that the principles of fairness are those that

would be agreed upon by people in a hypothetical situation he referred to as the “original position”. Rawls believed that in this original position people would agree on two principles.

- i. Basic rights and liberties should be as extensive as possible for each individual without infringing on the rights and liberties of other individuals.
- ii. Any social and economic inequalities should be equally available to any position and should provide the greatest benefit for the least advantaged.

John Mbiti (1990) captures the African conception of the relation between the individual and the society when he maintains in p.106 of his book, **African Religions and Philosophy** that “I am because we are and since we are, therefore I am”. This evinces Marx’s notion of the individual as the ensemble of social relations but the difference to be noted between the African community and Marx’s ideal state is that the former gears towards communalism while the latter embeds itself in socialism. In communalism, the kinsmen are there for the individual while in socialism the individual is there for the state. However, if togetherness is the reason of our existence, then the foundation of order and of course justice is the other or rather a social contract.

Universal Declaration of Human Rights is a statement affirming the dignity and rights of all human beings, adopted by the United Nations (UN) in 1948.

The rights described in the 30 articles of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights include the right to life, liberty, and security of person; to freedom of conscience, religion, opinion, expression, association, and assembly; to freedom from arbitrary arrest; to a fair and impartial trial; to freedom from interference in privacy, home, or correspondence; to a nationality; to a secure society and an adequate standard of living; to education; and to rest and leisure. The declaration also affirms the rights of every person to own property; to be presumed innocent until proven guilty; to travel from a home country at will and return at will; to work under favourable conditions, receive equal pay for equal work, and join labour unions at will; to marry and raise a family; and to participate in government and in the social life of the community.

Nota Bene: The above is a commendable concerted effort towards dissolving the plurality barrier to universal socio-political principles. It is universally accepted because they are human extracts of fair-play. However, for our study, rights are not ends in themselves. A question still comes up: what is the end of all human activity that made and still makes human human? Foundations bring the end of actions in view and offer challenges to the superstructures but are sometimes the end. (You can refer to the Processual Philosophy of Alfred North Whitehead). At such times the challenges are more focused.

Religious Enquiry

Igbo Religious Life

Nzomiwu in the book already quoted notes that the Igbo religious belief is necessary in understanding the Igbo perspective of justice. He presupposes the Igbo idea of the **Supreme God** and reinstates that the Igbo shows dissatisfaction over human justice and believes in that of God, *Chukwu*, who is just. This is so because in spite of the social disapproval, the poor are at times oppressed. Thus people appeal to *Chukwu* after human justice and that of the ancestors and minor deities have failed.

Ala, the most important deity in Igbo cosmogony is worshipped as the sustainer, champion of justice and defender of the weak and innocent. Social offences like homicide, incest, adultery, etc are considered crimes against the land and are attended to by sacrificial propitiation and punishment of culprits.

The ancestry is a domain for “*ndi aka ha kwu oto*”, those who have expended their lives in *straight*-living. That is those who have been just. It behoves on the ancestors to enforce the unwritten custom of the land. The Igbo believe that since they were once one of them and are now close to *Chukwu*, the customs are best known to them and they serve as mediators of God’s justice to the human custom. The aged, the *ozo* and/or the rulers are seen in the light of the ancestors and are often called by their name *ndiichie*.

Buddhism

Buddhism, a major world religion, founded in north-eastern India and based on the teachings of Siddhartha Gautama, who is known as the Buddha, or Enlightened One.

Closely related to this belief is the doctrine of **karma**. Karma consists of a person’s acts and their ethical consequences. Human actions lead to rebirth, wherein good deeds are inevitably rewarded and evil deeds punished. Thus, neither undeserved pleasure nor unwarranted suffering exists in the world, but rather a *universal justice*. The karmic process operates through a kind of natural moral law rather than through a system of divine judgment. One’s karma determines such matters as one’s species, beauty, intelligence, longevity, wealth, and social status. According to the Buddha, karma of varying types can lead to rebirth as a human, an animal, a hungry ghost, an inhabitant of hell, or even one of the Hindu gods.

Justice in the Old Testament

The OT confers the characteristic of “saving” to justice. This calls for revolution of what had been in speculation about Justice. In the document Justice in the World, the OT concept of justice is recapitulated in par 30

In the Old Testament God reveals himself to us as liberator of the oppressed and the defender of the poor, demanding from man faith in him and justice towards man’s neighbour

Liberator of the oppressed: Yahweh manifests Himself not through Philosophical concepts but through concrete experience of liberation of His chosen People from an oppressive socio-political structure. The Exodus experience is the fundamental event in their life that made them a nation. It has gone into their creed, cf. Dt 6:20-24; Josh 24:2-13 and helped to found their faith. The OT is replete with stories of liberative intervention of God in the People's lives. (Judges 2:16-18; 4:12-16; 1Sam 8:7-22).

Defender of the Poor: The liberating action of God in the lives of the Israelite subsists in His actions in favour of the victims of injustice and oppression (Ps.103:6). He champions the cause of the poor (Is 49:22-23), defends the defenceless (1Sam 18:10-12), protects the widow (1Kgs 17:9-20), orphan and stranger (Dt 10:18; 27:19). In Is 43:2-4, Yahweh liberates the oppressed often without minding injuring the oppressors.

Justice of God: When Israel sinned, Yahweh punished but never retracted the Covenant He made with them. God's wrath is not vindictive but included as an integral part of discipline and restoration. In short, the whole OT is a repertoire of the justice of God. God is just and His justice (*sedaga*) is closely associated with His steadfastness (*hesed*), mercy (*rahamin*) and fidelity (*emeth*). Thus when *sedaga* is interpreted as righteousness, it incorporates all and understands God in His covenantal rule in relationship with His people. Thus the basis of Justice in the OT is covenantal. According to Elazar Daniel in his article: "The Biblical Covenant as the Foundation of Justice, Obligations and Rights", this is differentiated from hierarchical (position in society – feudalism) and organic (primordial group) modes of Justice in societies.

Just man: The just man is thus the man who orders his life according to the order of the justice of God. This man accepts God's justice humbly and gratefully and extends it to his neighbour according to the Decalogue. (Jer. 22:15-16)

Justice in the New Testament

The Document Justice in the world also states in par 31 'By His action and teaching Christ united in an indivisible way the relationship of man to God and the relationship of man to other men'.

Jesus came to fulfil the OT. He proves the closeness of God to his people. He is no longer called God but God our Father. He teaches that the God who requires Justice is filled with and spurred on by love. God's justice is underlined by love. In fairness to the ruler of the world, he died to pay our ransom. There was an ontological sin or deviation of man that brought death to the entire world since the wages of sin is death. Out of the infinite love of God, He allowed an ontic-ontological remedy. Like His intervention in the real life situation of the Israelites from the Egyptian nation, He concretised His presence in the person of Jesus Christ and justly satisfied the wages of sin, death. Through an ontic-ontological medium (sacrament), we are made just. It is thus through faith that we claim our ransom or rather that we are justified. This is a whole theology of Paul on justification. We are made righteous through the justification of God in Christ Jesus. There is a connection between **justice**, **justification** and **righteousness** in the New Testament and the underlying principle is love. He justified us even when we were still sinners, when we could scarcely understand what He was doing.

Bringing in the issue of love to justice augments the OT idea of justice as a "saving" justice. This can be summed up

- Love is more basic than justice
- Love best guarantees the fulfilment of justice
- Aim of justice must be achieved in the spirit of love
- Love gives clear vision and extension to justice
- When right can be given up without damage to one's integrity, love is always prepared for such sacrifice.
- Love best fulfils our criteria for the foundation of justice, i.e., notions of **social stability**, **interdependence**, and **equal dignity**

Evaluation

The Primacy of justice is not what is found among men but as it is ordained towards God. God's sovereign justice makes man capable of newer and better justices. Justice is no longer an abstract concept but a duty that finds expression in the piety and worship of God, who is not a **Deus Otiosus**, the remote God. He is the God who has shown Himself concretely in the

experiential lives of the people. He does not remain obscure; He takes the lead and though unwavering, He understands the fallible nature of man and builds him up to a divine end. His Being gives man the adequate challenge to perfection. The Psalmist says in 115:12: What can I give to the Lord for all He has given me? Man is thus obligated towards God and God's creatures in response to God's goodness and in order to be divinized (Mt 25:40).

The foundation of justice is therefore God since He is the origin of life from where comes the need for human rights. He is the order, *jussum*, *themis* by which every thing is ordered. How do we know Goodness if not by a reflection of the Good? However, since the title of the paper is "foundations of Justice" and considering the fact that the atheists and other religions are somehow obscured from this, we can extract from the on-going that justice is built up by **truth, fairness, order, integrity** and not less importantly **the common good**. The argument still remains that since humans are fallible, these foundations cannot rest on any human person/s and remain tenable to all ages and all persons. The Christian base of Justice on the love of God is a *primus inter pares*. Justice with a base on love and coming from a higher Being empties itself in a kind of quasi-paternalism. But this paternalism involves the respect of the freedom of the beneficiaries.

Conclusion

The Nigerian Situation

Nigeria cannot be a homogenous country by faith or by ancestry and as such we do not have one understanding of God but Christians are of the majority. If they are true to their foundation, there is bound to be some kind of stability in socio-political institutions. There is no religion that does not seek the truth but the universal brotherhood which the Christian religion propagates is worth emulating. The Truth of the matter is that everyone is made by God and thus has a right to life and good things and one thinks about the good of others before his or hers. If, at least, our Christian politicians are honest, nobody in this country would suffer any lack of the basic necessities of life. They are simply robbers and occult being recycled from a position to the other. The other day an old OPEC Minister, Rilwand Lukman was appointed again by Yar' Adua. Obasanjo was a military President then turned a civilian President and Babangida is warming up now, yet they are not doing well; they loot the economy and deposit it outside. They have no sense of honesty to plant confidence in the citizens. About two weeks ago, CNN reported a Nigerian Politician who carried cocaine and when asked, he said he needed money for campaigning.

Nigerian society has been the most unstable one: prices are hiked at will; insecurity is everywhere since the politicians use the rest of the country as a jungle for hunting expedition. The Niger-Delta regions too help the irresponsibility of our Leaders in looting the country. I believe that the illegal and individual oil businesses in the country are more than what goes into the coffers of the whole nation. The issue of sectionalism or ethnicity, favouritism, despotism, egotism, greed, occultism and the like are replete in the country and I fear that it will collapse. The Dele Giwa incidence sends tremors down the spine of any challenger even the Bishop's conference. Their selfishness and favouritism come to light in their dioceses and often gag the mouths of the priests who would love to challenge the cycle of doom of corruption in the country. Most Pentecostals too portray a high sense of irresponsibility, misplacement of priority and greed. The common Nigerian citizen is socio-politically harassed and psychologically wounded. Justice is far-fetched therefore once the foundations are not there. There is therefore social instability, lack of interdependence and harmony and a clear sign of inequality.

In line with God's love of His people through Christ, the Church is supposed to abide by the truth, eschew favouritism, stand strongly against societal evil, and uphold the universal umbrella of common brotherhood of all. If the notions that engender justice in society are conspicuously missing in the Nigerian polity, then Nigeria is not a nation of justice and is bound to disintegrate in the future, if nothing is done. This is a heterogeneous country where some live at the expense of others; where the term "survival of the fittest" can be applied. However Nigeria can be referred to as practicing an organic mode of polity, where the primordial groups fight for their survival over against the others.

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