

African Philosophy: A Critical Discourse on Possible Global Identity Issues**Eruka, C. Raphael, Ph.D.****Department of Philosophy, Madonna University Nigeria, Okija Campus****erukaraff@gmail.com.****Abstract**

The elements, concepts and personalities involved in the generation, sustainability and dissemination of African Philosophy are significant factors in the African philosophy project such that a closer examination of these factors proffers broader insight into issues pertaining to African philosophy. The inquiries into the identities are telling in that they have grown in complexity and significance over time. This demonstrates that African philosophy is as dynamic as it is enriching in the values it showcases to the world of philosophy. The investigations into the identities reveal in effect, a growing world culture of interrelationships and the possibility of critically assessing values from different perspectives. The net reality is a diffusion of values with an extensiveness that can only be described as global. African Philosophy though with unique claims to Africanness has witnessed increasingly global participative scholarship. In achieving this dimension of reach, African Philosophy is set to run its full course in adding to the value-stores of the global audience. In the domain of idea generation and exchanges, there are no pigeon-holes as in the effort at absolute regional appropriation of the processes and products of the African philosophic enterprise. In the regional claims to philosophies, the walls of pure exclusivism and tight compartments tend to give way to global scholarly participation in the values, methodologies and conclusions reached by those regional philosophic concerns. Scholarship remains a free intellectual traffic in which the values available in particular regions are made available in other regions with the aim of maximizing value-additions from cross-cultural exchanges. In the case of Africa her wealth of understanding and value appreciation become the more enriched by her encounter with myriads of global values in the light of scientific objectivity. African Philosophy opens the door to the confluence of ideas on African perspectives. While focused on African affairs, it finds a place for Africa on the global intellectual podium and by its presence, co-creates a mega-value of ideas alongside its counterparts from any other parts of the globe. The methodology applied is the critical-analytical method.

Key Words: *Africanness, Homogenization, Centricism, Catalyzation, Multiculturalism*

Introduction

Philosophers have a stake in every philosophy since the tendency of philosophy is towards the universalization of ideas (Odia, 2006, p. 283). This is because what makes an idea essentially philosophic tends to appeal to the philosophers' intellect, geo-locus notwithstanding. The philosopher is always out for ideas no matter the regional inclination. In this way, it becomes convenient the globalization of philosophical ideas based on multicultural paradigm (Salami, 2008, pp. 200 – 201). Philosophical ideas are the most directed towards global multicultural dissemination. Every philosophy must have people it is concerned with in the immediate and in its

long term multicultural global outreach. Its status with the people determines its globalizability. Whether it is well received or not tends to matter. If well received, the adherents play a major role in the catalyzation of its further spread. Even the extra-ordinarily absurd may by that very fact, galvanize extra-ordinary interest, as in the case of Zeno whose penchant for the absurd gave his style and methodology a peculiar philosophical taste (Composta, 2008, pp. 60 – 61; Copleston, 2006, pp. 54 – 55; Salmon, 2009, p. 635). There is no doubt that Greek philosophy was addressed to and received by the Greek world first before it began to make inroads into a wider audience. Same can be said of other regional contributions to the world of philosophic ideas – Chinese, Indian, Western or African.

African Philosophy can be said to have taken off from Africa since it reflects on themes that are centered on Africa. Directly and indirectly, it can be said to have germinated from the African soil. Having received its nutrients, so to say from Africa, in the majority of cases, it has to first and foremost nourish the African mind. This it has to do by way of intellectual enlightenment in things African, by clarification of issues that border on the African's world of being, by challenges that border on development and what the good life is all about in the African world. There are different groups or classes of people that play significant roles in the existence and thriving of African Philosophy. One can rightly say that without these groups or persons, African Philosophy would not exist. If by any streak of the imagination it exists, it would not be known and spread. In terms of sources, African philosophy owes all it has got to these characters which include: *the African* ordinarily and extra-ordinarily defined; *the African Philosopher* understood in the broad and narrow senses and *the scholar with special interest on African affairs*. The roles played by these three groups make African Philosophy what it is, and indeed give it a global outlook.

The African – the quest for identity

If the characters should be considered as of an edifice, the African certainly lies at the base. This is the primary character involved in the realization of the existence of African philosophy. The others certainly stand on this base, founded on it, and again being fed by it. The African and by implication, his African world, gives birth, directly or indirectly to African philosophy, keeps it alive and ensures its growth. The campaign for enlightenment on questions meant to bring Africa

to the fore in global perspectives has been made possible first and foremost because the African is there in his geographical locus and in his *sitz-in-leben* (wherever he finds himself). That he or she

forms a component of the globalization question is as real as his otherness in the global question. He is part of the global system yet distinct, playing distinctive and unique roles. His particularity becomes pertinent as we try to investigate his identity. So then: who is the African? How is he or she part of the process of African Philosophy? What significant role does this character play in the development of African philosophy? The identity of the African is not as easy as we tend to glean its meaning. Further investigation is needed to make clear the identity of the African person, to fully grasp the meaning of the phrase 'the African'. The African personality is here looked at from many perspectives: the geo-racial, the political, the critical history angle, the pan-colonial, the diaspora connection, the sociological and the ideological.

The African popularly understood, refers to the person from the continent of Africa. The African continent is a geographical entity that is almost represented in the world map with Europe atop it while indeed it lies below the European continent (Bisong, 2007, p. 101). The shape of the African continent as seen on world map invites curious observation as if the African continent is geographically a question-mark (Bisong, 2007, p. 101). Part of that questioning is in the area of African philosophy. African geographical reality in whichever form it is considered was without proper reflection said not to be part of the intellectual history of the world (Masolo, 1995, pp. 4 – 5; Hallen, 2002, p. 65; Oraegbunam, 2006, p. 230). Fortunately, history is self-correcting and the lie in the above has been made as explicit as the lines on the palm of the hand on a typical sunny day. This work in part devotes attention not to questions of the philosophy of Africa's geography and the place of Africa in the history of thought but to the identities of those who claim to be African or those qualified to be ascribed the term 'African' considered in their specificities.

From the geo-racial perspective, the African is a person born in Africa; stays in the continent of Africa with valid claim to African ancestry. This tends to describe the millions of people found in the different nations that make up the African continent. In addition, most of the persons that fit into the description are black (Collins Discovery Encyclopedia). Okolo observed that the African continent; 'contains the heaviest concentration of black people in the world' (Okolo, 1996, p. 1). One can become an African through the political process. After satisfying laid down pre-requisites, an interested non-African can achieve the status of being an African by being granted the citizenship of a particular African country by the government of that country. In this way there

exists a universal opportunity for anyone from any part of the world to become an African (Ezeh & Enem, 1997, p. 88).

The pan-colonial perspective has also got to do with Africa's history. Although colonialism is not peculiar to Africa, it is the fact that Africa passed through colonial experience. This experience is emblematic in the sense that colonialism and all it stood for continues to play a part in the personal development and consequent personality formation of the African. There is no doubt that most Africans, especially all of black Africa have historically experienced colonialism. This historic-existential reality goes into making the African in terms of identity (Ruch & Anyanwu, 1984, p. 185; Oraegbunam, 2006, pp. 228 – 229).

The diaspora connection relates to Africans outside the continent of Africa. There are two sides to the diaspora connection – the critical history question and the voluntary option respectively. The former refers to persons who though trace their ancestry to Africa are no longer part of the African continent geographically. These have found themselves in different parts of the world due to irreversible historical circumstances that have defined their new identities, e. g. the slave trade phenomenon in Africa. Nevertheless, these people remain African in spirit, orientation and memory. The latter points to Africans who have migrated to different parts of the world and have either nationalized in countries other than Africa or remained for long in those countries for various reasons, e.g. in search of greener pastures. While the Africans nationalized in other countries are no longer Africans politically, they remain so in other ways that are significant to philosophy – cultural rooting and value appreciation, sharing of legacies, or benchmark for value comparisons, etc. Others retain their political membership in spite of their long absence from the African continent. From the intellectual perspective, a complex of ethno-histories of cultural values interfaces in their philosophic endeavor and the fruits of such enterprise (Outlaw, 2004, pp. 93 – 94). The values accruing from the other cultures notwithstanding, the starting point is always that of Africa (Outlaw, 2004, p. 94). Okolo as cited in Ekei agrees no less, for he believes that through critical reflection in the African world-of-being, 'the African grasps the truth of man and the entire universe' (Ekei, 2010, p. 125). The starting point is always African ontology, the being of the African as spring board for global discourse.

The African is defined sociologically as 'a being with' (Okolo, 1993, pp. 4 – 5). The African is a being that tends towards the other. The African has this propensity to reach out, to relate with the other. The African is a being in relationship – a being that realizes himself in others, in his fellows.

As a being with, the African is a being in hyphenation – he is complemented by the other. He is because others are; ‘an individual who lives in union with others’ (Odia, 22006, p. 281). His extension to the other does not necessarily destroy his uniqueness. On the other hand, it augments it and makes it more circumscribed and defined. The African does not get lost or totally dissolved in group dynamism or the community as the case may be. Although his survival depends on the community yet he clings to his particularity which is essential for the growth and survival of the community considered on another perspective. In Africa, the ‘universal’ and the ‘particular’ intermingle in mutually enriching relationship of survivalism and development. ‘Being with’ is for the sake of togetherness and sharing – the openness to relationships involved in mutual communicative enrichment, familiarization and knowledge, understanding and solidarity, security of lives and property and the fullness of the humanization process generally.

As an ideological concept, Africanity is a thing of the mind. It is a reality of social orientation and value judgment. In other words, the African judges social and cultural relations as of fundamental value to human existence. To be African is to look at things the African way, to be ideologically oriented to or given to African perspectives in the interpretation of reality. The ideological dimension is the most philosophically based identity in that it is essentially a thing of the mind. It is a question of intellectual preferment by peoples in which Africanity is open ended to personalities predisposed to it. It is a critical belief in Africa and the values it represents. This presupposes a logical acceptance from the critical sense development point of view and the internalization of the value fall-out of this critique that go into the formation of personality. Such is informed, consciously chosen to reflect in its own world of being an agglomeration of African value perspectivity such as the belief in African socialism, personality and authenticity. Those who, irrespective of geography, share in and consciously pursue humanizing African values are African by ideological orientation and, or affiliation. The work of T. Outlaw in *Africana philosophy* attests to this ideological orientation as a mark of African identity, irrespective of the geographical space in which the diaspora African or scholar with sufficient interest in African affairs finds him or herself (Outlaw, 2004, p. 95).

The African philosopher – The Quest for Identity

The person of the African philosopher or his identity is not as simplistic as it may seem. Any African that ever studied philosophy, for instance, up to the University level can lay claim to the

name. It would not matter whether the one majored in empiricism, existentialism or pragmatism as explicated in Western philosophy. This identification has a mere literary connotation and by that fact, has nothing to do with professionalism in the discipline. Secondly, any African critical thinker versed in sustained reflective activity on fundamental issues that border on African affairs, whether literate or not can take on the title. Such must be conscious of what he or she is doing and be prepared to devote the greater part of his life to it. This theoretical possibility not often does become a practical truth. Thirdly, there is the African academic with vast interest in philosophical issues especially as concerns the African person and his world. Some scholars are of the opinion ‘that African philosophy should be seen from the professional and academic angle’ (Ochieng’-Odhiambo, 1994, p. 62). Commitment to critical reflective activity at the second order level must be the ultimate determining point. The African philosopher in the quintessential understanding applies to the African academic philosopher; so called because of specialization in African Philosophy. The concern in African affairs is not only deep but there is the devotion to critical analysis of such issues at that level that spans over a lengthy period or even a life time. The African philosopher at no point abandons philosophy. African philosophy is a way of life: a life-long intellectual business centered on Africa – her experiences, triumphs and future projections. There is also sufficient exposure to the universe of philosophy and, or philosophies and the capacity for contextualizing philosophical issues for, ‘philosophy as an academic discipline could only be enriched rather than impoverished by the understanding of the philosophy of other cultures’ (Makinde, 2010, p. 526). The multicultural paradigm in African philosophy is the openness to enrichment from global cultural values.

The Scholar-Specialist in African Affairs – The Quest for Identity

This is the scholar with real interest in African affairs. He may not be necessarily African, for instance European Africanists (Ochieng’-Odhiambo, 1994, p. 66) but the essential factor is that he or she has sufficient interest in those questions that bother the African person. Such a scholar, who may or may not be non-African by race, and sometimes referred to as Africanist scholar may as well be an academic philosopher. Often he or she is. The Africanist scholar could be an expert in other fields of philosophic endeavor and may take to deep reflections on African issues as a matter of general or academic interest (Makinde, 2021, p. 527). Experts in other fields that share interdisciplinary interests and relations with philosophy may as well develop consuming propensities to themes central to the African philosophic enterprise. These may among others

include sociologists, anthropologists, political scientists, political economists, philologists, experts in religious studies, classicists, experts in literary studies and humanities generally. However, the quintessential Africanist scholar is the non-African academic philosopher given to cross-cultural critical idea dissemination with Africa as the main investigative focus. The German, Indian, French, English or American scholar and philosopher who turns to Africa as his or her field of research, in matters of philosophical importance, is by so opting, an Africanist scholar.

What matters is this consuming interest in the affairs of the region; the continuing studies or research and the critical reflections and the commitment to this project over time.

The elements and the way forward

African philosophy owes a lot to the background and activities of the people from the vast continent of Africa; especially in terms of what is transmitted as of philosophic value (Makinde, 2010, p. 526). It pertains to whatever happens to Africa from any other sources outside of the African continent as wider exposure enriches the values in African philosophy (Makinde, 2010, p. 526). It has in the above its primary and secondary sources and active creators or causes and propagators. We do not yet know of any sophisticated theories of how philosophy begins. However, we know of what people do in terms of philosophic activity in the places in which they happen to find themselves. Whatever it is that philosophers do according to Aristotle is always a product of wonder. Wonder, according to Aristotle, is the precursor of philosophy. Wonder is the factor that stimulates deep thinking of a critical nature; that which ruffles the philosophic mind and catalyzes the business of the reflective enterprise. The African people did respond to the inescapable co-existential wonder that is part of their then known world. They still do so today but as Western trained philosophers, perhaps in a different intellectual mode and mind cast (Odia, 2006, p. 281). Here too, the manner or method of response does matter. The proper encounter and management of the reality of wonder produces elements of emotional surprise and rigorous ruminations with critical intellectual content. There is no doubt that the primary source of African philosophy is the African acting and making impacts on his world. The experiences of operating in his physical and socio-religious world as well as his world of being in a sea of similar worlds all coalesce to generate the type of reactions that reflect in intense philosophic action. The African doubtless did have to make meaning out of the exigency of his existential situation at different levels. He had to cherish his culture and enrich it from the dynamics of the times. Even the norms on which some of the cultural elements are based develop out of the contingencies of the times.

These refer to the encounters that emerge from time to time that necessarily call for sustained reflective and critical redress. The call for redress of the unusual, extra-ordinary or unfamiliar points to the urgent attention required to fill-in the need for articulation of issues that needed to be so done; manageability of potentially out-of control situations all in the bid to positively impact on the human situation at particular times and places. This continual exercise assures of the emergence and injection of new ideas and consequently ensures that the development process is put in place in the community. The highest level of this search into meaning, validity and stability is apt to leave the legacy of intellectual content of real philosophic import.

This understanding of the limitedness or contingency of the human person was not just a mere subjective reality, it found bold and some sort of objective expression in the ideas of African philosophers as externalized and made available to others. It is an emphatic move, a large writ in that an avenue seems to have been worked out in conscious anonymity of idea generation and expression of what it takes for man to give meaning to himself in the articulating of the meanings of realities around him. It is the acknowledgement of the *nous* (Composta, 2008, pp. 77 – 79) at work in every culture. If *nous* translates to cosmic mind as it is sometimes entertained, then obviously, Africa like any other cultures, participates in the activities of this cosmic phenomenon. The cosmic *mind* leaves portions of self in the minds of peoples of all cultures engendering activities of an intellectual nature and the possibilities of intercultural relations from the rational perspective. Reason is not ours per se, strictly speaking, but only received. Perhaps the best that can be done is the disposition to its filterability in the human mind in the context of the agent of its dissemination.

The other aspect of this consideration has to do with another phase of Africa's existence, a turning point in his historical world of being, value judgment and appreciation. This has to do with new cultural interpolation and encounter, value dilution, extension and enrichment. With colonialism, the historical reality of Africa acquired novel substantial character. The same can be said of mindset and the criteria for value allocations. This is as well the scene that witnessed the emergence of the modern African philosopher and the high mobility trend that has occasioned further cultural intermingling. The significance lies in the fact that African philosophy especially entered a new phase of its existence. The high mobility trend brought in corresponding availability, challenge and utility of ideas. The exportation of cultural experiences into other lands had some sort of equalization in the importation into Africa of other cultural perspectives. The enduring

significance lies in the fact that in the face of all these, Africa could not and will never remain the same. An important aspect of this phenomenon became the presence in the people's way of life of a whole array of diverse values that continues to impact on the African region in a scale not witnessed before in Africa. African Philosophy has, by this fact, got to do with wider and widening thematic-values: cultural, religious, social, economic, political, scientific and technological. African philosophy thus acquires the dynamism of foreseen unending possibilities. Diffusions and counter-diffusions of ideas become real issues in their tendency to be rewarding and as well raise significant problems, questions and challenges and the widening of horizons occasioned by these developments.

It is here that the African philosopher must often wade in. The African philosopher gives a critical account of the challenges that have made Africa, the realities of today and projections beyond the immediate. Anything of relevance to Africa can be a point of interest with some more pointed than others. Investigations can be considered from two main perspectives – one being the tapestry of the other. These issues could be seen and analyzed horizontally as realities for external discourse and, or vertically as the product of internalized cross-cultural exchanges of ideas and experiences. In whichever point one chooses to begin, it will be the case that one fits and relates to the other as metaphysics to physics or as principles to practice and vice versa. What are perhaps too obvious are the horizontal realities – the multiple problems the African has to contend with in his determination to be what he ought to. Not too obvious is the anchorage of the vertical scenes – the relationship of what has been internalized to the problems as externally posed. These are the functions of a modal internal operation – a generated internal crisis resulting from the inability to achieve a favorable or functional collocation of the myriad of experiences and ideas garnered from encounters over time. It is a question of the crisis of African identity and, or conscience resulting from the reality of improper or faulty intellectual digestibility of values that he now claims as his. It is also the formation and consolidation of an amalgam of confused values resulting from the inability to digest and synthesize the right values from a concatenation of experiences that force their way into the African's mind. The great task before the African philosopher is that of resolution of this crisis and the re-orientation of the people towards this resolution. The African needs to be re-oriented to the right values, to the right ordering of the complex realities that now go into the making of the African person. No matter the quantum of experiences the African has accessed into due to cross-cultural contact with the outside or due to intrusive globalization

process, values worth pursuing must stand out validly in the midst of them all. It is the role of the African philosopher to do a proper synthesis of these values and refocus the people on them for appreciation, internalization, utilization and dissemination.

Another issue of real concern is the activities of the Africanist scholar in the investigations of issues that pertain to the African as such. The Africanist scholar though may be African or non-African geographically, is nonetheless immersed in African affairs. He is by that fact involved in the cross-cultural diffusion of values at the intellectual level especially if non-African by race. His presence in African philosophy completes the picture of a system devoted to the tendency at 'broad homogenization' of ideas from the heterogeneity of cultural orientations. This will point towards multicultural philosophy which 'is possible through a synthesis of the various philosophies in the world' (Odia, 2006, p. 283). This broad-based or loose homogenization does not imply the absolute loss of values in a totally new pool of ideas but the tendency to total availability of values to other cultures the way cultural values from other non-African regions have been made present to Africa. This process of increasing availability of ideas from different cultural realities characterizes the new trend of philosophizing in African philosophy. In a way it is a new world view for Africa as well as a reality beyond her frontiers, all of which have impact on issues that bother the African person. The role of the Africanist scholar catalyzes to a reasonable proportion, the tendency of cultures to lose their identities in the global pool of identities in the mega-culture of ideas. The focal question is with reference to increasing availability of regional ideas to a global audience, not necessarily the loss of identity in a new tendency to a homogenization process. It is actually the streamlining of heterogeneous views resulting from cultural diversities. It is the critic of cultures in view of other cultures. Beyond the critical factor, it is the reflective activity that is brought to bear on cultural realities from a stand point. It is again the resultant status of the supposed substance of culture-based contribution after it has gone through the crucible of scholarly criticism. In effect, it goes to portray how a culture fares in its philosophical quest after it has encountered its counterparts in the intellectual arena – using the methods that appeal to the era in question. The Africanist scholar is by no means less interested even if disinterested in Africa's enduring and emerging problems. 'Dinterestedness' it must be remarked does not imply lack of interest but the dispassionate academic view of issues in a spirit of sobriety and philosophic candor. This philosophic sobriety is a key factor in Africa being disposed to view itself from other cultural perspectives. The Africanist scholar thus brings the stamp of disinterestedness and expectant

objectivity to bear on his dissections and synthesizing of those issues that bother the African mind. This is not to be understood from the unilateral sense approach of all Africanist scholars of non-African origin but correctly from the multilateral dimension. With the intellectual activities of the Africanist scholar, the African identity is more concretized and marked because this identity is now more known and made to stand out clearly in a whole multiplicity of other identities, perhaps each also sharply defined. In a global panorama of identities, the identity of one region by the fact of just being there makes easily distinguishable the identities of others. Each stands out for self definition and by so doing, to help define the others. There is this co-relational and mutualizable impact of the realities of geo-loci and the values emanating there-from. What African philosophy gains is the introductory exposure to a variety of insights into other regional values, the possible comparison of methodological approaches to the philosophical perspectives in cultures, the appreciation of equivalences and correlations in philosophical investigative results, the bringing to the fore of the distinctiveness of cultural variations as epitomized in the divergent philosophical considerations of a given reality and other such demonstrable conclusions. What this leaves us with is what could be regarded as global idea centrifugalism – the homogenous-heterogeneous mega-culture of idea generation and availability for the greatest imaginable global audience. The introduction of Asian and Oriental philosophies would for instance not only beef up this wealth of culturally based ideas but also ‘possibly lead to comparative studies in Western, African and Oriental philosophies’ (Makinde, 2010, p. 528). African philosophy will not only gain in contributing its own approach to these realities but also in being actively made identifiable by the fact of her being-with-others.

There is also the question of inter-disciplinarity and intra-disciplinarity values in the philosophic quest for global relevance. The Africanist scholar, above all, demonstrates to us the interrelatedness of disciplines of human knowledge. Is knowledge one? Is it multiple? Whichever angle one chooses to approach the answer, there is always the possibility of acceptable justification. However, supposing we approach it from the monist-perspective, then all we do in our respective fields is the hewing of pieces of the epistemological monolith with whatever instrument at our disposal. In that case the monolithic foundation becomes cause for the justification of demonstrable epistemological heterogeneity. The vast array of fields of human understanding is not necessarily rightly defined by atomization but in practical terms by mutualization and value-syntheses. Disciplines exist to serve man in his environment. Man is the

ultimate recipient of the resulting values of human research or investigative efforts. The emphasis on the environment, quite cogent as it is, remains apt because man, factors in its positive correlation to stabilizing the physical, cultural, economic and social order. The intellectual net spread wide and aimed at the extensive conquest of the ‘mysteries’ of the universe drag their catches before man as the lone primary consumer with others deriving possible accruable values from this primary reach. Man, the integer and centrist, the point of arrival, can only be the reason why knowledge is multiplied in its varied departments, methodologies and conclusions. The issue of interest is the understanding that of necessity, reality lends weight to the existence of this network of paths that connect field to field and eventually bind branches of knowledge together for the utilization of the human agent rather than their atomizations and watertight particularizations. The Africanist scholar helps the philosopher in bringing this reality into a complex of wider consciousness outreach with philosophy in the forefront. The end is the widening of the frontiers of human epistemological conquests in African perspectives and the agglomeration of value-developments associated with the disciplinary intermingling. There is no doubt that philosophy has a role to play here since it tended to define all of knowledge in antiquity and as a matter of fact follows its tributaries in modern times to their natural confluence, the human epistemic centrism. African philosophy takes part in charting clearly the network of pathways to the different departments of human understanding with a view to synthesizing values there-from for the overall good of man and his environment. In doing so, it adds values to other spheres of human endeavor ensuring proportional value representation of various human interests in the knowledge arena in this megaculture of ideas.

Conclusion

The *in globo* extensions and possibilities in African philosophy lies mainly in the demonstration of the universalism in African philosophy. African philosophy does not subscribe to a project of philosophical parochialisms or unnecessary academic departmentalization; again not in the physical sense of academic departmentalization but fundamentally in the spirit of inherent value dissemination. African philosophy, by the fact of the elements that go into its making, tends to project outwards to emerge with global philosophic endeavor and contribute its values to global ideological heritage. The activities of the Africanist scholars especially of the non-African group directly impact on African philosophy and its tendency to grow more into the essential global character. Although it has been suggested in the trajectory of Hountondji, that African philosophy

is better done by the African (Hountondji, 1983, p. 33; p. 63; Masolo, p. 195; Ochieng'-Odhiambo, 1994, p. 66) it is possible that non-African scholars with consummate interest in African affairs may do just as well or better than some Africans in articulating philosophically certain issues that bother the African person. The non-African's interest would be such as would impel him or her to be immersed in African cultural understanding that may not have to exclude the linguistic perspective. This projection may border on the ideal but is nonetheless not unattainable. This makes the interest of the non-African Africanist scholar indeed consummate. The language question cannot be glossed over in African philosophy. African philosophy has to bear a landmark imprint of increasing insertion of African linguistic values of the native tongue in its communication-vehicle, with a view to one day finding opportunity to be done in that language. Without effort in this way, indigenous African technology may never emerge and may never be part of African values to be showcased on the global scene.

African philosophy anticipates in a profitable way that there ought to be the other dimension to its programs. This other dimension cannot be provided by the African as such. The non-African stands the chance to fill in this gap and participate in assessing the African philosophic enterprise from alternative and diverse visions and insights. Sometimes, this has been done in a bad light in not having recourse to objective assessment. This lie can be easily detected and has been detected to the credit of African philosophizing for African philosophy has enough valid tools to reach scientifically based conclusions. The alternative views from the prism of other cultural counterparts could be objectively valid and complementary to the effort to consolidate the identity of African philosophy in spite of its dimensional outreach to the global scene.

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