

**Makurdi Owl Journal of Philosophy
(MAJOP)**

Special Edition, 2025

Philosophy and Social Change

*A Journal of the Department of Philosophy,
Rev. Fr. Moses Orshio Adasu University,
(Formerly Benue State University, Makurdi)*

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Makurdi Owl Journal of Philosophy
Call for Papers

Makurdi Owl Journal of Philosophy is an International Journal of philosophy that is published by the Department of Philosophy, Benue State University, Makurdi. The editorial board hereby calls for articles for publication. It welcomes manuscripts from all areas of philosophy as well as other contemporary themes in the humanities with specific emphasis on emerging perspectives in philosophical scholarship.

SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

- * The title of the paper, author(s) name(s), the institutional affiliation, e-mail address and mobile Phone number only should be on the title page.
- * The abstract should not be more than 250 words and should contain not more than five (5) keywords.
- * Kate Turabian Referencing Style (footnoting) is the acceptable referencing style for publication in the Makurdi Owl. Consequently, prospective contributors should strictly adhere to it.
- * Manuscript should be typed, Times New Roman font type 12 point size double spaced and should not exceed 6,000 words or 15 typed pages.

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- * All manuscripts should be submitted to makurdiowl@gmail.com
- * Manuscripts will be peer-reviewed at a non-refundable fee of N 5,000.00 only and when a paper is adjudged to be publishable after a double-blinded review, the author(s) will be required to forward a clean copy of the paper with a proof of payment of N 20,000.00 publication fee.

For Further enquiries, email makurdiowl@gmail.com or

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Guest Editors Introduction: Philosophy and Social Change

The dynamic and often turbulent character of society imposes a dual responsibility on the social philosopher: first, to diagnose the problems embedded within a given social order, and second, to articulate normative and conceptual frameworks capable of guiding its transformation. In this sense, philosophy is neither an abstract nor detached enterprise as mostly misconstrued by lay persons. Little wonder that G.W.F. Hegel maintains that “the philosopher is invariably a product of his time, situated within a determinate historical and social context that conditions both the questions he asks and the answers he provides”. While philosophy is said to be historically situated, its central concerns about life remain enduring. Questions of leadership, justice, human values, the common good, moral responsibility, law, and civil disobedience persist across epochs, even as their concrete expressions evolve.

What distinguishes philosophy is its capacity to mediate between permanence and change. It interrogates the shifting configurations of social life while seeking conceptual stability and normative clarity. Thus, philosophy does not merely describe social change; it critically evaluates its direction, coherence, and legitimacy. In doing so, it assumes a reflective and, at times, regulative function by offering principled orientation in contexts marked by

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uncertainty and transition. This dual role is captured effectively in John Lewis's observation that philosophy provides both a “framework of reference” and a “world outlook” that shapes individual and collective life. Philosophy, in this regard, operates at the level of second-order reflection: it examines the assumptions underlying social institutions, moral norms, and political commitments. Consequently, it can function either as a stabilising force, preserving an existing order when continuity is warranted, or as a transformative force, challenging entrenched structures when change becomes necessary. Its critical power lies in its ability to question what is often taken for granted and to render implicit assumptions explicit.

The Keynoter, Professor CBN Ogbogbo captures the trend in his “Historicising Philosophy and Social Change in Africa in the 21st Century”. In his view, philosophy in the 21st Century abhors the state of permanence. The ever-changing nature of philosophy is targeted at “utilising the knowledge produced as a skill for solving contemporary problems”. This implies that the centrality of change to philosophical reflection is neither incidental nor superficial, it helps in shaping human values, human ethics and to address pressing social issues like poor character formation, prevailing existential threat, electoral misconduct, kidnapping for ransom, banditry, corruption, and underdevelopment among many other societal vices. African philosophies should not only serve as tools

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for resistance, social cohesion, but emphatically remain a living and evolving tradition in the pursuit of a better future for the continent. Little wonder, Heraclitus' claim that change is the fundamental law of reality to contemporary analyses of social transformation, philosophy has consistently grappled with the conditions under which change constitutes progress rather than degeneration. Not all change is intrinsically valuable; unregulated or misdirected change may result in fragmentation or disorder. The task of philosophy, therefore, is to distinguish between mere movement and meaningful progress by subjecting processes of change to rational and ethical scrutiny.

The first Lead Paper presenter, Professor G.O. Ozumba opens the gateway to destroying the obstacles to development in his paper titled: "Nation-Building to Nationhood: Path to Positive Social Change in Nigeria (1999 – 2025)". He emphasis on "the vicious cycle of manipulations which serve metropolitan interest and the interest of politicians in power. He calls for a radical break from the stranglehold of these financial institutions like the World Bank and International Monetary Fund and their sponsors". Such suggestions can be achieved if younger Africans are trained to have a proper understanding of philosophical systems which require their fuller knowledge of the historical and social conditions that occasioned the emergence the obstacles to development. Philosophical ideas are not produced in a vacuum; they are

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responses to concrete intellectual and existential challenges. Accordingly, the present volume situates its inquiry within the Nigerian context, engaging the concept of social change as both a theoretical construct and a practical imperative.

The second Lead Paper presenter, Professor J. Chidozie Chukwuokolo whose paper “The Philosopher and Social Change at a time like this in Nigeria” calls younger philosophers in Nigeria to live as mirrors of their philosophical milieu, not by continuing the blame game of heaping everything on colonialism and neo-colonialism, but by resolving to change our society and ourselves. His essay has offered a historico-philosophical diagnosis of Nigeria's socio-political condition, identifying structural and conceptual deficiencies that hinder national development. He calls on Nigerian philosophers to live up to this historical responsibility by paying the price for the struggle to change society.

At the theoretical level, the volume clarifies the conceptual architecture of social change, examining its underlying assumptions and operational mechanisms. At the practical level, Zaato Matthew Nor and Frederick Iornongu dwelt on “Landscaping Existence and Human Existence with Philosophy on Holiday” explore by way of demonstrating that existence and human existence devoid of philosophy, is existence lacking in meaningful meaning. It is through these theoretical insights that the supposed

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philosophical abstract can be translated into actionable frameworks within society. This movement from theory to praxis is crucial as shown through the article written by Benedict Michael, Benjamin-Mary Terfa Ageba and Benjamin Sesugh Kulekule titled: “Philosophy and Character Formation in Nigerian Society: Reflections from Plato's Virtue Ethics”, where they have discovered the overwhelming misconception about philosophy being so abstract that it has nothing to do with the practical life or character formation. The trio are out to show how philosophy can help in building or forming human character in the right way for a better society. For them, it is only by doing so that philosophy attains its fullest significance in its capacity to inform and guide concrete human and societal transformation.

Equally significant is the emphasis on character formation as a precondition for sustainable social change. In a context marked by moral ambiguity and institutional fragility, the cultivation of rational agency and ethical integrity becomes indispensable. The internalisation of humanistic values such as responsibility, justice, and respect for others is not merely a private virtue but a public necessity. Sound character formation bridges the gap between normative ideals and lived social realities, enabling individuals to act as agents of transformation. The idea of philosophy contributing immensely to character formation found support with the article sent in by Mary Winifred Eche with the topic “The Role

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of Philosophy in Character Formation: Cultivating Virtue, Reason and Moral Integrity”. She agrees that philosophy as a field of study is highly abstractive, but differs from many other philosophers in the sense that the primary role of philosophy is to study fundamental questions concerning existence, knowledge, values, reason, and all these features culminate in critical thinking that is systematic, creative and can solve complex issues of life. This article makes a significant contribution to the moral renewal of society as far as the relationship between philosophy and social change within the African intellectual tradition is concerned in the 21st century.

By foregrounding the historical dimensions of African philosophical thought, the contributors on character formation have tried to articulate the relevance of nation building not only with material resources, but with character. This is a clear attempt at resisting the marginalisation of indigenous intellectual resources by foreigners and affirmation of the relevance in contemporary mindset on driving the continent to a prosperous future. Solomon Babatunde Kumakpayi, Edwin Dooyum Tor-Anyiin, and Terfa Kahaga Anjov drove the point home in the article “Character Formation in Nigeria: The Role of Ethics”, to show that such an approach not only enriches the conceptual analysis of character formation through social change but also repositions the place of African Ethics within the global “battlefield of ideas.” It

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underscores the responsibility of African philosophers to engage critically with their socio-cultural realities and to articulate context-sensitive solutions. The paper concludes that “education in Nigeria should be refocused on character formation as an essential pathway to combat perennial moral decay, inequality and lack of opportunity. The idea of learning by doing where parents are the first teachers of morality must be encouraged to produce honest, transparent, accountable men and women with self-control, discipline which serve as hallmark of integrity”.

The question of nationhood in Nigeria constitutes another central thematic concern. Uchechukwu Kizito Ogu places emphasis on “Philosophy, Free Speech and Sustainable Democratic Governance” by advancing an integrative and humanistic framework aimed at addressing persistent challenges such as leadership deficits, ethnic fragmentation, and weak social cohesion that form the bedrock of bad governance in most African countries. The article reveals that good governance is responsible for high quality institutions and responsible political leaders that are essential for a plural, inclusive and transparent democracy which has greater respect for human rights and the most vulnerable members of society. In this context, the notion of Afro-constructivism emerges as a significant philosophical orientation that seeks to reconstruct social consciousness and reconfigure national identity in response to the existential demands of the

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present democratic machinations.

By rethinking the conceptual foundations of nationhood, the essays contribute to ongoing efforts to forge a more unified and purposive national community. This leads to the thoughts of Imoter Mark Shenge and Terzungwe Igyom in the article: “Philosophy and Education: A Critical Examination of Pedagogy for National Development”. The article interrogates the relationship between philosophy, education and development. For them, education is not simply the transmission of technical knowledge but as the formative process through which a society reproduces its values, norms, and intellectual orientation for the purpose of contributing the necessary ingredients for nation-building. The contributors argue that genuine development must be anchored in ethical principles, social justice, and respect for human dignity. Without this normative grounding, development risks becoming merely instrumental, lacking both direction and purpose.

Matthew Asemayina Dabu's paper “Ethical Impacts of Artificial Intelligence on Social Change in Contemporary Africa” reaffirms the indispensable role of ethics as one of the branches of philosophy in regulating the activities of Artificial Intelligence in a fast-changing world especially in Africa. Artificial Intelligence is rapidly transforming society at the speed that ethicists find it very difficult to cope with the task of regulating its activities. However,

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integrating critical reflection with practical engagement in the deployment of AI, the paper demonstrates that philosophy remains a vital resource for navigating the complexities of social change in an age of conflict of interest between the builders of the gadgets and their users. The paper succinctly concluded that AI is ultimately relevant to contemporary society, but it must be developed and deployed with the dignity of the human person in mind.

We remain forever grateful to all the participants who took part in the conference and most importantly those who sacrificed their time to make corrections on the papers they sent for vetting and returned the papers for this publication. It is the hope of this team that you will continue to contribute to the production of knowledge for the active development of philosophy and its practical contribution to the progress and human flourishing.

Dr. Terfa Kahaga Anjov

Dr. Imoter Mark Shenge

Guest Editors,

Makurdi Owl Journal of Philosophy's special Edition on
Philosophy and Social Change