RETHINKING THE CULTURAL PHILOSOPHY OF 'UBUNTU' AS AN AFRICAN ENDOGENOUS PATHWAY TO NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND INTERCULTURAL RELATIONS

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Abstract
This paper tries to develop a tenable philosophical idea of Ubuntu that can be more easily acceptable as an endogenous construct for African cultural, social and political development. This is because Ubuntu theory and practice seems to have become emotive, politicized and not inclusive enough due to grandstanding about ownership, poor conceptual and theoretical articulation as well as antagonism from other related foreign dominating worldviews that wish to become the development paradigm for human society. This is worrisome because it raises relational and dialogical issues about meaning from an African viewpoint. The search for an African endogenous paradigm for development is urgent given the real consequences of a (neo)colonial tendency that has threatened the development of most countries due to its dominant paradigms of alienation, exploitation and marginalization. These values have altered or affected African behaviour and thinking. This transformation of the human person has raised issues about agency and the values underlying same. So a development paradigm or philosophy of development for Africa or even the world at large requires an ethical basis for human existence in political and social order. To build a viable and stable endogenous paradigm for development in most African sociopolitical environments requires the use of interconnectedness among human beings as a central premise of a social system and value system. The research question is: What concrete elements and, or values of Ubuntu can be useful as paradigms of an endogenous African development? Specifically, our findings suggest that Ubuntu ethics is defined by a set of human values or qualitative correlates central among which are reciprocity, common good,s peaceful relations, emphasis on human dignity and the value of human life as well as consensus, tolerance and mutual respect. Thus the paper argues for a possibility of utilizing Ubuntu ethical correlates as materials for establishing stable and viable development worldwide and specifically in Africa.

Keywords: Ubuntu, ethics, communalism, community, human person, human dignity, moral values.

Introduction

The problem under study is how to crystalize or precipitate the core features of an acceptable African conception of Ubuntu that can be a carrier of desired human values that in turn can interface with democratic values for rapid progress and development in contemporary Africa. This is an onerous task of building a theory of Ubuntu. Some cultural world views across the world seem to have some traces of Ubuntu as human cooperation, integration and respect. What happens when the observed traces of human "cooperation" are not fair and not even-handed as we see in colonialism and globalization among others? One other serious issue to be tackled immediately is the legitimate concern about the extent to which we can curb the excesses associated with an insular and alienating way of thinking and acting. How do we persuade or influence other members of humanity as stakeholders, to buy into this Ubuntu theory as a cultural philosophy of national development and intercultural relations? Can we rethink an Ubuntu approach to ethics? Can we mainstream Ubuntu as a philosophical argument,

construct or theory that could be beneficial and acceptable to other worldviews, races or belief systems as a viable complementary or alternate indigenous ethical perspective capable of being applied on a global scale?

These questions cannot be swept under the carpet. Put simply, how does Ubuntu accommodate the reality of life itself as a harsh, contentious, conflicted and intriguing global arena? How do you make Ubuntu to work in a chaotic, stratified, conflict-ridden society or global arena? A more direct way to pose the same basic question can be: Can Ubuntu belief system or approach to issues moderate, contain or pacify outcasts, unbelievers, extremists, belligerents, terrorists, dissidents, dictators, bullies, rebels, opposition and outcasts, among others? The other side of the coin is: Can an Ubuntu view of the world or cosmology accommodate victimization, ostracism, unfair treatment of others? I think the answer to this latter question is no, because the core human values of Ubuntu are intrinsically against such excesses of human nature.

We now return to the first question: What strategies can we apply in curbing excesses such as domination, intolerance and ultra-ethnicity as threats to human cooperation? This is a very difficult question because such disruptive elements are a part of the existential predicament of man. These tendencies and the people that encourage and apply them, have nowhere to go. We must live with one another. How to live together is the question. Is it by contention, evasion or engagement? One way of responding is to suggest that the consequences of ostracism and alienation of bellicose members of humanity pose a problem in its own right. Fighting them or fleeing from them, seem to be two opposite reactions that have one end which is pushing them away; causing more commotion. Fleeing means one is afraid?[1] Fighting means one has descended to the level of the troublesome elements? There needs to be an incremental middle ground or philosophy of engagement or dialogue under treaties or agreements- legal or conventions, boundaries-legal or political, aid and assistance- humanitarian efforts, among others. These are by no means perfect solutions rather the focus is to see these elements as part of life and develop progressive strategies of managing the unending struggle of seeking ways of containing them. The question remains: How can we get human beings to cooperate with others? Should this be done through threats, dialogue, practices, conventions, war, rules, regulations and laws? Should we use a combination of the above?

We need to strengthen those who seek peace with the tools of deterrence and curb the excesses of those who seek turmoil by depriving them of offensive capabilities of conceptual and physical tools. We should empower the promoters of peace and disarm the chaotic and belligerent ones. We need to teach the trouble makers to live in peace with others. What happens when trouble making is in someone's or some group's DNA? Do we tolerate genocide against them? No. Do we create their own territory or State for them to live alone? Will they live amiably as neighbors? As such, we are looking for a holistic, inclusive, consultative and integrative theory that apprehends the diversity of humanity and thoughtfully weighs the repercussions of such. We need to look for solutions by starting with the basics of human nature or human essence. Can a critical re-examination of the knowledge of Ubuntu lead us in this direction? It is possible to reestablish the notion of Ubuntu as one of the major pillars of African cultural identity in

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[1] Philip Ogo Ujomu, "A Theory of the Indigenous Ubuntu Ethical Perspective", *Етика Наука Образование [Ethics Science Education]* Издание на" Лаборатория по приложна академична етика" и катедра" Философски науки" (Online) Брой 1, 2023: 49-60; Philip Ogo Ujomu, "Ubuntu African Philosophy or 'Ubuntu' as a Philosophy for Africa", *Philosophical* Alternatives, XXXIII, 5. 2024: 53-90.

the modern world and to offer a unique and constructive African solution to an African problem and also offer a formulation of it as a possible ethical and or, socio-political endogenous contribution to a divided and distressed world driven by domination and which in turn fairly challenges the Africans to show their true and enduring worth as an ancestral race of human beings. In the light of the above, the idea of Ubuntu is being re-conceptualized and proposed afresh as a possible response to the age-long philosophical question: How ought people to relate with one another? What rules, knowledge and norms can help human beings relate properly with others ethically, socially and politically? There are established views on human nature and human behavior in a social and political context. As shown above, Ubuntu can be viewed religiously, culturally or historically but that is not our purpose here. We seek a philosophical appraisal of Ubuntu. Is this possible? Or to put the question differently: What is distinctive about Ubuntu as a philosophical idea suitable for the development of Africa and for prompting peace among humanity in this modern age?

It seems that at the center of the threat to peace among individuals, nations and the world at large is the issue of "value clash" or a conflict of human interests. A value is something desired or chosen or preferred. It is something important or of interest. A value is a norm; a standard of behavior and of measuring behavior. The way someone thinks or lives can reveal his values and the way that he intends to engage other elements in the world. We can distinguish between the subjectivist and objectivist view of values where the subject is the embodiment or carrier of a value and the object is the end or goal or purpose of our values.[2] Every human society possesses values that it cherishes and defends. Societies may agree on key values that can be shared and upheld.

A society defines and defends certain shared values; meaning that the society is a carrier or driver of values; it is a value-system,[3] or a system of values,[4] a goal oriented system having its own voice, plans, mission, structure, officers, choice and action.[5] Put simply, the society is a purposive organization with a set of well-defined values that have taken root.[6] The values of a society are a signpost or mirror of the choice and performance of a people or nation.[7] Human and humane values are required for pursuing the common good.[8] Issues may arise if what a person or group or institution chooses or desires, competes or disagrees or conflicts with the things that other persons, groups or institutions desire. This situation can become life-threatening, if there are no clear

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[2] Nicholas Maxwell, "Are there Objective Values?" *The Dalhousie Review*, 79(3) Autumn, 2009: 301-317; Matjaz Potrc, "The subjective and the objective in Veber's ethics and in moral particularism", *ANTHROPOS*, 1/4, str. 2005: 33-44; Andrzej S. Zaliwski, "Information – is it Subjective or Objective?", *Triple C* 9(1), 2011: 77-92. ISSN 1726-670X http://www.triple-c.at CC: Creative Commons License. Birger Hjørland, "Information: Objective or Subjective/Situational?" *Journal of the American Society for Information Science and Technology,* 58(10), 2007:1448–1456. DOI: 10.1002/asi.20620. John T. Buchanan, "Objectivity and subjectivity in the decision making process", *Annals of Operations Research*. 80, 1998: 333-345.

[3] Harry. M. Johnson, *Sociology: A systematic Introduction*. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1961: 15, 16, 20 & 21.

[4] George F. McLean, "Institutional Patterns in Social Transformation", *Democracy and Values in Global Times,* George F. McLean, Robert Magliola and Joseph Abah (eds). Washington D.C.: Catholic University of America, 2004, 209.

[5] Calvin P. Van Reken, "The Church's role in social justice", *Calvin Theological Journal,* 34, 1999:198.

[6] Philip Ogo Ujomu, "Democratic Institutions, Participation and the problems of social engineering in an African nation-state", *Perspectives on Democracy and Development in Post-Military Nigeria.* Kunle Ajayi and Bonnie Ayodele (eds), Ibadan: Julius and Julius, 2004, 33.

[7] McLean, "Institutional Patterns in Social Transformation", 209-212.

[8] Ujomu, "Democratic Institutions", 31-33.

pathways of reconciling, bargaining or negotiating such differences. It means that certain differences in values in a society may occasion instability, insecurity, dislocation and disorder. Despite such challenges a way out exists through human values.

There are some basic human values that cut across humanity which may serve as the bedrock for value change in the social order or change in the value system of society. Common values shared by humans irrespective of creed, association or upbringing, include the desire for self-preservation, ownership of property, freedoms and wellbeing. These values drive the quest for peace, prosperity and progress among human beings. Peace, even in its minimal definition can only be attained through the establishment and sustenance of stable and viable social order as a means of attaining human freedom and dignity. How can we modify our social or group thinking for improved performance in the contemporary era?[9] What values should drive human behavior for peace and progress in this age? Values may be seen as things we desire or hold to be important. Our concern is with basic human values that cut across humanity such as a desire for self-preservation, associating for mutual help, a natural sentiment of justice and pursuit of pleasurable and productive activities, among others. Such values may serve as the bedrock for value change in the social order or change in the value system of society to entrench stable, viable and inclusive social and political systems especially in Africa.[10]
Some Matters arising from Conceptualizing Culture and Development

The human beings and the things he or she does (good, bad and the ugly) are important to cultural, social and political life. This is the perennial problem of agency. It is clear that life-promoting human behaviour is critical to the survival of the human race. The question arises: How can human behavior be managed or controlled technologically, politically or ethically for optimal performance? Conceptualizing development traditionally compels us to see it specifically in terms of the technological, economic or political advancement of a country or race. While this is reasonable, yet, there is the greater imperative of construing the development question holistically so as to highlight the concern for humanity. Here, the holistic approach suggests on the one hand, the pooling together of concomitant aspects of development such as we have in the core values combined to form the Millennium Development Goals or Sustainable Development Goals [MDG or SDG]. On the other hand, a holistic view, in a more important way, highlights a man-centered ethical view of development, without which even the technological and physical could be contradicted and compromised. This man-centered view, in turn, accommodates major humanistic and ethical elements or dimensions that define and promote human survival. Can we say that philosophy is capable of promoting human values and human survival thus leading to development? How does culture interface with development?

Using the tool of a prolegomena, we may review some meta-logical and meta-philosophical issues on the theme of this edition of the journal. To start with, philosophy means many different things according to time, place and peoples. Yet, we may agree that across the ages, one thing that is viewed as certain is that a philosopher's reflective ability is needed to improve the state of human individual and group reasoning so as to achieve a better situation for humanity and society. More specifically, philosophy is

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[9] Philip Ogo Ujomu, "African Philosophy and African Development: Philosophical Discourse on the Relevance as an Academic Discipline and as a Thought System", *Philosophy and Life International Journal,* 1(3), 2019: 68.
[10] Jon Elster, *The Cement of Society. A study of social order.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991: 4-5.

interested in developing a critical, intuitive, introspective, perceptive and logical thinking in human beings. This elevated mode of thinking is needed if we are to be able to break down inimical tendencies such as the cult of personality, demagoguery, extremism, ignorance, impunity, messianic tendencies, Nazism, prejudices, racism, siege mentality, stereotypes, terrorism and similar tendencies often found among human beings. Such tendencies pose ethical, legal, socio-political and cultural threats to humanity. What, if at all, is the place of philosophy in human development and human culture?

Let us focus on culture for a brief moment. What is culture? Some scholars tried to enter the study of culture by seeking to identify its components or constituents according to its core features or according to the way different disciplines understood it. This diversity of approach though suitable from the perspective of definitional analysis, further triggered ambiguity, ambivalence and contestation of meaning which probably created more problems that solutions in my opinion. A more serious contestation has arisen because a major perception we have is that the idea of culture is also contested concept because of the claim or suggestion that it is a total way of life of a people. Thus this connotes that there is no identified specific essence to it? Anybody can decree anything about it. This is worrisome. So questions arise: Is culture fixed, dynamic, subject to perception, relative, omnibus? Herein, we are looking at culture epistemologically from a point of intellectual entry.

Another more serious question may arise from a point of intellectual re-entry into the issue of culture: Is culture nebulous? Or what are its essentials if any? So we are now interrogating its ontology and phenomenology. How do we evaluate this matter? What options are available? Accordingly, one solution is to argue that; if the clearly defined provinces of education, politics, morality, law, science, ethos, life-world, diet, dress codes, are 'so-called' constituent parts or reflections of culture, but now in themselves distinct spheres of knowledge, then it seems epistemologically and metaphysically safer not to hide these domains under culture anymore. Rather, it is possible to lean towards the concrete definitive discourses on economy, education, philosophy, politics and religion among others, as exact domains of knowledge whose parameters are largely clear and known. So can these exact specialized spheres of knowledge stay outside the purview of culture?

A different solution is to argue that; if some other scholars traditionally have claimed that culture has no definition by viewing it holistically as a total way of life; a osmology, then we should probably see culture through the conceptual (exhibition or replacement) analysis of its constituents or members; material and non-material culture,[11] cultural universals and particulars,[12] intercultural relations,[13] and some who illustrate culture

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[11] Will Kymlicka, *Liberalism, Community, and Culture*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989; Will Kymlicka, *Contemporary Political Philosophy: An Introduction*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990; Will Kymlicka, "Communitarianism", *Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, Donald M. Borchert. (ed). Second Ed. New York: Thomson Gale, 2006, 368-369.

[12] Kwasi Wiredu, *Cultural Universals and Particulars: An African Perspective*. Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1996; Kwasi Wiredu, "Are there Cultural Universals?", *The African Philosophy Reader*, Pieter H. Coetzee and A. P. J. Roux (eds). London: Routledge, 1998, 31-39; Olusegun Oladipo, *Philosophy and the African Experience: The contributions of Kwasi Wiredu*, Ibadan: Hope, 1996; Olusegun Oladipo, *Conceptual Decolonization in African Philosophy: 4 Essays*, Ibadan Hope, 1995.

[13] Amitai Etzioni, The end of Cross-Cultural relativism. *ALTERNATIVES,* 22(2), 1997: 177-189; Philip Ogo Ujomu, "Cultural Relations, Human Communication and the Conditions for Intercultural Relations: A Critique of Anta Diop and Kwasi Wiredu", *Language Attitude and Language Conflict in West Africa*, H. Igboanusi (ed). Ibadan: Enicrownfit, 2001, 165-188.

using the idea of cultural 'goods' attributes or products. Others even talked about human nature or human rationality as a basis or substrate of culture. Some talk of the distinction between, (permit me to use Igbo language here,) *odinana*- the natural world that existed before man came- earth, trees, soil, rivers, mountains, which determine what man can do physically (living, agriculture) and socially (tradition and customs) in a particular environment and *omenana*- the social world created by man such as -values, meanings, laws, conventions, morals, religion, schools, rites of passage, institutions as social structures and functions which may be altered.[14]

A third way of looking at the issue is to consider culture through the lens of the theory of family resemblance of Wittgenstein in the work *Philosophical Investigations*; so that no human being or group may have all the traits or 'goods', but a substantial majority of traits or 'goods,' will cut across the different races in varying combinations. Put simply, one way of applying this theory holds that we have a basket or repository of permanent cultural 'goods' (such as human nature, natural world, etc) and then we have evolving cultural 'goods'(nurture, training, education, skills, trade, farming, science, philosophy, religion, diet). Today, human rationality and science and technology mediate these traits or goods so that there are adjustments seen as "necessity is the mother of invention." These 'cultural' goods or products, from observation and reflection illustrate the challenges facing aspects of our common humanity and social particularities. A view of specific parts of the world show that one race may have a comparative advantage of a prominent set of cultural 'good'- traits, value or attitude (positive or negative) much more than another race elsewhere. For instance, the Germans may have transcendentalism, exceptionality, ingenuity, social order and discipline more than Americans who stand more strongly on freedoms, pragmatism and republicanism. Some of the African races may cherish communalism, authority, respect, hospitality, kinship ties, aspects of familyhood or "ubuntu" tendencies more than other races. The negative side of these values can be that too much freedom can lead to license, permissiveness where anything goes socially and morally. Also too much superiority complex can lead to the feeling that others are not as human- racism, xenophobia and colonial tendencies among others. Again, too much respect for age and authority can lead to fear, docility and inability to be assertive and proactive. There are virtues and their corresponding vices.

A final way out is to leave this entire spectrum behind and ask the key question differently; what are the things that are not culture? What things are marginal to culture? For the moment, suffice it to say that the cultural expression or life a people can be easily seen in their rationality; the way they generate ideas, select and transmit their categories of understanding, meaning and values among others. In this essay we may agree with Oladipo who identifies a problem of knowledge which is the convolution in discovering "how to acquire and apply scientific knowledge and how to utilize man's accumulated wisdom for promoting human wellbeing."[15]

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[14] Christopher Ejizu, "Healing As Wholeness: The African Experience", *Africana Marburgensia*, XX(1), 1987: 3-19; Christopher U. M. Ezekwugo. "Omenana and Odinana in the Igbo World: A Philosophical Appraisal", *Africana Marburgensia,* xxiv(2), 1991: 3-18.
[15] Olusegun Oladipo, "Emerging issues in African Philosophy", *International Philosophical Quarterly* (March), xxxviii, I(149), 1998: 71

There is a particular conception of culture that adopts the idea of an interface between the age-old thoughts and actions of human beings and the need for identity, dignity, development and intercultural relations in this era of scientific and technological modernity. We may also learn from Cabral a leading light of African decolonization efforts. He says that culture is that instrument that will pave the way for a new Africa. This is so because according to him "culture, the fruit of history, reflects at every moment the material and spiritual reality of society."[16] Cabral says that we face the problem of choice "which may be called the dilemma of cultural resistance."[17] This resistance is however targeted at something. To this end, Cabral pushes for a national liberation that will pitch itself against "the principal characteristic, common to all kinds of imperialistic domination, the negation of the historical process of the dominated people by means of violently usurping the free operation of the process of development of the productive forces."[18] Cabral therefore simply calls for a new way of looking at culture as an instrument of cultural resistance especially where culture has a vital and effervescent ideological content and value which is represented by the dissatisfaction and rebellion that drive the physical and historical reality of the dominated society.

Furthermore, another way of understanding the idea of culture is to use a metaphor that explains the dynamics of culture and human existence. To paraphrase and summarize, a Spanish philosopher Ortega Y' Gasset was suggesting that we view the entirety of life as a sinking ship on the high sea and that we should view culture as our life boat or life jacket. The point is simply that there is nothing much we can do about the predicaments of life (at least, so he feels). However, there is a lot that we can do about the way we try to cope with or survive the tribulations of life (I strongly agree, some schools of philosophy, especially the Stoics held this view that calmness in the face of life's challenges and self-love form the fundamental basis of fruitful human action in such our world beset with tribulations). Accordingly, if our life boat or life jacket (culture) is torn or worn out then we cannot survive the sinking ship (life) for any reasonable length of time. If the life jacket or culture is compact and adaptable, then our chances of surviving in life as something that is basically beyond our control (through the operations of fate, providence, history, *force majeure* and so on) becomes better or higher.[19]

One key idea arising thereof in the various re-enactments of the meaning of culture is the idea of life as continuous path of struggle, learning, experience and adapting. In short, culture, among other things, is the search for human dignity and freedom for the African peoples who confront a continuous quest for, and an imperative of survival, security and progress at the material and ideological levels. We may argue that though Cabral rightly discusses the influence of a strong cultural identity as a factor of resistance against domination, more importantly in this article, we push further to say that a strong cultural identity embodies the power to learn and evolve continuously, to revise and rethink our actions and outcomes. This is fallibilism- the ability to correct oneself in the face of error and to sustain or improve on the beneficial things one is doing correctly. Put simply,

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[16] Amilcar Cabral, "National Liberation and Culture (Return to the Source)", *African Philosophy: An Anthology,* Chukwudi Eze (ed). Massachusetts: Blackwell, 261; Philip Ogo Ujomu and Felix Olatunji, "Cultural Identity as Security and a Philosophy of Development for Africa: Reflections on Amilcar Cabral", *Philosophy.* Философия Political Philosophy Политическафилософия, 29(1), 2020: 68-84.

[17] Cabral, "National Liberation", 260; Ujomu and Olatunji, "Cultural Identity as Security".

[18] Cabral, "National Liberation", 261; Ujomu and Olatunji, "Cultural Identity as Security".

[19] Philip Ogo Ujomu, "Philosophy, Rationality and Decision-Making: Basic Techniques and Tools Of Building The Human Mind", *Philosophy. Философия*, 28(3), 2019: 259-260.

cultural identity through the proper use of philosophy, law, science and technology, etc, remains a major weapon for development and equitable relational interaction.

However, not all aspects of culture are relevant for social change. Given the reality of cultural universals and particulars and the need for intercultural relations,[20] we may argue that the ethical part of culture such as this paper is trying to develop using the trope of Ubuntu, is one of the aspects of social or cultural change that is needed. The ethical part of culture is a major foundation of sociopolitical order and thus requires the tool of rationality to simplify and clarify its scope.

The Rationality Question and the Quest for Social and Political Order
Human beings continually ask questions about effective strategies of sociality or living together and cooperating for the common good. They also seek ways of improving and accomplishing better and greater results. This is a key issue in the human ethical and political realms of life. Organizing human beings in the social and political order is based on a rational order or conceptual scheme construed as an enduring and involved pattern or form of life based on stability across generations and abstract relations.[21] Rationality focuses on understanding of actions, beliefs, conscious choice, imagination, freedom, decision-making and intelligibility.[22] The human being is privileged to be gifted with rationality by nature and nurture. It is primarily a concern about the meaning and transmission of viable and sustainable human behavior that Africans have evolved over the ages. Questions can arise about rationality. At the heart of the rationality question or problem remains the challenge to the Africans: Who are you? What can you do? What can your culture, philosophy, politics, science and tradition do? What is the contribution of your worldview or life-world to general humanity? These questions are urgent and important to all governments, tribes and societies in Africa because some features of our African ways of life especially our tradition and practices, raise questions about our levels of civility, sophistication, adaptability and creativity of our ethical or moral behavior, and the intellectual foundations of such behavior. As such the Africans need to exercise a conscious choice or preference for sociopolitical values and cultural institutions they will uphold and sustain, either through a cocktail of values, or by erecting a core overarching value that drives all activities.

The establishment and sustenance of shared human values is central to peace and progress among human beings. Such include;

> . . . the desire for self-preservation, basic human freedom and wellbeing. These values drive the quest for peace, prosperity and progress among human beings. Peace, even in its minimal definition can only be attained through the establishment and sustenance of stable and viable social order as a means of attaining human freedom and dignity.[23]

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[20] Philip Ogo Ujomu, "Meaning, Translation and Cross-Cultural Communication: An African Philosophical Debate", *HUMANISTYKA I PRZYRODOZNAWSTWO*, 28, 2022: 231-245.
[21] Joseph L. Esposito, "Science and Conceptual Relativism", *Philosophical Studies,* 31, 1977: 270.
[22] Gordon Reddiford, "Rationality and Understanding", *Philosophy,* 50(191), 1975: 19; Ujomu, "Philosophy, Rationality and Decision-Making", 252.
[23] Philip Ogo Ujomu and Anthony Ibrahim Bature, "Conflicting Values, Ubuntu Philosophy and Peace Building: An African Experience", *Culture and Dialogue*, 6, 2018: 177. brill.com/cad koninklijke brill nv.

In Africa a major focus ought to be on designing or developing a viable social philosophy that promotes freedom and dignity within our traditions; inside how we think and generate meaning that is transmissible across generations. This has to do with ways that human values can be handed down to human beings for living together for a common purpose, resolving conflicts where and when such arise as well as living relationally according to the dictates of humanity. Can Ubuntu ethical and political correlates fill this void? The search for an African endogenous paradigm for holistic and inclusive development in relation to the world order is urgent and unending, given the real consequences of a (neo)colonial tendency has threatened the development of most countries due its dominant paradigms of domination, alienation, exploitation and marginalization.

Africans and the rest of the world have offered the following as possible pathways for renaissance in our common humanity: Ubuntu, Communism, Community, Communitarianism, Communalism, Globalization, Globalism, Multi-Culturalism, Cosmopolitanism, Integrative Humanism, Complementarism, Conversational Thinking, Universalism, *Ibuanyidanda*, "I-Thou Relations," and so on. Are these options viable? What guiding philosophy should attract our attention? This transformation of the human person has raised issues about agency and the human and social values underlying same. So a development paradigm or philosophy of development for Africa or even the world at large, requires an ethical basis for human existence in political and social order. In order to build a viable and stable endogenous paradigm for development in most African socio-political environments we attempt to use the main pillar of interconnectedness among human beings which is central to a stable and social system and viable value system to underscore some key moral and democratic values required for human liberation and transformation.

There is a struggle about the role of the human being (in her individuality) as the primary material of the universe; a human being is social and participatory and thus is inadvertently involved in the affairs of humanity. Are there arguments in favour of putting our collective humanity as a priority? Can there be an ethical outlook that promotes this tendency? Given the above situation, why ought human beings to desire a humane, cooperative and humanistic social and political order? An answer could be that in every generation human beings struggled with control or strength versus helplessness or weakness and so human beings sought to work together to accomplish the insurmountable or what one person found unattainable. Like the ancient philosophers of security such a Plato will say; security is beauty; beauty is harmony; harmony is when everything is working together for a common purpose. Working together for a common purpose is the teleology of sociality understood through its moral, political and cultural core. For our purposes, there are two traditional ways of maintaining order in a human community; the social and the political.

First, is the political order: This is a means of social control based on the obedience to law and order as well as adherence to the rule of law by government and citizens of larger societies or countries. In such a society, laws are central to peace and development because these embody properly laid down rules by the political and legal authorities, which are binding on all members of society without exception. In the political order, affairs are conducted formally or officially and the focus is on statecraft for the common good as well as political authority for the collective security of all. However, the political order is always under attack by the paradox of the "organic nature of the State and institutions," external subversive and insidious forces of deception, manipulation,

terrorism, fraud, ethnicity, impunity, mistrust, nepotism among the rulers and the ruled. This truncates efforts to attain the public good within the political order.[24] The political order is 'completed' by the social order.

Secondly, the social order presumes regularity, stability, predictability and organisation arising from kinship ties, associations and friendly relations. Organization and control of social life are central to social order using the tool of negotiation and bargaining arising from balancing the conflicts of interests existing among individuals and the society. The social order operates within smaller groups such as ethnicities, tribes, family as a system of control. When the social order is expanded into a social system or scheme of social relations then it can also be applied to larger human formations such as countries using rules, regulations, laws, moral codes and cultural practices. In this manner, a social order defines the political, economic and social roles, rights and duties of people. Unfortunately, a social order is easily threatened by the antagonism and restiveness of dominant or provincial ethnic and religious groups that have put their directing principles and values of egoism, hate speech, intolerance and injustice ahead of human values. What kind of social and political order is required for stability and development in this era of modernity?

Modernity is about a departure from the old ways to the present-day features of; technology, rule of law, enlightenment through education and exploration, urbanity, cosmopolitan and multicultural life forms as well as globalization. The core values of enlightenment and modernity are needed to live in modernized environments or technologically driven, urbanized, multicultural and globalized society. In some parts of the African continent governments and citizens appear to struggle with negative traits such as discrimination, disobedience to the rule of law, egoism, intolerance, oppression, ethnicity and religious bigotry, foreign domination, sexism, political and financial corruption and lack of equity among groups. Also there is a lack of efficiency and fair treatment by agencies and institutions as well as an inability to be civil in utterance and conduct within the political and social order hence the threat to peace. Despite modernity and civilization in the contemporary Africa, some knowledge and practices considered anti-humanistic and anachronistic are still being practiced. Is this acceptable?

There is always a need for balance in our thoughts and actions as human beings. As noted earlier, the problems associated with agency or human behaviour are real having impacts on daily life, institutions and value systems. The Africans must also accept the incontrovertible fact that some of the problems they are currently suffering within and outside the continent are equally self-created and self-inflicted due to over dependency on alien ideas and the imitation of exogenous values as well as the unfinished struggle around cultural identity and, or national culture. Knowledge in the major areas of science and technology for African development requires the use of adaptable endogenous knowledge systems adopted by the Africans. The connection between philosophy and science for the development of Africans can be construed thus: One way that philosophers can contribute to the development of Africa is to promote a culture of learning positive mental attitudes and social values; a system of rationality or reasoning among African governments, agencies and civil populace that is more scientific; systematic, coherent, constructive, calculative, objective, purposive, critical and

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[24] Ujomu and Bature, "Conflicting Values, *Ubuntu* Philosophy and Peace Building", 184-190; Philip Ogo Ujomu, "Africa's Crisis of Social and Political Order and the Significance of Ubuntu Human Values for Peace and Development", *Culture and Dialogue*, 2020: 97-115.

argumentative. We are trying to establish a pattern of scientific reasoning and attitude to life that challenges and relegates the following: fear of the unknown or something better than us, needless aggression, lack of foresight ignorance, impunity, anachronism, intolerance, hate speech, xenophobia, oppression, alienation, rashness, messianic tendencies, siege mentality of the ruler, terrorism, superstitions, sectarianism, self-help or jungle justice, rabble rousing and demagoguery.

The Africans are faced with an urgent demand or task of developing a set of scientific and philosophical traditions or systems that is highly adaptive and capable of solving theoretical and practical problems arising from our existence in a modern world where Africans are currently seen as lagging behind in world economy, international politics as well as science and technology. What connects human thoughts to theory formulation and then to practice or social life? Can the Africans survive without strong endogenous inclinations, analytical reasoning, theoretical analysis and conceptual frameworks for conceptualizing, controlling and explaining reality? Thought or thinking is essential to human life anywhere. Any human being that exhibits problems with thinking deeply and properly may ultimately pose a danger to himself and others. This is a clear evidence of the value of good reasoning or logic, which theoretically, formally, systematically and scientifically separates good thinking from bad thinking using arguments, rules, axioms, formal systems, meta-logic and so on. Logic is important to human life, because just as an athlete trains the body rigorously to excel in the mental and physical aspects of sports, most academic disciplines and their sub-branches train the human mind mostly, to become calculative, systematic, adept and rigorous in processing ideas and mental categories. What type of logic do the Africans need to make a global difference or wriggle out of their numerous existential problems?

Specifically, the Africans are now challenged on the need to think right; allow their thought to dwell on posterity using adaptable and ingenious basic human values, cultural and political values that promote life and well-being such as consensus, fair treatment, critical appraisal, respect for others and knowledge, lawful behavior and tolerance of diversity of human experience for building stable and viable social and political order on the continent. Time is not on their side. Global modernity and civilization in so far as such relate to the contemporary African situation shows that some knowledge and practices considered anachronistic are still being practiced on the continent. Is this progressive? Is there a possibility of reform, transformation or change for the better?

The Ubuntu Factor as a Philosophical Framework: Scope and Meaning
The human being's 'humanness' or the idea of being 'human' is the key feature of Ubuntu. While Shivji views this matter from the perspective of Ujamaa and Pan-Africanism,[25] this article goes further to analyze the notion of being 'human' in relation to the idea of Ubuntu especially focusing on the bridge between human values as well as moral values, democratic values and cultural values. . Relational existence and interconnectivity are the bastions of Ubuntu, which specifically for our purpose herein, is construed to mean the interdependency of human beings; the idea that a human being is a complete person to the extent that the society gives him or her recognition as a person

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[25] Issa Shivji. "Ujamaa, Ubuntu and Reimagining Pan-Africanism." *CODESRIA Bulletin Online*, 9, 2024: 1. Keynote Address at the International Conference on Ujamaa, Ubuntu and New Pan Africanisms, Arusha, 23-25 May 2024.

and allows him or her to realize the full potentials and benefits of being a human person.[26] What are the correlates of a viable conception of Ubuntu?

i. Ubuntu can thus be seen as a type or conception of humanism; it is centered on the predominance, dignity and well-being of human beings.

ii. The ethical basis of ubuntu rests on the belief in, and realization of our common humanity; our sense or perception of being part of the whole human family both relationally and idealistically, such as allows a human being to realize the full potentials and benefits of being a human person.[27]

iii. The philosophical basis of ubuntu rests on the belief in, and realization of our common humanity; our sense or perception of being part of the whole human family,[28] such that ultimately, human actions are tied to stability and peace *via* humane, fair, compassionate and productive interaction and interrelations between human beings using rules of cooperation, communication, community and compassion as directing principles.[29]

Some of the above are clearly attributes within the purview of human values. When we attempt to link the highlights of a view of Ubuntu to the African conception of the person and human society, then our aim is to seek a combination of the corporeal, mental, spiritual and social aspects as defining features of human personality. So Ubuntu emphasizes on the importance of other people or the society in the life of any human being. It highlights the fact that a person cannot do without others. Our individual lives are intricately and inextricably tied to the lives of others and we all need to cherish these interrelations and interconnections.

Some of the essentials of Ubuntu human values remain the emphasis on the fact that such interconnection should be guided by values such as kindness, respect, openness, accommodation and willingness to go beyond selfish interest and work for others' interests.[30] Human interaction, teamwork and networking among human beings are the key features of Ubuntu correlates of reciprocity and the common good. Ubuntu could then be conceived as a normative system that seeks to define the social nature of human beings. Human beings are social because they need to, or desire to, live together. Human beings are also social because, they need to cooperate with each other, in order to attain the common good. Such qualities are significant and valuable because of the opportunity they provide for human beings to live in a productive, peaceful and purposeful manner. Compassion is a moral virtue and a moral value. Respect for others and compassion combine together to foster peace and development.

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[26] Isaac M. T. Mwase, *Aspects of Ubuntu for International Research Ethics*. Fifth Annual Teaching Skills in International Research Ethics (TaSkR) Workshop, April 17 – 19, Indiana University: Center for Bioethics, 2013: 1-27.

[27] Mwase, *Aspects of Ubuntu for International Research Ethics,* 1-27.

[28] Thaddeus Metz, "Ubuntu as a moral theory and human rights in South Africa", *African Human Rights Law Journal,* 11, 2011: 532-559; Faustin Ntamushobora, *The Philosophical Presuppositions of Ubuntu and its Theological Implications for Reconciliation.* Daystar University Centre for Research, Publications and Consultancy Working Paper Series. Number DU/2012/007, 2012: 1-13; Mwase, *Aspects of Ubuntu for International Research Ethics*, 1-27; Augustine Shutte, *Philosophy for Africa.* Cape Town: Marquette University press & University of Cape Town UCT Press, 1993; Mogobe B. Ramose, "The philosophy of Ubuntu and Ubuntu as a philosophy", *Philosophy from Africa: A text with readings*, P. H. Coetzee and A. P. J. Roux (eds). Cape Town: Oxford University Press of Southern Africa, 2003, 230-238; Philip Ogo Ujomudike, "Ubuntu Ethics", *Encyclopedia of Global Bioethics.* H. Ten Have (ed). Switzerland: Springer International, 2016, 2869-2881.

[29] Ujomudike, "Ubuntu Ethics", 2869-2881.

[30] Ujomudike, "Ubuntu Ethics", 2869-2881.

From the above analysis, we may say that no one idea can be absolute across the world or perennial for all time, in this complex, mutable, fallible, temporal, relative and finite human and natural world. Given this fact, it follows that we need to be critical of any position that imposes on others, a unitary or mono-logical way of living in the world; of doing philosophy. Any effort to deliver a one-sided (parochial, dominating, colonial, intolerant) view of the universe, as the gospel truth, undermines the very core value of tolerance, openness and criticism that the diversity of humanity which Ubuntu and our common humanity points us towards. Perhaps, philosophy, despite its many weak points real and imagined, also points us towards variety and flexibility of thought and ideas. A diversity of humanity is central to even the survival of man and the world.

A way that the endogenous ethical variant of Ubuntu emerges as a possible solution to the unending problem of community is to offer its voice to the troubling question of power relations among human beings and their need for living together peacefully for a common purpose. For the society to enjoy peace, order, security and development, all stakeholders and social actors need to revise the ethical dimension of their lives, along Ubuntu lines, focusing on the foundations of society and the development of moral principles in the practical cultural situations of African public affairs. Put simply, we may argue now further for the place of man in the cosmos or existence. Understood from the point of existence or cosmology human beings have only this planet- earth to call their own for now. The oppressive, one-sided, reckless and careless use of the world's resources that have led to climate change and global warming have the prospect of extreme consequences that bring to the forefront once again the need for human beings to live together for mutual cooperation and the common good. The quest for the common good has been an ancestral quest since man appeared on earth and in this era we are looking at the prospects of Ubuntu ethical and political values for fulfilling this desire or agenda of peaceful and progressive human interconnectedness, cooperation, respect and interaction.

Some Ingredients of a Meta-ethical Justification of Ubuntu Ethical Values as Social Values: Mutual Cooperation, Common Good and Reciprocity

In what ways can we sustain social and political order in Africa? We need to focus on human and humane values.[31] We need to balance divergent individual and social interests for peace and development to be established and sustained across Africa. One of the directing principles or 'binding force' of all social action ought to be the sovereign will or the conscious and concerted efforts of citizens' and governments' all over the continent, to create avenues for peace and development. We may ask: "Are there African values which need to be preserved, revitalized, developed further and adjusted to our time of rapid change?"[32]

Basic African values that have been affirmed over the ages include; hospitality, consensus, respect for the elders, family ties and communalism among others. Are such values still relevant in this age? Can we utilize or modernize them to build humane social orders around the continent? Can expand respect to include the respect for human dignity of all, and respect for superior ideas and superior ability? Can we expand family ties to include relational family-hood of all human beings? These are the issues of concern.

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[31] Kwasi Wiredu, "Our Problem of Knowledge: Brief Reflections on Knowledge and development in Africa", *African Philosophy as Cultural Inquiry*, Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2000: 182.
[32] Hans-H. Munker, "Which Values for Africa of the 21st Century?" *Africana Marbugensia.* 17(Special Issue), 1998: 79.

Certain types of political action can enhance human conduct for peace, progress, security and justice. There are other types of action that may decrease the value and enjoyment of human life and so yield chaos, repression, lack of human dignity and instability. This implies that our appraisal of, and responses to social and political challenges would lead us devise ways of moderating human behavior. In most political and social orders across Africa there is a need for peace and tolerance through shared values and understanding. The aim is to promote respect, cooperation and dialogue as human values.

Human beings continually struggle to establish core values to serve as binding forces of social order. Most societies continually seek ways of evolving and establishing core human values from primordial instincts or contractual obligations that promote working together for a common interest despite members' different inclinations. Whereby there is a conflict of values or interest there should be a way of seeking amicable resolution or consensus for the common good. Common values shared by humans include the desire for self-preservation, freedoms and wellbeing. These values drive the quest for peace, prosperity and progress among human beings. It means that people need to evolve and improve the quality of their social living. For a society to enjoy peace, order, security and development, all stakeholders and social actors need to revise the ethical dimension of their lives using Ubuntu human values.

Ubuntu is in a more important sense therefore, a value-system, a scheme of social relations or a way of life that determines human personal and social actions in the cultural, political and economic domains of life at the individual, group, national and even possibly the international levels.[33] We may ask: How much really can a single person achieve without the support of others in this life? How does an individual human being contend with overwhelming forces such as Providence, Fate, destiny, society, culture, history, God, Nature among others? Are there elements or forces in the universe that can affect the social desires and actions of human beings working as a group? The point being made is simple. Human beings are born as existential and particular creatures; constrained by specificities of ancestry, tribes, religious beliefs, mortality, cultures, histories, bloodlines and other deterministic factors. These factors can be advantageous or otherwise.For the human being to fully human and achieve her fullest development, she must transcend that particularity and see herself as a part of a common humanity, since no man has a monopoly of knowledge; nobody is an island. This is the basis of far-reaching and resounding contributions of humans to global aspects of medicine, social life, culture, technology, philosophy, arts and knowledge. All of these complement one another and are governed by the human interest. The African continent is currently challenged by an ancient philosophical problem closest to the nature of human beings, namely: How should we live our lives with others in peace?[34] What human values ought to guide our lives in Africa? Pursuing the common good or collective well-being is a central element of the social, ethical or moral life. Human beings are also political because once there is a realization of the advantage of pursuing the common good then the power or ability of different men will be harnessed alongside their interest to create value. This value is the purpose or end of political life; to accomplish together as a society what an individual can never dream of achieving alone.

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[33] Ujomudike, "Ubuntu Ethics", 2869-2881.

[34] Philip Ogo Ujomu, Key Note Address: The Church Of Wukari Diocese At The Service Of Reconciliation, Justice, Development And Peace (II Corinthians 5:18-20) 5th Of March, 2024. *On The Occasion Of The 1st Annual Catholic Diocesan General Assembly Of The Catholic Diocese Of Wukari,* Taraba State, Nigeria. *4th To 8th March,* 2024, 1-30.

So we offer core Ubuntu human values (fairness, compassion, justice, dialogue, mutual respect and reciprocity) as positive and preeminent values that all concerned can cherish.

Reciprocity is important because it aims at developing a just society with reasonable persons retaining feelings that reinforce interrelated actions among persons. The synchronization of interests as the central focus of justice and order predicates itself on a concept of mutuality or the appreciation of reciprocal obligations. According to Bellamy and Hollis

> Reciprocity is the ingredient of society. It aims at populating the just society with reasonable persons retaining feelings of neighbourliness with others. The reciprocal nature of life in a social order depends on the definition of roles into a set of obligations and expectations. For life in social context to have meaning, the activities or roles of each person must in some way be related to those of every other person.[35]

Accordingly, we are looking at the establishment and sustenance of a driving force of social and political order in Africa that is based on the practice of mutual respect, cooperative activities, civility and obedience to the rule of law. Also, we are recommending a critical, constructive, compassionate and scientific outlook to life as the parameters that can foster peace and development on the continent currently plagued by crisis.

Concluding Remarks

Can we formulate an endogenous African contribution to a theory of ethics or a conception of justice in global relations? What role can an African perspective or conception of Ubuntu play in such as effort? Let us first of all, attempt to build a theory of human nature as a foundation for clarifying humans living together: Human beings are higher rational creatures because they are required to (but they may not sometimes) exercise freedom and responsibility as morally sensible and autonomous agents in private and public life. This is the basis of human dignity and moral sense. However, the exercise of freedom and responsibility among humans individually also depends on man's activities as a social being who exists within a culture and society.[36] It is important to observe that human beings as social creatures need to live together by having a sense of belonging and working for a common purpose. Common cooperation leads to faster development, peace and easy harmonization of interests where required. These two major ends of social life in a human society are attainable through the establishment of laws, morality and conventions that promote the life of individuals and the society. It is possible to raise an argument from why and how man is a purposive being. Put differently, how does man learn how to survive and progress? One answer is that man survives and thrives because he can separate life-promoting actions from life- threatening actions in terms of their deontology or rules and even more importantly their consequences or teleology. The former, acts that promote life, are approved, desired and considered desirable. The latter, which are acts that undermine life, are prohibited,

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[35] Richard Bellamy, and Martin Hollis, "Liberal Justice: Political and Metaphysical", *The Philosophical Quarterly,* 45(178), 1995: 5.
[36] Ujomudike, "Ubuntu Ethics", 2869-2881.

punished and undesirable. The desirable or desired is defended by rules and positive rewards while the undesirable is deterred by punishment and disapproval.[37]

To a large extent we may ask individuals, groups, nations and the world at large to behave in a morally and socially responsible and responsive manner due to the fact that it is right to do so also. Put simply we encourage or promote moral norms and moral values due to reasons behind and consequences of actions. This is the approach or understanding that had been defended by ethical universalism and utilitarianism. We could introduce some extra justification here about the way that the ideas human beings develop affect mental processes and physical actions. Ideas are concepts or mental entities. We do not see them the way we see tables and chairs. But we see their effects in the good and bad behaviors of human beings. So Viscount Samuel is correct when he declares that "men's actions are governed by their ideas: right ideas lead to good actions and good actions bring welfare: wrong ideas lead to bad actions and bad actions bring suffering and disaster."[38]

Human beings across epochs, have exhibited negative attitudes such as racism, tribalism, colonialism, slavery, Nazism, fascism, alienation, apartheid, genocide, corruption, militarism, terrorism, etc, and thus retarded human development. Despite the above, our main point rests on the normative and prescriptive postulation that ubuntu demands ethically or morally sound behaviour due to the fact that human beings are related to each other in time, space and history, by virtue of their direct interrelations and their common humanity.[39] The bad and the good ideas and actions affect all humans eventually. Interestingly, the point needs to be made that no human being is perfect nor is any human being immortal, so the deep and foundational consequence of finite human existential interaction suggests that people in fact do actually work for themselves when they work for others or they feel that they are working for others. Much of the time, the things you do to or for others have a way of returning to you as positive or negative reward. This is so due to the interrelationship between human beings and societies. Accordingly, one reason for adopting the human values of ubuntu rests on the concept of purpose. This is the idea that; in applying the ubuntu principles or values to the life of the individual or humanity at large, we are working for a lower and higher purpose or end.

Every human being we may argue, requires or even deserves this opportunity of the human, humane and humanistic values of ubuntu, to fulfil himself and benefit the self and the rest of humanity. Thus the need for humans to be hurtful, hateful, wicked, cruel, and destructive of good and productive things, can be viewed or queried as an inimical action that is needless and perhaps ineffectual in the existential scheme of things. Ubuntu in its ethical dimension offers us a prospect for change in human nature as well as social and political life that can be positively consequential for the security, peace and progress of humanity.

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[37] Ujomudike, "Ubuntu Ethics", 2869-2881; Ujomu. "Africa's Crisis of Social and Political Order", 97-115, Philip Ogo Ujomu, "Human Nature, Social Order and Ubuntu Human Values for African Development", *Divyadaan*, 32(1), 2021: 55-66; Ujomu, "Philosophy, Rationality and Decision-Making", 251-263.

[38] Rt. Hon. Viscount Samuel. "Philosophy and the life of the nation", *Philosophy*, XXXI (118), 1956: 199.

[39] Ujomudike, "Ubuntu Ethics", 2869-2881; Ujomu. "Africa's Crisis of Social and Political Order", 97-115; Ujomu, "Human Nature, Social Order", 55-66; Ujomu, "Philosophy, Rationality and Decision-Making", 251-263.

There is an issue to be clarified here: The fact that morals and ethics retain longevity and subtlety as their binding force or modus operandi does not make them weak as some scholars like Henk ten Have and Bert Gordijn recently suggested?[40] It is true that moral rules are not enforceable the way laws are enforced. After all, human beings still perpetrate evil despite the leniency or strictness of sanctions; legal or customary. Some scholars like Ujomu and so many others, disagree with this recent and worrisome position that ethics is not potent. In fact, to think in this manner, is to misunderstand the nature of, and need for, as well as the relevance of ethics. Many scholars have argued over the years that morality is purposive, persuasive, inclusive and definitive in its dictates, and so is a very valuable ingredient especially in building human behaviour as well as stable and viable social and political order.[41]

Unlike law, for example, the approach of morals or moral obligation is not coercive; rather it is persuasive and nurturing; seeking learning by training and practice as a way of human formation. Morality applies a soft approach to issues. Its attributes are more enduring and deep rooted. Society is easier to manage socially or politically due to the impact of moral sense and moral suasion. It is in fact, a received doctrine that the primary aim of morality as a set of personal or social rules guiding human beings in separating right and wrong behaviour for the harmonization of interests, is the injunction against harming others,[42] and showing sympathy, dependability, sense of fair play among other enduring elements of human relations. Morality upholds basic social rules (and discourages or prohibits the reverse) of honesty, decency, compassion, social commitment; reasonableness, criticality, fair treatment, negotiation, cooperative action, through learning and practice.[43] Morality is thus immersive and assimilative in its approach to controlling or guiding human social behaviour. This factor is a major pillar or strength that undergirds evolutionary human nature by moving man forward, gradually, yet, purposefully away from consistent chaotic behaviour, prudential obedience, fear of punishment as a basis of good behavior or a duty of imperfect obligation. The effect of morality is to tease or urge man towards a duty of perfect obligation or reason as the basis of morality for achieving productive human personal and social life. Suffice it to say that ethics and, or politics exist because human beings inevitably need to, and have to relate with one another (harmonize interests, resolve

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[40] Henk ten Have and Bert Gordijn, "The impotence of ethics", *Medicine, Health Care and Philosophy*, Springer, 2024: 1. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11019-024-10202-1.

[41] Philip Ogo Ujomu, "National Security, Social Order and the Quest for Human Dignity in Nigeria: Some Ethical Considerations", *Nordic Journal of African Studies*, 10(2), 2001: 245-264; Philip Ogo Ujomu and Ibrahim Muhammad Danlami. "The Institutionalization of Democracy and the Democratization of Institutions in Nigeria: A Philosophical Reflection", Етика Наука Образование [Ethics Science Education] Издание На" Лаборатория по приложна академична етика" и катедра" Философски науки"Година II, Брой 1, 2024. DOI: 10.54664/SCJP5929 pp.55-65;

[42] William, K. Frankena and John T. Granrose, *Introductory Readings in Ethics*, (edited), New Jersey, Prentice Hall Inc. 1974: 1; Michael, I. Mozia, *Christian Morality and Charisms*, Ibadan, Shaneson Ltd., 1990: 1-2.

[43] Kwasi Wiredu, "The Moral Foundations of an African Culture", *Person and Community* Ghanaian Philosophical Studies, Kwasi Wiredu & Kwame Gyekye (eds). Washington D.C. The Council for Research in Values and Philosophy, 1992, 191-199; Wiredu, "Are There Cultural Universals", 37-39; Ralph Barton Perry, "The Meaning of Morality", *Introductory Readings in Ethics*, William Frankena (ed). New Jersey, Prentice Hall, 1974, 373; Michael D. Bayles and Kenneth. Henley, "General Introduction: The Importance and Possibility of Ethics", *Right Conduct,* edited, New York Random House, 1989, 10; Philippa Foot, "Utilitarianism and the Virtue", *MIND*, XCIV(374), 1985: 208; William Frakena, *Ethics*, USA, Prentice Hall Inc. 1973: 6; Charles Henry Whiteley, "The Justification of Morality", *Philosophy*, 57(222), 1982: 138; Joel Kupperman, *The Foundations of Morality,* London: Unwin, 1983: 4-10.

conflicts and associate in a friendly manner) within different types of society: family, tribe, nation, State, institution among others due to the desire to harmonize interests. Should this be a source of worry? Let us examine an issue in contention: It has been erroneously taken as a truism that "the name of the game in international politics is power, and there are no moral rules in this game, only the "rules" dictated by prudential self-interest."[44] It bears restating that "no nation, no people, no society can achieve and indefinitely retain power, prosperity, influence, and leadership except on the basis of a sound and unshakable moral standard."[45] A long time ago Paton had made it clear that "those who say that politics has nothing to do with morality are explicitly denying the doctrine that part of life, namely life as a statesman, is exempt from all moral obligation."[46] Is it the case that the public realm, political affairs at any level are devoid of morality? This claim, if answered in the affirmative should really be a source of worry for any human society. The main reason is that it erodes the possibility of reciprocally or mutually obligatory conduct as well as erases the baseline of minimally acceptable norms. It is for such reasons that a view of ethics as bringing people together is needed.

Some efforts were made towards bringing humanity together at different times in the history of man. Let us discuss a few. We may start with globalization, which has to do with two related ideas: the interconnectedness of the human beings and locations of the world and the interdependency of human beings on one another due to the almost seamless flow of information via technology, migration, telecommunication, people, products, values and ideas all around the world. For Kearney, 'globalization describes social, economic, cultural and demographic processes that not only take place within nations, but also transcend them. Globalisation deals with the intensification of worldwide social relations which link distant localities in such a way that local happenings are shaped by events occurring many miles ways and vice versa.'[47] The interplay between globalization, international politics and the rise of inequality provides a sharper view of our analysis. We can understand easily the point that "globalisation is as much about politics as it is about economics."[48]

On its part, cosmopolitanism as another strategy of seeing humanity as one refers to the idea that contemporary trends and processes in the global order are increasingly giving rise to a more physically compact world where human beings share a universal or global membership of the world. This universality and an inherent rejection of any exclusionist tendency is presumed to rest on the idea of our common humanity as a community of mankind and the possibility of a world citizenship or individuals becoming citizens of the world or earth. According to Pogge, a person who adopts the cosmopolitan idea can be seen as citizen of the world. The world at large is the focus of cosmopolitanism. A human being may be referred to as cosmopolitan, when he is well travelled, understands and respects other societies and cultures, interacts and inter-relates easily and properly with other races and peoples. A town or group can also be cosmopolitan to the extent that it is inclusive and accommodating of diverse languages, religions, ethnicities, cultures

[44] William Aiken, "Realpolitic, Morality, and International Affairs", *Humanities in Society.* 5(1&2), 1982: 95-108.

[45] Marc T. Greene, "Ethics and Morals in America", *The Quarterly Review,* 299(627), 1961: 381.

[46] Herbert James Paton, "Justice Among Nations", *Philosophy*, XVII(68), 1942: 291-303.

[47] Michael Kearney, "The Local and the Global: The anthropology of globalization and transnationalism", *Annual Review of Anthropology,* 24, 1995: 548.

[48] Peter Alexander, "Globalisation and Discontent: Project and Discourse", *African Sociological Review*, 5(1), 2001: 59&61.

and lifestyles. Cosmopolitanism refers to a commitment to the above idea and ideal of citizenship of the world.[49]

In concrete terms, globalization can be unfair due to power tussles and hegemony, class distinctions, trade and financial imbalances and social justice deficits across the world, while cosmopolitanism may be hypocritical due to cultural discrimination and racism, tribalism, as well as prejudicial and oppressive immigration laws and practices currently prevalent worldwide. The successful application of these two concepts entails a maturity of mind, civilization, and liberality that is in really short supply around the world today. Hence there is a need to revisit the prospect of ubuntu with regard to global peace and security.[50] Both concepts; globalization and cosmopolitanism, in fact, problematize, rather than serve as a solution to queries about the basis of our common humanity. As such the idea of ubuntu (re)emerges to define and establish the key concepts required for the effective and responsible operation of values at the international level. The way ubuntu can lend itself to reforming the global order or human behaviour at the international level is to transpose the localized kinship values of tolerance, human dignity, consensus, respect for others, compassion and the pursuit of the common good to the broader activities of nations within the international system. This is a tall order indeed, not merely in the conceptualization, but also in the application of the ubuntu ethic to the international spaces.

Taking on this challenge, rests on the possibility of having a conception of Ubuntu that offers a fresh and innovative look at the global dynamics of human relations. We may perhaps argue that there is a sense in which the idea of ubuntu foreshadows the notions of globalization and cosmopolitanism. The three concepts are easily linked by their common vision and mission of seeking and explaining the interconnectedness and interdependence of human beings and human creations. The degree of success or failure is not yet the concern here. The continual quest for a common fate and unity of humanity is not a negative thing in itself. This is a significant point to note because even though cosmopolitanism and globalization are not originally African concepts or constructs, yet they emerge as a result of the Westerners' continued search for strategies to bring the world together, mitigate selective humanism, exclusion and intolerance among human beings. In fact globalization and cosmopolitanism have significant positive and negative impacts on the African world.

It should be noted that when we include the idea of ubuntu as refinement of the vision of global human interdependence, we notice that the three concepts in a sense aspire or end up with the same goal to bring humanity together. Despite the common thrust that the three principles possess, they apparently reveal different logical designs and causality. The challenge that they have in common is that agency or human nature plays a role in human institutions in a way that ends up working at cross purposes from the original aim. Therefore ubuntu as an African contribution to the quest for our common humanity and the mitigation of the ancestral predicaments of humanity is a continuation of the tendency towards enlightenment (intellectual development and a sense of knowledge as adventure) or modernity (greater role of reason, civility, rule of law, education and a scientific attitude) in the way that human beings deal with each other. These three ideas

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[49] Thomas Pogge, "Cosmopolitanism", *A Companion to Contemporary Political Philosophy,* vol. I. Robert E. Goodin, Philip Pettit and Thomas Pogge (eds). Oxford: Blackwell Publishing Ltd, 2007, 312.
[50] Ujomudike, "Ubuntu Ethics", 2869-2881.

reflect overlapping shades on the continuum of humanization and development of our sense of humanity at the local and global levels. From the above, therefore a second point emerges. This is because in emphasizing these areas of convergence between the three notions we can then observe the way that ubuntu definitively contributes to the clarification of the quest for a global ethics of change and development. Ubuntu pursues social change in human nature by distilling the key mental orientation and social values required for personal and social liberation and transformation. A sound and viable philosophical application of ubuntu whether it operates at the local, national or international levels needs to rest on such ethical and meta-ethical foundations.

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