

Trends in the Philosophy of Progress and Development in Africa: A Critical Evaluation

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ABSTRACT

Africa is a continent that has had a chequered history of enslavement, colonialism, and neo-colonialism, a history of exploitation, oppression and constant unhelpful external interventions. The cumulative effect of all these experiences is that Africa appears to be in confusion and her development trajectory appears to have been blocked or disoriented. The titles of many books on Africa tell the story in (*Afriqueest mal parti*) (Africa has started badly), "how Europe underdeveloped Africa, "Africa, the white man's burden", "Africa and the donation fatigue" These point to the crisis that have overtaken Africa. The aim of this article is to critically review some recent developmental philosophies and ideologies that have been postulated or followed by African Nations with regard to finding a solution to these existential crisis.

Keywords: Eurocentricism, Globalism, Afrocentricism, Development, Transculturality, Indigenization, Modernization, Cultural integrity.

INTRODUCTION

The word progress and development generally evoke a process of growth, advancement, of movement from one earlier state to another, generally regarded as better and more desirable. It is no longer debatable that Africa is today in urgent need of progress at all fronts, given her present crisis situation.

Commenting on this a Nigerian professor recently observed; "isn't it frightening and amazing that most otherwise intelligent well trained and patriotic Africans do not in the least feel disturbed that virtually every aspect of our life is in crisis?"

We seem to be now used to living in crisis as a normal natural way of life. Is this the result of a skillful process of brainwashing or an overdose of the chloroform of faith?

But it may well also be due to the confounding power of phenomena to become overtime so completely familiar that we really do not hear, see or notice them anymore." (Kinwume Isola, 2007 p.29) A look back on Africa historical experience provokes a memory of exploitative dependency, alienation, material impoverishment and chaos. The African crisis situation could be articulated under seven crisis points.

Crisis of Survival and Poverty

Hunger is ravaging a large part of Africa as millions of her citizens are living under very hard and difficult situations, scoring very low under almost every indices of human development.

Crisis of Order and Security

Africa has had more than her fair share of conflicts and wars and poor organization of her socio-political space.

Crisis of Habitation

The crisis of survival, order and security will naturally and logically lead to the crisis of habitation characterized by mass movement of displaced people, due to wars, inhospitable and environmental degradations.

Crisis of Nationhood

Many African states emerged as a product of colonial and imperialist creations or forced amalgam to serve colonial designs and interests.

The post-colonial African states never crystallized into any deep national consciousness but rather torn by tribalism, ethnicity, and separatist tendencies which have brought dangerous strains on the social fabric of many

African countries with its political, economic and cultural consequences.

Crisis of leadership

For the most part, post colonial Africa has tragically been ruled by authoritarian leaders whose leadership has brought to African nations untold harm and disaster. Except for very few exceptions, the quality of leadership in Africa has been very inept, inefficient, violent, divisive and corrupt. They are mostly versions of the former colonial lords, occupying the colonial suites.

Crisis of Relevance

African countries and peoples are practically not taken seriously among the comity of nations, as the image of poverty and incapacity of self-organization as well as corruption has sustained the age long stereotypes of a people lacking the capacity of excellence and high achievements.

Crisis of Authenticity

African societies are culturally in disarray, alienated, a land of copycats slavishly aping anything that has the imprint of the Whiteman, his styles, mannerism, values, tastes and even his mistakes and coughing.

Frank Franz Fanon's "black skin White mask" is a true reflection of events in the Africa continent, a land under the weight of inauthenticity.

TRENDS IN THE PHILOSOPHY OF PROGRESS AND DEVELOPMENT IN AFRICA.

There is no gain-saying the fact that Africa needs a new path to progress and development since the path(s) that led her to her present situation has indeed failed. The question then is which road Africa? How could Africa stop this constant deterioration in her cultural, social and political space?

How can she unlock, her enormous economic and productive potentialities. How can she improve on the quality life of her citizens.

The articulation of all these problematic situations into a grand vision of progress and development in Africa, for her total well-being is what we mean by a philosophy of progress. Of course theories on this are not in short supply.

The goal of this work is to subject such philosophies or even ideologies and their claims and vision to a critical examination with regard

to their capacity to resolve the African crisis of being and having in the world.

Westernism/ Eurocentricism

This is the civilizational ideology which consciously or unconsciously guided the western or European man in his encounters with Africa especially during the colonial and neo-colonial times and which even endures up till today under various guises, names, ideologies, philosophies and development paradigms.

Western liberal civilization and culture was identified as the highest civilizational and cultural attainment by man (I. Wallerstein, 1988). Hence the Western and European colonial adventure in Africa was then seen as a civilization and modernizing mission. Africans were seen as the other who must be made or forced or absorbed into universal civilization seen as Western civilization. Racist and Eurocentric anthropological theories were used to legitimate their position some like the naturalist theories of people like Condorcet (1743-1794) and Evolutionists like Herbert Spencer (1820-1901) and Charles Darwin, whose ideas led to the idea that western culture is the highest achievement of man, thus introducing a hierarchy among cultures of which some are inferior to others, The African was particularly degraded and counted among the lowest in this civilization and cultural ladder.

Even the ideas of some European Enlightenment philosophers helped in the inferiorization of the African humanity and culture, from Hume to Kant, to Hegel, from Voltaire to Montesquieu to Karl Jaspers. For example, Hegel held that Africa had no history, much less the ability to generate any civilization. It became only a part of world history from contact with Europeans (G. Hegel 1968:153).

The philosopher Montesquieu was even more brutal in his characterization of Black Africans. He said "... One cannot put oneself into the frame of mind for which God who is wise took it upon himself to put a soul and a very good soul at that into such an entirely black body... it is impossible for us to suppose that these creatures are men because, If I were to allow them, to be so, a suspicion would then follow that we are not Christians". (T. Besterman(ed) 1974 vol. II p.375)

Is it then any wonder that Levy Bruhl would question how an untutored African can have an idea of God?

Our interest here is not the racist overtone of these statements from these men of letters, but to underline the prejudice and conception that were wide spread about Africans and could have been the mindset of those colonial masters and planners, who ruled Africans for long years. For example the theory of social evolutionism could have provided the ideology of still expanding colonialism. And for these men, progress and development meant nothing but trying to humanize Africans by offering them the "privilege- and gift of western civilization regarded as the model of universal civilization. To develop Africa meant to westernize or Europeanize Africans, which is a process by which western/European society and values must be replanted into Africa and the African man must empty his Africanness to become a black version of a Whiteman ("black skin white mask" according to Franz Fanon). The consequence is that Africans must embrace the promises of liberal modernity and its dogma of development. These are:

To foster political systems that promote human well being based on the consent of the governed.

To foster economic systems that spread the benefits of science, technology and the division of labour all over the world.

To foster International co-operation in order to secure perpetual peace.

To promote science and technology grounded in human rationality, to fuel the continued prospects for improving the human condition (Sachs, J, 2005 p.351-352)

Summarizing the various elements of this civilizational project of the West in Africa, A. O. Balcom said that this discovery led to a revolution against authority, tradition, faith, transcendence and the supernatural. A new system of power was birthed.

It was to become the system that governed economic and social arenas. Politically there emerged the notion of democracy centering on individual rights and choices.

Economically there emerged a notion of the accumulation of wealth through judicious pursuit of self interest and socially there emerged a deep separation between the private and public spheres of life. Science moreover has to become the engine room which drives society.

The sum total of all this was identified with progress and development. The myth developed

that as long as the world comes on board, the eventual destiny would be glorious.

By dialectically negating Africa, Europe was able to posit and represent itself and its contingent historicity as the ideal culture, the ideal humanity and the ideal history. While it posited herself the ideal, the Africans and their cultures became their opposites; both in their epistemic and value systems; it sets up such contrasts as rationality and irrationality, open and closed; scientific and religious, conceptual and perceptual, logical and pre-logical; savage and civilized. Modernization and westernization development, this means enlisting Africa into the grand project of Western Enlightenment. (P.H. Coetzee and A.P.J. Roux (ed.) 1998 p.2.)

Thus in the project of westernization of Africa, it is advocated by many that all attempts, political, social, economic, educational, and cultural should be made to instill a process of radical deafricanization. For as Barbara Ward said, Westernization brought forward five revolutions which are thrusting the old static subsistence economics to the back waters of the world. Thus Eurocentrists argue that for Africans to survive, they must imbibe the four revolutions namely: Intellectual revolution of materialism: the political revolution of equality and above all the scientific and technological revolution which comes from the application of savings and science to the whole business of life. (Barbara Ward, 1962, p.41) We must once more emphasize the economic dimension of this Westernization of Africa, which was essentially a liberal capitalist economic project which hooked Africa into a so called world economic order, regarded by them as the superior economic organization for the creation of wealth. In fact it was regarded as the destination of all economies. Our mind goes immediately to Rostow's five stages of growth. In his Eurocentric teleology of five stages of economic growth Rostow, gave the highest point to Europe and its ascendancy is regarded as natural. His theory can be expressed thus on the basis of indicators a b c...developing country "x" in the 1970's corresponded to the stage of modernization in developed country "x" in the 1819's".So the message to any non-European society especially Africa is clear. "If you want to have what we have then, be like us, do as we do".(Rostow W. W, London 1960) In an ominous warning to any society who would fail to follow the Western economic and development paradigm, C.E Ayre said "... the technological revolution is itself irresistible, the

arbitrary authority and irrational values of the pre-scientific, pre-industrial, cultures are doomed. Three alternatives confront the partisans of tribal values and beliefs. Resistance if sufficiently effective though it cannot save the tribal values can bring on total revolution. Or ineffective resistance may lead to sequestration like that of the American Indians. The only remaining alternative is that of intelligent voluntary acceptance of the industrial way of life and the values that go with it".(C E Ayre, New York 1944)

Of course the totalitarian communism arose to oppose liberal capitalism in the west, yet Marx himself accepted the inevitability of capitalist modernity and the evolutionist understanding of development. Both liberal capitalism and totalitarian communism shared Westernization as the paradigm of development in Africa, and both share materialist basis of western civilization. They tied African destiny to Europe.

In recent times Francis Fukuyama has restated the triumph and inevitability of liberal capitalist modernity and the end of ideologies when he spoke of the "end of history as such: That is the end point of ideological evolution and the universalization of western liberal democracy as a form of human governance" (Francis Fukuyama, 1992).

Many Africans having trained in western ways become "new men" and were prepared and willing to become agents of change and demonstration. Some African philosophers have turned to be propagandists of western way and believe that a better future and destiny for Africa lay in submitting totally and comprehensively to the dictates and directions of western liberal and capitalist values. It means a complete overhaul of the African societies and African minds and habits to the image and likeness of the capitalist and liberal modernity. For these people the extirpation of tradition is the first step towards freedom. Through such changes, they argue, Africans are fortifying their universalist abilities to the detriment of particularism and getting ready to embark on a similar process of empowering which makes them unexploitable and uncolonizable.

Three representative African thinkers in this mold are Wiredu, Towa, ChielozenaEze. For example Wiredu expresses the position thus "This process of modernization entails changes not only in the physical environment but also in the mental outlook of our people, manifested

both in the explicit beliefs and in their customs and their ordinary daily habits and pursuits since the fundamental rationale behind, any changes in a world outlook is principally a philosophical matter, the philosophic & evaluation of our traditional thought is of very considerable relevance to the process of modernization in our continent". (KwesiWiredu. 1980, p.x).

In essence, these African "Westernizers" are the prototype of Westernized African Iconoclast, very pessimistic of Africa. Nothing in the African past to retrieve. All we had was backwardness in technology, anachronistic clinging to outmoded forms of government, medicine e.t.c. he will not go back to repent to his ancestors. He would rather destroy the Homestead; uproot the pumpkin, a total rejection of his traditional culture.(Okot p. Biket, 1984. P. 131).

EurocentricismAnd Her Critics

The abysmal state of Africa today is said to have its root on an externally determined and directed capitalistic developmental orientation on the one hand and the totalitarian communist orientation on the other, foisted and imposed on African states by the colonizers and new colonialists in the name of civilization.

Moreover, Africa's destiny became tied to the European or the so -called world order, in which Africans have no weight or relevance, but in which Africa has been condemned to dependence and 'satellitism'. The result is that the more Africans tried to become Europeans, the more they have been alienated from themselves and also the less European have they become, only to assume a condition that can best be described as confused; producing a society that is chaotic and rudderless and a quality of life which in general has been less progressive or more depreciative.

According to critics, Eurocentric values inform the development paradigm and planning models in African societies, so also the present African predicament. The models of development have become conformist, depriving African societies of self reliance and self determination. Development agents; donors, and western educated African leaders unquestionably and misguidedly bow to the stereotype of using planning models which are informed by western values, and systems, this models of development and planning were exogenous, often applied out of context and not compatible with the beliefs, attitudes and practices of the African people.

The incorporation into the world dominating value system, witnesses the alienation of the African societies from their value system, which consequently deprives African societies of foresight and understanding and local interpretation of phenomena. This according to Mfaniseni . F. Schlongonyane led to mimicry 'agenda' in African societies. This Agenda enroute in the developing world is a process of doing "like the master". However, neither did master fully understand the complex values of the servant nor did the "servant" absolutely capture the supposedly absolute objective verities of western values. Commenting further on this mimicry agenda, Susan George said: "it mimics without understanding and copies without controlling. Lacking roots in the local cultures or environment it quickly drops and withers, if not sustained by transfusions of foreign capital, technology and ideas. It goes for growth, usually, without asking: growth for what? For whom? ..." (C. Susan George 1992 Pg xv – xvi,) And for AdedejiAdebanjo, Africans have become mimic people who mimic other societies, and their life styles, use borrowed phrases, jargons and terminologies which have no real meaning to them and merely becloud the issues. (Leistner, G.M.T, 1981, vol. II). Lamenting further the cost of dependence to which Africans were forced through this Eurocentric developmental paradigm, Mfaniseni. F. Schlongonyane observed "The dependence on Foreign values transported the symbolic imagery of African societies completely and immediately into a state of dependence.

The African people lost vision, focus, and version of africanness such that they lost its capacity to interpret and appropriate external knowledge to their context..." So it is argued that the Eurocentric approach to development especially through colonialism and neo-colonialism deeply disturbed and affected the perceptions Africans have of themselves, which also plunged Africans in a deep and lasting crisis of identity. D. A. Masolo summarized how many African philosophers saw this identity crisis which eventually is cultural and developmental crisis.

For Eboussi-Boulage, it is the deep political and cultural crisis of "muntu", the African person; For Hebaga, it is Africans dependence on western tutelage (D. Masolo, African 1994 p.67 and for Mudimbe, it is the invention of Africa at the margins of western Knowledge. (V.Y. Mudimbe 1988 P.1x).

Globalization (Globalism)

This is the new face of Westernism. It is officially taken to mean the emergence of a single worldwide economy in which all economies must integrate themselves or more accurately be integrated in the passive voice.

However, globalization which in reality is globalism has a defined frontier between economics, society and culture. In economy it has organized itself as a single world system driven by the economic imperative of liberal capitalism. In politics the various regional and overarching unities have developed, and in informatics, single perspective on the world, is increasingly disseminated and assimilated driven by modern communication technology especially in the hands of Western technological monopoly or the rich countries of the world. The co-coordinated impacts of all these dimensions constitute a change of horizon which is not only incremental and quantitative but qualitative. So globalization is a multifaceted and complex phenomenon which must be grasped in the diversity and unity of all its different dimensions. Beyond its visibly economic interconnection powered by modern technology and modern means of social communication, it is also a connection between individuals and peoples. So the breaking down of borders as Pope Benedict observed is not a material fact only, it is also a cultural event both in its causes and effects... as a human reality, it is a product of diverse cultural tendencies..." (Pope Benedict XVI 2019, p.66-67).

Globalization prides itself as a way of making world wealth to circulate freely over the world without national obstacles, through free commercial and economic relationship across boundaries; opening up an unprecedented possibility of large-scale redistribution of wealth on a worldwide scale. It appears to be the realization of the dreams of enlightenment philosophers with Kant and Adam Smith who saw in the international trade and commerce among peoples as a new road to international peace and prosperity.

Globalization for the proponents carries an implicit promise that it will relieve poverty and offer security, thanks to the powers of global capitalism to create wealth. It is assumed then that this priority will sweep aside all other human preoccupations, including all existing institutions, interpretations and searches and meaning_ From the point of view of globalism particularisms are just phenomena which are

retrograde and whose destiny it is to vanish. (cf. Wolfgang Welsch, 1999, p.231)

However globalization as experienced in reality has caused a lot of anxiety and cause backlash and have been met by tremendous backlash both from the rich and poor countries and even among the economic powers. The critics have seen globalization as a new face of modern colonialism and imperialism by the Western owners of capital, the multinational companies and the powerful countries who control the technologies which are not value neutral. It is seen as a type of neo-westernization. For them globalization-which is nothing but globalism is a ruse, a new form of imperialism which is derobing people of their identity, their cherished values and their Culture. And as Jeremy Seabrook said: "But to billions of people all over the world, their culture is not local. It is central to their lives and who they are. Globalization eclipses, or at least subordinates all previous ways of answering need, and of dealing with vicissitudes of human life. All other ways of life are diminished and marginalized at a stroke. Globalization is a declaration of war upon all other cultures" (Jeremy Seabrook, Jan 13, 2004). Globalization is seen by some as a declaration of wars on all other cultures by the powerful capitalist culture. It is now a euphemistic contraction of global Civilization. No wonder, Former United States President, Bill Clinton said that globalization was a fact and not policy choice and Tony Blair (Former British prime minister) saw it as inevitable and irreversible.

Paradoxically then, the attempt to uniformize through globalization in spite of claims to the contrary, is producing unintended contradictory effects, On the one hand the trend towards a world society, and the other, the return to the "tribes" and increasing particularism which the American academic Samuel Huntington predicted as the clash of civilizations. Tribalism fights globalism. This creates explosive situations because the particularisms often appeal to cultural identity and thus build up to nationalism or fundamentalism, producing hatred, purification actions, and war. People feel compelled to defend themselves against being merged into a global uniformity which of course is only Western particularity. They do not just want to be universal or global but also specific and of their own. They want to distinguish themselves from one another and to be well accommodated within a specific identity. (cf. Samuel Huntington. The 1996)

These resent economic globalization and its attendant cultural globalization as a violation of their identity. An example is the emergence of many religious fundamentalisms in various religions in many parts of the world.

some want the better of the two worlds, the economic advantages of globalization and to seek to maintain what is of great value from their indigenous genius, their language, tradition and custom. Even the same anxiety is found among the richer countries where many of the citizens today are feeling invaded by other cultures and peoples. Hence the attempts to re-introduce protectionism and re-emergence of nationalism like in Trump's America.

The question is, can globalism which is painting the world with the image and likeness of the Western world and her economic and technological imperatives, allow or tolerate the survival of other local values?

The remark of Morfaw is instructive here, when she said that changing man has his problems in a changing world. Africa has been most hit in this process of change, this world drama in the name of modernity, Globalization and progress must be approached with caution. The preservation of the family values cannot be achieved by a total rejection of change nor can they be achieved by an open ended acceptance of change in the name of modernity, advancement, civilization, development, an open ended acceptance of change introduces the kind of liberalization that speaks the language of centralization. As one world or people call led globalization, the world seems to be moving towards greater chaos, conflict destruction of the human and natural environment, exposing both to a crisis of survival.' (Marie Morfaw Nov.15 1999).

Thus Pope Benedict XVI was right when he observed that inherent in the process of globalization are great difficulties and dangers that can only be overcome if we are able to appropriate the underlying Anthropological and ethical spirit that drives globalization towards the humanizing goal of solidarity. Unfortunately the spirit is often overwhelmed and suppressed by ethical and cultural considerations of an individualistic and utilitarian nature. (Pope Benedict the XVI, 2011, p.67-68)

Civilizational Integritism&Afrocentricism

In order that Africa may escape what is seen as the entrapment in the Eurocentric liberal capitalist world, some African scholars have proposed that Africa should toe the path of

civilizational intergrism. They trace all African development problems to the loss of her proper developmental axis. They hold that Colonialism and imperialism with their forces and violent acculturation wounded the African cultural soul and deviated her historical course and stunted her growth. And this has continued unabated today in various forms. African cultures were fully defeated militarily and technologically. So were their culture and cultural idiosyncrasies profoundly challenged in terms of their languages, standards of beauty, law, leadership, education and religion for better or for worse. Modernization meant demolition of the fabric of African society and culture. The cultural intergrists see the basic sources of the present African predicament and crisis as the collapse of African cultural linkages and the substitution with foreign cultural modes. They claim that cultural imperialism has structured the consciousness of those in the world periphery, mostly the oppressed people of Africa, who are treated as blank slates on which the global capitalism's moving finger writes its message, leaving behind another cultural automaton as it moves on (Kwame Anthony Appiah Jan.1, 2006). They decry the whole state of western oriented modernization or westernization which substitute western culture, democracy and science for traditional values, spreading, a Eurocentric vision which saw nothing valuable in the African past and culture. Africa is presented as a tabula rasa, land where nothing positive is achieved and where there is no past achievement worthy of mention. Tradition is then seen as a stumbling, block to obstruct any move towards future progress. Hope lay in a quick westernization process.

To this J. Don Granville said we have been everywhere, have been molded in every identity, have taken of every culture, practiced every religion and believed in everybody, save ourselves". (J. Don Granville Davis, in I.J. Henderson (ed.) Pg 182).

The cumulative effect of this cultural imperialism according to these cultural fundamentalists has been catastrophic at all levels: Loss of social cohesion, an undigested value system, robbing Africans of their proper identity, and turning them slaves of alien ways of thinking, and of an alien world. This has plunged Africa into a crisis of authenticity, a crisis of identity, a crisis of direction and crisis of legitimacy in the African universe, resulting in the many conflicts; cultural, Political, social and economic that currently beset us.

On the question about how the African people can regain their authenticity and pace, face the challenges of their present situation, how they can lay the foundations for a meaningful development for the future. How can they regain their dignity and well-being, the civilization intergrists have a clear answer: Africans must return to their original sources, relink with her glorious culture, and reinvigorate and revitalize their indigenous civilizational dynamism and regain faith in her capacity. For them the road to African renaissance and African wellbeing is to return to civilizational integrism and cultural authenticity, As Chinweizu would put it. "the past is all we have and to wipe out our past through amnesia is to wipe out all that we have, all that make us what we are" (Chinweizu, 1987 pg. 265)

Among the proponents of African civilizational intergrism are Blyden, Cabral, earlier Mazrui, Mbonu Ojike, K.O. Onyiah. African Civilizational intergrism embraces a number of movements like Africa neo-traditionalism, Godianism, Ethnophilosophy. However the greatest contemporary philosophical and systematic defense of this orientation and that which embraces the various groups that lay a claim to Africanity, both Africans in the diaspora, and in the continent is Afrocentricism. Here it becomes a means of uplifting not only Africans in the continent but also of those who now find themselves in the West because of the historical events of slave trade and colonialism. Hence it could be seen as a pan- African philosophical articulation of the African civilization, integrity, identity and development.

Most of the positions already articulated under civilizational integrism can be weaved within Afrocentricism, though Afrocentricism is a more systematic and seriously articulated philosophical defense of African civilizational integrism and identity. The Afrocentrists had as their thesis that what we call Africa is originally black and remains predominantly black, who founded ancient Egyptian civilization and this Africa in spite of the presence of other races and cultures, today is especially of black identity and hence the spiritual, cultural unity of all blacks of African descent, no matter where they may be in the continent and in the Diaspora. In general, Afrocentricism can be seen as an educational and intellectual movement whose proponents make very strong claims about the truth value of their ideas, especially their ideas about history, but also about psychology, anthropology and various sciences. They see

their views as representing the true historical reality, long suppressed and sealed by European racists and lies.

Hence according to MolefiKaite Asante, "for too long we have been held up at the margin of the European's world and have been victimized by the illusion that we are working in our own best interest, when we have become the chief apologists for Europe". For the past five hundred years, Africans have been taken up in cultural, economic, religious, political and social terms and have existed primarily on the periphery of Europe. We know little about our own classical heritage and nothing about our contributions to world knowledge. To say that we are de-centered means disoriented. Afrocentricity as a theory of change tends to relocate the African person as subject, thus destroying the notion of being in the western project of domination...' (MolefiKeke Asante 1988) So Afrocentricism conveys the profound need for African people to be relocated historically, economically, socially, politically and philosophically. It becomes a frame of reference wherein phenomena are viewed from the perspective of the African person. It becomes necessary to examine all data from the stand point of Africans as subjects, human agents rather than as objects in a Euroframe of reference. Hence it aims at removing Western hegemony.

Afrocentricism claims in the final analysis to embody the black man's struggle to grapple with what is called modernity or modernization or globalization and the technological era. Hence the need to rediscover Africa's cultural creativity which was at the origins of Western civilization. Many of them will claim that the struggle to retrieve African original culture and values does not mean the absence of influence or participation in other cultures but simply means that we are unashamed to claim our own cultural heritage. For the Afrocentrists, decolonizing higher education is synonymous with Africanizing it. The replacement of Eurocentric epistemology with an Afrocentric, one appears to adopt the deconstructionist method of the post modernist. Post modernism underscored by critical pedagogy is concerned with examining how institutions, knowledge, language, ideology and social relations, are inscribed in power. They aim at deconstructing the so-called facts by showing how facts are constructed as facts and the consequence of such particular constructions. The Afrocentrists tend to deconstruct the Eurocentric and Western

presentation of institutions, values and history. Thus, Afrocentricity signals the shift from a monocultural education to one of cultural pluralism. So it professes to be against racism, ignorance and monoethnic hegemony in the curriculum. Hence, Afrocentric education wants to empower Africans with emancipatory knowledge. Hence, Asante warned "we must not allow those who have for nearly five centuries been the engineers of our despair, the architects of our miseducation to continue their assaults on our ancestors, traditions, morality, ethics and values (Molefi Asante 2004). Many Afrocentrists, have a pan Africanist dream of an eventual federal African state, in order to attain the solidarity of the African people in line with the ideas of panafricanism (Theophile Obenga 2004).' Thus, it is proposed that Africa must develop with its roots firmly embedded in Afrocentricism, not an Africa that develops with its tap root firmly anchored in Eurocentricism. They seek to turn Africa's economy to reflect the objective reality obtaining in the continent.

Civilizational Integritism and Afrocentricism and Their Critics

This orientation of African development and future orientation has been massively criticized by the so-called Western oriented African modernizers and defenders of liberal modernity. While no one today can deny the rich potentialities of African past which accords with the UNESCO's decade of cultural development (1988 to 1997) which is aimed at drawing attention to the necessity to search for solutions to various social issues by looking inwards to the indigenous culture and traditions of the various peoples of the world, Yet for critics this does not warrant the ideologies of cultural integritism or neo-traditionalism and Afrocentricism. First, cultural integritists, and Afrocentrists have been accused of romanticism and wild imaginative phantasy, of fixation on the past and romantic longing for a return to pre-industrial simplicities by its nostalgic celebration of the past. It is pointed out that the African cultures could not blindly call for "drum beats" to celebrate the golden past. It is argued that so called "golden culture" that crumbled under the military might of a few white men, or facilitated the enslavement of millions of her youth or easily rolled over, politically and economically could not have been the El dorado which the puritans and Afrocentrists celebrate.

"It was the same pervasive trait of the same culture that enabled sparse groups of Europeans

to subjugate large masses of African population and keep them in subjugation for many years (Wiredu in Emmanuel Chukwudi (ed.) 1998 p.193). Some have accused the Afrocentrists of trying to engage in wild phantasies in their so-called historical reconstruction of ancient African past. Hence according to Appiah "it is an attempt to root African modern identity in an imaginary history". It is a narcotic that has people look at the past as a halcyon era of wholeness and unity, to take us to past values and beliefs and uses it to suspend ourselves from contemporary problems and future hopes (K. Appiah 1992, p.14, 176). To buttress his point Appiah would say that the gap between Africa of the past and modern Africa is unbridgeable. Our recollection of the past is mainly a result of our own phantasies and inventions (K. Appiah 1997. P.686) It is further argued that African culture is something which needs to be constructed in the present and future and not something which can be returned from an invented past.

Cultural integrism as Afrocentricism has been labeled as anachronistic, reactionary and regressive. For according to critics it detracts from the reality of African society today in the 21st century. Mbefo observed that, to reject colonial legacy and other external historical influences totally in preference to the traditional status quo is unreal. Rejection of the West completely would involve the loss of western technology which has proved very effective in the transformation and modernization of the continent and the world. Without mastering western technology even in its transferred form, it is argued; Africa would return to the pre-modern condition and would run the risk of greater exploitation by materially stronger nations, seeking markets and raw materials. It furthermore argued that we need the services of Western education and technology which empowered men to master nature and using it to bring about what they would like to be and what ends they would have men, shape their intelligent activities (L. Mbefo 1988.P.94). Cultural and civilizational integrism for opponents represent a distorted view of the world. For the history of human social, cultural world is replete with cross pollination of language, religion, art, dress, rites, metaphysical outlooks and progeny all bespeaking an enormous aptitude for cooperation, bond and friendship. We are an intercultural, intertwined and inter dependent species, just like every other on the planet.

In the light of the above, ChielozonaEze declared that there is nothing like African culture that is not already suffused with western influence. Using "African culture" as a banner either to fend off western imperialism or to preserve African unity is doomed to contradiction. It means using, what is not homogeneous to argue for some form of homogeneity. (ChielozonaEze 2005. P.31).

By trying to insulate themselves within a world view and culture, Afrocentrists have been accused of reversed Ethnocentrism. It is the substitution of one hegemonic discourse, that of Eurocentrism with that of another hegemonic discourse. Afrocentricism with its essential notion of identity is to continue the pattern of classification and pattern of inclusion and exclusion and have the potentiality of leading to totalitarian discourses and practices.

The idea of progress and society envisioned by these philosophers of civilizational integrity represent a false autarky or (self-sufficiency). Indeed they appear to be addressing ancient tribal societies, not the present pluralistic Africa societies, with overflowing populations.

Cosmopolitanism (Transculturality)

As the name transcultural suggests, this vision proposes or pretends to go beyond the traditional conception of cultures and its implication for the understanding of the nation and hence indigenization. The great exponent of transculturality, Wolfgang Welsch holds that the old concept of culture as referring to a way of life of a people in a determined territory, demarcated from other territories, regarded as the outside, the foreign, today obsolete is no longer characteristic of our societies and communities. What we have today is networking of cultures, interconnected, intermingled lifestyles which go beyond borders of national cultures and found the same way in all cultures. That is a hybridization, whereby other cultures have virtually come to be the inner content of each other and receive identical information. There is the destruction of the foreign/own distinction. Thus writes Wolfgang "Strictly speaking there exists no longer anything absolutely foreign. Everything is within reach. Accordingly there is no longer anything exclusively "own" either. Authenticity has become folklore (WofgangWelsch 1999 P.223). "The regional culture talk today is regarded as mere rhetoric and aesthetic. The life of an academic or accountant is no longer

Nigerian or Italian but basically global, shaped by many homelands, or various cultural origins.

This idea of transculturality has been called Cosmopolitanism by some like Kwame Appiah. In his *Essay on the Fallacies of Eurocentricism and Afrocentricism* he holds that to be cosmopolitan is to declare oneself a citizen of the world. We choose our cultures not inherit them; and if individual autonomous choice could lead to the extinction of certain forms of life, of cultures, of language, then the individual still has the right to choose their own way of life. If all people organize their life around solidarity to cultures different from others, this brings conflict, disagreements, ghettoization etc. For him old histories have themselves been shaped by the movement of people and their communal practices as old as human history.

He further argues "... Greece to which the West looks back was at the crossroads of the cultures of North Africa and the Near East...The West that has triumphed today, acquired its gunpowder from China, the astronomical date on which was based the beginnings of the Scientific Revolution from the Near East. (Kwame Appiah *Fallacies of Eurocentricism and Afrocentricism*).

Laying credence to this, Wolfgang Welsch observed that cultures can no longer lay claim to homogeneity and Separateness. The Intergration of cultures or emergence from one another is as a result of "migratory processes as well as of world-wide material and immaterial communications, systems, economic interdependence and dependence..." (Wolfgang Welsch in Mike Featherstone and Scot Lash (eds). *Friedrich Nietzsche is regarded as the father of transculturality when he said that he was glad to be inhabited not by one immortal soul but many mortal souls within. He talked of the emergence of a supra-national and nomadic type of man, the type that possesses, physiologically speaking, a maximum of the art and power of adaptation as its typical distinction. He warned against relapse into fatherlandishness and soil addiction. (Friedrich Nietzsche, 1984, p.228, 62, 67. Wittgenstein contributed to the transcultural concept of culture, as he outlined his pragmatic principle based, concept of culture, which is free of ethnic consolidation and immeasurable demand for homogeneity. For him culture is at hand, wherever practice in life are shared. Our pre-occupation is not to understand other cultures but with interaction with foreigners. He*

favoured pragmatic efforts to interact in preference to hermeneutic conceptualization (Peter Winch 1990)!' Other philosophers like Montaigne have expressed a transcultural concept of self. "I have nothing to say about myself absolutely, simply, and solidly without confusion and without mixture, or in one word, we are all patchwork, and so shapeless and diverse in composition that each bit, each moment plays its own game (Montaigne in Donald M. Frame 1992, p.242, 244) For transculturality, the diversity as understood in the form of single cultures, does disappear increasingly. New forms of diversities take shape arising from different cultures and forms of life, each arising from transcultural permeations and exhibiting a transcultural layout. The transcultural web is woven with different threads and in a different manner.

Now the differences no longer exist between clearly delineated cultures, but result between transcultural networks. They are no longer bound to geographical or national stipulations but follow purely cultural interchange processes. By their theory they claim to have tried to mediate between the global and the local, the universal and the particular.

For them it favours awareness of contingency, flexibility and changes. Relation can change as well as locality. We are ultimately in the more temporary and never final. Max Horkheimer and Adorno pointed to this when they said that the actual home land can be far away from your original home, which was perhaps just constriction, prison and anguish. They went further: Homeland is the state of having escaped (Max Horkheimer and Theodore N. Adorno 1994, p.78).

Critics accuse transculturalists of mutilating the idea of culture to apply to any association. Even the idea of transculturality was used in an odd fashion since in its reasoning; it would imply something that is universal to cultures not in the sense of intermingling, or mixing up. It promotes indiscriminate pluralization of society which could lead to social anarchism similar to the post modernist slogan of "anything goes". Infact one can say that in their hand the only thing indigenous is that there is nothing indigenous. While conceding the mixing up of populations and mutual influences, yet our society still recognizes core values and practices which define or identify a people in the original sense of culture. Transculturalists have been accused of veiled westernism and propagating

liberal values in the name of globality, and freedom of choice.

They talk of pluralism and fallibilism but seem to espouse the liberal freedom as a universal bulb. Transculturality looks more like an utopia or social Darwinism, in which rich powerful and technologically effective societies will gradually eliminate the less powerful and low technology societies, because the economic and technological rich countries will surely produce more powerful transcultural networks and value system which will be more exposed or even marketed at the expense of the less advantaged peoples cultures. Infact most of the criticisms made on globalism can also be made of transculturality. In a transcultural model, African identity varnishes.

CONCLUSION: IN DEFENCE OF THE PHILOSOPHY OF PROGRESSIVISTIC INDIGENIZATION (CRITICAL ROOTED INTERCULTURALITY)

The philosophy of progressive indigenization is a philosophy of progress which recognizes and tries to accommodate whatever is true and suitable in other theories by being realistic, existential and non-utopic. It recognizes that there can be an Africa-oriented and designed way to the future, an Africa development paradigm working within the African cultural dynamics to realize Africans proper destiny in the world; without falling into the errors of anachronism and romanticism or the utopia of the African civilizational fundamentalists, because autarky or developmental isolationism is not a serious option. We cannot perpetuate the notion of the “African otherness”. Human beings in many ways are the same. We are never completely the other; whether African or not. The Afrocentric “Alterity” is unfortunately the acceptance of racists slur, according to which Africans are irrational and incapable of acquiring the rudiments of modernity. There is no doubt that human beings as human beings have many identical problems susceptible to common solutions from the stock of knowledge discovered by man, the source of the origination not withstanding (Messy Kebede, vol.1 No.2, 1999) This does not mean a surrender to a so called liberal civilization projected as a natural way of human progress. Therefore Francis Fulkyama was wrong in declaring that democratic liberal capitalism, marks the end of the human search for a civilizational model (Glenn W. Olsen 2004, p.327-328). Surely the great achievements of liberal modernity and

civilization are enormous to be denied. We must be honest to accept that there is no Africa existing today except an Africa that is a by-product of the indigenous, the Islamic and Western civilizations. As Prof. T. Okere stated... The Africa of today is a living confluence of cultural rivers, the major rivers being on the one hand, the traditional culture with its tributaries of religion, social, sometimes, language values and worldview, and on the other hand the Christian-Western cultures and other alien cultures including Islam...” (Theophilus Okere p.10). Western modernity with its prodigious economic scientific technological revolution cannot be ignored by any section of our world. So philosophy of progressive indigenization which can be called rooted interculturality lies in fostering an effective, proper and judicious development of African peoples and society through her endogeneous resources and creative genius and in critical openness to the exogeneous elements that have proved their credentials in promoting economic, social and cultural well being of peoples in other places.

Philosophy of progressive indigenization sees progress as a process of empowering the people or nation to effectively and judiciously develop and harness their indigenous endowments, resources, productive forces and civilizational values and unlocking the local genius with an equally adequate and critical openness to the exogeneous, the foreign, for the total well being of the people, in trying to overcome their challenges to their material existence and quest for integral development. Progressive indigenization is thus a developmental and emancipatory philosophy appropriate for nations like in Africa who have for long been under the hegemonic control of others, laboring and sweating under the burdens of the predeterminations of imposed history, twisted Anthropology, imposed developmental process and hijacked destiny. African people’s existential situation has been dictated by the logic and demands of other people’s internal developmental logic and interests and which have left Africans alienated and under the burden of a suffocating dependency. So progressive indegenization aims at galvanizing Africans to self-consciousness, and self-confidences on their ability to own their developmental trajectory, strategies, priorities, space and time (International Development Targets (IDTS) of OCCD/DAC, 1996). Perhaps AimeCesaire’s observation should be the guiding principle here when he said that he

would not entomb himself in some strait particularism nor did he intend to become entrapped in a fleshless universalism. For him there were two paths to doom: by segregation, by walling up in the particular or dilution by

thinning off into the emptiness of the universal. It is a universal richness with all the particulars there are, the deepening of each particular, the coexistence of them all. (AimeCesaire, letter to Maurice Thorez, 1987, p.15).

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Citation: Dr. Uwalaka Jude And Dr. George Mbara, “ Trends In The Philosophy Of Progress And Development In Africa: A Critical Evaluation”, *International Journal of Research in Humanities and Social Studies*, 8(10), 2021, pp.55-67. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.22259/2694-6296.0810005>

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