

# MORAL THINKING IN TRADITIONAL AFRICAN SOCIETY: A RECONSTRUCTIVE INTERPRETATION

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## **Abstract**

A debate concerning the nature of moral thinking in traditional societies has long dominated the scholarship of ethical thinkers and social anthropologists alike. Western scholars and intellectuals had justified colonialism as a “civilizing mission” meant to rescue African “savages” whose only mode of regulating conduct was through religion and magical sanctions. According to these scholars, in traditional cultures, there are no behavioural patterns, which can be properly referred to, as ‘moral’. The argument here is that behavioural patterns of the purely secular kind, which exist in more complex societies, were completely absent in traditional African societies, such that relationships between individuals in society only had a religious undertone.

## **Introduction**

What was the nature of moral thinking in the traditional African society before the Europeans arrived on the shores of the Black Continent in the 15<sup>th</sup> century? Was there anything resembling a moral order or an ethical system in traditional Africa similar to what existed in Europe, Asia or the Americas, at that period in the history of the world? Or was it the case, as Thomas Hobbes and other imperial scholars were wont to argue, that Africa had “no art, letters or social organization, but instead, only fear and violent death”?<sup>1</sup> The German philosopher, Friedrich Hegel (1770-1831), was even more poignant than Hobbes in his *devalorization* of African culture. Like most European scholars of the colonial era, Hegel wrote in

support of “a physiological lobotomy of the African Negro” (to use a phrase we have appropriated from Frantz Fanon)<sup>2</sup> by positing the following argument:

Africa is an ahistoric continent even though it has a geographical location. The people live in a condition of mindlessness barbering without laws and morality.<sup>3</sup>

Hegel and Hobbes were not alone in the vilification or denigration of the black race. Most European scholars, dating back to the period of slave trade, have had some slide thing or the other to say about the Negroid race. Renowned thinkers such as J. J. Rousseau, David Hume and Immanuel Kant all had uncomplimentary things to say about the black person. It is either the black man has a “subcritical” or “prelogical” mentality; or as Rudyard Kipling would argue, he is “half devil and half child,” and needs the anodyne of brutality or physical violence to make him truly human!<sup>4</sup>

Even the great Karl Marx, the illimitable revolutionist and bitter enemy of bourgeois capitalism, when it came to the issue of European domination of non-European territories, knuckled under the racial weight. While acknowledging the monstrosity of European rule over colonized peoples, Marx was however tepid and tendentious in his assessment of the colonial situation. In his view, the brutality and violence meted out to subjugated people could be exculpated on the grounds that it made possible a “fundamental revolution in the social state” of such people.<sup>5</sup> But the logic of this argument is obverted by the very fact that it is a non-sequitur. It is like saying that the white settlers in Zimbabwe and South Africa were justified in dispossessing the black majority of their farm lands because it helped expose the natives to modern methods of farming! Or that Hitler was right in eliminating millions of Jews because it helped liberate the Jews from the haughtiness of racial superiority or exclusivism! To argue that way is to be engaged in bad logic or mere intellectual shenaniganism.

Bigotry, hatred as well as racial prejudice are age-old problems that devalue our world and make light all human achievements. In particular, the peculiar problem known as *negrophobia* (i.e., the dislike for Negroes) has remained the black man’s burden all through the ages. And

though it is now a clichéd issue to keep harping on the old argument that colonialism is responsible for the woes of the African continent, it is however a big surprise to discover that by some twist of logic, those same imperial scholars who provided the intellectual justification for colonial domination are usually the ones celebrated as intellectual gurus in African intellectual circles!

The issues adumbrated above have been of a general nature. However, the paper has a specific focus, which is to examine the claim by European anthropologists and colonial historians that Africa lacked an ethical (or, moral) system before its contact with Western civilization! The crucial issue in this discourse is to consider whether or not this claim is true; and whether there are historical or ethnological evidence to back up such a claim. We shall also consider whether this opinion put forward by the colonial historians is not in fact a harebrained assertion by some arm-chair scholars who lacked the basic knowledge of how traditional cultures operated. But before we get into the discussion proper, we need to make a few general remarks on the meaning of morality and some other related concepts.

## **Morality and Cognate Concepts**

Moral thinking is concerned with the issue of good conduct among those who make up the human community. It is also concerned with the creation of a humane social environment without which those who live in society would hardly realize their goals and aspirations in life. It is for this reason that people are constantly exhorted to lead morally emulous lives because, as the argument goes, it is in living virtuously that human beings can give meaning to their social life and existence. With particular reference to traditional African life, it was the opinion that a life of rectitude helps build up society and guaranteed the individual a good place in the preternatural or chthonic world. The logic of the belief in the existence of an extra-terrestrial world notwithstanding, the important issue that bears relevance to the present discussion is that the human community can only function properly if it is built on a good moral foundation. But then, what exactly do we have in mind when we talk about *morals*? And in relation

to African life, what was the nature of moral thinking among traditional Africans in the pre-European African world? These are some of the issues we shall address here. But first, we need to make the following explanation.

In philosophy, the terms ‘moral’ and ‘ethical’ are often taken to be identical, and have as their cognate the word ‘morality’. Etymologically, ‘moral’ is derived from the Latin word *mores*, meaning that which concerns character, behaviour, or actions, considered or judged as being good or evil, right or wrong, etc. Broadly construed, however, morals refer to the models and standards of conduct people adhere to. As a concept, it reflects the actual behaviour of members of big or small social groups as well as what the members of these groups allow or prohibit themselves to do. Morals, says Kwasi Wiredu, “covers ethical rules proper as well as customs and taboos.”<sup>6</sup> In other words, morals taken as a whole bear on the morality of a social community. It entails human principles of right and wrong, and deals with how people treat themselves in order to promote mutual welfare, progress, creativity and meaning in a striving for what is right over what is wrong, and what is good over what is bad.

In our day-to-day interactions as human beings, we expect people to conduct themselves in a morally good way. Similarly, we also expect a person to do that which is ethically propitious or good while avoiding that which is evil. When, for instance, we judge the actions and characters of people to be right or wrong, good or bad, just or unjust, etc., we have an idea of the best way we think they can live. While we may define moral behaviour as behaviour in accordance with the recommended patterns of a community, the morality of a community on the other hand consists of those ways of behaviour which each member of the community is taught, bidden and encouraged to adopt by other members.

Having made the foregoing remarks, in the discussion that follows in the paper, we shall dwell in particular, on the nature of moral or ethical thinking in the traditional African society, that is, the African society before Christianity, Islam or European colonization. But before proceeding in the discussion proper, it is important to clarify the sense in which we are employing the term “society” in this essay. In the present context, we are using the word, “society” as a collective noun to represent the different cultural groups that make up the African continent. In saying this, how-

ever, we are aware that certain differences may exist in cultural emphasis of the diverse groups that make up the African world. The other side of the argument is to state that there are certain elements of culture, known as *cultural constants*, or what John Bowker identifies as the “recurring elements in human behaviour,” which arise from the fact that human beings are all conceived and born in, broadly speaking, the same way.<sup>7</sup> It is these cultural constants or elements that establish the universal brotherhood and kinship among all races. However, if as the argument goes, human beings are the same or similar in certain respects, from whence came the problem of racial hate and prejudice among people? The answer to the question is simply, bigotry and blind ignorance!

What is shown by the above is that the theory of cultural autarky among the different African groups is neither supported by experience nor historical evidence. This is perhaps what J. A. Omoyajowo tries to explain when he says that, “man everywhere is man;” and that the *tribal* societies that flourished in primeval times were “relatively undifferentiated and homogenous” in outlook.<sup>8</sup> If this statement is accepted as a truism, it therefore follows that we can confidently make some generalization about the nature of African culture and belief system. Hence, in our discussion of moral thinking in the primeval African world, we shall feel free to adopt any given African culture of our choice to fecundate and to represent how in traditional Africa as a whole, the people grappled with moral matters. Our choice of a cultural guide in this regard will be the Igbo culture. But this choice is not informed by a supposed superiority of Igbo culture over other African cultures but for mere convenience, and because the author is familiar with the Igbo culture itself and the language with which it is conveyed. Put differently, traditional Igbo ethical thinking will merely be an example or gauge for traditional African cultures as a whole.

### **Moral Thinking in Traditional African Society**

Africa is distinguished by its close-knit society. Traditions, customs and rules for regulating conduct and interpersonal relationships are varied and diverse. As with other societies of the world, in Africa, the rules are not always obeyed nor expectations all the time fulfilled. As a result, some

sanctions are usually put in place to prevent social disorder and anarchy. In every African community, an elaborate system of guides and sanctions exist. These range from legal sanctions, social customs to moral rules. It is often said that moral and ethical considerations in traditional African societies are communitarian in nature, meaning that it is in submitting his or herself to the will of the community that the individual finds social security and peace. J.O. Awolalu argues, for example, that the basic moral values of which the elders are the guardians have to be maintained. According to Awolalu, it is the responsibility of the elders to see that all the social norms and ethics relating to the well-being of the community are maintained. The argument here is that the elders “are aware that they owe their positions to the author of these moral values and to the ancestors who are ever present and ever watching to see that a high moral standard is maintained.”<sup>9</sup>

Based on this idea of communitarianism, some scholars have argued that African traditional value systems lacked, in several respects, the characteristic feature of a true moral system. According to these scholars, moral institutions in pre-literate societies were mere devices through which men sought to establish a flourishing society. They were at best studied in functional terms, with the individual’s moral behaviour adjusted to meet society’s need and expectations. Among early anthropologists the view was commonly held that in traditional cultures there were no such behavioural patterns which can be properly referred to as ‘moral’. The claim here is that behavioural patterns of the purely secular kind which exist in more complex societies are completely absent from traditional societies, such that the relationship between individuals and, the individual and all forms of social interactions were seen in religious perspectives only. To justify the foregoing assertions two types of arguments are usually proffered. The first is the claim that a truly moral system must be universalizable, and since African traditional codes of conduct discriminate between insiders and outsiders, they are said to have restricted applicability. The second argument claims that a truly moral system is typically characterized by critical reflections, with reason as a crucial tool for differentiating between right and wrong. Traditional African value systems, it is argued, are not only dogmatic but have as their sources of reference authority of one kind or another.<sup>10</sup>

A number of early social anthropologists and social scientists had

also argued that life in traditional African societies was full of a superabundance of the emotional as against the rational. The worldview of such societies, we are told, “is dominated by images which have their origins almost solely in man’s uncharted sensations and are coloured more by mystical awe than by the confidence of reason.”<sup>11</sup> Long ago, Lucien Levy-Bruhl held that the ‘primitives’ or the so-called savages had a prelogical mentality, that their mind is incapable of rational, critical effort. Levy-Bruhl compares the Western and the so-called savage mind and argues that the latter is:

not constrained above all else, as ours is, to avoid contradictions. The same logical exigencies are not in its case always present. What to our eyes is impossible or absurd, it sometimes will admit without seeing any difficulty.<sup>12</sup>

Many Western scholars and social anthropologists are wont to argue that moral conduct in traditional African societies is bound by the sanctions of dogma, religion and authority. One such scholar, E.W. Smith depicts African morality as ‘taboo morality’. The African, he argues, is taught to revere custom and resent change. Smith lists three types of sanctions, which according to him, explain African customs and behavioural patterns. These include religious, traditional and magical sanctions. The magical sanction, Smith says, is the oldest and strongest of the three, and exercises the greatest influence on African behavioural patterns.<sup>13</sup>

The opinions above need reviewing, as there may not be scientific evidence to support them. With particular reference to Levy-Bruhl, we need not bother refuting what he has to say since his were the views of an armchair scholar which lacked any scientific or empirical support. With Smith, however, we have to concede that in Africa, customs are highly revered and even cherished. But this is also true of every human society anywhere in the world- be it Europe, America or Asia. In other words, it is not only in Africa that culture is hallowed or cherished. What is true about Africa in this regard is also true of every other society in the world. But the other opinion which has it that Africans resent change is the one that is rather bizarre and awry. The truth of the matter is that Africans, more than any other group or race, have proved to be highly receptive to

change and new ideas. A few examples would help to lend weight to what we have said here. Africans have not only accepted Christianity and Islam which are foreign religions but even to the point of killing one another in a bid to win adherents to their faiths. Nigeria is a good example where religious violence and mayhem is a normal and common occurrence! And almost all the religious wars fought in the country are between devotees to Islam and Christianity. Africans have embraced Western education, democracy, and technology; they have even adopted foreign modes of dressing and mannerisms. These can hardly be said to be the characteristics of a people who are so enamored with their custom that they resent change.

By 'traditional sanctions' what the writers have in mind is that when questioned regarding why he acts the way he does the African would reply that his parents acted that way and bade him to act likewise. M.J. McVeigh avers, for example, that "by the mere fact that they are passed on from generation to generation, customs tend to be hallowed by time. They may have at one time rested on religious sanctions, but these have been lost or forgotten; so that today the only answer given to the question is that this is the way it has always been."<sup>14</sup> The argument that African value codes have a restricted applicability needs some qualifications. All moral thinkers agree that moral codes or what are commonly known as the fundamental principles of the moral law admit of exceptions. We could take as an example, the moral principle, "Thou shall not kill." Ordinarily, the killing of a human being is prohibited (under normal circumstances); but since circumstances are not always normal, situations may arise where the killing of a human being becomes morally justified. This could be in a situation of self-defense (when the only way to save one's life from an unjust aggressor is to kill him), in a situation of war, or as an act of capital punishment, etc. These are all cases of *restrictability* in the application of the moral principle which prohibits the killing of a human being. However, they are not peculiar to Africa but to all human societies as a whole.

Admittedly though, a kind of discrimination exists between the way an insider is treated and the way an outsider is treated in the so-called traditional societies. But this fact (if it is a fact) is not peculiar to African societies but is universal to all human cultures and societies. For example, the European colonial authorities discriminated between their fellow Eu-

Europeans and the citizens of the subjugated territories. In the same way, the fugitive occupationists in Australia and New England (now America) discriminated between those of their own stock and the original owners of these territories. Therefore, the argument that African value systems lack the characteristic feature of a true moral system simply because they are said to discriminate between insiders and outsiders is *non sequitur*. Besides, the argument is untoward and lacks merit. The truth of the matter is that morality is a universal feature of all human societies; and to be moral presupposes rationality. By simple or elementary logic or parity of reasoning, since Africans are rational beings, it follows as a matter of logic, that their traditional value systems had a moral status. To allude to a point we have made already, morality entails human principles of right and wrong. It deals with how humans treat themselves in order to promote mutual welfare and self-fulfillment in society. Keith Davis captures this point in a picturesque manner when he argues to the effect that morality:

is reflected in the conscience of humankind confirmed by the experience of people in all ages. It has to do with the consequences of our acts to ourselves and to others. It recognizes that life has an overall purpose and accepts the inner integrity of each individual.<sup>15</sup>

### **Moral Thinking Among the Traditional Igbo**

The Igbo form one of the three major ethnic nationalities in Nigeria. The other two are the Yoruba and the Hausa-Fulani. The Igbo had many of its able-bodied youths exported to Europe and the Americas through the Trans Saharan trade in slaves. Through British colonialism, the people also had an early contact with Christianity and Western education. However, our reference to Igbo past here is merely incidental and perfunctory, as this is not meant to be a treatise on Igbo history or colonial experience. The Igbo experience with colonialism is well documented in the literature that it needs no repeating in the present essay. Our choice of the Igbo culture here is, as we said earlier, to serve as an example or metaphor for our discussion on the nature of moral thinking in the tradi-

tional African society.

A debate concerning the nature of moral thinking in traditional societies has long dominated the scholarship of ethical thinkers and social anthropologists alike. And as we have indicated above, there are moral thinkers who deny that traditional societies had value systems that could truly be characterized as ‘moral’. But as we have also pointed out already, this type of argument is vitiated by the fact that morality is a universal feature of all human societies. Besides, the argument itself cannot be sustained by evidence or by any rational proof.

Among the traditional Igbo, for example, the level of moral thinking was very high. The Igbo language contains a variety of words to express approval and disapproval, good and bad, pleasant and unpleasant, and so on. All embody moral connotations. Take, for instance, the words, ‘aru’ (pollution) and ‘nma’ (good); to commit ‘aru’ (*ime aru*, in the Igbo language) is to do that which is evil while to do ‘nma’ (*ime nma*, also in Igbo) is to conduct oneself in a morally worthy manner. A person is described as ‘onye aru-rala’, literally ‘one who pollutes or abominates the land’, if his or her ethical conduct is contrary to ethically approved behaviour. ‘Ajo mmadu’ is a phrase used to describe a bad man (or woman), where the ‘ajo’ means bad, i.e., the opposite of good. Furthermore, when a thing or an act is spoken of in terms of ‘iru-ala’ (desecration of the land), ‘ime-aru’ or ‘ime nso-ala’ (doing that which is abominable or acting in pollution of the earth), all these are seen as morally bad actions. Among the Igbo, ‘ala’ (that is, the land or earth) is believed to possess some form of divine sanctity or sacrality such that one can either please or offend the preternatural forces that indwell it. The close link the Igbo have to their land is largely due to the belief that it is the abode of the departed ancestors. Similarly, the fertility of the soil, the progress of human life as well as the health of the animals is only assured as long as the earth is not desecrated and the ancestors are duly honoured.

The Igbo word ‘nma’, as we have said earlier, conveys the idea of goodness or the idea of acting in an ethically appropriate way. In all things, the Igbo expect that individuals will act and conduct themselves in morally good ways while avoiding that which is evil and obnoxious. In this way, social harmony is ensured. The good life for the Igbo is known as ‘ezi-ndu’ (i.e., the virtuous life), the life of rectitude and approbation. But

the question may be asked, what is it that makes some actions good and others bad? Put differently, what is the standard of judgment among the traditional Igbo? C.C. Okorochoa answers that traditional Igbo moral code is based on the concept of ‘omenala’ or social custom. ‘Omenala’ derives from three Igbo words, namely, ‘ome’ (that which obtains); ‘na’ (in); ‘ala’ (land or society). In the words of Okorochoa, “the moral code of Iboland commonly spoken of as ‘omenala’ defines the various aspects of behaviour and social activities that are approved while at the same time indicating those aspects that are prohibited.”<sup>16</sup>

Generally, in Africa, the norm of right or wrong is said to be social custom. As with most other societies of the world, in Africa, the *good* is usually that which receives the community’s approval while the bad is that which the community prohibits or frowns at. While the good actions build up society, the bad ones tear it down. One is social, the other anti-social. With the Igbo in particular, ‘omenala’ or social custom is the means by which society enforces conformity to its rules. ‘Omenala’ then, is the means by which “the social ethos is measured, and the values of the society... controlled from one generation to another and the processes of socialization through which the education of the young ones are facilitated.”<sup>17</sup>

Traditional Igbo morality, like those of other African societies, was communalistic in nature. In communalistic societies, virtue and goodness are often seen as a means of realizing the social harmony of the group. They function to promote order, peace and the feeling of camaraderie among the individuals who make up society. Yet some writers claim that such group-related morality detracts from the ‘essential’ nature of morality. Group-related morality, we are told, removes from the moral life the joy of its inner motivation which, it is argued, results from choice, personal decision and responsibility. This is the type of argument, which Paul Roubiczek makes in his book, *Ethical Values in the Age of Science*. In the book, Roubiczek argues that “to subordinate the good to another purpose, such as usefulness for society, falsifies its nature and thus falsifies morality.”<sup>18</sup>

However, there is no good reason to suppose that Roubiczek’s opinion is necessarily correct. For as Gerhart Piers and M.B. Singer have suggested, there is no scientifically demonstrable reason why in group-related morality, “heavily influenced by the community’s rigorous enforce-

ment mechanism including shame and taunting improvised songs, members of such group could not develop inner remorse or guilt.”<sup>19</sup> Some elements in traditional Igbo cultural practice could be a helpful illustration in this regard. They will also help lend support to opinion expressed above by Piers and Singer. It was (and still is) the practice among the Igbo that when a man and a woman were caught in any uncomely relationship like adultery, they were made to go round the village half naked, with children singing taunting songs on their heels. If any member of the community committed a heinous crime or sacrilege, he was made to suffer public shame or dishonour. Such taunting songs, like the ones by the children, apart from bringing the offenders to public opprobrium, were also meant to deter others from committing the same type of offence in the future. Such immoral acts as adultery and incest were described as ‘nso ala’ (i.e., pollutions against ‘Ala’, the earth goddess). ‘Ala’, the goddess of the land and custodian of Igbo morality, imposed numerous laws and taboos which were meant to guide conduct between the individual and his neighbours, the individual and the forces of nature and, the individual and ‘Ala’ itself. In the words of A.E. Afigbo:

the transgression of any of these rules known as ‘omenala’ (conduct sanctioned by ‘Ala’) was promptly punished. In this way ‘omenala’ came to mean the highest law. It was distinguished from, and superior to ‘iwu’ which is any enactment made by man, the transgression of which would not involve offence to ‘Ala’ and the ancestors, and did not imply moral lapse. ‘Ala’ was the guardian of Igbo morality.<sup>20</sup>

In concluding the discussion in this paper, what remains to be said is that contrary to the trite opinion that traditional Africa lacked a moral system, Africans are social beings like other peoples of the world; and as social beings, Africans are not only rational but are also imbued with a sense of rectitude and propriety. To backtrack on a point made earlier in the paper, morality is basically concerned with society and with the relations between men and their fellow men. It is also concerned with general rules governing relations between men and the rules of society they ought to adopt. And as Thomas Hobbes himself would later argue, “the prov-

ince of morality is limited to those qualities of mankind that concern their living in peace and unity.”<sup>21</sup> In other words, no society can subsist or continue to flourish without a solid ethical or moral foundation. Societies that encourage good ethical conduct are the ones that have the capacity to survive whereas the ones that encourage moral laxity or rapaciousness are likely to founder, as was the case with ancient Sparta.

As we bring this discussion to a culmination, there are two final remarks that should be made, and which bear a close relevance to what we have said in the paper already. One is that good moral conduct redounds or conduces to the good of society as a whole. The other is that among Africans in particular, apart from the healthy social role which morality promotes, the pursuance of moral rectitude is also seen as a precondition for attaining a beneficent place in the ancestral mode of being. Generally, Africans regard the ancestors as organic members of the community of the living and as links between the living and the preternatural forces that inhabit the unseen world. The ancestors wield tremendous power over the living. Among the Igbo, for example, they are seen as the custodians of the social norms of the community, through whom “the moral code is passed on to the living members of their lineage.”<sup>22</sup>

Perhaps this explains why Africans set much by on people living virtuously in the society. Similarly, Africans believe in the transiliency of the human *existent* from the mundane to the divine essence. And sure enough, the belief in an *after life* of some sort, and the hope of attaining to the enviable status of a departed ancestor could be for people an incentive to live morally worthy lives in the community. The important thing here is not the logic of the belief in an afterlife or of the existence of ancestral beings that inhabit the *after world* but the fact that such beliefs served as an aid for traditional Africans to live morally worthy lives in the human community.

## ENDNOTES

<sup>1</sup> Noxious or denigrating ideas such as the one here were employed by imperial scholars to justify and support colonial rule or the subjugation of foreign territories by European colonizers. For example, Thomas Hobbes, the famous English philosopher of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, described Africa as “a timeless place,” where the people lived in primitive barbarism and the fear of violent death. For more on this,

- see S. B. Oluwole's paper titled "African Philosophy in Yoruba Language," excerpted in *New African* (London), October 2006, No. 455, pp. 10- 11.
- <sup>2</sup> Frantz Fanon, "Racism and Culture," in E. C. Eze (ed.), *African Philosophy: An Anthology* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers Ltd., 1998), p. 305.
- <sup>3</sup> I am indebted to Professor S. B. Oluwole for this quotation from Hegel. For more on how the colonial scholars depicted the African world during the colonial era, see S. B. Oluwole, *op. cit.*, p. 10.
- <sup>4</sup> T. S. Eliot, *A Choice of Kipling's Verse* (New York: Anchor Books, 1962), p. 143.
- <sup>5</sup> Karl Marx, "British Rule in India," in Karl Marx and F. Engels, *On Colonialism* (New York: International Publishers, 1972), p. 41.
- <sup>6</sup> Kwasi Wiredu, "Death and the Afterlife in African Culture," in Kwasi Wiredu and Kwame Gyekye, *Person and Community: Ghanaian Philosophical Studies, I, Cultural and Contemporary Change, Series II* (Washington, D. C.: The Council for Research in Values and Philosophy, 1992), p. 143.
- <sup>7</sup> John Bowker, *The Meaning of Death* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), p. 18.
- <sup>8</sup> J. A. Omoyajowo, "The Concept of Man in Africa," in *Orita: Ibadan Journal of Religious Studies*, vol. IX/1 (June 1975), p. 37. 69.
- <sup>9</sup> J.O. Awolalu, "The African Traditional View of Man," in *Orita: Ibadan Journal of Religious Studies*, vol. 1/2, December 1972, p. 133.
- <sup>10</sup> For a criticism of this type of argument, see G. S. Sogolo, *Foundations of African Philosophy* (Ibadan: Ibadan University Press, 1993), pp. 120-125.
- <sup>11</sup> Cf., I. Okpewho, "Myth and Rationality," in *Ibadan Journal of Humanistic Studies*, no. 1, April 1984, p. 28.
- <sup>12</sup> L. Levy-Bruhl (1931), *La Mentalité Primitive*. Quoted by S. Lukes, in *Rationality*, edited by B.R. Wilson (Oxford: Blackwell, 1970).
- <sup>13</sup> This classificatory scheme done by Smith is not supported by history or ethnographical evidence. Besides, the classification is misleading and unscientific. There is nothing to suggest that African behavioural patterns are simply classifiable into the traditional, the religious or even the magical mode as Smith suggests. Smith and other writers like him downplay the fact that in traditional Africa there were also behavioural patterns of the ethical or moral type.
- <sup>14</sup> M.J. McVeigh, *God in Africa* (Massachusetts: Claude Stark Inc., 1974), p. 85.
- <sup>15</sup> Keith Davis, *Human Behaviour at Work* (New Delhi: Tata McGraw Hill Publishing Co., Ltd., 1982), p. 13.
- <sup>16</sup> Cf., C.C. Okorochoa, *The Meaning of Religious Conversion in Africa* (Brookfield, U.S.A.: Avebury, 1987), pp. 101-102 and, E. Ilogu, *Christianity and Ibo Culture* (Leiden, Netherlands: E. J. Brill, 1974), p. 124.
- <sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>18</sup> Paul Roubiczek, *Ethical Values in the Age of Science* (Cambridge: The University Press, 1969), p. 57.
- <sup>19</sup> G. Piers and M.B. Singer, *Shame and Guilt: A Psycho-analytic and Cultural Study* (New York: W.H. Norton and Co., 1971), p. 99.

- <sup>20</sup> A.E. Afigbo, "Prolegomena to the Study of the Cultural History of Igbo-speaking Peoples of Nigeria," in F.C. Ogbalu and E.N. Emenanjo (ed.), *Igbo Language and Culture* (Ibadan: O.U.P., 1975), pp. 42-43.
- <sup>21</sup> For this quotation by Thomas Hobbes, see G.H. Sabine, *A History of Political Philosophy* (London: Union Books, 1969), p. 428.
- <sup>22</sup> J. C. U. Aguwa, "Patterns of Religious Influence in Igbo Traditional Politics," in U. D. Anyanwu and J. C. U. Aguwa(ed.), *The Igbo and the Tradition of Politics*(Enugu: Fourth Dimension Publishing Co. Ltd., 1993), p. 92.