A CRITICAL RE-EVALUATION OF NIGERIAN NOTION OF VALUE

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Abstract
What we want to stress here is that for the Nigerian, indeed African by extension yesteryears, anything that is seen *valuable* and *morally worthy* must be found on the *principles of communalism* and guided in the real *exercise of humanism*. It must be directed and aware of the sanctity cum value of life and welfare of the people. But unfortunately today, this conception of value has drastically changed as value is now all about the *acquisition of money cum wealth and possession of power* by all means. The instinct for materialism, power for selfish interests characterized by disregard for life and human welfare has suppressed the instinct for worthy values. Lives and human welfare are today seen as means to ends and no more ends itself. Why must value for the Nigerian (and African) today be all about the ideology of "any way na way" provided the individual is heard financially and becomes politically famous? However, while we do not despise the *necessity* of money cum wealth and political powers when justly got and positively applied, we are just trying to reawaken our moral consciousness, raise certain moral critical questions vis-à-vis what we see as *trending values* today, and at once, proposing a new way of conceiving *worthy values* where our human nature of material consciousness and our moral consciousness will harmoniously exist. We will apply comparative cum evaluative methods in addressing the issue.

Introduction

The issue of what is good and what is bad (morality) and by extension, value, are existentially central ones. Many have argued that value is a product of reason, implying that it is a sort of universal concept, whereas others strongly hold that it is strictly relative. That is to say that it is a people who institute their value. This underscores the power of a people to deploy their tradition and culture in defining their value system. However, it is an ethical concept that has a lot to say about people's culture, philosophy, attitude, identity, mentality, social peace, progress and development, etc. It also shapes and directs the thinking of a people, their object and modes of thought and whence the thinking takes place. It is an important factor in human affairs; in that, it modifies an individual on how to lead a good life for his own benefit and that of the society. Its emergence may include influences from acculturation, willful emulation or force on the people by certain natural factors, or even the human nature. But the big question is: what is the principle that guides value, whether universal or relative? What is the rationale behind the forming or emergence of values? Where are the meeting points of values that emerged from diverse backgrounds? What is the justification of values that contradict human reasoning?

These are serious critical questions that Africans and particularly Nigerians must answer. What is value to the African or Nigerian? This paper is an attempt to reassess

the African conception of values today which I argue here has entirely derailed from what it was in the yesteryears of the African man, when the *oughtness* of value played out in the people's lives. The reverse has now become the case, and in Chinua Achebe's line of thought, the center can no longer hold as things have fallen widely apart. In the present circumstance, what Africans now conceive as values, be it in their religious, political, economic, ethical cum moral, educational, commercial lives, can be anything other than *African* in principle which we will explain latter as we progress.

The Concept of Value

Etymologically, the term "Value or Worthiness" derives from Greek, "Axios/Axias" which translates in English "Axiology" (Ethics) which is a branch of Philosophy today. Value as an ethical concept is "a philosophical equivalent of the goodness, the excellence, the desirability and what not, which we attribute to certain sorts of objects, states and situation". According to Eneh (2001:82):

> Values are what the civilized and rational minds cherish, esteem, prize preciously and have an inclined attitude for, while, disvalues are what we reject, abhor and disapprove as detrimental to life. They are the principles or standards of a person and society for the good or benefit of the personal or societal judgment of what is valuable to life.

Value is that which a person or a people conceive worthy to be respectfully preserved, cherished and held close to heart. It defines (identifies) a people, has much impact on their conception of reality, makes them to think original in their culture – language, religion, tradition, etc. It is a people's pride, honour, integral life phenomenon, dignity, patrimony and phenomenon of patriotism worth dying for. It directs a people's attitude and serves as an instinct or directive force behind their attitude, thinking and speaking. It serves as a standard and a *why*, a *when* and *where* determining factor as to the reason people behave in a particular way. In other words, value, an aspect of "morality is co-extensive with life itself; it is not some separate area or sphere of life. A moral problem is not just a moral problem. It is also a personal, social, economic, political or international problem." (Titus, 1970:360) It is a goal, an end itself. It intrinsically concerns itself with the nature of certain existential ethical concepts like good, bad, right and wrong, justice and injustice, freedom, duty, conscience, practice, proper, excellence, virtue, advantage, education, language, inclination, truth, obligation, objectivity, subjectivity, universal acceptable social conducts, law, etc. From all indications, value is an important human factor which defines who a person is, why he behaves in a peculiar way, the moral content of his thought, a mirror to the state of his mind, and equally of the general society. Thus, "to ignore the role of values is to have a very distorted or one-sided view of man and his world. Most men are concerned to see decency, justice, love, beauty, and devotion to truth increase and to see brutality, tyranny, hatred, and ugliness and falsehood decrease." (Titus, 1970:339)

Theoretically however, as an ingredient of academic exercise, not every person believes in the conception and articulation of value and the concept of morality held by others. This could have stemmed up following the fact that there are various disciplines looking at value as a concept from different angles. Hence, it calls for a critical review and comparison among the different theories of value and morality as espoused by different philosophical schools of thought.

Naturalism: This theory holds that whatever produces pleasure is good or moral or valuable whereas whatever produces pain is bad, immoral or invaluable. Perry (1954:3), for instance, holds that "a thing – anything – has value, or is valuable, in the original and generic sense when it is the object of an interest – any interest." That is to say that "whatever is an object of interest is *ipso facto* valuable." According to Hobbes (1946:32), *good* in man's 'State of Nature' is the object of man's appetite or desire while any object of hate and aversion is evil and any object of contempt is perceived as vile, and in short, inconceivable. Simply put that *good* and *bad* (morality) express man's 'appetite' and 'aversion.'

Anti-Naturalism: This theory goes in direct opposition to Naturalism and holds that natural properties like *pleasure*, *appetite* or *desire* cannot be used to explain value or moral goodness. For Moore and Ross, certain ethical terms like *Good*, *Right* (value), etc. are indefinable and un-analyzable and the simplest ethical notions. Moore (1903:10) says that if he is asked 'what is good?', he would simply answer 'that good is good, and that is the end of the matter.' For Ross, we can only know these ethical terms, even recognize our duties and obligations by intuition for fundamental ethical principles are self-evident. For Parker (1931:20-1), "value belongs wholly to inner world, to the world of mind. The satisfaction of desire is the real value; the thing that serves is only an instrument." This means that value is always an experience (of the mind) never a thing for values should be projected into the external world, attributing it to the things that serve desire.

Emotivism: This theory holds that the idea of morality is only an expression of one's *feeling* or *emotion* towards whatever is in question. By this, we can say that value judgment is judgment of appraisal which may be thought of as merely an expression of one's feelings and desires- that is subjective. But the question remains whether values express feelings, facts or knowledge? Or is something good or its goodness in the mind of the knower? (Titus, 1970:341) For the emotivists, the term *good* or *value* (moral) expresses one's positive, approval, acceptance or favourable feeling, while the term *bad* or *unvalue* (immoral) expresses one's negative, unapproval, unacceptance, rejection or unfavourable feeling about something. In this, two points are expressed: first, acceptance or rejection of feeling of the moral object in question; and second, calling on others to join in the feeling.

Prescriptivism: This theory holds that ethical terms like *good* and *bad* are only used to prescribe a cause of an action. It is more of persuasion for moral goodness and moral badness depict a luring attempt or act on people to choose or follow and unchoose or unfollow the same line of action. This implicates Hare's point when he

posits that "moral judgments always have a bearing on our conduct, in that, we cannot in the fullest sense accept them without conforming to them." (1952:143)

Motivism: This theory holds that the morality of any action is based on the motive, aim or purpose for which the agent carries out the action. The implication is that motive for which an action is done justifies it and makes it either good or bad. But the principal question is: what itself makes the motive or aim *right* or rationally *justified*?

Situationism: This holds that the situation or condition in which the agent or actor is, when performing the act makes it right or wrong. The same question laid against motivism is also applicable here: the rationality or reasonable justification of the condition or situation in which the actor is when carrying out the action has a lot of moral burden and implication.

It is important to note that there are much more versions of ethical theories, but we wish to stop here because of their relevance to our discourse. It is no hidden fact that these theories as driving and phenomenal force on people's mind enhance series of questionable attitudes among the people .This underscores the saying that ideas control the world and people's attitudes. "Values seem to vary from one society to anther… However, when these values are analyzed, in terms of their functions and inter-relations, some general principles emerge. Behind the seemingly endless diversity of traditional… moral values, there is fundamental uniformity." (Ajah, 1997:532) The uniformity referred to here is what we will expose in the *concept of universality of good*. However, the point remains that many hold that value is relative and not universal, whereas others insist that it is universal. The relativists draw much argumentative support from the fact that even though we all are humans, we are not of the same people and we are from different backgrounds, philosophical, cultural and religious conceptions which guide our peculiar ways of thinking and have much influence on our conducts and general way of life. Therefore, what may be of value to a people may not be to other people, and so, everyone should preserve his background and culture and be the free architect of his values in accordance with what he conceives deserves it in his local environment. Thus, society must keep itself alive and its machinery smooth running and to this end. It evolves a system of self-preservation. The Sophists championed this position.

Concluding this, therefore, we may reiterate the Protagoran assertion that "man is the measure of all things, of the things that are, that they are, and of the things that are not, that they are not." That implies that what *are* to you, may not actually be for the other people, hence everyone creates what *are* for him. The central question however is: What becomes the fate of the ingredients of human existence which include human rights and freedom, the exercise of volition and the duty of reason in the face of ethical relativity? This is important to consider because sometimes we find ourselves in situations where two values are in conflict, in which case the two moral principles protecting them are also in conflict. Many a times, there exist values that neglect human dignity and pride, thereby neglecting the Kantian Ethical Categorical Imperative (Apodectic Practical Principle) as revealed by Ellington (1996:78) and encouraging a life of the survival-of-the-fittest. However, in such value-contradicting

situations, it is impossible for us to protect the two values or to observe the two moral principles protecting them.

In the very opposite, some have insisted that value is a universal concept which means that it is general to everybody. Value expresses the idea of *good* and good is a universal concept for it proceeds from reason and everybody possesses it. The implication is that hence you know what is good for you, then ensure such to your neighbour. To conclude this point, we may employ the biblical injunction which links to the Aristotelian and Kantian ideas of value, which we should do unto others what we would wish they do to us. An actor should therefore use himself to set a pragmatic example. According to Plato, in his idealism, even God is a subject to the principle of the universality of reason. Hence for Plato, "moral standards were superior even to God; goodness is anterior to God, and God is good if and only if he acts in accordance with a standard" (Popkin and Stroll,1993:4-5) Plato is even more ideally universal than even the Judeo-Christians and Muslims who opine that God is the initiator and director of goodness. Value and standard of goodness is universal and second to no other thing hence all is subject to their principle. No wonder Cicero insists saying:

There is in fact a true law, namely, right reason which is in accordance with nature:

> applied to all men and is unchangeable and eternal. By its command this law summons men to the performance of their duties; by its prohibitions it restrains them from doing wrong. Its commands and prohibitions always influence good men but are without effects upon the bad. To violate this law by human legislation is never morally right. (Sabine, 1963:164)

The emphatic point is that value or good is a product of reason, it is neither known nor encouraged to be done because religious holy books and articles demand it from us, but because it is in self-expression for we know, do and would like it be done onto us. Teleologically, speaking, for Titus (1970:359) "an act to be right it must make some contributions to the goodness of man or the world" for the desire for good is inherent in man's nature. In this regard, the central question is: Are what Nigerians conceive as values guided by which ethical theoretical principles and or orientation? Or are the Nigerian political, religious, educational, economic, commercial, social values guided by the accumulation of many principles of ethical theories? That is, should we say that the Nigerian conception of values is guided by the principle of the ethical theory of the situationists or motivists or prescriptivists or emotivists or anti-naturalists or even the naturalists? To answer the question, let us analyze the concept of values by the African or Nigerian.

African (Nigerian) Notion of Value Yesteryears (In its Pristine)

The traditional African society has ever been known for its communalism and humanism even though these two concepts are universal to everybody. Put in another way that the deductible value in such a society is the essence and rudiments of community-life whether good or bad and the respect for the sanctity and dignity of

life. For the traditional African therefore, anything virtuous or valuable or good that does not recognize the rudiments from these two concepts is morally questionable. These are the foremost values for the African and which have made him to still retain such life style as his personality even though modernity and globalization have succeeded in instilling the divisive individualistic sort of life among the Africans. For the African, the identification of the African personality as the attitude of communalism is based on the sense of *obi mmetuta nwanne* (brotherly-emotion) and the value that the fellow with whom I live and have my experience in the world has life just as I do, which is more valuable than anything existing. But in the other hand, the European concept of communism is based on the reason that man is born in the world and as such, is condemned to give essence to his life through socialization and exploration and exploitation of his fellow man, the world and any other existent for he has no excuse for his life-unfulfilment. This is indeed nothing than encouragement to egocentrism, inhumanity, violence and survival-of-the-fittest sort of life and the Hobbesian state of nature where life is regardless. The African holds this point as a strong reason which differentiates the African concept of communalism from that of European versions (Okolo, 1993:8-9)

Value for the traditional African is *care* for the neighbour, observance of *live-and-let-live* principle in life and then *compliance* to the traditional institution – say – respect for agriculture and its products, detest for damage of neighbour's properties because all these are considered *nso ala* (vices against the mother-earth).

By extension, an inclusive discourse on the African value cannot do without recognizing the purity and deity-nature of *Ala* (the earth-goddess) for it is the universal binding force of all men, as no man avoids its impacts in all aspects of human endeavours. The sense of morality begins with the consciousness from recognizing the traditional and cultural efficacy of *Ala* as a great tool or agent through which the Supreme Being manifests His supervision on earth and its inhabitants. So, the fear of *Ala* as a pure deity through which *Chineke* manifests His supremacy on every other existents is the beginning of morality and defining *values*. This is because as a woman-god, she gives birth to other earthly gods and goddesses and divinities, and in that sense, can influence all as the object that carries or holds and cares or sustains every other existents. This is how the sense of values is formed in the traditional African society coupling with the principal phenomena – humanism and communalism – which concretize it. Anything otherwise, begins the *unvalue*, and today that is the case, and that is a major source of the Nigerian (indeed African) problems.

African (Nigerian) Current Notion of Value (Corrupted-Value)

Unfortunately today, the Nigerian yesteryears concept of value is no more the same today as the Nigerian is now carried away as a result of modernization cum globalization life style. In this kind of life style, the Nigerian has been brain-washed to term his traditional life an *archaic* one and consequently advised to leave it and queue in the Western-motivated life of the exploitation of the fellow, materialism and

ephemeral-guiding *trending* life. Apart from this Western-cause, other factors behind this life of value-misconception today include acculturation and African predicaments –colonization, slavery, Apartheid, etc and their products like European religions and other *modern* orientations, practices and conceptions which have instilled in the African person and society, the other wise to his traditional values. These *trending values* are what Okolo (1994:9) conclusively explained as the Nigerian cum African problem with the concept of *Squandermania Mentality or Consumer Consciousness* which is all about the misleading orientation given to the African by the European that anything African is inferior and nothing *good* or *valuable* can be African. "This "consciousness" is easily defined as that disposition in a people by which they conceive and judge things mostly in terms of their materialistic, at times, consumable value." (Okolo, 1993:11-2) At this, the Nigerian (African) is now "dominated largely by acquisitive rather than productive instinct", he becomes guided by the instinct "to have more rather than be more; quantity of life rather than its quality, immediate rather than remote gain." This misconception of value and its replacement with the love for materialism and cheap honour aims at getting the "immediate material advantage or gain, which in turn, leads to consumerism, to mere accumulation of material goods and property." The Nigerian (African) neither conceives *value* as the *ideal*, he does not consider the *worthiness*, *supposedness* , *whyness*, *whereness* and *whenness* as *ought* and not as *is* of anything, rather, what he cares after (value) is *bring the remuneration or proceed let us eat*.

It is thus clear that he is far from being guided by the principle of Anti-naturalistic ethical theory. He now replaces his value-concept in his mentality with the *pleasure principle*, the value of material gains and advantage. This makes him to be existing on the Kierkegaardian Aesthetical Human Developmental Stage. "For the Nigerian, gain with little or no labour at all is ideal. He usually shuns creative labour which promises values other than material. His sole ambition is largely centered on being rich overnight." (Okolo, 1993:17) The trending Nigerian (African) value is all about *ego mbute* (money-unsuffered-for). By this, the Nigerian value is now dominated by the principle of materialism and material-pragmatism, and the Nigerian-African, more of empirical or physical rather than ideal or spiritual. Ethical terms like social values, powers, authority, rights, importance, etc are defined and determined in terms of material success and achievements, yet and as worst, with no work or labour for them.

Other trending values for the modern Nigerian-African include *excessive love for money*. Of course he is not denying the necessity of money in human life for "money is highly valued for what it does and can do", but the fact remains that "the average Nigerian strongly believes that money is almighty and can achieve anything and everything" and that it is the sole "key to paradise on earth, to property, power, social importance, even national honours." (Okolo, 1993:14) Nigerian popular high life musician Muddy Ibe concludes it this way: *oji ego ji okwu* (he who has money has the talk) and for Oliver de Coque, *aku n'etigbu okwu* (wealth puts any case to an end). Could it thus be said that the Nigerian is guided by the principle of Naturalistic ethical theory? Be that as it may, the idea that money is the most and the only *value in vogue* is never hidden in the Nigerian life, and that is why he would ask you: *if you no get*

money, wetin you gain in this life? At this, I would wonder if money and materialism are all that life worth! If money becomes the *gain* of, and in life, then money is the *value.* In that case, the value-sayings or names that *Ndu bu isi* (life is the main valuable thing) or *Ndu ka aku* (life is more valuable than wealth) have overgrown their truism, rather the truism now is *Ego bu isi* (money is the main valuable thing) after all *onye n'ejighi ego amaghi ikikere ya* (the poor does not know his right). The Nigerian forgets that no matter how money is valued, that *aku anaghi eje ozi* (wealth does not go for an errand). A friend who is aspiring for Catholic Priesthood once told me that it is better for God to come and take his life instead of living but without money. Today in birthday wishes, we see wishes like: "more bank alert", "more fat account", and even when going out for the daily hustling, we see wishes like: "more money", etc. No one cares for "good life", no one wishes to be "spiritually guided to lead a good life", no one wishes to "morally inspire somebody" or "touch a life to spiritual change", rather, money changes and does everything. Any way is way provided we make money. This explains why there is a lot of terrifying and horrible experiences in the country and indeed continent. This conception and mindset may explain why most of the religious men are after money, and would quickly corner gospel message from where it is directed to, to *fat tithe* and *offertory* giving.

As an influence from such conception, a country "where money and wealth are acquired with little moral scruples and means most foul, other mini-values are bound to surface such as unproductive spending, wealth exhibitionism, brandishing of wealth, power, etc." (Okolo, 1993:14-5) As with the Nigerian case, this explains why Nigerians spend so unreasonably that they even unknowingly go into indebtedness to other countries which they supposedly should be better than. To make life, politics, religion, economy, education, public service and trust, agriculture, commerce, name it, worthy, then money must be the *central driving force*. There is no gain asking: does this morally worth it? There is no more the self-moral question: Must I have to do this, in this way and to this extent? There is no custodial way of behaving and in accordance with the principle and consciousness of the conscience! There is no more an act of charity or someone saying: let me just do it for sake of Nature or that Nature will reward or for just the sake to encourage such an act in the society or just for the sake of morality to take its course or surface once more in the society. Every act these days must be paid for- with money in as much as it is an act performed with somebody's *strength*, *time*, and *initiative* of course not minding its moral worthiness. There is no sacrifice in its real practical nature; every sacrifice whether for the public or an individual, must be bought in cash or even in kind. This does not mean that rewarding is out of place, but the ego, the instinct for money remuneration from an act has surpassed that of sacrifice or discarding reward from the mind. Put in another way: *ogo adighizi* (charity act is no more) among Nigerians; any act must be rewarded unlike before. This is clear in all aspects of the Nigerian life- be it politics, religion, education, etc. Even when you personally dare to do it unrewarded, you will be termed *mumu* or *mugu* (unwise) and finally would be verbally and actively attacked heavily and severely. Reason: *that you do not know anything by ignoring your opportunity to take your own share*. And like play, before you know it, you are already out from the office so that those who know the *value* of the office will replace

you. By this, public offices where the public interests should be taken care of, and the people's trust addressed and held with high self-esteem and respect, become a colony of *odi ka odi* (people alike) and if you do not belong, or cannot comply with the guiding principles or rules of the games-*values*- of the offices, you are mocked and called a JJC (Johnny Just Come) and finally removed as such. This explains why Nigerian affairs have become a *kindred or clan affair* or the popular idea of *kitchen cabinet* or management. "Clannishness, ethnic affiliations and nepotism become respectable values to the Nigerian because somehow they are means of survival and hence of material and social advantages to individuals and their families or relatives in this competitive, open society, made up of a remarkable number of ethnic groups." (Okolo, 1993:18) That explains why life in Africa is today terrible and horrible as individualistic, egoistic and exhortative life have become human-driving-phenomena among the Africans. As a result, today, everything has become *tigbuo, zogbuo* (do or die) affair in Africa. Nobody cares about the feeling of others, neither would he consider the effects of his actions on others, yet, he claims as his personality, *communalism grounded in the principle of humanism and the feeling of others as fellow beings who must ontologically share in the goodness and badness of whatever he does*. This value of selfishness, material life-line and nepotism are what Momoh dramatizes of, when he writes: "The case of the public officer who bought several parcels of land and built miles of estates in the names of his wife, two children, aged ten and seven, and his late mother is no proof that he is not altruistic." (Osi-Momoh, 17)

This Nigerian conception of value today has made the Nigerian politics "a private gamble and not a service for the nation, a theatre for competing selfish interests where the common good is often carted away as private property by individual politicians or groups." (Okolo, 1993:19) This mentality of the *trending value* in the African way of life has become so inclined and part of the African personality that he no more lives in his daily life, what he claims is his personality. It has worn on him another personhood. These days, the living out of the saying that *ezi-okwu* or *ezi-agwa ka ego* (truth or good conduct is more valued than money/wealth) has gone into extinction. Nobody cares about that, what people care about most is money as the remuneration from an action. In Nigeria (Africa), *values* in Politics are *lies and fake promises*, provided there is *conviction*, instead of that sense of service to man, nature and God and being guided by the sanctity of promising and fulfilling; in Education, *values* are *bottles of wine, money* and *gifts*, instead of sacrifice, practice and that respect for the idealism of knowledge which changes the ideal aspect of man; in Religion, *values* are *"do it, that is how it is done"*, be *"thankful"* to God, *fame* by being a *chosen one* and then *upgrade* your living standard, instead of being driven with the spirit of sacrifice aimed at encouraging moral conduct; in Economy, Entrepreneurship and Productivity, *values* are just *produce* and *tell lies* provided *money* comes; in the legal system, values are just bring money and leave the propagandist-argument and protection for me, instead of calling a spade a spade and avoid all-round-self-contradictions; in Media, *values* are *inform* the populace *whatever* the government tells you is the truth and *never allow interruption* to that, instead of verifying the information and thinking on the impact of such *lies* on the people and its consequent *astray*; in Commerce cum

Business life, *values* are *lies*, ensure *sales* provided *money* is involved; in Ethics, Humanism and Moral Conscience, *values* are show your *hardmanness*, *fame*, *gifts* instead of respect and value for the sanctity of life, concern and respect for human natures: will, freedom, volition and human capacity for self-development; in Security, *values* are "*pay-and-pass*", *gifts* and *fame* instead of value for lives and properties, respect for professionalism in accord with moral judgment; in Sports, *values* are *money* and *ima mmadu* (man-influence) instead of merit; in Arts and Entertainments, *values* are the *valueless*- do it for doing sake and no more to impact positively on the audience, *cheap fame*, *money* and then both financial and bodily "*pay-and-pass*".

This may have influenced Okolo to hold that second to the most African dominant value after *excess love for money* is *cheap fame or base honours*. "Showmanship in wealth-displays as the cost and advertisement of funerals, weddings, title-taking, celebrations of all sorts, etc. amply demonstrate, is fully indicative of cheap fame since classism or class consciousness is implied." (Okolo, 1993:15) Having identified the Afri-Nigerian foremost problem as consumption of outside-made-goods with no questions and seeming forgetfulness that they are the products of somebody's sweat, Okolo contends further that the subsequent extravagance in spending for them gives the Afri-Nigerian man fame. After all, Nigerians have been told that their wealth is plenty, and that their problem is to spend it- perhaps this extravagant expenditure is the best reasonable way to do that. In making this more explicit, Enahoro puts it this way: "Next to God, there is nothing that fills the heart of the Nigerian with greater awe [and satisfaction] than a chairman." (1966:7) This equally gives us a lee way into why any who enters into this chairmanship would never like to go out from the system and any who never experienced it would do anything in dormancy to whatever effects it might have on others, provided he gets there. It is a clear fact about the African man especially as it concerns political positions. It is all about love for power and the African spirit of never-wish-to-leave-the-office.

This clear fact about the Nigerian person is indeed funny and when we watch some individuals, groups or even national events, we see that truly, nothing makes the African, the Nigerian to feel arrived like honour and fame, some of which are so regardless, cheap and even unreasonable when compared to the same situations in the developed countries. The Nigerian ordinary Local Government Development Council Chairman or Councilor likes to be noticed, escorted with siren echoing, feared and see people standing in awe for his presence. Chukwudum perceives this factual and alarming Nigerian life style of ostentation as our greatest enemy and disease which no section of the society is free from. (1981:34) This "show-offism" at its peak" extends to every aspect of the Nigerian man's life, and many a time, we end it in shame, blunders and self-ruin. The Nigerian soon forgets the Socratic position that the problem is not just to live, but to live well; and make it more explicit, St. Augustine quickly adds: To live rightly and honourably in the light of reason and conscience. This *trending value* that is purely materialistic in nature has made the African, the Nigerian wolves and cannibals with no sense of humanism unto his fellow. It explains why the richer gets richer and the poor, poorer daily. The poor has been impoverished that he does not know his rights. For instance, a day without power interruption for

the Nigerian becomes a *value* and *credit* for the government for he has not seen light since last four to five months. The little which should be his right and a fundamental duty of his government he sees becomes the biggest experience of his life because he has not seen such, and as a consequence, value for the African Nigerian thus becomes a poor one emanating from his mentality and experience of the behavioural influence from his richer, political elites and capitalists countrymen. That explains why the electorates see no value than money in election. Instead of thinking beyond the chicken change into the possible damage unto themselves when they must have voted in to power the wrong man, the African would rather choose to satisfy immediate and sing praises to the clearly intellectual-incapacitated. We could therefore say that while the principle of *Motivist ethics* guides the materialist-rich-political class, that of the *Situationist ethics* guides the poor of the African, the Nigerian. Values are *impoverishment* of fellows which is *prescriptivistic* and *emotivistic* in nature for the materialist-rich and *let-us-manage-the-one-we-see* for the poor masses.

This materialistic cum selfish mentality of value has made those who should develop Africa and Nigeria to ignore this task keep developing overseas through their lootings, while the poor masses in search of greener pastures have become laughing stocks and objects of mockery as they are practically "indignified" in Europe and because of their "optionlessness", take up jobs left for citizens of a lost country. They are equally used to test harmful objects and ideas. These people go out with no sense of value of life for themselves because they are never made to recognize that, and as such, the people whom they run to would never as a consequence, accord them any value and dignity of life. The African Nigerian value has become so poor that *value* is now all about *what to eat*. Anything that does not bring food on table is not a value. This explains why there is nothing to consider in the Nigerian politics except who brings money. There is no more thorough investigation on political office aspirant as to who has what qualities that are prior, for the good of all and the society at large.

Conclusion and Recommendations

From all indications, the African Nigerian appears confused about his real personality. This is because what he thinks and says are different from what he does. A man is most and correctly known by what he does and not what he thinks and says. The African Nigerian value is no more what it has ever been in his traditional society where more emphasis are practically given to life, community-concern and trust and the security of posterities. Reality, according to Njoku (2009:72-3) in the African Nigerian scheme is *value*, and this value "is an elusive concept, in that, it encompasses being itself and retains anything that is good." Categorically it is conceptually dual: Infra-human and Natural-human Values, and its contents are *truth* (ezi-okwu) and *wise judgment* (ikpe-nkwum oto). But today, where are these value-contents? The African Nigerian sense of value has degenerated and derailed that he has lost his sense of truth, morality in leading others, promise-keeping, duty, justice, respecting human freedom and even right, among others. For the poor masses who have been impoverished in their minds and pockets, values are showing concern and favour-for-the-government and paying lips service by testifying for the government even when the inherent lies are clear provided they diplomatically protect their

tribesmen-lead-government and also be given something to eat. I become ashamed seeing the level of the degeneration of the conception, unconsciousness cum its practical experience when people give false testimonies on media for the government and justify inhuman-acts because they eat from them or they are perpetuated by their tribesmen. I also wonder the sense of morality of a people who blend wherever they leave (un-involved) evil and wherever they live (involved) good. By this they become prostitutes of values, baseless and bat in values. Sometimes, they would even be ignorant to recognize the clarity of these lies.

The values behind these are nothing but the little token of money offered to them to come out and say such things without realizing what truthfulness is, how grievous it is to mislead others by giving a false witness. Nigerian government officials have impoverished Nigerians that value for them are those gifts of small amount of money, electricity for two hours, sachets of salt, among other items. At this, the poor man has no more reason to say that the giver is neither a good man nor his public management not commendable that he would not be given a second chance to deliver the country. They have been so impoverished that they do not even know their rights and freedom which their fellows elsewhere sue the government to court and win if the government dares to deny them of them.

This problem poses a perennial problem on the African Nigerian society and stand as an omen of doom to the African Nigerian real value and safety in posterity. Therefore, here calls for the necessity to go back to what is value and how that has been cherished and preserved that have seen us proudly through all this while. We must critically through philosophical cum ethical discourses reassess and reevaluate our sense of value and then use reason to justify it knowing full well that by accepting it as a value implicates accepting and wishing it to be our own experience.

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