

Editorial

One of the most intrusive mistakes of classical philosophy is the supposition that philosophy of any color and taste that is worth the honor of philosophy must be done through the eye and vantage point of Western philosophy. This systemic idea-funneling has to a very large extent silenced the African voice and where there is a little succor, it has led to transliteration, copycatism and philosophy of commentary. Members of the Universalist school in particular are guilty of spreading this Western agenda for some decades now. They police other African philosophers and cajole them to the path they must follow without as little as producing a specimen of what they recommend. We nonetheless acknowledge their contributions to the debate but insist at the same time that the moment has arrived when we must summon courage to say that “A” has not been good enough hence, “B”. We, therefore, present Volume 4 Number 1 of *Filosofia Theoretica*, a journal dedicated to the promotion of conversational orientation in African philosophy. Conversational philosophizing breaks away from the perverse orientation introduced by the Universalist school in African philosophy. Papers published in the journal have phenomenological basis and thrive on productive conversations among actors. We believe that conversational philosophy represents one of the modes through which the episteme of African philosophy could grow.

To this end, Prof. Fainos Mangena writing from University of Zimbabwe, outlines and discusses the idea of deep ecology as defended by Arne Næss (1973) as well as Bill Devall and George Sessions (1985). He looks at how deep ecology has responded to the dominant view in ecological ethics, especially its attendant theory – anthropocentrism or homo-centrism or simply the reason-based account – which he outlines and explains in the first section of his paper. At the end, he looks at the feasibility (or lack thereof) of applying deep ecology in Sub-Saharan African ecological contexts focusing particularly on the Shona ecological matrix of Zimbabwe. He answers the question: How applicable is the idea of deep ecology in the African context? Having reviewed Zimbabwean literature, he comes to the conclusion that the Shona environment has a different form of deep ecology that is not only anchored on spirituality but that it also interprets cosmology and ecology from a communitarian viewpoint. This conversational essay is rich on a number of interesting fronts to wit; ecology, African philosophy and Zimbabwean thought, by far a veritable research resource in African environmental thought.

Dr. Idom Inyabri of the Department of English and Literary Studies, University of Calabar holds a critical conversation with Joseph Ushie. He responds to Joseph Ushie’s argument for Neo-colonialism rather than Postcolonialism as the most appropriate theory for the criticism of what the latter calls Current African Literature. He posits that Ushie’s proposition is based on the premise that Postcolonialism as a theory runs counter to the neo-colonial situation of Africa since the attainment of flag independence by different African nations. Hence, neo-colonialism answers directly to the socio-political and economic condition of most African countries and should be utilised in the appreciation of most literatures from

the continent. In this meta-criticism Dr. Inyabri proceeds by making bare the crux of Ushie's argument, then he identifies obvious contradictions in Ushie's logic and critically presents the merit of Postcolonialism as a cultural theory fit enough for the critical engagement of Current African Literature. Those interested in African literature would find this piece intrusive and academically exciting.

Writing from the University of Calabar, Dr. Jonathan Chimakonam converses with a number of actors and Uduma O. Uduma in particular who have in the last three to four decades dwelt on the criteria question in African philosophy. He observed that old campaigners like Paulin Hountondji, Odera Oruka, Peter Bodunrin, Kwasi Wiredu, Sophie Oluwole, Innocent Onyewuenyi, etc., have all dwelt on the question with some going more in-depth than others. His aim in the work was to attempt to settle what he calls the metaphilosophical vicious circle of the criteria question once and for all by recommending the logic criterion. On the basis of this, he attempted to orchestrate a shift from the vicious circle of metaphilosophical engagements to a more fruitful conversational engagement in contemporary African philosophy. Those who follow Chimakonam in his efforts to develop conversational thinking know exactly what to expect in this excitingly original piece.

And from Obafemi Awolowo University Ile-Ife, David Oyedola Converses with African philosophers on the subject of African philosophy and the search for an African philosopher. A deeply engaging piece, this essay appropriates the tools of critical conversationalism in investigating the yardstick for doing African philosophy and the qualification for being an African philosopher. Anyone wishing to have a clearer view of the project of African philosophy in this contemporary time should read this essay.

In the conversations section, we feature three conversational essays. The first comes from Aribiah David Attoe who engages J. O. Chimakonam on his work entitled "Mental Surgery: Another Look at the Identity Problem". In this piece, Attoe disagrees with Chimakonam on his physicalist/sociological location of identity. For him, Chimakonam's thesis fails to recognize that the sociological influence on the concept of personal identity is based both on a false premise and on an invalid argument, it fails to recognize the role of the "self" in the concept of personal identity and finally, it fails to recognize the fact that the concept of personal identity is nothing more than a necessary illusion. He submits that our idea of the "self" or personal identity is nothing more than illusion which we cannot help but have. Like the mirage of water on the road which we cannot help but have because of the sun's intensity, the illusion of personal identity is due to our brains interpretation of its ability to understand reality. In understanding consciousness (the foundation of our understanding of the self) we discover that consciousness is nothing more than the ability to perceive, understand and give meaning to that which is perceived as well as our emotional states, etc., (CHURCHLAND 2002, p133). In a bid to give meaning to this process of consciousness – a sort of meta interpretation – the brain gives us the illusion of a self distinct from itself and it is to this illusory self that most individuals feel their personal identity resides.

Also Victor Nweke engages with Augustine Atabor on the latter's paper entitled "The Question of Objectivity, its Implications for the Social Sciences in the Era of Postmodernism: Africa in Perspective". Nweke argues that Atabor's position that postmodernism attempts to deny the possibility of objective truth in the social sciences might not be correct. Nweke submits that: first, postmodernism is the *vindicator* not the *vituperator* of the social sciences. Second, the claim of Atabor that "the attack of postmodernism on positivism is an attack aimed at the possible claims of the objectivity by the social sciences" (2014, 55) is inaccurate. Third, while "Modernism encourages the universalization of Western values" (2014, 58) postmodernism encourages the relativization of all values, extols cross-cultural borrowing and challenges intellectuals in all cultures, including Africa, to seek and devise solutions to the diverse problems affecting human beings in the contemporary world using any fruitful method. Fourth, postmodernism sees objectivity in the social sciences and indeed in all the sciences as a matter of "compatibility" or "solidarity" with the "consensus" reached by the works of leading authorities in a given intellectual community at a given point in time. Last, globalization today is more or less the universalization of Western values because it is riding on the wheels of modernism, and an ideal global ideology will only be possible if it emerge as a product of consensus reached by the views of leading authorities in all regional intellectual and social communities that make up the globe.

On his part, Segun Samuel holds a critical conversation with Chimakonam on his essay on Interrogatory Theory. Interrogatory Theory (IT) according to Chimakonam is a social philosophy that seeks a revitalization of institutions in modern Africa. Its purpose is a "reflective assessment or interrogation of social structures (tradition and modernity) in order to deconstruct, construct/reconstruct or synthesize where necessary. Samuel criticizes Chimakonam's interrogation of the institutions of Education, Religion and Democracy in which he concludes that religion was a problem for Africa's development; and that some aspects of human freedom must necessarily be repressed for Africa to make progress. For Samuel, it is rather capitalism that plays a pivotal role in remanding African in poverty. In his submission, Samuel insists that all three institutions studied by interrogatory theory have a basal and common characteristic which has led to their defect in postcolonial Africa. This is the unbridled human selfishness that has been endorsed by the wave of capitalism; these have undoubtedly exploited all institutions in postcolonial Africa. Indeed, those who have longed to see the growth of African philosophy would definitely enjoy reading this section on conversations.

Finally, Irem Moses Ogah produces a fine review of the book [Arguments and Clarifications: A Philosophical Encounter between J. O. Chimakonam and M. I. Edet on the Ibuanyidandaness of Complementary Ontology], 2014. 3RD Logic Option: Calabar. Paperback. Pp147, written by Mesembe I. Edet and Jonathan O. Chimakonam. He presents the arguments of the three parts of the work taking care to expose and examine the value of the tool of conversationalism as employed in the work. He identifies some weaknesses and highlights the gains of the new system.

On the whole, the Volume 4 Number 1 offers interesting articles for the reading pleasure of all. We are once again proud to bring to our readers this exciting issue. We announce that *Filosofia Theoretica* has now been added to the index databases of EBSCO and SABINET. We announce also that from this issue, every article published on *Filosofia Theoretica* receives a Digital Object Identifier (DOIs) assigned by AJOL, South Africa who simultaneously publishes the Online edition of the *Filosofia Theoretica*.

An anonymous African thinker once said that an old woman never grows too old for the dance steps she is adept in. We savor our growing experience in publications in African thought. But above all, we praise our contributors who are the real heroes ceaselessly penning down essays that promote and sustain conversational African philosophy. *Hakuna Matata!*

Editor -in- Chief

CORRIGENDUM

In Volume 3 Number 2, we referred to Augustine Atabor of the University of Nigeria Nsukka as Dr. Augustine Atabor. Augustine Atabor is yet to obtain a PhD. The management and Editorial Board of *Filosofia Theoretica* regret this mistake.