

A CRITICAL REVIEW OF ALEXIS KAGAME'S FOUR CATEGORIES OF AFRICAN PHILOSOPHY

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Abstract

Philosophy as a rational enterprise is and remains the search for truth. This endeavour is basically centred on man and his activities. This man as a rational animal is a product of culture and this underscores the continued rapport between culture and philosophy. This correlation and the inevitability of culture in the codification and existence of philosophy precipitated the drive and the move of some African scholars to shunt into the culture of Africans to garner and galvanize the latent philosophy therein. This was in the wake of the polemics against the existence of African philosophy. Albeit, taking a critical look into these affairs, it became plausible that some of the works produced from this task remains a paradox and a travesty as they were inflicted and affected with foreign categories and schemes that further leave the search for an authentic African philosophy open and their endeavour a charade. However, this lousy situation can only be address through proper reflective activities of African scholars towards originality of ideas that corresponds and represents the African world and that will make the African world intelligible to Africans.

Introduction

The interplay between culture, thought and philosophy is perennial, hence the triad cannot be alienated in the quest for a holistic appreciation of reality. Culture encapsulates our *modus operandi and vivendi* and this is from where a philosophy of life a people can be garnered. More still, man's history starts within a certain occurrence in time, his tribe, the clan, the villages and the small town represent kinds of small world within which all his living is done[1]. It is based on this that scholars argued that philosophy also has a cultural root, for every experience has an environment in context. Man speaks from within his environment and culture and these are responsible for his linguistic expressions. Philosophy is therefore embellished with varieties of experience[2]. The varieties

of philosophy for Imbo are due to the variety of culture, races, nationalities; he submits that:

It is more accurate to point out that these categories of race, culture and nationality do not determine but rather influence the attitudes and methods adopted and the choice of questions asked. A philosophy always springs however, indirectly from the society in which the philosopher grows up, with its religious proclivities or lack thereof, the social class from which the philosopher has been drawn the events that have shaped the philosopher's education[3].

This correlation that exists between culture and philosophy is what gives philosophy is distinctive and universal coloration. Western scholars like Hegel and a host of others, concur to this camaraderie between philosophy and culture. However this rapport has been the strongest point in the polemics against the existence of African philosophy. This has not however stopped the enterprise of philosophy in African; albeit it has helped to awaken in African scholars the hermeneutics therein in African philosophy while other further engaged in exposition some aspects of African philosophy in the bid to reaffirm its existence, status and relevance. The latter is going to be the task of this paper as it appreciates the four categories of African philosophy as espoused by the Rwandan Philosopher, Alexis Kagame.

African Philosophy in Perspective

This work is purely on traditional African philosophy. For this reason it will be relevant to highlight some issues concerning the existence of the enterprise of philosophy in Africa . From the colonial times, there has been the query whether there is a branch of knowledge in Black Africa that can legitimately qualify for the name 'philosophy'. On this, Archie Mafeje states;

From a formalistic point of view, it is hard to conceive of philosophy in its systematic form in pre-literate societies. Substantively, it is equally hard to imagine peoples without some conception of, or

ideas about the meaning of existence, notion of being and its imperative/logic, and the purpose of mankind in the universe[4].

Mafeje however reminds us that other disciplines in African like African history, African literature, and social science went through the same birth pangs or fate. In general, we can undermine certain facts about the debate concerning the status of African philosophy or the rise of the historical consciousness and the debate on African philosophy. According to Masolo, two related happenings have put the debate on African philosophy in perspectives, namely western discourse on African, and the African response to the western discourse on Africa[5]. Three major discourses of these western scholars and rational responses on them are relevant here. Firstly they question the existence of African philosophers who are engaged in the enterprise of African philosophy, that there are no original African philosophers who have pursued philosophy as an academic discipline; this is however using their own paradigm to ascertain who a philosopher is. On this is can be argued that only categorical ignorance or perverse intellectual dishonesty would deny the fact that there are African philosophers.

The second question is ontological, and it calls into question the very humanity of indigenous Africans people, thereby linking the capacity of Africans to philosophize to their very being. They contend that Africans are not qualified to be called human beings and philosophy is out of the issue. Of the many qualities considered to be relevant in the definition of a human being rationality has been singled out, especially by the western tradition[6]. In response, from the point of view of biological anthropology[7], and indeed from the viewpoint of the philosophy of mind[8] as well, human rationality as an intentional reflective consciousness[9] can be understood and expresses only in relation to autopoietic activity. Ramose then contends that specific behavioural pattern constitute the specific character of all living entities. This is the experience and the reality that despite the transitoriness, all living entities are destined by their very being to strive towards preservation of being as wholeness. 'On this basis we posit the thesis that preservation of being as a wholeness through the transitory 'self preservation' of the

multiplicity and pluriformity of all living entities, is the universal principle of being as a wholeness[10]. Hence neither ontology nor biology has exempted indigenous African people from this experience and reality. And it confirms the thesis that indigenous African people have always been potential and actual participants in and are full members of *Homo sapiens*.

The third remark springs from non-Africans who had encounters with indigenous African people and bolstered a philosophy and a science aimed at disproving the humanity of the African people. It is unfortunate because the indigenous African people have not abrogated their humanness on philosophical grounds but have rather asserted and affirmed their membership of *homo sapiens* even on philosophical grounds. As a result of the latter, Ramose posits that there is no ontological defect inherent in the indigenous African people by virtue of which they are to be excluded from *Homo sapiens*. That, if Africa is the cradle of *Homo sapiens* then, it is the indigenous African people who are the first members of and the very root from which the tree of *Homo sapiens* took shape and grew. From the rejoinder of Mafeje and Ramose et al, it is clear that the issue of the existence of African philosophy is primarily otiose and should be jettisoned by rational and sane individuals. After successfully addressing these scathing remarks on the existence of African philosophy, one then think right and proud to unearth the four categories of African philosophy as expressed by Alexis Kagame.

Prelude to Kagame's Categories of African Philosophy

Abbé Alexis Kagame (May 15, 1912, died December 2, 1981), Alexis also spelled Alegisi. He was a Rwandan poet, historian, and Roman Catholic priest, who introduced the written art, both in his own language, *Kinyarwanda*, and in French, to his country. He was the intellectual leader of the Rwandan Tutsis, defending their traditions and positions against colonial control. Alexis Kagame is without doubt a giant of contemporary African thought. He may only be compared to Amadou Hampate Ba, from Mali, with whom he has many similarities. Both of them were born early in the twentieth century and grew up when colonization was triumphant, but also when African traditions were still vibrant.[11] It is

instructive to state that the most profound and common of the thoughts of Kagame in philosophy is his categories of African philosophy.

Kagame had his further studies at the Gregorian University in Rome between 1951 and 1955. During this time, Tempel's work was keenly discussed. The camps were between the *pro* and the *anti* Tempels. The latter claimed that Tempels had made a perverse use of the concept of philosophy. The former contends that Bantu Philosophy as an idea was positive and plausible; however Tempels's work was seen as an essential part of the colonial discourse on Africa.

According to this view, Tempel's work was part of the West's self-definition, which included that attributes of science, rationality, logic and philosophy, and the denial of the same as characteristics of others. For this reason, the pro-Tempelsians thought that there was need for the new African intellectual elite, with solid preparation in philosophy and knowledge of the traditions, to give Tempel's hypotheses a better grounding[12].

Incidentally, Kagame was the first African scholar to respond to this pressing need. Kagame articulates a philosophy similar to that of Tempels. Although *formally*, he did not agree with Tempels, he praised the discovery of a unique and collective Bantu philosophy. According to Kagame, such a discovery was seen as serving an important psychological need of establishing or at least re-affirming a long-denied humanity of the African[13]. Commenting further on this, Masolo argues that the work of Kagame states clearly that other Bantu-speaking people of central Africa and eastern Africa had linguistic structure similar to those of the Bantu of Rwanda which reveals the unique way in which all the Bantu-speaking people conceive being.

Kagame and the Bantu Ontology of Being

Kagame worked among the Banyarwanda people. The people of Rwanda are collectively called *Banyarwanda*, and their language is called *Kinyarwanda*. So, he *sought an interpretation of the philosophy of being of his people through a linguistic ethnophilosophy*. He got preoccupied with elucidating the philosophy of being through the study of the Kinyarwanda language. In setting out

to do this, Kagame used a category that is akin to the systems of Plato, Aristotle, Thomas and Kant. He maintains that in Kinyarwanda, all terms are divided into groups and classes, and the substantive are not divided as in other languages. He discovered eleven such classes of words in Kinyarwanda under which terms and words can be grouped. Kagame thinks that each of these words is made of four elements, which have some philosophical role depending on the class to which the word belongs from which are derived the four general categories of speech. This is laced with a Thomistic tradition. In addition to the Thomistic Aristotelian classification tradition, Kagame build on something familiar to speakers of Bantu languages.

The classes are of human beings, for things animated by magic, including trees, tools, fluids, animals, places, abstractions etc. the class of a word can be recognized by a sound or group of sounds which preceded the stem and this Kagame calls determinative. Kagame stated that the stem is ineffectual without the determinative in Bantu language. It was from this that Kagame brought out the four categories of African philosophy. All that exist in the universe of being and becoming is summed up under any of these categories. 'Everything there is must necessarily belong to one of these four categories and must be conceived of not as substance but as force' [14]. The stem is Ntu but, it is not particular without the determinatives which gave the categories their distinctive characters and understanding.

According to Kagame the categories of African philosophy are;

Muntu - 'Human being' (Plural: Bantu)

Kintu - 'Thing' (Plural: Bintu)

Hantu - 'Place and Time'

Kuntu- 'Modality'

All being, all essences in whatever form it is conceived, can be subsumed under one of these categories. One cannot think of anything outside them. According to Kagame, all that there is must necessarily belong to one of the four categories *and must be conceived not as a physical substance but as force. Man is a force; all things are forces including place and time, modalities.* They are all also related to one another because they are forces and this

relationship is vivid in their very names because if the determinative is removed, the stem Ntu remains and is constant in all of them.

Ntu – The Underlining Category of Being

Ntu is the most general category of being and it is divided into four. Umuntu (Human Being), Ikintu (Non Human Being), Ahantu (Place and Time), and Ukuntu (akin to the Aristotelian category of quantity). This Ntu has the generic meaning of something. *It is the ultimate unifying notion*, it is a generic of being but God does not belong here. According to Kagame, the 'property' common to all things and beings is their activity; divination and magic are based on the metaphysics of these powers. These categories are mutually exclusive, the common denomination in the categories is being and this accounts for their interactions.

Ntu as a universal force never occurs apart from its manifestations: Muntu, Kintu, Hantu and Kuntu. Ntu is being itself the cosmic universal force, which only modern rationalizing thought can abstract from its manifestations. As a force, Ntu is the point where being and beings coalesce^[15]. In trying to buttress the centrality of the being of Ntu Breton observes that 'everything leads us to believe that there exists a central point of thought at which the living and dead, real and imaginary, past and future, communicable and incommunicable, high and low, are no longer conceive as contradictory'. *Ntu is that 'point from which creation flow'* this was what Klee was seeking when he said 'I am seeking a far off point from which creation flows, where I suspect there is a formula for man, beast, plant, earth, fire, water, air and all circling forces at once'. However, Janheinz remarked that Ntu is not independent above all these that Breton stated, rather Ntu is what Muntu, Kintu, Hantu and Kuntu all equally are. Ntu only expresses their being and their forces act continually. *Ntu is also not the driving force, that activity is the special reserve of Nommo.*

Kagame's Four Categories of African Philosophy in Perspective:

Muntu

This is about human beings, but it is instructive to state that this does not only include man or human beings but other beings that

have relations with the man. It includes beings that were human but now control and assist the activities of the human being. On this count Muntu includes both the living and the dead, and the ancestors also have their place in this group. Muntu also includes *laos*, the *orishas*, other gods, and intermediaries that help man to reorder the social system and maintain sanity. Muntu from the designation of Kagame also includes God the highest being which Janheinz Jahn termed *Bon Dieu* (Good God) Tempels calls God '*the Great Muntu..* Muntu therefore represents the genre of beings that have the primal force and in the works of Tempels, this force is what control and re-orders other forces and things in the cosmos. Humans are different from other physical beings by their ability to reflect, compare and invent. All these are functions of intelligence. Hence, Muntu accordingly to Kagame is '*force endowed with intelligence*'. Human beings share the same principle with animals, that is, the principle of shadow (it is the principle of birth and death which men share with animals).

However, human beings are distinct from animals by the possession of intelligence. Man is the union of body with the principle of intelligence. Life, which in Bantu language is called *Amagara* is definitely not on the same plain with the animalistic kind of life[16]. The *Banyaruanda* makes a clear difference between sensitive being in general and a sensitive being imbued with intelligence, the two have certain faculties and operations. But the intelligence attributed to man is not same with the animals because the latter operates mainly at the level of sensations. This led Kagame to the immortality concept. For him the problem of human immortality is the problem of 'disincarnated souls'. When the principle of intelligence is liberated in the human person, it is called the spirit of the dead. This led Kagame into two basic Bantu concepts worthy of clarification in his ontology of being. They are *Umuzinma* and *Umunzimu*, the variation is explicit in the 'U' that terminates the second term; the latter means a non-living being with intelligence[17]. The appreciation of these beings is in most cases abstract and can only be made necessary and made concrete as long as they as symbols and appear in practice of reverence to the ancestors. They are immortal and cannot die, with a *terminus ad quo* but not a *terminus ad quem*. They are not neither eternal because

they had a beginning in space and time; they are therefore *eviternal*. Muntu is an entity which is a force that has control over Nommo (the word in action). This is where Tempel's idea was recanted in that muntu as a being endowed with force is the controller of other forces and can even enforce or 'de-force' another beings. Nommo is the magic wand of the word that man uses to make this to be and also used to redirect events. This Nommo is under the control of muntu and it underscores the preeminence and crucial role of the muntu as a mode of force. It is the force of all forces as it controls activities together with other beings (forces) under the canopy of muntu.

Kintu

Kintu as a category of being includes those forces that are sterile and need the action and activity of other forces to enliven themselves. The force that does this empowerment is muntu, the primal force. The command of the muntu sets the kintu into motion and makes it active. The kintu family includes; plant, animals, minerals, tools, object of customary usage etc. they all do not have a will of their own neither do they possess the requisite force to pull them towards activity. The seeming exception are animals, in their case, it is the *Bon Dieu* that gives their force a drive. Others are sterile and impotent except with the action of the muntu and they are at the disposal of the muntu. Another notable exception among the *bintu* (plural of kintu) are certain trees that are designated as the street of *laos*, in them the water of the depth, the primal Nommo, the word of the ancestors, surges up simultaneously; they are the road traveled by the dead, the *laos* to the living men; they are the repository of the deified' [18]. As a result of this interaction of the trees and the muntu, Jahn was apt to state that in many Bantu languages; trees belong linguistically speaking to the muntu class. This is because of the interaction of forces between the trees and some of the forces in the muntu category. However, this call to mind the idea of totem and taboo, in that when sacrifices are made to the 'tree' it is not meant for the plant but it is for the *laos* or the concerned ancestor that is, that muntu force that has rapport with it. As a result of this privileged condition of these trees, the product (wood) from them have special quality, this is as a result of the Nommo of the ancestors that makes it special and consecrated.

Hantu

Space and time fall within this category, hantu helps to situate spatial and temporal phenomenon and every event and motion. And because all beings are forces, they are constantly in motion. This hantu takes charge of all the events that are reckoned within time and puts them in perspective. In the expressions of Kagame, time and space are coterminous, just like there is the close affinity between object and subject in African epistemology. Nazeem had averred that the object or the subject cannot know the other if it is detached, this is to avoid the pantheism of the mystic [19]. The time predisposes one to the event in space and is also in within time. This was why Jahn stated that a question of place can be answered in terms of time e.g. when did you see it? The answer may be 'in the boat under the liana bridge after Y. Jahn further defends this view, as not been unusual as all who read time (clock) does so in conjunction with position of the hand(s) and this is about space. Kagame made a tripartite distinction of the category of hantu, they are; the physical: having to do with locality of space occupied by an object; the second is the localization insofar as it is a position in space or internal space and lastly external place

Kuntu

Kuntu stands as the modal category with a modal force. Here, it is not like the other categories that can be explained away, kuntu is quite unique in the way it is to be understood and appreciated among the other categories. Kuntu has to do with existent that is not tangible but not also metaphysical or strictly abstract. Kuntu cannot be seen or held but it can be experience and felt. The impact of kuntu as a force can be to make some effects and affect human endeavours. The understanding of this is not strictly western but only within the African system. Such things like beauty, laugh, and laughter fall under the kuntu category. They are only felt. To make this category of Kagame explicable and communicable Janheinz Jahn used some extracts from Tutuola's *Palm Wine Drunkard*. There, beauty was exposed as a force that has impact and cannot be felt but of course it can be experience and its effects are obvious. Tutuola showed how beauty as a force can manifest. He states that if a gentleman goes to the battlefield, the enemy would not kill him or capture him and

even if the bombers saw him in a town which was to be bombed, they would not throw bombs on his presence, and even if they do, the bomb would not explode until the gentleman leaves the town. All these calamities will be averted off the man only because of his beauty. Here once sees the modal force of beauty at play and it has saved a situation. This is the unique genre of force that kuntu commands as a category.

Concluding Reflections

The presentations of Kagame has gone a long way to state that Africans indeed have a thought system that is unique to them, which they use to appreciate themselves and understand reality. The work also stands out to throw more light on the philosophy of the Bantu people as expressed by Tempels. By rooting his analysis in language, Kagame attempted to reveal features of a Bantu worldview and complement the system started by Tempels. He obviously believed that language affinity is akin to same disposition to world view. He tried to prove it that people who speak the same language share the same abstract philosophical concepts. These concepts for Kagame are both explicit and implicit in the proverbs, myths, legends and social institutions. Thus as Imbo observed, implicit ontological ideas provide the glue for the habits and values that are transmitted from one generation to another. The perennial social creation and transmission of values cannot take place in the absence of underlying philosophical concepts that are discernible in the structure of ordinary language. This accentuates the importance of language in and for philosophy[20].

Conversely, this issue/problem of language remains a major issue in the academic enterprise in Africa and even by Africans home and/or abroad. This is because, if one enters into the debate of African philosophy or other disciplines, one looks at the meaning of words in English and what it means in African philosophy and world. 'All talks about African philosophy or African socialism are bound to result in conflict of meaning, cultures and perception of reality'[21]. It is in view of this that Kagame is obviously been vilified for being unapologetically too Aristotelian in his analysis of the Bantu ontology of being. This defect is due to Kagame's faint thesis; his exposition rest outstandingly on the assumption that, a

semblance exist between the ancient Greek philosophers and the ordinary Bantu. The basis of this comparison rests on the fact that philosophical problems are common to all people without distinction[22]. Kagame then examined the cultural differences in the application of categories to the concept of being. Nevertheless it is pertinent to remark here that there could be similarities between certain Greek thought and Bantu worldview however, this similarity need not produce the same result.

Regrettably, this comparison that Kagame tried to reiterate smacks of what Okere[23] describes as the fallacy of comparison. This is one of the severe blunders palpable in dealing with intercultural relations. This tendency to compare *interchange and intertwine* cultures is even liable to various haziness. The first is that one's culture is both taken for granted and also as the standard. But by taking one's culture for granted, one uncritically harbours some ignorance of aspects of one's own culture, thus even becoming an uncouth judge of it. On the other hand, to take one's culture as the standard, one cannot avoid the pitfalls of stark relativism and subjectivism. Too many parameters, quantities and equations become unnoticed and unknown and this accounts for the copious anomalies and logjam evident in the initiative of Kagame and explicit in his end point. More still, Kagame went on to portray the ordinary person among the Bantu as being primarily *res cogitans*, whose primary attribute is a contemplation of essences. He then attempts to prove the universality of the principle of unity of beings, through the forceful formulation of the *Ntu* category.

One is therefore prone to distort its meaning as it is in English when translated to an African language. Certainly, Kagame's work has been influenced by Tempels, but Kagame stands greatly accused of its scholastic background from which he imports categories to transplant into his culture. Imbo would contend that Kagame justified his procedure using the Thomistic belief in the unity of rationality across human tradition and cultures; and the impression is that to penetrate an understanding of African philosophy, we need to follow a procedure founded on a belief that Aristotelian and scholastic philosophies faithfully speak for humanity thus 'if this is good enough for the Aristotelian, it is good enough for Kagame'. But Asouzu was quick to point out that the difference in Kagame's

categorization of *Ntu* with the logic of Aristotle is that while the latter is bifurcating, polarizing and exclusivist, the former is complementary and harmonizing[24]. Another inconsistency that is characteristic of some scholars mostly Africans is the perception that reality as perceived by an individual equals reality of a vast majority of people. Hence for Kagame, the thought of the *Banyarwanda* is equal to that of Aristotle. This is what Asouzu calls '*a presumptuous and precarious undertaking*' and he observed that this mode of thought is replete in the thought of Tempels and Kagame as in some other African scholars. But a cursory look makes it palpable that traditional African societies never perceived reality in a uniform way even though at most, there were some similarities in thought pattern.

From Kagame's standpoint, Bantu philosophy thus strangely conforms to the contours of Europe, Kagame's attempt to distance himself from Tempels notwithstanding. Like Tempels, Kagame seems to have fitted African concepts into western categories, in order to render them intelligible to a foreign audience that detects the parameters of meaning. This is scrupulously making real the assertion of Iroegbu that 'it is curious to note that many Africans are repeating the contents of Tempels' findings in their different areas, cultures and ethnic groups. And these are presented as African philosophy[25]. In lieu of this, it is of the essence to stress that modernization is not westernization; it simply refers to as Professor Youichi Ito has rightly observed, 'to the advancement of a culture and civilization in the competitive sector...(which) includes those aspects of a civilization which people can compare, determine which is superior or inferior[26].

So, Kagame should take note that it is not just about keeping up with categories and wealth of knowledge generated elsewhere or 'adapt it to local needs and conditions'[27] but the task in African philosophy on issues bordering on culture is the capacity to generate idea and from it make cognitive and indigenous discoveries. This is because authentic philosophizing is possible only through the inclusion of that which was deliberately ignored and omitted and, in our example, this is African philosophy. This issue of inclusion is critical for the liberation of African philosophy from the overwhelming one-sidedness of the history of Western philosophy[28]. This is because this discrepancy in history from

western scholars is the bane of any authentic and liberal thought system in African, and philosophy is a major recipient of this dilemma. This according to Olusegun Oladipo remains one of the crises of relevance in contemporary African philosophy. Olusegun Oladipo asserts; ... so (*probably referring to Kagame and his acolytes*) what he is busy doing is to promote an order of knowledge which is largely informed by a socio-economic experience that is, at least in its fundamental aspects, anything but African[29]. The outcome of this according to Oladipo[30] is that the contemporary African philosopher derives his education from cultural sources that are distinct from African culture. The apparent implication of this repulsive scenario according to Azenabor is that 'the African is alienated! But then, the real problem, according to Wiredu, is not actually the variation of sources but its lack of reflective integration[31]. This view is axiomatically in tandem with the logic of Iroegbu that in many others who have written on the African theory of being, one negative cord runs through. This cord is the absence of personal, individual critical and systematic interpretation of what reality is, what reality means for the author in question, as an African[32].

This for me is the paradox of the predicament inherent both latent and manifest in contemporary African thought system. It was this same quagmire that Oguejiofor appreciated that made him to think that works like; *Bantu Philosophy* (Tempels), *African Religions and Philosophy* (Mbiti) and this work in question (Kagame) do not pass as African philosophy. His reason are not far-fetched they; lacked individual contribution, agreed that culture is the raw material needed for philosophy to take root, however, at last, the final analysis have to be the individual's self-understanding or appreciation in the context of his culture[33]. In the wake of these incongruities and in the bid to darn the complex situation, Asouzu[34] proposed his own remedy out of this conundrum; this is *Ibuanyadanda*. This according to Asouzu provides us with a new ontological horizon that seeks to overcome the reductionism that is inherent in all forms of ethnocentric rationalism. Asouzu maintains that its merit lies in the fact that it seeks to 'articulate philosophy in a way that supersede this ambience based on personal critical

reflection. As a philosophy it emanates out of the communalistic nature of man.

This same abysmal and hackneyed 'superimposition of foreign categories of thought on African thoughts systems through colonialism' led Olusegun to later propose a conceptual decolonization in African philosophy[35]. Even when he further called for a synergy/syncretism of culture in the course of development, it was with a caveat that it must be discriminate coupled with appropriate criteria[36]. Kagame and Tempels both have the same style, using western categories to appraise African philosophy, though that of Tempels was more of a cultural betrayal coupled with some sort of intellectual cum philosophical segregation. This was borne out of the colonial scheme that betrayed their endeavors at that time and their works smacks of scholars writing to make an impression within an oppressive system. Liboire Kagabo, explicates this ludicrous situation further:

Both of them were born early in the twentieth century and grew up when colonization was triumphant, but also when African traditions were still vibrant. They were lucky enough to experience African traditions at the right moment and gifted enough to conceptualize those traditions and make them known *to both contemporary Africans and Europeans. For that, they both deployed an intense literary activity which has no other equivalent in Africa*[37].

For them and others scholars of like orientation and mind I end this paper on a warning note from Ramose:

Colonialism is therefore, regarded as a veritable moment of epistemicide as far as the indigenous conquered people are concerned. To urge for the protection of standards in these circumstances is another way of asking for the dominance and perpetuation of the colonial epistemological paradigm.[38]

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