

THE ELEMENTS AND DIRECTIVE PRINCIPLES OF PROGRESSIVISTIC, INDIGENIZATION AS A PHILOSOPHY OF PROGRESS FOR CONTEMPORARY AFRICA (CRITICAL ROOTED- INTERCULTURALITY)

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ABSTRACT

African nations after, an average of about 50 years of their so called political Independence have failed to meet up with the glorious expectations of the African optimists. Pessimism is the order of the day. The problem lies in the fact that African states were born in a world already ready-made by the colonial powers and their imperatives. Consequently, their technological and economic developmental suits and patterns were sewn for Africa, but they have always remained either oversized or undersized or even shapeless, which made Africa a laughing stock in the world. African states have dissipated their energies trying to live in other peoples world views which have suffocated her, economically and culturally and created a shameful dependence and a beggarly mentality. This article intends to articulate a theoretical road map in the name of a philosophy of progressivistic indigenization envisioned as a philosophy of progress, which could offer a road map and progressive path to Africa nations

Keywords: Indigenization, Interculturality, Progressivism, Culture, Leapfrogging, Self-reliance, Modernization, Technological Choice.

INTRODUCTION

The word indigenization relates to that which is indigenous, homegrown, in distinction to that which is alien, to make less strange, a process of taking and making something homely or to receive inspiration from the local people and land. Progressivism underlines the fact that societies, peoples' or societies are not static. The idea of homeliness for people does not necessarily mean what accords to ancient practices, but that which a people owns as contributing to their general well being. Thus the idea of progressivistic indigenization draws attention and focus on that part of a people's life and practices that advances their total well-being. We can also refer to it as philosophy of critical rooted-Interculturality.

So the goal of the philosophy of progressivistic indigenization or critical rooted- interculturality, is to articulate the condition for the possibility of liberating the African people and Society from their present predicament, to break the fetters of suffocating dependence, to unleash the process of self-development, to initiate an effective mechanism for harnessing the African

creative and productive values to the realization of a destiny in which Africans will assume the full responsibility and in which they are the principal architects. It is a philosophy which will inspire and help Africa to regain or rediscover her proper historical and existential mission in order to stop the rot in her social, political, cultural and economic space, and to initiate a corresponding social, cultural, political, economic and spiritual development process by a proper and efficient integration and mediation of her home grown resources and creativity with the foreign, deemed relevant.

Modernization in the Philosophy of Progressivistic Indigenization (Critical Rooted -Interculturality)

The philosophy of progressivistic indigenization will combat two dangerous developmental myths.

The myth of romanticism by which the African peoples' future is said to lie in undoing the historical colonial and neo-colonial aberrations in Africa, in order to reclaim Africans glorious past. This is spirit in the statement which Ali

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Mazrui once made when he said “African Culture must reclaim its own and help Africa retreat back to its ancestral authenticity or Africa may struggle to find a third way (Mazrui and Tidey, 1984, pg. xii) This is defended by the African cultural fundamentalists, nationalism, and some sectors of Afrocentricism.

The myth of inevitability and irreversibility which claims that there is a unique natural form of developmental process for a harmonious social order and economic well being, in the name of the liberal social economic order or liberal modernity. (KwesiWiredu, 1980, pg.x)

None of the above postulations accords with the philosophy of progressivistic indigenization or critical rooted-Interculturality. A dualism has always been present between the modern or western modernity and traditional societies which means and holds that any society which is not transformed along western modern society is said not to be modern. The question is: Must one society be transformed wholesale into another, in order to be considered modern, civilized and wealthy, or to generate well being? This is the fallacy of the myth of inevitability and irreversibility. Certain questions follow this line of thinking. To what extent can an African become modern without losing his identity? How can one remain in the path of tradition without bringing about stagnation in his social-economic development?

There is no doubt, that all peoples ought to carve out a developmental path in accord with their history, their culture and their basic philosophy of the Good. Any other path may become a rupture. According to Leo Apostle, rupture implies destruction which would plunge the recipient into deep disarray!’ (Leo Apostle, 1981 P.10) When you suddenly empty a people’s culture, or forcefully introduce undigested elements, values, without understanding, without integration, without relevance to people’s real needs, aspirations, and sense of being, one automatically introduces confusion into the heart of the society and the person.

Life becomes a bundle of confusions, uncoordinated actions, meaningless imitations, incompatible combinations and contradictions. These have been the fate of Africa and explain much of the crisis in African societies: their value crisis, administrative chaos, corruption, technological backwardness and lack of initiative.

Hence like the Afrocentricists, we cannot accept the racist tinged Eurocentric conception, of one straight forward process of social evolution or one model of modernization, that is, the myth of inevitability of the westernized and Eurocentric development paradigm for all peoples’ and nations. (Molefi Asante, 1988)

In short, modernization does not imply a flight from one’s cultural legacy. Modernity has been posed as a problematic of temporality – “a time lag”. The idea of seeing societies as not modern because it is claimed that they lie in the Western past, pre-capitalist, pre-industrial, in a Liminal space must be combated. Thus an author writes: modernity in the contemporary sense no longer refers to the ground project of Western Enlightenment but rather to a multiplicity of modernity, in different places, in different cultures at different civilizations. (Christo Van Staden in P.H Coetzee and AP.J Roux (ed).1998 P.32) We must equally, say that even though we have our national and cultural identities and possibility of civilizations, yet we all remain the same human beings, The spirit of man as man, is always oriented towards a transcendence, a capacity that could make him in some ways to trace his place of birth, his time and space, his particular, to some universality. We are never completely the “other”, whether African or not.

However, the fact or the recognition of certain universals does not constitute an acceptance of eurocentricism or the equation of eurocentricism with universality or the denial of cultural identity or certain particularities or developmental specifics. It is simply a recognition that the history of all civilizations consists in lending and borrowings and the rejection of autarky and isolationisms. In fact the present dominating and powerful European/western civilization, was fuelled by both internal and external factors. As TetsuroNakeoka said. “Imitation is an important procedure in a child’s learning process. History teaches us this also, it is true for nations and cultures. In the early part of this millennium, Europe learned much from the highly advanced science and technology of the Arabic, Indian and Chinese cultural areas. This process included abundant examples of imitation and borrowings, the most important of which was the adoption of Arabic numerals. But once rooted in European culture, these exogenous elements triggered off the energy latent in the European domestic conditions and Europe

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rapidly began to develop". (Tetsuro Nakaoka", in Anour Abdel -Malek 1979)

The extensive European borrowing is further corroborated by the observations of Sandra Harding that European sciences foraged in other cultures for elements of those cultures Ethno science to incorporate into European science. Native informants taught Europeans about the local flora, fauna, minerals and ores, climates, diseases, and other threats to health, pharmacological remedies, agricultural fishing and engineering practices, land and sea routes and much of the rest of the knowledge traditions, developed and stored in local culture." (Sandra Harding in Emmanuel Chukwudi Eze (ed), 1997 P.62)

In same way Africans must also open themselves up to other positive influences in the light of their historical experiences. As Maria Morfaw observed "Changing man has his problems in a changing world. The African has been most hit in this process of change. It is an evolution of man... that no people or nation can remain unaffected by the new rhythm of human history. Without warning and without preparation Africa has been invaded by world revolution. Now a new and rapid rhythm is beating from the technology, modern communications and mass media, Schools, Universities, Cities and towns. Africans must get up and dance for better or for worse". (Maria Morfaw Monday 15, 1999).

Every society and cultural group can modernize from its internal dynamics. Modernization is an internal dynamics of every culture brought about by the imperative of culture and society to respond to challenges, interrogations and questions, necessary and indispensable for their survival and wellbeing as beings in the world and their future. It is for a culture and its owners to either develop new techniques, method, ideas, practices, priorities or to readapt, reinvent, undertake some comparative analysis with a view to appropriating any relevant knowledge, action and value from external sources to supplement the internal effort at innovation in order to respond fruitfully and productively, satisfactorily, and authentically to the new challenges and present interrogations.

What is envisaged here is "a way of modernization which is not destructive, which does not destroy the positive cultural and productive heritage or original civilization, but is simultaneously creating new living and

working conditions, for the population, a development which preserves progressive cultural and productive traditions, which turns it into the point of departure in the creation of new forms of social organization and the great mobilization of human energy. (Anour Abdel-Malek, et al., (ed), 1979).

What is needed then is a realistic and critical discernment and selection of internal and external resources and values and methods necessary to establish an ordered disciplined prosperous, peaceful, and decent society that is inclusive and in accord with total wellbeing. Africa needs a way and orientation which, while assuring material prosperity, also assures human wholeness dignity and integrity which are the condition for the possibility of authentic happiness for the African peoples. This is what the philosophy of progressivistic indigenization is supposed to articulate. This orientation was beautifully expressed by Adedeji Adebayo when he said that Africa needs a development process,; a process that is both human and humane, that does not alienate man from his society and culture, that increases self-confidence and self-reliance; and sustains the needs of the society on an equitable and just manner. It demands the evolution of a truly indigenous pattern of development and lifestyle as the condition sine qua non for the attainment of higher levels of living. (Leistner G.M.T, 1981 Vol. II No 2)

The Directive Principles and Elements of the Philosophy of Progressivistic Indigenization (Critical Rooted Interculturality)

The conditions and directive principles of the Philosophy of progressivistic Indigenization will incorporate these indispensable building blocks or animating or directional principles which will promote rooted Interculturality and dignified engagement of Africans with other "world-livers" in their quest for total well-being in the world. We intend to discuss this under the following elements.

- 3.1 Local ownership and self-reliance
- 3.2 People-oriented Development..setting the priorities right.
- 3.3 Reconquering the African Development space and time
- 3.4 Caution against unguarded jump into the "catching up" and "leap frogging" train
- 3.5 Culture the Soul of Development.

3.6 Critical Judicious Openness to the Exogenous

3.6.1 Appropriate Technological Choice.

LOCAL OWNERSHIP AND SELF-RELIANCE

If African societies must progress without being alienated, if they must be less dependent, they must creatively harness available resources both the gift of nature and product of the people's creative genius and energy in such a way that the Common good and Inclusiveness may be promoted.

Such resources will include natural capital, human capital, social capital, physical capital, cultural capital and spiritual capital. We will dwell a bit on cultural capital later. This is the essential meaning of looking inwards and the onus of self-development. All societies' especially African societies have the wherewithal, to develop themselves and attain the level of material progress that can offer their citizens a happy good life and prosperity. All that Africans need and must strive for is to get mastery of their local environment and unlock the natural physical, mineral, human, social and endogenous endowments that nature and God have prodigally and prodigiously lavished on her.

Another area which demands important attention for the effective development and utilization of what we have is the area of our creative genius, which will comprise long years of accumulative wisdom, skills, techniques inventions, on the various aspects of life; environmental, medical, political, artistic nutritional etc. It will tantamount to downright stupidity for a people or a civilization to abandon her thousands of years of adaptive experience and indigenous genius which could be social, moral, physical, economic, technical and cultural. To abandon such indigenous capacities and discoveries which enabled a people, for hundreds or thousands years to survive their existential challenges and obstacles and expect that they can only move progressively forward to the future by erasing all their past or, as a tabula rasa or to totally and blindly model their life and form of society on the experience of others or follow an orientation of life, existential compass determined by others historical, cultural and geographical imperative will be a terrible and impoverishing mistake. There is no doubt that long years of dependence and exogenously determined development, have

made most of these treasures to be abandoned, neglected or marginalized. A self-reliant and developmental paradigm will surely look more deeply into this indigenous genius and into these discoveries which could be a fruit of painstaking observation and analysis of soils, season, and all manifest diversities of nature including human nature, or even a complex product of a process of trial and error, in search for survival and expansion. The creative maximization of people's creative genius and natural endowment is what will define people's existential comparative advantage, and even the source of their unique standing in the world. The great scandal of development in Africa today, is in her inability to feed her people and dependence on foreign handouts inspite of her massive rich and fertile endless land mass. Africa should have nothing to do with hunger and poverty. But this is the reality today. This can be offset if there is deliberate organized program of food security, exploiting Africans almost inexhaustible potentiality for Agricultural production and other material resources to be able to feed the people.

People-Oriented Development- And Setting the Priorities Right

A self-reliant process should be people oriented, and not elite oriented which has been the bane of our planning and social initiatives since colonial times. This means taking into consideration where most of our people are and the challenging problems and changes to their well-being. This means a deliberate effort and initiatives to evolve programs that will touch the real people without the obsession with statistics. It means taking the people on board in evolving socio-economic and political policies. Thus self-reliant development will imply the capacity for autonomous decisions by the people who are the real agents of development and ultimate beneficiaries. All aim at maximizing independence and minimizing dependence. The people know better the opportunity cost to their other important core values and demands for their communal lives. For example people may need to take decisions which reflect the balance among economic efficiency, stability, human well-being, ecological integrity and equity considerations.

A people oriented and self-reliant development in Africa today must start by addressing peoples' fundamental and foundational needs, or what can be called basic needs, not the wants of

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the Elite or the Wants imposed from external sources. We mean the needs directly related to the sustenance of life and other goods and investments necessary for human resources and capital development and the pursuit of social well being proportionate to the economic capacity of the nation. Africa is littered or defaced with wastefulness, abandoned multi-million white elephant projects, bogus systems, and other externally induced government paraphernalia and obsession with international grandeur which does nothing to improve the quality of life and the socio-economic well being of the people. These automatically impose consciously or unconsciously false tastes, false consumption habits, false planning, and false organizational system and corruptible practices. We call a state of affairs, choices or activities or facilities false when they are ill adapted or unsuitable or even counterproductive to the real needs of the people at any point in time and incapable of responding adequately to the peoples developmental challenges, from the point of view of who they are, how they are, where they are, and what they want to be. Hence the need for African societies to target those developmental goals and choices and aspirations which the societies can effectively and extensively deliver to their people which are not intrinsically alien or serve alien interests. It means devising mechanism and solutions which will lead to negating all oppressive, exploitative methods of the reigning world dominant ideologies, and their developmental patterns.

Reconquering the African Developmental Space and Time

The above demands can also be realizable if the African societies' development is determined essentially by its proper internal dynamics that is that African development efforts and policies will move within Africans proper temporality. This applies regaining control over her existential space and time lost since Africa came under the control of the Euro-centric and euro-directed world. Writing on the effect of colonialism on the colonized Tsenay Serequeberhan observed; "To exist as a human being is to temporalize but the colonized as colonized only passively endures times and submits in a history of which he is not a participant... the colonized, the "native" is forcefully barred from and does not historicize. Rather he endures as a subordinate thing in the historicity of the colonizer..." (Tsenay Serequeberhan in Emmanuel ChukwudiEze

(ed), pg. 203). The specter of confusions, disorder, and apparent anarchy in the heart of African body politic today, is traceable to the fact that she has been dragged along a developmental path (socio-economic, cultural and political), dictated by the priorities and timing of what happens in the Western world. So the pressures, changes, demands, influences, brought to bear on African societies have become so fast and so congested that African societies have lost control and are just being dragged along on policies, value systems, and consumption habits which alienate them and does not advance their fortunes.

As Balcorn observed, the dynamism of Western Modern society lay in separation of time and space, this contrasts with the traditional societies including Africa where time is measured by what happens in society. Space in these societies has to do with a particular locality. With modernity came the invention of a system of time that was not tied to specific places with their people, customs and events. The 'emptying' of time and space means the radical objectification of the social people and environment. Things become impersonal objects that are part of a wider system of other objects.

People enter into the most impersonal relationship of practical life -the life of the market community where an unknown obligations develop, resulting in myriads of connections which create anonymous dependence. One can see immediately that such conception of time introduced in Africa, made Africans unable to control the movement of their history and developmental orientation. It makes them a historical appendix to a history that is constructed, effected and realized for other peoples interest and their African elite co-operation. It makes policies and developmental plans, at times unconnected or unsuitable to the life of the concrete African people and where they are. No wonder as already observed we operate economics of growth without real development, and the obsessions with statistics, and no impact on real people and then the attempt to subject all societies to the same model of development. This is surely a great factor that has contributed to the even his historical dehumanization of the African man and his traditionally human-oriented Society. Thus the separation of time and space meant that the history of the peoples experience was no longer an affair viewed from inside as participants but from the outside as non

participant observers. Being viewed from outside means that the data of history are impersonal forces whereas viewed from the inside, is for them to become part of the overall destiny of human persons and communities. well being and progress. Time is not merely quantitative but qualitative, social and organic.

Caution against Unguarded Jump into the “Catching Up” And “Leap Frogging” Train

For a long time, development experts have been proposing strategies and projects which they said could make Africans “Catch up”, with the so-called developed and advanced Nations, or reach their height of modernization. Of course this means that developing countries like in Africa must follow the same part or steps that allowed developed economies to prosper; investment in the same skills, stages of development, technology, manufacturing capacities, financial arrangement, financial aid from donor countries. Modernization would then mean mechanization, urbanization industrialization.

Today, the language of “catching up” has changed to “leapfrogging”. Leapfrogging, aim at leveraging on technological progress to drive growth and help emerging economies while bypassing some stages or elements in the incremental path of traditional theories of development or modernization.

“Leapfrogging occurs when a nation bypass traditional stages in development to either jump directly to the latest Technologies... or to explore on alternative path of technological development involving emerging technologies (path creating). (EroYayboke et.al.April 2020). Such technologies include mobile phone revolution, digital revolution, artificial intelligence, drone Technology, alternative energies.

Proponents point to how these new technologies are empowering millions in the whole of rural Africa, make them have access to information, solving health and energy needs, financial services without the heavy traditional investments in machinery, infrastructures, that have defied governments in Africa, who have failed to address poor health, poor schools, lack of roads, lack of electricity, lack of jobs. So it is claimed by people like Ban-ki-moon, a former UN Secretary General that with the rapid development of the global digital economy and the availability of technology, the next century

belongs to Africa. It is further claimed that while it took Britain 150 years through the Industrial Revolution harnessing wind, water and steam power to move from Agriculture to an advanced economy, it is said that it took few generations for Japan, Singapore, Thailand, South Africa, China to leap from poverty to middle or high income state. Thus a World Bank 2017 study would say that “vertiginous changes brought about by the digital revolution in the past 20 years make leapfrogging... not only a possibility but necessity”.

No one should be stupid not to accept that no nation should ignore inventions and innovations that are boosting economic progress and bringing prosperity to other climes. it is equally true that the emerging technologies will no doubt drive developing nations in a faster lane to some sectors of development. In Africa the mobile phone technology, alternative energy sources and digital technology have empowered many people and bringing positive economic changes and developments in many areas in rural Africa and empowering the youths, yet as the United Nations Conference on Africa Trade and Development (UNCTAD) said, in articulating a well-coordinated and holistic, enduring and sustainable development model for Africa, we must look before we leap. The strategy of “catching up” and “leapfrogging” have their limitations and down side. The two of course have the same basic assumptions namely seeing development and progress only in terms of material development and essentially in consumerist terms.

This distracts nations from what should be their principal economic preoccupation to be producers than consuming technology and services developed elsewhere. The new technologies like mobile phone revolution or digital technologies can be no substitute for good roads, electricity capable of powering the manufacturing sector, strong institutions bound together by social capital and public trust.

No technology will ever be able to replace the laws, norms and institutions that provide the foundation for political and economic stability and security for investments. And as UNCTAD observed, “Catch up requires learning modern Technologies and accumulating indigenous technological capabilities in innovation and technological know-how for production as well as in investing in physical assets, However the innovation capabilities are lacking especially in

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the least developed countries” (UNCTAD, Policy 71, Dec. 2018) So in the final analysis leapfrogging will need basic investments in necessary infrastructure before it can even function.

From the above we can see that the ideas of leap-frogging and all the talk of “catching up” for Africa is a clear revelation and confirmation of African’s loss of their developmental time and space. It is only in moving within our own time frame, that we could develop an integrated developmental orientation where all aspects of human society will evolve in tandem and in accordance with the peoples own aspiration and to the greater advantage, well-being and fulfillment of the people. A situation whereby people are made to adopt certain externally induced measures in order to speedily attain the so called economic and political heights of another society without taking into consideration the social, psychological and cultural demands and consequences on the people is nothing but a destructive not civilization or progressive step. It is alienating, creates destabilization and kills indigenous creativity and social harmony. This has been the fate of Africa. For Africans to make “catching up” with the western developmental train the basis or motivating element in their developmental orientation is surely not wise. Trying to do that has already left us with two terrible situations or impasse. The first is that the Western developmental train does not stop to wait us to catch up and is rather increasing her speed every day and making our efforts, futile and unproductive.

Secondly, the illusive program of “catching up” has left Africa as a mere appendix living on handouts which fall off from the masters table, creating a terrible dependence and leaving Africans also terribly poorer. What-however is being proposed here is that we forget the idea of catching up with the Western modernity train and find the African modernity train. This means stopping to reflect on the type of train, direction and speed that will take our people and society to the level and type of well-being we want, in openness to all that is authentically good? Not every good thing or invention for example, technology, could be adopted or introduced into every society at every or any time, because certain importations or novelties will require the prior existence of certain conditions or other necessary elements. For when a society is not prepared or ready for

certain adoptions or adaptations, the new introductions could cause uncontrollable chaos with negative consequences, inimical to the common good. This is why the more Africans adopt the so called importations of modernity, the more African problems of development are exacerbated, and the more chaos we experience in the African social-cultural and economic universe today.

As we have said, I will re-echo again when we will consider technological choice Africans can expedite their progress materially and socially by a wise exploitation of the achievements of civilization and emergent technologies but the speed or what must be adopted must take into consideration Africa realities and the need to build a society which they want to have and the way they want to live their lives in harmony with their other cherished existential values, in view of total well being. It is only when the people can direct the orientation of their life within their own capacities and possibilities, according to their own choosing and in the light of their own aspirations that their being and humanity, their specific existential vocation, and being in the world, being of their authenticity and self-revelation, the truth of their being as Africans, well begin to unfold and flourish.

CULTURE THE SOUL OF DEVELOPMENT.

This model for Africa development and progress based on this philosophy of progressivistic indigenization, presupposes at the background, a deep and good knowledge and appreciation of the cultural deposit and treasures of the people which will include their cherished and time tested values; knowledge base; language, technology, spiritual values, which in sum constitute their culture.

Culture is the amalgam of nature and history, that which is added to nature. So through culture we think we can best express who the people are, where they are, how they are and what they have, and even the yearnings of their heart. Hence we are using culture here in these embracing senses.

It is the totality of the human activities considered to afford to individuals the possibility to cultivate, to actualize, and to develop their human potentialities, mental and physical. It is the totality of human efforts, achievements in the course of man’s struggle for existence, well-being and survival amidst the unfriendly militating forces of nature.

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From the above meanings of culture we can see that culture includes the-total life way of the people, their beliefs, systems, their technology, their economic organization, their view of life, the moral and value systems, their political system, their language, knowledge system and habits acquired by people as members of society. So it is the deepest expression of the people's own identity; their creative works, the discoveries, their civilizational legacy, the soul of the society. Culture will offer the internal, social, moral, economic linkage that helps to mobilize the people to pursue the collective Good, necessary for their development and well-being. It is the only real possibility available to a people for a life of meaning and dignity for themselves and offers the symbols and signs through which the foreign can be integrated and interpreted to the indigenes. Thus it provides the internal integrating mechanism and understanding which helps a people to take the necessary decision on when, how and to what extent, and where changes are needed, without destabilizing or causing greater harm to the greater well-being; of the people. No genuine development on the basis of a cultural tabula rasa is possible.

The role of culture in any progressive project of a society can be better understood in these seven functions of culture as well elaborated by Ali Mazrui.

- 1) Culture as lenses of a peoples' perception, hence how people view themselves and the environment.
- 2) Culture as springs of motivation, for example what people respond to as incentives and disincentives.
- 3) Culture as a standard of judgment, helps to understand a people's sense of right and of wrong. 4) Cultural role as basis of stratification e.g. role of genders, age-role, division of labour.
- 5) Culture as a means of communication hence provides languages, which can be people's window to reality, and which widens or limit their world.
- 6) Culture as defining production and consumption and influencing them.
- 7) Culture as a basis of identity, defining the we and them (Ali Mazrui, 1999, April 22-27)

Pope John Paul II in his address to the UNESCO in 1980 captures the power of culture when he said "man lives a really human life thanks to

culture.. culture is a specific way of man's 'existing' and 'being'... culture is that through which man as man becomes more man, 'is' more.. The nation is in fact the great community of men who are united by various ties, but above all precisely the culture. The nation exists 'through' culture and for culture and it is therefore the great educator of men in order that they may be more, in the community. It is this community which possesses a history that goes beyond the history of the individual and the family... I am the son of a nation which has lived the greatest experiences of history, which its neighbors have condemned to death several times but which has survived and remained itself. It has kept its identity and it has kept in spite of partitions and foreign occupations its national sovereignty, not by relying on the resources of physical power but solely by relying on its culture" (Pope John Paul II, 2005, pg. 96 -97).

He would further say that culture turned out in the circumstance to be more powerful than all other forces and that the right of a nation to the foundations of its culture and its future is not, the echo of any nationalism but it is always a question of a stable element of human experience and the humanistic perceptive of man's development. There exists a fundamental sovereignty of society which is manifested in the culture of the nation. It is a question of the sovereignty through which at the same time, man is supremely sovereign.

Africa and Africans can relate easily with the Pope's statement given Africans similar cruel experience of occupation, and domination and its search today for a self directed and determined development and destiny. NgugiWa, Thiong' O, lamenting the past African experience said: "African continent has been victim of forces of colonial exploitation, oppression and human degradation... Western Culture became the centre of African's process of learning and African was relegated to the background. African uncritically in imbibed values that were alien and had no immediate relevance to her people. Thus was the richness of African's cultural heritage degraded, and her people labeled as primitive and savage. The colonizer's Values were placed in the limelight and in the process evolved a new Africa who denied his original image and exhibited a considerable lack of confidence in his critical potential. (NgugiWa, Thiong' O, 1986 (2005) pg. 100).

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But as Amos .N. Wilson, said “ Culture carries a Spirit that guides and leads a people. When a people creates symbols those symbols are deigned to evoke particular types of reactions, feelings and moods in members. So culture is a means by which a group of people organizes the way they think, organizes the way they believe, organizes the way they would do so as to create a consciousness by which they co-operate in achieving certain ends, such that they can mutually aid each other and gain ends they cannot gain as separate individuals. Thus culture is an instrument of power. He warned against allowing other people to impose them with their own cultural spirit. He said “when you let another people generate certain values in you ... when you let another people let you see yourself and see your own people in a particular sort of way, they have implanted a spirit – and that spirit has been created by and for them and only responds to them” (Amos Wilson, 1999, pg.112-113)

This means furthering their own interest against the interest of the one it possess. This is why progressivistic Indigenization will be a process of recovering and empowering the people, and their culture, and looking inwards to harness the indigenous endowment in order to attain self-chosen destiny. This is a process of emancipation from those things that has stifled a people’s creativity.

In the light of the above it is inconceivable to talk of progress and development, without a thorough understanding of the cultural presuppositions operational in society. Any true development must be anchored on people’s culture not in the sense of making development a matter of cultural conservation as if any culture is self-sufficient or limiting the possibilities of a people’s progress or aspiration to the possibilities of their culture which is the error of cultural fundamentalism, but in the sense of discovering, the core cultural values which integrate the totality of peoples life and also their hidden intentionalities and motivation which are necessary to mobilize people to high ideals, the source of a people’s stability, cohesiveness and identity. They are the source of a people’s “rootedness” which makes intercultural dialogue, authentic and true. On this Pope Francis said “culture is more than what we have inherited from the past. It is also and above all a living dynamic and participated present reality which cannot be excluded as we rethink of the relationship between human

beings and the environment. (Pope Francis, 2015, pg. 94). In fact I may say to almost other aspect of life and society.

Every culture is perfectible and non can lay claim to infallibility or wholeness. Culture is always in need of reform. (Cultura semper reformandaest) This is necessary in order to continue to refine it so that any aspect that has been become anachronistic or counterproductive or impracticable in relation to values efficiency or available knowledge could be removed and substituted with better elements the sources notwithstanding. Hence when we talk of progressivistic indigenization, we simply mean to retain or indigenize what is indeginizable in the light of present realities and in accord with people’s present needs, aspirations and well being. All these will leave untouched the core unifying elements of a people’s culture that offers them identity. For example, to think of development and progress in Africa without a deep understanding of such core cultural values as, her religious sense; humanistic and communal sense, the holistic sense of the good life; the sense of harmony and balance and the importance of the family and children is to destroy the African identity in the world. So both cultural nationalism or puritanism and cultural iconoclasm are all anti-progress and developmental fallacies.

CRITICAL OPENNESS TO THE EXOGENOUS

We have said it many times in the process of this paper that while indigenization will refuse all externally induced developmental impositions which expropriate and alienate the people, yet self-reliance and local ownership of the process of development does not mean autarky. No country, European or otherwise developed or can develop alone. We have already shown that in the process of this work.

Man is not only a local being but also a cosmic being; we have our human commonalities and common problems which could be amenable to common solutions. Hence every people, culture and nation must be open to the intuitions, and discoveries and insights of other people and nations. Each people are limited in their existential horizon. There is the fact of man’s anthropological ignorance. Hence the need to avail ourselves of the insights and achievements of other cultures in many areas of life. Any true insight about man and his world no matter from where it comes becomes a part of the stock of human knowledge which is potentially the

common property of all men in the world. Knowledge per se has no culture, however, for practical and developmental purposes, people appropriate whatever insight or knowledge, in relation to other human and social realities and exigencies, in view of total well being.

Appropriate Technological Choice

Whereas we have to recognize certain inevitabilities and enduring elements of our human condition in Africa, today, yet we have to realize that there are many other very contingent factors valid for some situations, circumstances, places, and times. Hence the need for Africans to be critically open to whatever values, practices, programs, projects, philosophies that are being proposed to them by external sources and experts, in the name of universal verities and inevitabilities. For example no nation or culture can pretend to do without science and technology. It has been a great blessing to humanity as a problem solving mechanism. No society can pretend to survive today without a good level of scientific and technological know-how. Yet we must not fail to realize that science and technology have also their Ethno dimensions. Some scientific practices and certain researches arose and are provoked by certain local imperatives. Their values and forms can be Ethno determined. A piece of technology is not a mere metal but is also value laden. This means that a piece of technology can change the manner of operation of a whole society for better or for worse. It could affect economic direction, mode of living, social relationships, family stability, and wealth distribution. Weighing on this, Pope Francis cautioned “Science and Technology are not neutral.

From the beginning to the end of the process, various intentions and possibilities are in play and can take on distinct shapes. Nobody suggesting a return to the Stone Age but we do need to slow down and look at reality in a different way, to appropriate the positive and sustainable progress we have made, but also to recover the values and the greater goals swept away by our unrestrained delusions of grandeur. (Pope Francis, 2015, Pg. 76) .

This is why it is necessary that every nation and Africans in particular are obliged to make a proper scientific- technological choice. A technology that is relevant and beneficial in one culture may be very counterproductive and destructive in another culture or situation.

A piece of technology when introduced in a culture can destroy many other core values which hold and inspire a society. Hence the necessity for a society to indigenize their technology that is a technology which does not destroy the time-tested, honored and founding values of a society without which the life of the people will be more impoverished if not damaged. African countries must then be able to develop, adapt and exploit scientific and technological solutions appropriate to their specific needs otherwise they risk becoming more dependent on advice and assistance from the Western world which does not come easily or cheaply or even beneficially.

In a way, the low technology in African countries today can somehow offer them a future advantage to make better technological choices for their people especially for future generations because having seen the ravages which excessive technological instrumentalism and consumerism have done to the “advanced nations” their cultures, their environment, their social life, African nations, are in a better position to draw the necessary lessons by adopting technologies that are sustainable and not driven by materialistic consumerism, and being sensitive to the quality of life issues, respectful to the environment and conducive to man’s total well being. Pope Francis was right when he said that not all problems require uniform technical interventions because this could lead to overlooking the complexities of local problems which demand the active participation of all members of the society. There is need to respect the rights of people’s and culture and that development of the socio group pre-supposes an historical process which take place within a cultural context and demands the constant and active involvement of local people from within their proper culture. The notion of quality of life should not be imposed from without, for quality of life must be understood within the world of symbols and customs proper to each human group (Pope Francis, 2015, Pg.94-95).

Hence the critical openness to the exogenous, whether cultural, spiritual, economical, moral, and political as an element of the progressivistic indigenization process, would mean the appropriation of what other civilizations can offer in such a way that it does not alienate the people, but ennoble or enriches them more, their culture and their total well being. The external element should not be adopted as an

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external imposition, from a mere consumptive attitude but from an internally determined, judicious, selective approach in view of a people's self-chosen destiny. The external resources are surely needed to fill the lacuna and the deficiencies in a people's world, where a suitable local solution is not possible. We need the external which does not destroy or disorientate the living and effective core values which anchor the dignity and identity of the people. We must note once more that not every achievement of man is useful to all peoples at all times and in all circumstances. Hence the need for Africans to establish a selective rationality which will help them in discerning what to retain, promote, conserve, and perpetuate in their endogenous world and what to appropriate and adopt from the exogenous world. This will help us to avoid the exaggerations and extremes of Afrocentricism and the arrogance and fallacies of Eurocentricism in all its dimensions.

CONCLUSION

This philosophy of progressivistic indigenization or critical rooted inter-culturality which demands critical, loving, judicious and appropriate attention to the local endowments, values and needs as well as a critical openness to the exogenous, is unrealizable and an empty noise, if it is not backed up by an appropriate educational system and process, that places the good and interest of people as a priority; a process that does not alienate them and make them strangers to their culture, their environment, or designed to promote local creativity. We cannot have an educational philosophy and curriculum, of which the content and methods are determined by foreign experiences and imperatives or even directed by foreign ideologies and interests and perception and yet expect to have an educational system which can develop and prosper Africa. NgugiWaThiong'O insight is relevant here when he said "Education is a means of knowledge about ourselves". Therefore after we have examined ourselves, we radiate outwards and discover peoples and worlds around us. With Africa at the centre of things, not existing as an appendix or a satellite of other countries and literature, things must be seen from the African perspective. (NgugiwaThiong'O,1981 (2005). Surely our educational systems should open to our people, the great innovations in knowledge in the world, but the message of Mao Tse Tung, the father of modern China in 1956, to his people remains relevant to our African

people today. "The things which you study are useful, but you should master both Western and Chinese things. Do your utmost to study and develop them with the aim of creating our own Chinese things with characteristic national form and angle. If you grasp the basic Policy, your world will have a quiet future" (cf S Schram, 1974, pg. 90). Perhaps this is the birth of the policy that slowly and surely led to the wonders of Chinese economy and science today. A clear lesson in progressivistic indigenization or critical rooted inter-culturality for a future prosperous and empowered Africa with dignity and prepared to accept her historical destiny and vocation in the world, in the light of her creative genius and the richness of her being as a being-in- the- world.

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