

## A CRITIQUE OF FORCE IN AFRICAN WORLDVIEW

Archibong, Emmanuel Iniobong  
Faculty of Arts, Department of Philosophy  
Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka  
[emmymark2jr@gmail.com](mailto:emmymark2jr@gmail.com)

### Abstract

*Vital force is in hierarchical order in African worldview from God the supreme vital force through to the ancestors-the living dead, divinities, living humans, animals, plants and minerals. There are both material and non-material dimensions of force in African worldview which qualifies it to have a metaphysical (non-material) and scientific (material) basis simultaneously. Factual or material knowledge among the people of Africa is mainly restricted to matter of everyday living not really giving a place of prominence by way of in-depth reflection and analysis. It is also mostly the fundamental concerns of the artisans. But without any doubt, the work of artisans played a decisive role in establishing man's knowledge of and mastery over the material universe which precedes Western science as it is known today. Africans therefore, are very conscious materially only in the sense that they use the material force in the universe to enhance their life-force, healing and magical powers. This is why sacred plants, places, hills, rivers, valleys, mountains and animals are used by Africans to manipulate nature without any economic or infrastructural benefits accruing from such practices. The study employs the method of criticism and argues that focusing on the non-material aspect of reality wholly as the major preoccupation and explanation for every phenomenon in the African universe is the major reason why Africa is still scientifically and technologically underdeveloped. Thus, striking a balance in both the material and non-material aspect of force in African worldview or focusing more on research on the material aspect of reality devoid of non-material explanation will see to a new generation of Africans who will overcome present economic and infrastructural deficit by coming up with indigenous African science and technology for the peoples economic emancipation and wellbeing.*

**Keywords:** Force, worldview, African, Development, Scientific, Technological, Material, Non-material.

### Introduction

That the mineral which is nature's material deposits whether solid, liquid or gaseous is at the lower rung of the ladder of force in African worldview should be of great concern to contemplative Africans. This is because it may serve as an explanation to why Africa as a continent and her people are backward scientifically and technologically. Force in African worldview is predominantly religious and

*(A Publication of Tansian University, Department of Philosophy and Religious Studies)*

metaphysical. Hence though it has a material dimension, it is however subsumed under the non-material to the point that the material aspect is accepted on the basis of the metaphysical.

For the Bantu's as well as other Africans, it is a common belief that being is animated by force. This force has a supreme value which is life force, to live strong or vital force. This Bantu Ontology is contingent upon the worldview held by the people. Tempels emphasized this point lucidly when he asserts that, anyone who wishes to study primitive people or *Evolues* must give up all idea of attaining valid scientific conclusion so long as he has not been able to understand their metaphysic. To declare on *apriori* grounds that primitive peoples have no ideas on the nature of beings, that they have no ontology and that they are completely lacking in logic, is simply to turn one's back to reality.

Force in African worldview can be understood from a firm logic of belief. This belief is centered on the Supreme Being or God. Thus, "the Bantu speak of God himself as "the strong One", he who possesses Force in himself. He is also the source of the force of every creature. In the minds of Bantu, all beings in the universe possess vital force of their own: human, animal, vegetable, or inanimate. Each being has been endowed by God with a certain force, capable of strengthening the vital energy of the strongest being of all creation: Man"<sup>1</sup>

The unique thing about this force as subscribed by Africans is that they are metaphysical but with evidence in the physical or material realm. This suggests that "life force" or "vital force" has been enshrined in everything in creation by the supreme creator, God. To this end, there is force in everything in creation animate or inanimate. The understanding of the workings of this force is essential to the survival of the Bantu's as well as their unique knowledge of manipulating mind over matter. Tempels avers also that "the Bantu say, in respect of a number of strange practices in which we see neither rime nor reason, that their purpose is to acquire life, strength or vital force, to live strongly, that they are to make life stronger, or to assure that force shall remain perpetually in one's posterity".<sup>2</sup>

The concept of force to traditional Africans has a dimension to which it is correlated to the scientific term "energy". Energy in Western Science is uncreated and indestructible. Similarly, force in African worldview has the same connotation as it can only diminish one's being but it cannot be destroyed. Tempels explains this point lucidly thus:

Those who think that, according to the Bantu, one being can entirely annihilate another, to the point that he ceases to exist, conceive a false idea. Doubtless one force that is

*(A Publication of Tansian University, Department of Philosophy and Religious Studies)*

greater than another can paralyze it, diminish it, or even cause its operation totally to cease, but for all that the force does not cease to exist. Existence which comes from God cannot be taken from a creature by any created force.<sup>3</sup>

The Bantu African has a rich and profound philosophy of reality which captures the very essence of the people's worldviews, culture and logic. Their idea of being has a lot of relationship in many ways with that of the Westerners as can be implied, since being is a subject that has a lot of relevance to reality. Since force is at the centre of being, it becomes very germane to examine Africans understanding of force from her worldview and why it is not as systematized and utilized as that of the Westerners. One of the outcomes of such an interrogation will reveal why African theory of vital force though very unique, has not helped Africans fared well economically just like that of their Western counterparts because of the over concentration of the non-material aspect of reality to the detriment of the material. The study shall now proceed to examine the concept of a worldview as imperative to viewing and understanding reality.

### **What is a Worldview?**

A worldview or *weltanschauung* in German, closely associated with the philosopher and historian, Wilhelm Dilthey is an overarching philosophy or that which defines the most consistent cherished beliefs of a people. A worldview can be religious, philosophical and scientific which reflects reality or truth. A people's worldview is important because it determines beliefs and beliefs determine behavior invariably. A certain belief is accepted because it is believed that it produces a certain consequence. Worldviews are therefore implicit by their nature as people are not usually aware of the ways their categories, systems of logic and basic assumptions affect the way they view the world. According to Kraft:

Worldview, the deep level of culture, is the culturally structured set of assumptions (including values and commitments/allegiances) underlying how a people perceive and respond to reality. Worldview is not separate from a culture. It is included in culture as the deepest level presuppositions upon which people based their lives.<sup>4</sup>

From the above, a worldview is a set of beliefs, a model that attempts to explain all of reality and not just some aspect of it. Geisler and Bocchino correspondingly aver that, "...a worldview is a philosophical system that attempts to explain how the facts of reality relate and fit together. In other words, a worldview shapes or colors the way we think and furnish the interpretative condition for understanding and explaining the facts of our experience".<sup>5</sup>

*(A Publication of Tansian University, Department of Philosophy and Religious Studies)*

Worldview is from where a people make sense of the meaning of life, existence, reality, the universe, values, afterlife, and the supernatural. It could also relate to any ideology, philosophy, theology, movement or religion that provides an overarching approach to understanding God, the world, and the familiar and unfamiliar features of the universe. Worldview is man's construct clearly embedded in culture and culture is diverse and dynamic sometimes leading to a shift or shock. In all, definitions of worldview could contain: fundamental cognitive structures, systems of beliefs, explains all of reality (cosmology, metaphysics), philosophical system, assumptions about reality (conscious or unconscious, true or false), significance of life (teleology, ontology), culturally constructed, religion, ideologies, associated with a group or society, nature of knowledge (epistemology), personhood (ontology), nature of human history (philosophy of history), fundamental values (axiology) and cultural norms (ethics). That being the case, what is force in African worldview?

### **Force in African Worldview**

The concept of force or "vital force" in African belief system as contained in her worldview is very primordial to the understanding of reality in its general form. The idea of force implies "being" as force is not different from being. According to Tempels:

Force, the potent life, vital energy is the object of prayers and invocations to God, to the spirits and to the dead, as well as of all that is usually called magic, sorcery or magical remedies. The Bantu will tell you that they go to a diviner to learn the words of life, so that he can teach them the way of making life stronger. In every Bantu language it is easy to recognize the words or phrases denoting a force, which is not used in an exclusively bodily sense, but in the sense of the integrity of our whole being.<sup>6</sup>

The logic of explanation of Africans with respect to force is hinged on her cultural worldview. Africans do not isolate reality; they see reality from the whole and not in parts. This is very important if we must make sense of why Africans conceive force as such. Africans see reality in hierarchy, what we may call "hierarchy of being". This is her own "...unique and peculiar way of viewing reality".<sup>7</sup> By hierarchy of being, the African builds a structure of reality according to primacy with God (the Supreme Being) at the apex from whom flow other existent realities such as (ancestors, spirit, deities), (man), (animals, plants and minerals). Interestingly, God is the causeless cause of other forces. Mbiti, in line with this view avers that:

*(A Publication of Tansian University, Department of Philosophy and Religious Studies)*

According to African peoples, man lives in a religious universe, so that natural phenomena and objects are intimately associated with God. They not only originate from Him but also bear witness to Him. Man's understanding of God is strongly colored by the universe of which man is himself a part. Man sees in the universe not only the imprint but the reflection of God.<sup>8</sup>

In African worldview, it is difficult if not impossible to discuss being without beginning from God the supreme creator of the universe. Though a spirit, the Supreme Being is force personified and has power over every creature "matter" inclusive. In fact the force emanating from God it is believed animates or gives life to other creatures. This is perhaps the reason why Africans see 'life force' in everything both in the natural and supernatural. Affirming this point, Nkemnkia asserts that "the African's life is characterized by an organic whole within which it is difficult to distinguish clearly, as the Western classical conception does, the boundaries of the different realities forming the whole universe of the living. It is very difficult to differentiate clearly between man and the world, man and God, God and the world."<sup>9</sup>

Force in African worldview is not only reducible to the activities of the material but to the non-material as well. It means that non-material forces can also influence the material leading to active or passive causality. This is why there are certain herbs, roots and leaves that can be used to manipulate "mind" over "matter" and in the process used to influence humans positively or negatively. It is on this belief that the idea of sorcery, magic and even witchcraft finds expression in African worldview. It can be logical to infer that, if the force or energy emanating from the Supreme Being flows through to other beings, then there will be a replication of forces in everything created. Ibeabuchi, following this point avers thus:

There is a conception of the Supreme Being as he who gives life, or he who gives force to other beings that are subordinate... These beliefs teach that gods are responsible for the creation of the world and the continuation of life in it, and that they control important events such as birth, death, disease and success. God's, unlike men, do not die; they live forever and restore force to created things that lost theirs.<sup>10</sup>

Under the hierarchy of force or being in African worldview, plants, animals and minerals are at the lower wrung of the ladder. After God, there are spirits/ancestors, man before rocks, trees, plants and animals. The reason is because

*(A Publication of Tansian University, Department of Philosophy and Religious Studies)*

man is at the centre of God's creation and he is made in his image and likeness. In the hierarchy of force then, man is of more importance than nature consisting of rocks, plants and animals. These existing things are subservient to man. However, deities like spirits according to Etim "are... localized in trees, rivers, hills etc. There is virtually a deity for everything of existential importance to the Africans like thunder, war, fertility, agriculture, fishing, family, etc".<sup>11</sup>

The point being made here is that Africans have a belief system occasioned by naïve realism. By this, they see life forces as emanating from the Supreme Being which is God and animating every other form of reality. This is also to say that the life force of the creator is present in all creatures of His and in all things. Force then is being and relates in common to all existing things. Force in African worldview cannot be separated from being unlike in the Western worldview where the transcendental notion of being is separated from its attribute of force. It becomes easier following African conception of force to understand why Africans think the way they do and make sense of their universe as well. The study now proceeds to examine further dimension of force in African worldview.

### **Causes and Interaction of Force in African Worldview**

In African worldview, events are caused; events and motion are a product of "force". Force has the same ontological status as being in African thought; nothing just happened to an African. This suggests that there is some kind of deterministic belief that the Africans hold. Interestingly, the non-material realm is more profound to the African and that is where reality to him is determined and understood. The material plane to the African is far lesser and real compared to the non-material where God dwells as well as the ancestors and spirits. Before anything happens in the material plane, it must have happened in the non-material plane. Teffo and Roux assert that:

Since metaphysical discourse is generally about non-physical aspects of phenomena that transcend space and time, the bulk of the subject matter of African metaphysics falls under the category that is traditionally described in western metaphysics as "supernatural". Two considerations are important here. On the one hand, as will be emphasized repeatedly, dualism which is the stock-in-trade of western metaphysics, such as those between matter and mind/soul/spirit, do not appear in African metaphysics.<sup>12</sup>

That Africans place a very high premium on the non-material plane should not be misunderstood. It does not in any way mean they do not exist in time and space. Much of the African day to day lives are based on empirically verifiable facts. The only difference is that, the African reduces all of these facts to a non-material cause so that all the activities that takes place in the material plane is a direct consequence of what goes on in the non-material or supernatural realm through causal interaction.

Causality in African worldview is founded upon beliefs. This is different from how it is perceived in Western worldview of science. For a statement to be considered causal in Western worldview of science, it has to fulfill “three properties which mean that the cause must precede the effect, cause and effect must be materially related, and whenever the cause happens, the effect must take place”.<sup>13</sup> Explaining causality from cause can be non-materially or supernaturally determined by Africans. For instance, a material cause can be informed by a non-material interaction or means. This view is predicated on the “being” of God.

God or the Supreme Being in African worldview system is a “spirit being”. The nature of his being is such that can affect matter even by mere spoken words. For the Africans, each reality whether material or non-material appears and disappears into and takes the nature of the opposite reality.<sup>14</sup> This point seems to follow the principle of Newton’s third law of motion in science. In other words, there is a constant interaction between these parallel universes. Thus, “...reality is cyclical. The spiritual appears as a physical reality and goes back to the spiritual world and the cycle continues. This means that the physical has an inbuilt spirituality and the spiritual has an inbuilt physicality.”<sup>15</sup>

The reality of this belief accounts for the explanation by an African of certain events that do not make meaning within the purview of Western science. For instance, when a person is to be poisoned in Africa, it is not necessary that the poison should have direct contact with say, the food or drink. Just holding the bottle or glass is enough to transmit the poison into the content after the necessary incantations. Just like there is the presence of radio waves everywhere in the material universe, there is also a web of interaction with regards to force in the African universe. As long as the force being talked about is fundamentally non-material, it is believed that it can affect the material aspect of reality. Mbiti asserts here that:

The whole psychic atmosphere of African village life is filled with belief in this mystical power. African peoples know that the universe has a power, force or whatever else one may call it, in addition to the items in the ontological categories. It is difficult to know exactly what it is or how

*(A Publication of Tansian University, Department of Philosophy and Religious Studies)*

it functions. Even where allowance is made for conjuring tricks, obvious cheating, superstition, manipulating of hidden means of communication and other skilled use of laws of nature, one is left and confronted with phenomena which as yet cannot be scientifically explain away.<sup>16</sup>

Cause in African worldview works by interaction. The interaction is from the non-material or supernatural to the material or natural and vice versa. The Supreme Being interacts with his creatures by infusing "life force" into them and all of creation exhibits this causal life force. It is in rocks, trees, flowers, birds, plants, animals, man and so on. It animates existence and forms the bedrock of everything living or has the possibility to being in existence. Knowledge of the existence of these realities is important in harnessing their vital force. Force can be used constructively or destructively in African worldview depending on the spirits behind it as there are good spirits and evil spirits. Mbiti further avers that "there is mystical power which causes people to walk on fire, to lie on thorns or nails, to send curses or harm, including death, from a distance to change into animals (Lycanthropy), to spit on snakes and cause them to split open and die..."<sup>17</sup> The study now examine how material force is a consequence of non-material cause in African worldview.

### **Non-Material Force with a Material Effect in African Worldview.**

The major reason why it seems weird or absurd for something non-material or spiritual to affect a material object is because of our outlook to reality via a worldview. When discussing the concept of cause from the Western point of view for instance, it is expected that there must be material connection which in turn produces material effect. To say that something A is the cause of an effect B is to be understood from a material perspective. This kind of explanation is not really necessary when we shift our attention to African worldview. Africans believe that every material effect has a non-material cause as "matter" itself is a product of the non-material or supernatural. Tempels makes the point lucidly when he declares that:

The fundamental notion under which being is conceived lies within the category of force. Metaphysics studies this reality, existing in everything and in every being in the universe. It is in virtue of this reality that all beings have something in common, so that the definition of this reality may be applied to all existent forms of being. To arrive at this reality common to all beings, or rather which is identical in all beings, it is necessary to eliminate all forms

*(A Publication of Tansian University, Department of Philosophy and Religious Studies)*



of reality which belong to one category only among beings. We pay attention to the elements, which are common to all beings. Such elements are, e.g. the origin, the growth, the changes, the construction or the achievement of the beings, passive and active causality and particularly the nature of the being as such supporting those universal phenomena. These elements constitute the object of metaphysical knowledge, that is to say, of knowledge embracing all the physical or the real.<sup>18</sup>

In Western worldview, there is a place for invincible forces of nature. But the difference is that, they are all reduced to material or natural processes. For instance most parts of the universe are just forces and its fields leading to the concepts of black holes and dark matter. These realities are not apprehensible by observation except through their effects. We know about the presence of the wind when we see the leaves shaking. There is a lot in the universe that also seems to be hidden from human consciousness with philosophical appendages as it was only in the 17<sup>th</sup> Century that physics became an independent discipline; before that time, it was called *Natural Philosophy*. That said, the window through which the material is known by scientists is through the senses, majorly five.

The non-material or supernatural realm has been a very contentious subject for the Westerners because Western science reduces all of the material including man to “matter” and their descriptions. Man is therefore held to be just a composite of matter or atoms without a soul and spirit. Thus, any claim to the non-material or supernatural realm in science would be described as hallucination or delusion something that is not real with regards to material reality. As Mawere and Mubaya will opine, “while we appreciate the universality of philosophy as a discipline anchored on rationality and critical inquiry, we examine the question in cultural and geographical frames in order to try to bring out to the surface that which distinguishes Africa-philosophy from other philosophies such as Western philosophy or Chinese philosophy”.<sup>19</sup>

From a scientist’s angle, it will sound absurd to assert that a non-material or supernatural entity or force without form or shape can influence matter. But to doubt this possibility is to also be coming from another worldview. To dismiss the belief of mind over matter as utter balderdash is to be judgmental based on a supposed superior worldview. Africans have often been berated by the Westerners on account of their belief system with regards to the non-material or supernatural. Thus it is a belief in African worldview well held that the non-material or supernatural is a plane more real than the material.

Consequently, the Westerners have a worldview about reality that is material with a reductionists approach so that the mind is just a brain activity and not an independent entity as captured in the Cartesian dualism. The scientist then is “someone who is prepared to say that every event can be described in micro-structural terms, a description which mentions only elementary particles, and can be explained by reference to other events so described.<sup>20</sup> Furthermore, with regards to the mind, the scientists will say indifferently that we are dispensing with mental states and events in favour of a bodily ones or explaining mental states and events as bodily ones.<sup>21</sup> Safro Kwame corroborating the thesis of physicalism, captures Kwasi Wiredu words, what he calls quasi-physicalism thus:

Quasi physicalism does for physicalism what physicalism did for materialism expressed exclusively in terms of atoms and other elementary particles. It stretches the limits of matter or materialism as far as is compatible with what we know or do not know, without embracing dualism. It admits the possibility of quasi-physical objects as belonging to a category between the realm of the obviously physical, i.e. those objects that obey the known laws of physics and the realm of the so-called spiritual or completely immaterial objects that do not obey any of the known laws of physics. These are the “fuzziest” objects that quasi-physicalism recognizes as being compatible with a limited version of physicalism. They, unlike outright spiritual or immaterial objects, are recognized as existing together with atoms, fields, energies, sets and numbers.<sup>22</sup>

When an African is talking about the non-material or spiritual affecting the physical or material, he is doing that from a face valued point of view. He is not referring to brain or mental processes but to a being outside of matter which can influence it. The influence in question is outside of the material; it is a supernatural influence over the material. The study will now examine briefly the purpose of man’s existence in a material universe and why he should maximize the potentials available to him to lived a fulfilling life.

### **Why do Man and the Universe Exists?**

From the African worldview, man and the universe exists as God’s creation. God created the universe and placed man in it out of his own will or pleasure. Thus “man is not the first or creative cause of life but he sustains and adds to the life of the forces which he finds below him within his “ontological” hierarchy”.<sup>23</sup> This suggests that the material universe was created for man to aid his existence, which is

*(A Publication of Tansian University, Department of Philosophy and Religious Studies)*

why man co-habits with nature or the universe and this affects his activities in the environment in several ways either positively or negatively. Man does not see his material life as all there is to his existence neither the material universe. He is in the material universe in order to prepare himself for the spiritual universe and that has an adverse effect on his preference on the non-material or spiritual reality. Kanu declares that:

Man's coming to the world cannot be understood within the western category which sees the human person in mechanistic terms. Man in African worldview has a purpose and mission to fulfill; he comes into the world as a force amidst forces and interacting with forces. Good status, good health and prosperity are signs of the wellbeing of a person's life-force, and man struggles to preserve it through an appropriate relationship with the spiritual forces around him.<sup>24</sup>

When a man has lived a good life here on earth, he goes into the world beyond, a spiritual universe of the living-dead where he continues his life as an ancestor. The material universe came about as a result of God's benevolence and magnanimity expressed to man his choice possession. This suggests that the universe has a moral purpose which is for the good of man. Most works of African worldview are silent about what the ultimate fate of the material universe will be just as it is in the Western worldview of science. This may be that way because there is a better spiritual universe which is more important and sustaining than this one which man should strive to get to. We shall now evaluate why Africa with its vast knowledge of the workings of the non-material universe has not been able to develop a functional material science and by extension technology for the benefit and utility of its people and the world at large just as the Westerners and Orientals have done.

### **Evaluation**

African worldview makes no pretense in asserting that there is a hierarchy of force of which man and the material universe is one. Man may be the wisest and most intelligent force compared to plants, animals and mineral resources but not to the ancestors, divinities or God who gives him divine inspiration and knowledge in general. Thus man is not just a composite of matter alone; he has an immortal soul that lives on after the body dies. As such, African worldview does not confer such loose freedom on man to live his life any how he deems fit. There has to be some regulations that will bring about order in the society. If man still chooses to live a reckless life, he will have to bear the consequences for such a choice. Etuk makes the

*(A Publication of Tansian University, Department of Philosophy and Religious Studies)*

point that “the first thing that the new humanism affirms therefore, is that the environment is God’s gift to man; secondly, the new humanism affirms that as important as science has been in human development, science is not everything”.<sup>25</sup>

However, while the Western worldview of science makes room for only man, the material universe and everything in it, African worldview makes room for man, the universe and God. This is the reason why force as a concept is materially inclined to the Westerners and they have invested heavily in research in that area with attendant economic and infrastructural gains. But it appears that the Western worldview of science is now stretching its boundary as it is now moving towards the non-material and non-observable like dark matter and blackhole after having made so much progress in the material dimension of reality. Hence, all the four fundamental forces in the material universe are all connected in the Western worldview of science and none is held as non-material at face value. That made it easier for research to be made in that aspect using complex mathematical formulations and axioms. At the same time, they are all unobservable and metaphysically explained through causality. Probing into what force is in itself, Western worldview of science will simply assert that it is a material property which causes object’s motion whereas in African worldview, forces have a supernatural dimension intermingling with the material. Africans can invoke a non-material or supernatural force that can suspend the laws of nature but have not been able to harness the same knowledge to solve her existential problems bedeviling them as a people especially economic poverty.

Since beliefs are held as being without substantive material evidence and different from knowledge which is evidenced based, it cannot be said one believes what is already known. African claims based on belief are usually discountenance by the Westerners because belief does not translate to knowledge as one can believe just anything even a lie. However, for the Africans, as contained in her worldview, beliefs are founded upon prior knowledge so that when the evidence cannot be repeated again or not immediately handy, belief would do. For instance, if a certain people had a deity visits them who performed certain wonders which defy the laws of physics, after that encounter, the event can be transmitted to a later generation who would then believe though without evidence of a repeated occurrence. Beliefs also have some psychological satisfaction it gives to those who hold on to it and this is why the Western worldview of science hold theories that do not have empirical evidence like the big bang, evolution, abiogenesis, superstring, quantum gravity and the four fundamental forces.

The reason for emphasizing this dimension of belief is because of the dichotomy between belief and knowledge as pushed by the Western worldview of science.

Science holds that knowledge is only gained from experience hence, belief doesn't give demonstrable knowledge. Accordingly, knowledge is knowledge because there is evidence to prove that a thing is the case, some kind of correspondence with an actual state of affair or event which can be established. Since knowledge is divided into two types: basic and non-basic knowledge, Ozumba opines that 'the basic is different from the non-basic in being anchored on a justification that does not need further justification while the non-basic is anchored on justifications deriving their epistemic strength from other justifications culminating in a basic justification'.<sup>26</sup>

Because beliefs are well enshrined in a worldview, it can affect a people's outlook to life and determine their preferences in research and method of investigation. Worldviews then becomes like a map that shows a people the way to go and what to focus on. Clearly then, worldviews contain what has already been accepted to be worth pursuing by a people; a kind of set of standards by which one evaluates human knowledge, the focus of that knowledge and judges it as having utility or not. Worldviews then contains aspects of reality worth focusing on whether material or non-material. Looking very closely from this understanding, it will be clear that every worldview whether the Western or African contains principles that can determine human behavior, preferences and the attendant outcome from it. For example, since the Western worldview of science holds the belief that man is just a composite of matter or a bundle of energy, that gives the impetus to researches leading to knowledge and understanding of the material universe since it is held as the only reality there is. This also accounts for why the Western worldview of science is investing heavily in researches in the material universe which the world at large is enjoying today but at a price that is plough back to the Westerners developmental advantage giving them the power, voice, comfort and wellbeing amongst the comity of nations.

## **Conclusion**

African has all it takes to be a continent and people of pride and envy going by the quantum of human and material resources she is blessed with. But it is a sad reality that that her belief system as contained in her worldview and the overwhelming emphasis of the non-material or supernatural aspect of reality over the material has adversely affected the prospect of engaging the material dimension of reality and getting the best out of it. This limitation has made the continent to be regarded as dark and impoverished because she does not have an indigenous science neither a technology hence without a voice in international circles. Clearly, the African economic and infrastructural problem cannot be devoid of stemming from its worldview. Despite this shocking reality, something can still be done to get Africa out of her current economic woes and it is simply in striking a balance between the non-material and material aspect of reality with the latter gaining more place of

*(A Publication of Tansian University, Department of Philosophy and Religious Studies)*

prominence. It is also for its leaders to emphasize, invest and encourage indigenous research on the material aspect of reality as a policy statement so that Africa can attain the same results as that of her Asian counterparts who have an almost similar worldview.

As we draw the curtain of this discourse, it is important to reiterate the point that worldviews are very subtle and salient in determining a peoples belief as well as what they hold to be of utmost concern to their survival. African worldview with its hierarchy of force is rich and unique; but its emphasis on the non-material aspect as determining everything including the material has not seen to the development and investments in knowledge and exploration of the material universe. This lopsidedness or outright disregard for material knowledge must be addressed and very timely so that we can have a generation of Africans who would not suffer the deprivations their forebears suffered because of the lack or absence of African indigenous science and technology.

### **Endnotes and References**

- 1 Placide Tempels, *Bantu Philosophy*, (Paris: Presence Africaine, 1959), p.22
- 2 *Ibid*; p. 22
- 3 *Ibid*; p. 28
- 4 C H. Kraft, "Culture, Worldview and Contextualization" Winter R D. and Hawthorne, S. C. (eds), *Perspective on the World Christian Movement 3<sup>rd</sup>*, (Pasadena, CA: William Carey Library, 1999), p.385
- 5 N. Geisler and P. Brocchino, *Unshakable Foundations*, (Minneapolis: Bethany House, 2001), pp: 43, 55
- 6 Placide Tempels, *Bantu Philosophy*, (Paris: Presence African, 1959), p. 22
- 7 E. I. Archibong, "African Metaphysics: An Overview" A. F. Uduigwomen and C. O. Akpan (eds), *Metaphysics: A Book of Readings*, (Calabar: Ultimate Index, 2012), p. 407.
- 8 J. S. Mbiti, *African Religions and Philosophy*, (London: Heinemann, 1969), p. 48.

- 9 M. N. Nkemnkia, *African Vitalogy: A Step Forward in African Thinking*, (Nairobi: Paulines Publications, 1999), p.110.
- 10 O. M. Ibeabuche, "The Theory of Forces as conceived by Igbo Africans" *Filosofia Theoretical Journal of African Philosophy, Culture and religious* Vol.2 No.1, (2013), p: 289.
- 11 Francis Etim, "African Metaphysics" *Journal of the Asian Scientific Research* Vol. 3 No. 1, (2013), pp.11-17.
- 12 Lebisa. J. Teffo and A. P. J. Roux, "Metaphysical Thinking in Africa" *The African Philosophy Reader* P. H. Coetzel and A. P. J. Roux (eds), (London: Routledge, 1980), p. 196.
- 13 Cristina Puente Agueda, "Casuality in Science" *Revista*. Vol. 1. (2011), pp. 1-10.
- 14 Chris O. Ijiomah, *Harmonious Monism: A Philosophical Logic of Explanation for Ontological Issues in Supernaturalism in African Thought*, (Calabar: Jochrisam Publishers, 2014), p. 118.
- 15 *Ibid*; p.18.
- 16 J. S. Mbiti *Ibid*; p. 197.
- 17 *Ibid*; pp. 197-198.
- 18 Placide Tempels, *Ibid*; pp.23-24.
- 19 Munyaradzi Mawere and Tapuwa R. Mubanya. *African Philosophy and Thought Systems: A Search for a Culture and Philosophy of Belonging*, (Mankon: Langaa Research Publishing, 2016), p.28.
- 20 Richard Rorty "Objectivity, Relativism and Truth" *Philosophical Papers*. Vol.1 (Cambridge: University Press, 1991), p. 144.
- 21 W. V. O. Quine. *Quiddities: Intermittently Philosophical Dictionary*, (Cambridge: The Belknap Press, 1989), p. 133.

- 22 Safro Kwame, "Quasi - Materialism: A Contemporary African Philosophy of Mind" A Companion to African Philosophy (ed) Kwasi Wiredu, (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2004), pp. 345-346.
- 23 Ikechukwu Anthony Kanu, "The Dimensions of African Cosmology" *Filosofia Theoretica: Journal of African Philosophy, Culture and Religion*, Vol.2 No.2, (2013), pp. 550-551
- 24 *Ibid*; pp.186-186
- 25 Udo Etuk, *The New Humanism*, (Uyo: Jamae Press, 2012), p. 2
- 26 G. O. Ozumba, *A Concise Introduction to Epistemology*, (Calabar: Ebenezer Computer Service, 2011), p.101