

## GLOBALISATION IN AFRICA: A CRITICAL REFLECTION ON KANU'S CONCEPT OF GLOBALIZATION AS A PROCESS

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### **Abstract**

*The word 'globalisation' seems to be a misnomer in view of what it designates. This is because it includes in its extension the idea of the ontological movement of the world towards cultural, political, religious and economic unity. But that is not what happens in reality. The converse is really the case; the world is moving in the opposite direction. There is irrefragable evidence that shows this disintegration of the world. It happens not ontologically but consciously through the instrumentality of human actors. The political objectives of politicians, countries and regional political groups are unimpeachable epiphanies of this movement towards greater disintegration. They set these political objectives for themselves because they find disintegration more rewarding than integration. But the African countries are being sold the idea that integration, that is, that globalisation is more beneficial than disintegration; that they have everything to gain if they join the globalising ship. This idea is being propagated by the beneficiaries of globalisation. This paper maintains that the word 'globalisation' will be extirpated and indeed will become a shibboleth if African countries and in fact all the countries of the world become developed economies.*

**Keywords:** Globalisation, Development, Superiority, Humanity.

### **Introduction**

Globalisation is now a hobbyhorse among great thinkers. It is a topic that many like to discuss. And this has given rise to profound discussions and reflections on the subject. In general, the word 'globalisation' encapsulates the idea of the ideal of the world as a village. It points to a time of global unification of cultures, politics, economics, religion, information, etc. While many thinkers endorse this idea of globalisation on account of what, in their considered opinion, is its

positive effects, many others are averse to it, for they believe that its negative consequences outweigh whatever may be its positive effects.

Nevertheless, another aspect of interest, in the discussion of globalisation, is on the question of whether it is a policy that is carefully formulated in Europe and America, and is now being exported to the rest of the world, or whether it is a historical process, indeed an ontological process, that is absolutely bound to happen. Anthony Kanu, in his paper, *Globalisation, Globalism and African Philosophy*, subscribes to the view that it is a process. As an erudite academic, he presents his argument in a clear, precise, distinct and scholarly manner. He urges African countries to embrace globalisation, “to globalise and be globalised.”

This paper will differ from Kanu’s position in his paper, namely, that globalisation is a process, that Africa “should globalise and be globalised”, and that globalisation is a mode of being. It will make a critical reflection on these points. This will be followed by a practical response to the idea of globalisation. On the basis of this, the paper will maintain that the term ‘globalisation’ is a misnomer, it will peter out, it will become a shibboleth whenever the countries of the world, particularly African countries, are all developed.

### **Globalisation As a Planned policy**

Globalisation is a man-formulated policy. It is not an ontological reality. It is not even something that happens fortuitously. Its existence is factitious. It is being propagated through the shenanigans of its originators. Africans particularly ought to be wary of its chameleon-nature. It is a trojan horse.

The description of globalisation as trojan horse is meant to bring out, in no uncertain terms, its insidious nature. The significance of the phrase ‘trojan horse’ is coded in a legend found in *The Aeneid*. In this legend, the Greeks were said to have been engaged in a protracted war with the city of Troy.<sup>i</sup> The Greeks, however, eventually defeated the Trojans through a ploy. What they did to secure victory was that they constructed a wooden horse of extraordinary size. Their gallant and distinguished soldiers, well-armed, were asked to enter inside the wooden horse. The Greek soldiers retreated, and sailed to another direction while leaving the carved horse behind. Having found the abandoned wooden horse, and having been convinced by a captured Greek ‘fugitive’ that this was the mysterious power that made the Greeks unconquerable in wars, the Trojans became excited. They fell victim to the Greek stratagem. They took the wooden horse and dragged it into their city gate and left. In the middle of the night, the

soldiers hidden in the horse, alighted from it. They opened the city gate, and went and called up their fellow Greek soldiers. They all entered the city. This was how the Trojans were overwhelmed and defeated.

Europe and America began their decimation of Africa through the trans-Atlantic slave trade. This lucrative business burgeoned and snowballed into outright colonisation. Africa was oppressed and exploited. It was down but not completely destroyed. Europe and America only retreated at independence. They retreated only to re-strategize. They have now constructed a trojan horse under the guise of globalisation as a smokescreen to completely subjugate the Africans. We maintain that globalisation cannot be defended as a process. It is a carefully planned policy for permanent and complete subjugation. Having said this, let us get to the nitty-gritty of the reflection in support of globalisation as a man-created policy.

We begin the reflection by noting that man occupies the most important position in the hierarchy of beings. This is so because he is the one that gives meaning to the world. The world is meaningless without him.<sup>ii</sup> He is the agent of historical change. This ineluctable fact can be deduced from Aristotle's philosophy. According to him, changes and events are explicable in terms of the four causes: material, efficient, formal and final causes.<sup>iii</sup> The objective, which is the final cause of any change or event, is attainable through a well-co-ordinated use of the material cause by the agent. If the objective is human objective, it is realised through the agency of the human intellect, for man is a rational animal. Thus, any human event or even the formulation of a new concept, is a product of voluntary choice. Hence, globalisation is a planned policy, a product of human ambition and imagination. Anthony Kanu, in his attempt to substantiate his claim that globalisation is a process rather than a carefully planned policy, mentions Pierre Tielhard de Chardin, Hegel and Karl Marx, who, in their respective philosophies, affirm the ontological movement of history towards unity.<sup>iv</sup> But it is good to note that neither the 'Omega point' of Pierre Tielhard de Chardin nor Hegel's 'Absolute Spirit' nor Karl Marx development of reality is attainable without man.

Jean Paul Sartre's distinction between *l'être-en-soi* (being-in-itself) and *l'être-pour-soi* (being-for-itself) highlights the indisputable role of man in historical change. *L'être-en-soi* refers to external objects, whether animate or inanimate. They include, for example, goat, sheep, reptiles, fish, rock, sand, etc. These have their respective definite natures but are bereft of consciousness. *L'être-pour-soi*, on the

other hand, refers to a being which does not just possess consciousness, but possesses consciousness of itself. Man is that self-conscious being. With consciousness, man can think about a project in the future and work towards its actual realisation. Unlike *l'être-en-soi* which has definite nature or essence, man, according to Sartre, has no definite nature. He is the one that gives himself the essence. In doing this, he is involved in the historical transformation of the world. So, the historical changes and events in the world are not arbitrary; they are not in any ontological process. They are things imagined and put together by man. If this fact is accepted, it follows that globalisation can never be successfully defended as a process.

There are some assumptions that underlie the tenet that globalisation is a process. One of such is that man is not free. This is an assumption that is behind such claims as "Africa has no option of not involving herself in the process of globalisation, Africa must globalize and be globalized."<sup>v</sup> This means Africa must globalise, willy-nilly. It must necessarily work towards the cultural, socio-political, economic unification of the world. It is not only Africa that ought to globalise and be globalised. Individuals, groups, countries, etc, must inexorably join the globalising ship. From historical experience, however, this claim is a farce. Many groups and countries have rather worked in the opposite direction. Instead of greater integration, many countries composed of ethnic nationalities have disintegrated. This happened on the premiss that disintegration is more beneficial than integration. In 1947, Pakistan separated from India; in 1945, Korea gained independence from Japan; in 1991, the Soviet Union broke up into the following states: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Estonia, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Latvia. Out of these countries, the 2020 *World Economic and Prospects* report shows Estonia and Latvia as developed countries, while Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan are economies in transition.<sup>vi</sup> The six republics that made up Yugoslavia (Serbia, Croatia, Slovenia, Montenegro, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Macedonia) went their separate ways and became different countries. While Croatia and Slovenia are now developed countries, the rest are economies in transition.<sup>vii</sup> If globalisation is an ontological process, these disintegrations and the economic progress being made would not have taken place.

A similar phenomenon played out many centuries ago, at the time of Alexander the Great, the king of Macedon. During his reign, he embarked on military expeditions. He conquered many nations and annexed them to his kingdom. He introduced a policy that resembles the ideals of globalisation. He tried, by the use

of force, to unify all the cultures of all the nations within the sphere of his dominion. These subdued nations resented his cultural unification project. However, they could not muster enough resilience to flex their muscles to go against this policy. At the death of Alexander, his empire composed of many nations disintegrated. Besides, the ill feelings against Macedonia spilled over to Aristotle, the teacher and mentor of Alexander. This was because he was believed, on account of his association with Alexander, to be privy and instrumental, to the idea of cultural unification. Aristotle took to his heels, claiming that he would not like Athens to sin against Philosophy twice.<sup>viii</sup> This historical event, is yet another irrefragable evidence that globalisation is not an ontological process. If it were, the conquered nations under Alexander would have continued to be integrated culturally after his demise; they would never have disintegrated. The policy of cultural unification which Alexander embarked upon was not forced on him by any extraneous ontological necessity. Perhaps, it could have been suggested to him by Aristotle. But then he acted freely without compulsion.

Even the coming together of countries to form regional groups does not lend credence to the idea of globalisation as a process. There are a number of regional bodies such as the European Union (EU), North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO), North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), African Union (AU), Economic Community of West Africa States, (ECOWAS), etc. The aims and objectives of these bodies are not for the greater unification of the world. They are formed to protect the interests of their respective regional member countries. They serve as bulwark to shield their members from unfavourable economic and political climate. This protectionism should never arise if globalisation is a process moving ontologically towards greater unity where everything will be in perfect order.

Besides this point, it should be noted that even in these regional bodies, there are cries about unfair treatment by some member countries. It is in this context that the former American President, Donald Trump, pulled America away from NAFTA. His action is in consonance with his campaign mantra “America First”. How can the world be moving towards greater unification with this mantra? It is equally on the basis of the same policy conviction that he withdrew America in 2017 from participation in the climate control arrangement agreed upon by the countries of the world in 2015. Again, America is not a signatory to the International Criminal Court (ICC) which was formed in 2003. How can one be

talking of the benefits of globalisation when a Superpower like US is distancing itself from these actions that take place at regional and world levels?

As a Member of European Union, UK refused to be fully integrated into the Union; it refused to join the other member countries of the Union to use the Euro as their common currency. And in 31<sup>st</sup> January, 2020, it unabashedly exited the Union. It felt there was more economic benefits to stay outside the Union than to be inside it. This is a palpable evidence that the new-fangled idea of globalisation is not a movement towards global unity.

The second assumption in the conception of globalisation as a process is that it is irresistible. This is not totally correct. Oguejiofor writes on the resilience of the Igbo people. He maintains that even though the Igbo were enfeebled as a people as a result of the trans-Atlantic slave trade and colonization, as well as their experience of the corroding influence of globalisation, they still retain certain features of their identity. Their communal spirit is still strong enough to counter the negative effects of globalisation. Oguejiofor says that at present, “The emergence of town unions is indicative of the ethos among the Igbo to take their future in their own hands.”<sup>ix</sup> In religion, there is also the resurgence of the belief in the traditional gods. This is expressed in the search for miracles and healings in the healing centres. So, globalisation is not an ontological process that cannot be resisted.

The third assumption that is beneath the idea of globalisation as a process is the belief that the more a thing evolves, the better it becomes. The more the world is globalised, the better it becomes. But this is a sham. It is highly untenable. What are the premises that lead to the conclusion that if globalisation continues in the future, the world be a better place? In the context of his virulent criticism of evolutionistic ethics, G.E. Moore says “that circumstances will always be favourable to further development, that Nature will always work on the side of Evolution, we have no reason whatsoever to believe.”<sup>x</sup>

Globalisation is not an ontological process. It is a lofty idea that was wittingly or unwittingly conceived and promoted by the European thinkers. Their theories on race, their affirmation of the West as the superior race, was the remote cause of the idea of globalisation. Their denigrating comments on Africa was disgusting and totally unacceptable. David Hume affirms without any doubt in his mind that the white Europeans were superior to the Africans and to other species of human beings. And he believes that these inferior races need the West to improve the quality of their life. He supports his claim by his remark that the

Africans who were found in their numbers at the time “tho’ low people, without education, will start up amongst us, and distinguish themselves in every profession.”<sup>xi</sup> This means that the Africans are only in potency. They need the Europeans who are already in actuality to bring them to actuality. This is a demeaning remark from someone who should have known better.

Kant shares David Hume’s conviction of the superiority of the Whites. In his reflection on race, as Eze notes, Kant divides humankind into “White (Europeans), yellow (Asians), black (Africans), and red (American Indians).”<sup>xii</sup> He affirms the superiority of the Europeans based on the colour of their skin. He bolsters this claim, *inter alia*, with the fact that at birth every child is born white. But then within weeks after birth, every child, apart from the European child, begins to change its white colour to the colour of the race to which it belongs. This claim on the superiority of Europeans based on complexion of skin makes them the embodiment of humanity. The other races are human to the extent to which they strive to imbibe the values of the Whites. Their humanity would be upgraded if, for example, they adopt the globalisation agenda being exported to them by the West. This is an unimpeachable example of how the European thinkers gave remotely theoretical support that generated the idea of globalisation.

Hegel’s stand on Africa leads to a conclusion akin to that of Hume and Kant. He believes that Africa is at the bottom rung of history. According to him, Africa is “Unhistorical, Undeveloped Spirit, still involved in the conditions of mere nature.”<sup>xiii</sup> In spite of the fact that he condemns slavery, he maintains, nevertheless, that it was good for the Africans to be lifted from their land and transported to America, because remaining back in Africa was worse, for remaining there, they would not even recognise or be aware of their freedom. By this comment, it is unassailably clear that he regards Africa as a continent to be assisted. And one can, by this conclusion assume, that globalisation, which is a Western policy, is good for the Africans. It is not. It is the wiles, the guile and the snare of the Westerners for the exploitation of Africa.

### **Should Africans Join the Globalisation Wagon?**

It is necessary at this juncture to examine globalisation in the context of culture. The aim is to show culture as something that has the source of its growth within itself. And its natural growth is dictated by its needs. But globalisation is extraneous to culture; it intends to force itself into culture in order to stifle or stunt its growth. Should Africa then welcome the idea of globalisation? We begin

the response to this question by making preliminary remarks on the essence of culture, that is, what culture is all about.

We begin the remarks by noting that human beings are found in every nook and cranny of the globe. The weather condition is not the same everywhere. For some people, their weather condition is clement, for others it is inclement, and yet for others, it is mild. The soil texture is also not the same. Some have arable land, while for others, theirs is infertile. The type of plants and animals found in different locations of the world is not same. These environmental conditions are in general not conducive to human habitation. Man in his natural and original state is not naturally constituted to deal with his hostile environment. He needs basic necessities such as clothing, shelter, food etc. Clothing is necessary to protect him from inclement weather; shelter for rest and protection from danger and sudden attack by fellow humans and animals; food for sustenance. Thomas Aquinas notes that man, of all creatures, is the least equipped to deal with his basic needs.<sup>xiv</sup>

Because of the hostile nature of the human environment, man everywhere began a search for a better living condition. Initially he went about plucking fruits and hunting for animals. He graduated from this and moved to planting of fruits, farming and animal husbandry. He moved from working with stone to making use of iron. Everywhere efforts were being made to dominate nature in order to solve the problem of basic necessities of life. These efforts extended to how they organised themselves socially and politically. The method which different sections of the globe evolved in their search for a better living condition is what is known as culture, a way of life. This is why culture includes politics, customs, traditions, religion, etc. These aspects of culture are not the same everywhere. This is because each region formulated them from its prevailing circumstances.

One of the characteristics of culture is that it is dynamic. It is so because human beings are continuously in search of better means of improving their conditions. This explains why certain crops, plants and animals that were originally found in one region are at present domiciled in other regions. In Sub-Saharan Africa, for example, there are now herbivorous animals such as horse, cow, sheep, goat, pig, that were not originally found in that region.<sup>xv</sup> There has been exchange of goods and services going on in the world, all aimed at improving the human condition. Even politics or the art of governance discovered by one country was adopted by others without being cowed to do so.

Adopting other's way of life - farming, husbandry, politics, economic and social life, etc - is done not out of coercion. It is freely adopted. It is carried out on the basis of freedom and equality. The end result is mutual enrichment. No cultural group engages in cultural exchange with the intention to allow its own culture to go into extinction. It selects only what is necessary from other cultures. And so, every culture grows while remaining the same. It undergoes accidental and not substantial change. This is what we noted earlier when it was said that culture has the source of its growth internal to it.

Now, does globalisation aim at mutual enrichment of cultures? No. Kanu makes a distinction between globalisation and globalism. For him, globalism designates, what the critics of globalisation regard as the negative effects of globalisation. According to him "Globalisation as a concept and ideology has a positive nature, dynamic and logic. However, when abused becomes globalism."<sup>xvi</sup> I must make haste to assert, that in African context, there is no difference between globalisation and globalism; the meaning of the two words coincide. This means that it has enervating and debilitating negative effects on the continent. It is extraneous to African culture and has all the potentials to pulverise it. Africa should therefore not join the globalisation wagon. We can enumerate some reasons to bolster this claim.

The first point is the existence of the pervading poverty in Africa. One of the objectives of globalisation is to increase trade and investment, to create jobs and wealth, and indeed reduce poverty to the barest minimum. None of these has happened. The benefits resulting from the African and Western economic relations appear clearly to be lopsided. Africa is blessed with huge mineral and material resources. And there is nothing practically beneficial in terms of development to show for it. The resources are simply being purloined. It is said that the continent "harbours over 40 percent of the world's potential hydroelectric power supply; the bulk of the world's diamonds and chromium; 30 percent of uranium in the non-communist world; 50 percent of the world's gold; 90 percent of its cobalt; 50 percent of its phosphates; 40 percent of its platinum; 7.5 percent of its coal; 8 percent of its known petroleum reserves; 12 percent of its natural gas; 3 percent of iron ore; 64 percent of the world manganese, 13 percent of its copper, vast bauxite, nickel and lead resources and millions upon millions of acres of untilled farmlands."<sup>xvii</sup> And yet Africa's poverty is on the downward trend; it continues to worsen unabated by the day. Its debt profile continues to increase. The number of heavily indebted countries in the world as at December 2018 is 39.<sup>xviii</sup> Out of this number, 36 countries are from Africa. Countries of the

world are classed into developed countries, economies in transition and developing countries. No country in Africa is among the developed countries, and economies in transition. All of them are in the category of developing countries.

The reason for this is that the West has set up structures to make Africa perpetually poor. It fixes the prices on which the African minerals and raw materials are sold. It buys them, refines or processes them and brings them back to Africa and sells them at prices determined by it. Africa seems totally emasculated to raise any objection in the face of this structural injustice. There has never been a trade war between the two continents, something akin to the recent trade war between US and China during President Trump's administration. African goods are hardly found in European supermarkets while the African markets and supermarkets are flooded with European goods.

The second reason why African should reject globalisation is that it is not done within the ambit of freedom and equality of persons. Where trade and investment are negotiated without these principles, there is bound to be injustice and unfairness. But this happens in Africa. This explains why it is losing out financially while its trading partners are coasting home with humongous amount of dollars. An example of where there is absence of freedom and equality is in respect of lending and borrowing. Lending of money usually attracts interest. The rate of interest varies from one lending institution to another. Countries borrow money to finance their projects in order to create jobs and improve their economic wellbeing. In Africa, this objective is hardly attained. The reason is because the lending institutions like the IMF and the World Bank, apart from the interest rate, attach conditionalities. The latter scuttle the economic growth of the borrower-countries while increasing the economic opportunities of the Western multinational companies and corporations. Of course, it is said that these institutions and others like them – United Nations and World Trade Organisation, were put in place by the world superpowers to dominate, strangle and hold Africa under bondage under the garb of globalisation.<sup>xix</sup> They are shylocks. What is the reason for asking the borrower-country, for instance, to devalue her currency as a condition for getting a loan? The reason that is given, *ad nauseam*, is that it will attract more investors into the country. But why are such countries as US, France, Germany, Japan etc not being asked to devalue their currencies when they want to borrow in order to attract investors? Conditionalities ought to be advisory and not a condition for granting loan.

Now since the African countries cannot access the loan they apply for, and for which they have accepted to pay the required interest rate, unless they fulfil additional condition that does damage to their economy, it means that the trade negotiation is not being conducted under the principles of freedom and equality.

The third reason that makes the rejection of globalisation an imperative is its inappropriate analogy. This is being made on account of the belief by the progenitors and promoters of globalisation that it can make the world a global village. The world is made up of five continents. Each has its defining features. There are also cultural diversities existing among the ethnic nationalities in each continent. Even the idea of a village is not the same everywhere. What then does global village mean? Which type of village is being projected? In Igbo village, for example, there is fraternal love and solidarity. The villagers assist the less privileged members among them *ex gratia*. Fallen mud or thatched houses are rebuilt by the community. Those unable to marry due to financial problems are enabled to do so by their kindreds. In a village, one can move from place to place without hindrance or let. Will there be non-restriction of movement in a globalised village; will the borders be open so that people can travel to other countries without visa? The restriction of migrants from entering Europe and America is sufficient evidence that this will never happen. In the village, people buy and sell their products without addition of tax. Is this possible when the world becomes globalised? Certainly not. How then does the world become a village when the remarkable features of a village are not likely to be found in it? Ferd-Harris Odimegwu says that “even assuming the ‘local village’ were perfect, it would still be naïve to expect the ‘global village’ to replicate this micro-village in all its dimensions, for obviously the two are different realities.”<sup>xx</sup> It is therefore inappropriate to claim that the aim of globalisation is to make the world a global village. The whole idea is a hoax.

### **Is Globalisation a mode of being?**

The examination of this question has become necessary because of the claims of the ardent supporters of globalisation. They muster arguments at all fronts aimed at persuading people to adopt the idea. In his emphasis on globalisation, Kanu says “Globalisation is a modality of being and thus cannot be boycotted. No one can boycott his or herself”<sup>xxi</sup> This means that man ought to globalise, it is part of his nature to globalise, to unify things, to move towards greater unity. This is a strong claim or rather a conclusion. What are the reasons Kanu used to

support it? Are the reasons justifiable? We need to reflect on the reasons to see whether they provide any support whatsoever to the conclusion. The first reason given is that man is a social being. Kanu relies on the authority of Omoregbe who maintains that man is a social being; that he is social because he tries to associate with others. Admittedly, man is a social being; he likes to be in relationship. He feels dejected and sad when he is denied human association. This is perhaps why, in order to make a law breaker feel the weight of his offence or infraction, he is ostracised, excommunicated, banished or thrown into prison. But this fact should not be taken too far. There are some people who leave human society on their own and go to live in the desert. These are the hermits. They are happy doing so. These are also human beings who are supposed to be social.

Nevertheless, it is good to understand the idea that man is social in its proper perspective. Aristotle shares in the conviction that man is by nature a socio-political being. He underscores this point when he goes on to say that anyone who cannot live in society is either a beast or a god. This view is clearly supported and bolstered by an empirical fact. This fact is that man is the weakest of all the creatures. At birth, he cannot survive without the assistance of other human beings – parents, relations, etc. This is part of the reason why he is said to be social. He receives social assistance unconsciously. As he grows up, however, he makes the conscious and voluntary choice over whom to associate with. He does not make arbitrary choice. He does not associate perfunctorily nor with anyone from whom he stands to lose.

The way man is social is different from the way other creatures, for example, ants, are said to be social. Ants are social by nature. They do not live isolated lives. They cluster together and move like a battalion. The same is true with bees. Ants and bees do not have the natural choice to behave otherwise. But man has the natural ability to choose or determine the way he wants to live his life. He is not determined by nature to relate with people just as ants and bees relate with their respective kinds. This is, perhaps, the reason why Thomas Hobbes disagrees with Aristotle by maintaining that man is a social being by convention.<sup>xxii</sup> This means that he can agree or disagree with somebody, choose or not choose something. In effect, he can choose or not choose to globalise. Now if man can make this hypothetical choice, it follows that globalisation is not a mode of being. If it were so, he would always choose it even when he stands to lose. The actions of the former American President, Donald Trump, such as withdrawing America from NAFTA as well as his political mantra “America

First”, are pieces of indisputable evidence that globalisation is not a mode of being as being canvassed.

Another reason which Kanu advances in his affirmation of globalisation as a mode of being is from the standpoint of the notion of belongingness. The idea of belongingness is almost coterminous with the idea of man as a social being. The major difference is that the idea of belongingness is ontologically and chronologically prior to the idea of man as a social being. One has to belong before becoming social. This conclusion is deduced from Kanu’s understanding of belongingness. For him, belongingness is identical with being, because “To be is to belong and to belong is to be.”<sup>xxiii</sup> So, one has first of all to be, he must belong, before he becomes social. Having made this distinction, we examine whether equating belongingness with being can lead to the conclusion that globalisation is a mode of being.

The assertion “To be is to belong and to belong is to be” leads to a question, “What happens if one does not belong?” Does it mean that he vanishes out of existence? George Berkeley had made similar claim when he said *esse est percipi* (to be is to be perceived). He was confronted with the question of what would happen when something is not perceived; whether the thing in question would cease to exist or not? His answer is that when a thing is not perceived by a human mind, it is perceived by the divine mind. So, the thing does not cease to exist. Is there a similar response to the assertion on belongingness and being? The answer is, either one belongs and be, or does not belong and not be. This response is, however, not satisfactory. This is because it makes belongingness the essence of man. But it is not. There is something that comes before belongingness. It is more fundamental than belongingness. This is the art of thinking.

Descartes affirms the importance of thinking in his famous “*Cogito ergo sum*”, I think therefore I am. Thinking is a continuous human activity. Thinking may be logical or illogical, but it is thinking all the same. If man ceases to think, he dies. Man thinks about so many things. He may think to belong or not to belong, to associate with people or not to do so. If man can think in either way, it means that belongingness is not so fundamental as to be the *raison d’être* in the affirmation of globalisation as a mode of being.

Besides this point, Kanu says that belongingness moves in *Pari passu* with activity. If one belongs, one inevitably contributes one’s quota to the overall wellbeing of the group; each according to his ability. The Igbo proverb, *Egbe bere*

*Ugo bere*, is believed to capture this idea. *Ugo* is an eagle. It is the king of the birds. It is the strongest of all the birds, for it soars to highest level in the sky. It is also the most beautiful bird. On the other hand, *Egbe* is a kite. It is ugly and weaker than *Ugo*. Applying the proverb in the context of the society, it means that the strong, the weak, the beautiful and ugly ought to live and work together and contribute according to their respective capacities to the progress of the group. According to Kanu, “when *Egbe* perches and *Ugo* perches, they come face to face with each other...They have common projects, needs and desires. Together they struggle to overcome their difficulties and share their joy. This is the environment that globalisation strives to achieve.”<sup>xxiv</sup> But this is not what happens in reality. From what has been argued earlier in this paper, this ideal of globalisation is will-o’-the wisp; it is an illusion of an extreme proportion. Some sections of the globe are exercising their political hegemony and their economic power without restraint, and with carefree abandon; they lord it over others and cause them economic haemorrhage.

### **Practical Response to Globalisation**

Countries in Africa consist of ethnic nationalities. Their coming together as countries was not out of their own choice. They were brought together forcefully and through well-co-ordinated contrivance by the colonial masters for their administrative convenience and economic exploitation. The cultural affinity of the ethnic nationalities was not considered as a relevant factor while fusing them together. This explains why many of the countries that are composed of ethnic nationalities are strange bed fellows in terms of ideology, structure of authority, etc. While some ethnic nationalities maintain oligarchic form of government, others practise democracy or aristocracy. For this reason, there has been perennial problem of integration in many African countries. This singular fact has negative multiplier effects on the choice of their leaders, trade and industry, and on all the facets of life; it has cumulative adverse effects on development. The reason for this negative ripple effect is because each composing ethnic nationality strives, by hook or crook, to have one of its own at the helm of affairs. The question of competence is not factored in this inordinate ethnic ambition. Leaders of various descriptions are chosen at the national level based on ethnic consideration. Contracts and jobs are offered on the ground of the same sentiment.

This integration problem destabilises the African countries; it weakens them and makes them vulnerable to the foreign policies that are obviously inimical to their

development. They borrow money with all the stringent measures attached, but the money goes down the drain without any realistic benefits to show for it. The money is mismanaged due to ethnic loyalty, favouritism, tribalism, incompetence, etc. They apply yet for another loan, even though they are still servicing the previous one in which the objective for earlier borrowing was not met. This culture of borrowing money without economic benefits leads tellingly to an unacceptable accumulation of debts for which a large chunk of GDP is used to service. This obviously hamstrings development.

To minimize the pernicious impact of ethnicity to development in Africa, we note the following. First, it is not absolutely necessary to go the way of USSR and Yugoslavia, whose composing ethnic nationalities disintegrated and became separate countries. Second, it is not also necessary to introduce a policy like that of Switzerland to manage Africa's ethnic problem. Switzerland has multi-president arrangement to defuse ethnic rivalries. Third, it is not proper to attempt to neutralize ethnic feeling and ascription. It will be an effort in futility, for it is bound to fail. What the Africans need to do to withstand the pervading and corrosive influence of the Western imperialism that is being orchestrated as globalisation is to practise true Federalism; where the federating units are allowed to develop on their own within the federation; where they generate their own fund and resources to develop their own areas.

Africans are highly talented. Their talents are distributed in different areas of human endeavour. They are capable of innovative ideas. But ethnic rivalries and chauvinism do not allow such ideas to materialise. Let us take, for example, what happened during the Nigeria-Biafra war. At that time, the Igbo manufactured *Ogbunigwe*, a medium-range missile; they refined crude oil to produce fuel. The talent of the innovators could not be explored after the war, probably because of ethnic rivalries. Nigeria continues to purchase arms from the West to combat insecurity, and engages the Western multinational companies to work in the oil sector, in place of harnessing the talents of indigenous scientists. But if Nigeria is practising a federalism, the federating unit in which the scientists belong will certainly encourage them financially in order to create wealth for the unit, and jobs for its teeming population.

Indeed, if African countries practise true federalism, many of the multinational companies will fold up and go back to their countries. Why should there be still foreign road construction companies in the continent? In US, France, Germany, Britain, their roads are not constructed or maintained by foreign companies. In

the health, manufacturing, industry, energy, power sectors, Africans have no need of multinationals. But the problem of ethnicity would not allow the African technocrats and people with competence to manage these sectors.

The donor agencies and the lending institutions like the World Bank and IMF should make the introduction of true federalism as a *conditio sine qua non* for getting any donation or loan from them. This is preferable to the conditionality of currency devaluation or removal of government subsidies on critical items that are often being proposed to the Africans. But it is not likely these institutions will take that risk. This is because they stand to lose if the African countries become truly democratised by the introduction of true federalism. But if they love Africa, they should do so. It is very interesting to know that the Superpowers behind the donor and lending agencies are all practising true federalism. They know the benefits accruing from it. They should use their powerful influence to ensure that it is introduced in Africa. Economic sanctions can be used as a carrot and stick approach to facilitate the process. But it is not likely they will take that line of action because of what they stand to lose. If they do, it will serve as a major step in arresting Western imperialism which is being projected as globalisation.

### **Conclusion**

Africa should be cautious about all the propaganda and grandstanding on globalisation. It is Western Capitalist idea cleverly conceived as a tool for the continuous advancement of imperialism. It is not an ontological process that must happen inevitably. And there is no need to believe that there is a sword of Damocles hanging on the recalcitrant countries who fail to acquiesce to this bogus and sinister agenda of the West on globalisation. The spread of the idea of globalisation should no longer be allowed to go untrammelled. It ought to be halted. Globalisation is a Pandora's box which no African country should open.

There is no doubt that African countries need to develop and join the league of developed countries. They need to be assisted to do so. But it should not be done in the manner in which it is currently being foisted on the African countries by the donor agencies and lending institutions. This rather exacerbates the already existing poverty situation. There is a saying "If you give someone a fish, you feed him for one day. But if you teach him how to fish, you will be feeding him for the rest of his life." African countries do not need financial assistance as much as they need to be taught the benefits of true federalism. When federal structures are put in place, they will facilitate rapid development. When the African countries and other countries of the world are all developed, that will mark the

end of imperialism, domination and exploitation of one country against another in the habiliment of globalisation.

## Endnotes

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- <sup>i</sup> Virgil, *The Aeneid*, Trans. by Allen Mandelbaum, New York: Bantam Dell, 2004, pp.28-54
- <sup>ii</sup> Joseph Omoregbe, *Knowing Philosophy*, Lagos: Joja Educational Research and Publishers Ltd, 2018, p.196.
- <sup>iii</sup> Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, trans. by Hugh Trennick, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, pp.211-215.
- <sup>iv</sup> Anthony Ikechukwu Kanu, "Globalisation, Globalism and African Philosophy" in *African Philosophy: A Pragmatic Approach to African Problems*, ed. by C. Umezina, Saarbrücken: Lambert Academic Publishing, 2014, pp.158-159.
- <sup>v</sup> Anthony Ikechukwu Kanu, p.158
- <sup>vi</sup> *World Economic Situation and Prospects*, United Nations, New York 2020, p.165.
- <sup>vii</sup> *Ibid.*, p.165.
- <sup>viii</sup> S.E. Stumpf, *History of Philosophy*, McGraw-Hill, 1975, p.87.
- <sup>ix</sup> J. Obi Oguejiofor, "Globalisation and the Resilience of Traditional Paradigms: The Case of the Igbo of Nigeria" in *The Humanities and Globalisation in the Third Millennium*, ed. By A.B.C. Chiegboka, T.C. Utoh-Ezeajugh and G.I. Udechukwu, Nimo: Rex Charles and Patrick Ltd, 2010, p.24.
- <sup>x</sup> G.E. Moore, *Principia Ethica*, Cambridge: University Press, 1922, p.57.
- <sup>xi</sup> David Hume, *Essays: Moral, Political and Literary*, vol.1, London, 1882, p.252.
- <sup>xii</sup> Emmanuel Chukwudi Eze, "The Color of Reason: The Idea of 'Race' in Kant's Anthropology" in *Postcolonial African Philosophy: A Critical Reader*, ed. by E.C. Eze, Cambridge: Blackwell Publishers, 1997, p.115
- <sup>xiii</sup> G.W. Hegel, *Philosophy of History*, New York: Dover Publications, 2004, p.99.
- <sup>xiv</sup> Thomas Aquinas, *De Regno (On Kingship)* Trans. by Gerald B. Phelan, Veritatis Splendor Publications, 2012, p.6.
- <sup>xv</sup> J. Oguejiofor, "Is African Worldview Responsible for the African Predicament?" in *Uche* (Journal of the Department of Philosophy, University of Nigeria, Nsukka, vol.15, 2009, p.8.
- <sup>xvi</sup> Anthony Ikechukwu Kanu p.162.
- <sup>xvii</sup> E. O. Ogbunweze, "The Scandal of African Poverty: Exploring the Factors sustaining the African Predicament" in *The Scramble for Africa: The Scramble continues*, ed. by T.I. Okere and C.A. Njoku, Owerri: Assumpta Press, 2005, p.154.
- <sup>xviii</sup> *World Economic Situation and Prospects*, United Nations, New York 2020, p.169.
- <sup>xix</sup> N. Ojiakor and N. J. Obiakor, "The Impact of Globalisation on African Economic Development" in *The Humanities and Globalisation in the Third Millennium*, ed. by A.B.C, Chiegboka, T.C: Utoh-Ezeajugh and G.I. Udechukwu, Nimo: Rex Charles and Partrick Ltd, 2010, p.147.
- <sup>xx</sup> Ferd-Harris Odimegwu, *Globalisation and African Identity*, in *Philosophy and Praxis in Africa*, ed. by M.F. Asiegbu and J.A. Agbakoba, 2004, p.320.
- <sup>xxi</sup> Anthony Ikechukwu Kanu, p.159.

<sup>xxii</sup> Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan*, London: Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1965, p.130.

<sup>xxiii</sup> Anthony Ikechukwu Kanu, p.160.

<sup>xxiv</sup> Anthony Ikechukwu Kanu, p.160.

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