

## PHILOSOPHICAL KNOWLEDGE FOR HUMAN AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT<sup>1</sup>

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DOI: 10.13140/RG.2.2.15971.99366

### **Abstract**

*Philosophical knowledge is based on critical and reflective thought about all aspects of human experience. It is all about thinking and all rational persons think. Thus, philosophical knowledge can be attained by all persons, professionally or unprofessionally in different degrees. Few persons who are recognized as philosophers, sages, and gurus in all cultures of the world practice philosophy professionally and are believed to have philosophical knowledge. However, the professional practice of philosophy today, especially the adoption of the Western scientific method and the verification principle by some contemporary philosophers, does not adequately capture the all-encompassing nature of philosophical knowledge (that includes the physical, the metaphysical, the ethical and aesthetically, etc.); it also does not adequately cater for the thought provoking nature of philosophy that produces the knowledge that prevents it from being complacent in the face of conflicting values in our society today. The critical and reflective nature of philosophical knowledge makes it provocative as demonstrated by Socrates. The complacent way philosophy is practiced today has led some persons to wonder if the knowledge produced by philosophy is still of any value to the human person and the society at large. But the historico-critical survey of philosophy carried out in this work exposes the true nature of philosophical knowledge, reveals the values of rigorous, critical, logical, and consistent thinking devoid of dogmatism that philosophical knowledge develops in the human person, and how these values (especially logic and critical thinking) in the human person bring about the development of the society at large, using the Nigerian society as an example.*

**Keywords:** Human Development, Logic and Critical Thinking, Philosophical Knowledge, Social Development, Socratic Method.

### **Introduction**

The beauty of philosophy as a discipline is that the knowledge it produces in its enthusiasts is very dynamic, interesting and thought provoking. For students to appreciate the beauty of philosophical knowledge, the teacher of philosophy need to do much in terms of clarifying what philosophy is and teach philosophy in a down to earth manner with all enthusiasm. When

properly taught, philosophy is “worth living for or even dying for, as Socrates did.”<sup>2</sup>

Defining philosophy is difficult. This is basically due to the fact that philosophy is an all-embracing discipline. Indeed, in the words of Edward Craig, philosophy is “an extremely broad term covering a very wide range of intellectual activities.”<sup>3</sup> It is interested in the nature and value of the human person in particular, and the natural and the supernatural in general. Its main branches are metaphysics, epistemology, axiology and logic. It is also a second order discipline to all other disciplines where it scrutinizes their methodologies and conclusions. This all-embracing nature of philosophy partly explains why definitions of philosophy tend to be relative to the goal the person defining it has in mind or wants to achieve. It is better, therefore, while defining philosophy not to adopt a dogmatic position. It is even safer to describe the nature of philosophy based on what those who are referred to as philosophers do while philosophizing in different places and cultures of the world, rather than defining it, so as not to be too narrow or too broad in defining it.

Also, although it is safer to describe the nature of philosophy from what philosophers do while philosophizing, it is worthy of note here that in ancient period philosophy was essentially a search for wisdom. This is true of Western philosophy, African philosophy, and Asian philosophy. In ancient Western philosophy, for example, Pythagoras coined philosophy from two Greek words: *philo* (meaning ‘love’) and *sophia* (meaning ‘wisdom’) to give us the meaning of philosophy as ‘love of wisdom’; thus, the philosopher becomes a ‘lover of wisdom’, a person that perpetually seeks knowledge that essentially contains wisdom. This idea of a philosopher as one who seeks wisdom is vivid in Socrates who strongly believed that wisdom belongs to God alone, and that humans are only reasonably wise within the limits of human nature. In other words, while the knowledge that is essentially wisdom from the human point of view is fallible (when compared to knowledge attributed to God), it calls for constant re-evaluation and growth. Hence, Socrates refused to accept the title of ‘a wise man’ conferred on him by the oracle of Delphi, except when ‘a wise man’ is understood as a man who knows the limits of his philosophical knowledge and keep seeking for more knowledge. The significance of this attitude of Socrates to our understanding

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<sup>2</sup> Richard L. Purtill, Michael H. Macdonald, and Peter J. Kreeft, *Philosophical Questions: An Introductory Anthology*, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall Inc., 1985, p. xi.

<sup>3</sup> Edward Craig, *Philosophy: A Very Short Introduction*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002, p. 5.

of the true nature of philosophical knowledge will be discussed later in this work.

However, the idea that absolute or ideal wisdom belong to God alone and that human wisdom is limited and imitates that of God continues through medieval Western philosophy. But during modern Western philosophy there was a shift from the limitations of humans to attain absolute philosophical knowledge to one of the possibility of attaining certainty in philosophical knowledge grounded on reason or the senses (experience) irrespective of differences in culture, religion, world-view or ontology. This agenda of the modernists to attain certainty of philosophical knowledge that got to its peak in the philosophy of the logical positivists and their verification principle is believed by the post-modernist to have failed. Meanwhile, the post-modernist agenda (that seems to relativize philosophical knowledge), gender sensitivity, and cultural awareness of the last century have further compounded the challenge of defining or describing philosophy as a discipline and the knowledge it produces. But for African and Asian cultures, the idea of the philosopher as a wise person (sage and guru respectively) who continuously seeks wisdom persists till date.

Today, philosophy is practiced in such a way that the knowledge it produces takes into cognizance place, culture, world-view, gender, and ideology. Hence there are “numerous philosophies from different places – Indian philosophy, Jewish philosophy, Chinese philosophy”<sup>4</sup>, American philosophy (pragmatism), British philosophy (empiricism), Continental philosophy (rationalism), German philosophy, African philosophy, and so on; and the philosophical knowledge produced is place sensitive.

As an all-embracing discipline, there is a general conception of philosophy different from the way it is professionally conceived. What is this general conception of philosophy? How is it professionally conceived? What is the value of knowledge philosophy produces in relation to the human person and the society at large? These are the questions that this paper now addresses from a historico-critical perspective. It begins with the general conception of philosophy.

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<sup>4</sup> Havi Carel and David Gamez (eds.), *What Philosophy Is: Contemporary Philosophy in Action*, London: Continuum, 2004, p. 1.

### **The general conception of philosophy**

For some persons, philosophy is practiced by a very few persons in higher institutions of learning. For some other persons it belongs to the people of a given culture from where it has spread to other cultures. And, for some other persons, philosophy is what an idle man or woman preoccupies himself or herself with by criticize what others are doing. However, based on the nature of philosophy as a rational discipline, and giving the fact that rationality is essentially thinking and every rational person thinks, then philosophy is not as restrictive as some persons think it is. Fundamentally, "thinking is the pathway to philosophy"<sup>5</sup>; everyone thinks, everyone engages in philosophy in different degrees.

Our response to the puzzles and challenges of life make us think and forms our experiences. These experiences of ours vary from different aspects of our lives - social, cultural, religious, political, axiological, and psychological. In the process of thinking we sometimes synthesize our experiences and make a meaning out of them. Also, we sometimes "take our experiences and weave them into some kind of a pattern, a whole which is more or less satisfying. This pattern, this whole, is our philosophy."<sup>6</sup>

In weaving our experiences into a satisfying pattern we align with some prevailing values and world-views. These values and world-views we align with are modified to suit us; and with them we produce philosophical knowledge with which we govern our lives and make meaning of the whole of reality. With them we form our philosophy. S. E. Frost puts it this way:

Your philosophy, then, is the meaning which the world has for you. It is your answer to the question, "Why?" Having fitted your experiences into a whole, having related them to each other, you say of the world, "This is the way things fit together. This is the world as I understand it. This is my philosophy."<sup>7</sup>

Everyone's philosophical knowledge and the philosophical knowledge of persons referred to as philosophers vary in terms of the rigour with which they are produced. While in a sense all rational persons are preoccupied with the business of producing philosophical knowledge, not all persons preoccupy themselves to the extent of seriously reflecting and criticizing the values and world-views by which they govern their lives and evaluate reality. Thus, the few persons in all cultures, societies, and epochs of human history who have preoccupied themselves with serious, rigorous and critical

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<sup>5</sup> S. E. Frost, *Basic Teachings of the Great Philosophers: A Survey of Their Basic Ideas*, New and Enlarged Edition, New York: A Dolphin Book Doubleday, 1962, p. 1.

<sup>6</sup> S. E. Frost, *Basic Teachings of the Great Philosophers*, p. 1.

<sup>7</sup> S. E. Frost, *Basic Teachings of the Great Philosophers*, p. 1.

assessment and evaluation of the values and world-view by which we govern our lives and evaluate the whole of reality are referred to as philosophers. In other words, philosophers are persons in all epochs, cultures and places who produce philosophical knowledge by constantly perfecting the skills of critical, rational, logical evaluation, assessment and constructive criticism of the values, beliefs, world-views or ontologies by which we govern our lives and reality in its totality. Frost articulates it thus:

Your philosophy and the philosophy of those whose names appear in books of philosophy differ only in that the latter use more experiences in weaving their patterns, those patterns which satisfy them, and are more careful and thorough in fitting their experiences into a pattern. Theirs is a more complete, more all-inclusive pattern, more logical, more consistent, more accurate.<sup>8</sup>

Such persons philosophize in the sense that they “state their views and argue for them or discourse upon them.”<sup>9</sup> A very good example of how philosophers philosophize to produce philosophical knowledge is Socrates, and he is considered as one of the greatest philosophers in Western philosophy.

### **Socrates as model of philosophizing**

In Plato's *Apology*, Socrates in his attempt to disprove the statement of the oracle of Delphi that “there was no man wiser”<sup>10</sup> than him, Socrates (especially as he does not consider himself a wise person, and conscious of the fact that some persons in his society are considered wise persons), set out to test the wisdom of men who were considered wise by other men. By doing this, he discovered that men who were considered wise by other men were not as wise as himself. In the process of checking the extent of the wisdom of these so called wise men he exposed their lack of wisdom; and for this exposure of their ignorance he was declared their enemy. In fact, Socrates discovered that “the men most in repute were all but the most foolish; and that others less esteemed were really wiser and better.”<sup>11</sup>

From Socrates we can see that philosophizing is all about crosschecking our values, beliefs and world-views in a continuously rigorous, critical and consistent way. One should not take for granted any belief without cross-examining it. And, even after one may have reached a philosophical

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<sup>8</sup> S. E. Frost, *Basic Teachings of the Great Philosophers*, p. 1.

<sup>9</sup> Edward Craig, *Philosophy: A Very Short Introduction*, p. 3.

<sup>10</sup> Plato, *Apology* (Sect. 20-21), in B. Jowett, *The Dialogue of Plato*, with an introduction by Raphael Demos, Vol. One, New York: Random House, 1937, p. 404.

<sup>11</sup> Plato, *Apology* (Sect. 22), in B. Jowett, *The Dialogue of Plato*, p. 405.

conclusion on an issue (and thus produced a philosophical knowledge), like Socrates one should not dogmatize the conclusion reached (or the philosophical knowledge produced). One should keep searching and broadening one's horizon until one dies because knowledge grows.

Also, we can learn from Socrates the fact that philosophical issues or problems are not restricted to observable facts or events alone. Philosophical issues or problems are not restricted to the domain of science (physical things) alone. Thus, the verification principle of the logical positivists taken as the only way to do philosophy and produce philosophical knowledge is too narrow a position to hold. Socrates investigation of those considered to be wise by others was all-encompassing. It was not restricted to the knowledge of physical realities alone. Philosophical issues include "The intrinsic evidence of certain principles, of the existence of moral values, of the difference between an inferiority complex and humility, of the difference between mind and brain"<sup>12</sup> and so on. To discover ideas that are beyond the observation of the senses is part of philosophy. Thus, a good philosophy, as opposed to a bad one, is all-encompassing – it is physical, metaphysical, axiological, etc., – and does not reduce philosophy to the limits of a given methodology applicable to a particular aspect or branch of philosophy.

Furthermore, to be a good philosopher and be able to produce philosophical knowledge, one needs to sustain the spirit of wonder found in children. Added to this, one needs to be stimulated by existing life puzzles, issues and problems. One needs to keep questioning things with the aim of suggesting how to make them better on the principle that there are always room for improvement for mortal persons. Also, there is the need not to be contented with conflicting and contending ideas or values. "When ways of life contend, we have the stimulus, since each needs an ideology, a set of reflections on who we are and what we are doing that justifies the favoured stance."<sup>13</sup>

If philosophers of today are not as provocative as Socrates was (given the fact that our society today is bedeviled with conflicting values and confusion of what is true, real and knowledge) then they may not be qualified to earn the name philosophers. For Carel and Gamez philosophers of today seem complacent and not doing better than their political counterparts:

One problem is that, as many right-wing commentators have lamented, for many years the prevailing spirit in philosophy has not been remotely

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<sup>12</sup> Dietrich von Hildebrand, *What is Philosophy?* Milwaukee, USA: The Bruce Publishing Company, 1960, p. 5.

<sup>13</sup> Simon Blackburn, Foreword, in Havi Carel and David Gamez (eds.), *What Philosophy Is: Contemporary Philosophy in Action*, London: Continuum, 2004, p. xvi.

confrontational. Philosophers, whether of supposedly 'analytic' or 'continental' allegiances, celebrate difference, flirt with relativism, sneer at the authority of experience, deny the autonomy of reason, doubt the concept of progress, debunk objectivity, and relegate truth to an airy nothing. In place of reason we have persuasion, and in place of knowledge we have consensus. Hence, in place of the civilized authority of reason, the age has substituted the brutal pragmatism of advantage. Its thinkers are therefore incapable of providing the set of tools that justify, even to our own satisfaction, the scientific and secular way of life we would no doubt prefer everyone to adopt.<sup>14</sup>

The quotation above from Carel and Gamez presents to us the sorry state of philosophy today and the need, in spite of the all-embracing role of philosophy, to re-emphasize the value of philosophy and the knowledge it produces in developing the human person and the society at large.

### **Philosophy and the development of the human mind**

From the model of Socrates and from what philosophers do in different places and cultures of the world, we can deduce how philosophy helps to develop the human mind. The importance of the human mind to the philosopher lies in its being the seat of thinking, and also "That how people think alters things, and that how lots of people think alters things for nearly everyone."<sup>15</sup> From the mind comes "the formulation or construction of world-views, critical thinking, and the rational, but non-scientific, quest for understanding."<sup>16</sup> The study of philosophy helps the mind develop the tools of clarifying, synthesizing, criticizing and arguing about our assumptions, puzzles of life, and the beliefs, theories, and ideologies by which we model our lives. The mind develops these tools through the process of doubting like that of Socrates (who doubted the oracle of Delphi's statement concerning him) and Descartes (who in his methodic doubt doubted everything he hitherto knew) to arrive at an opinion or justified belief which, for him, does not contain any idea or belief that can render it false. This often goes with "asking questions and forming provisional conclusions."<sup>17</sup> The emphasis here is *provisional* as opposed to *dogmatic* conclusions that ignore the fact that knowledge grows.

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<sup>14</sup> Simon Blackburn, Foreword, in Havi Carel and David Gamez (eds.), *What Philosophy Is*, pp. xvii – xviii.

<sup>15</sup> Edward Craig, *Philosophy: A Very Short Introduction*, p. 2.

<sup>16</sup> Olusegun Oladipo, *Thinking About Philosophy: A General Guide*, Ibadan: Hope Publications, 2008, p. 12.

<sup>17</sup> Edward Craig, *Philosophy: A Very Short Introduction*, p. 10.

One, out of the many reasons why philosophers should avoid a dogmatic conclusion in the philosophical knowledge produced is that philosophers begin to philosophize from a socio-cultural, ideological and a given world-view perspective. "This is because the philosopher does not operate in a vacuum. He [or she] is a product of specific socio-cultural circumstances with which he [or she] is engaged in a reciprocal relationship."<sup>18</sup> This may explain why often times the conclusions we reach in philosophy are reflections of who we are. Carel and Gazel explains this view thus:

A man and a woman set out to discover philosophy. As the years go by, they wander through the lands and ask the strangers that they meet: "What is this wisdom you call philosophy?", "How is philosophy practiced in this place?", "Why do you do philosophy?" A short time before they die, they discover that the patient labyrinth of lines that they have gathered trace the lineaments of their politics, their science, their country, their way of thinking, their culture, their wellbeing, their profession and their limitations.<sup>19</sup>

However, although philosophy is place sensitive it is not place restricted because it stresses or gives room for cross-cultural translation of ideas and intercultural fertilization of ideas towards a more universal philosophy of humankind. In this sense, one can talk of African philosophy understood as "a mode of critical and reflective thinking directed towards the development of a broader view of human possibilities."<sup>20</sup> There is need to allow philosophy cultivate in us the values of fertilizing our ideas with those of other places and cultures towards a genuine universal philosophy.

Furthermore, logic is very important to the philosopher. It is the main tool with which the philosopher philosophizes. Copi and Cohen define logic as "the study of the methods and principles used to distinguish correct reasoning from incorrect reasoning."<sup>21</sup> Put in another way, logic is essentially "the study of reasoning."<sup>22</sup> Here, the philosopher uses the tools of logic to access reasoning in all disciplines (including philosophy) and in all aspects of life. He or she uses logic to determine truth from falsehood, correct argument and reasoning from incorrect argument and fallacious reasoning. The logician is primarily interested in the form of arguments. By accessing the form of

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<sup>18</sup> Olusegun Oladipo, *Thinking About Philosophy*, p. 61.

<sup>19</sup> Havi Carel and David Gamez (eds.), *What Philosophy Is*, p. 1.

<sup>20</sup> Olusegun Oladipo, *Thinking About Philosophy*, p. 62.

<sup>21</sup> Irving M. Copi and Carl Cohen, *Introduction to Logic*, Eleventh Ed., Indian: Pearson Education, Inc., 2002, p. 3.

<sup>22</sup> Thomas Jefferson, Foreword, in Irving M. Copi and Carl Cohen, *Introduction to Logic*, Eleventh Ed., p. xiii.

arguments, the logician is able to know if an argument is correct and valid, or incorrect and invalid. So, a good "Command of the principles of logic can make a permanent and deeply satisfying contribution to the intellectual lives of all those who devote the time and energy necessary to master these principles."<sup>23</sup> Also, since human experiences are not fully captured by any spoken language (thus, language is constantly being improved on), the spoken language should not solely be relied on as the expression of the totality of reality of those who speak it. Hence, alongside the study of language, the philosopher should study the music, dance, poetry and other works of art and forms of entertainment of a people so as to be better enriched with how they express their grasped of reality.

However, in today's practice, Logic as the main tool of philosophy is expressed in language. That is, philosophical ideas are expressed logically in language. So, it is necessary to master the language with which one philosophizes (English language, for instance, as the major foreign official language of Nigeria, and our local languages for those interested in indigenous philosophy). In the course of using language to philosophize, new meanings are given to terms and new terms are coined or created "to cope with aspects of human experience that are believed to be unique or novel."<sup>24</sup>

In addition, there is an important attitude philosophy arouses in the mind of those who study it. It is not an attitude of instructing others concerning the problems and puzzles of life with a sense of an intellectual pride, but an attitude with a sense of humility that stimulates "people to think about the basic problems of existence as they affect them as individuals and as social collectives."<sup>25</sup> This intellectual humility that true philosophy breeds in those who study it, and that ought to prevent philosophers from adopting a dogmatic position on issues can best be understood from the views of Socrates thus:

And I am called wise, for my hearers always imagine that I myself possess the wisdom which I find wanting in others: but the truth is, O men of Athens, that God only is wise; and by his answer he intends to show that the wisdom of men is worth little or nothing; he is not speaking of Socrates, he is only using my name by way of illustration, as if he said, He, O men, is the wisest, who, like Socrates, knows that his wisdom is in truth worth nothing.<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> Thomas Jefferson, Foreword, in Irving M. Copi and Carl Cohen, *Introduction to Logic*, Eleventh Ed., p. xiv.

<sup>24</sup> Olusegun Oladipo, *Thinking About Philosophy*, p. 23.

<sup>25</sup> Olusegun Oladipo, *Thinking About Philosophy*, p. 24.

<sup>26</sup> Plato, Apology (Sect. 23) in B. Jowett, *The Dialogue of Plato*, p. 406.

### Philosophy and society

As stated earlier in this work, in formulating world-views, philosophy critically evaluates existing world-views and rejects or develops them towards the development of the human person and the society in general. By so doing, it provides “some guides to life which are capable of making human existence less painful and more tolerable.”<sup>27</sup>

The human society is plagued with imperfection morally, religiously, and intellectually. Even science with its dealings with material things as given to us by our senses aided by scientific instruments is yet to say the final word concerning nature. Thus, “the ideas and ideals – core aspects of world-views – we live by are best regarded as tentative guides, which can be re-examined from time to time in the light of new knowledge or information and our understanding of our socio-cultural condition and its existential demands at any given time.”<sup>28</sup> Given the limitations and short-comings of world-views as well as the partial nature of human knowledge, the philosopher should make effort to avoid dogmatizing any position he or she has taken or conclusion he or she has reached concerning the society. Also, the critical and reflective thinking nature of philosophy promotes the attitude of the philosopher not taking “any belief or assumption for granted, but is ready to examine the grounds for the validation of a belief or opinion that is presented as being true or plausible.”<sup>29</sup>

According to Oladipo, philosophy helps one to “acquire self-knowledge – that is, knowledge of the human person in relation to the environment in which her activities take place.”<sup>30</sup> As Nigerians or persons living in Nigeria, for example, our social activities take place in Nigeria; and the Nigerian society has been characterized by Oladipo as one “which privileges the inessential and the superficial over the real and the essential in the resolution of problems.”<sup>31</sup> Some of the major problems and challenges the philosopher needs to address in Nigeria today include how to develop a sense of nationhood that transcends tribe, cultural and religious affiliations; an adequate remuneration for civil servants *vis-à-vis* the remuneration of political office holders; the mode of acquisition and distribution of wealth; an independent and corrupt-free judiciary; a national goal or agenda with a value system that transcends party, tribal, religious and personal agenda; the practice of true federalism; a well-defined, functional and goal oriented social

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<sup>27</sup> Olusegun Oladipo, *Thinking About Philosophy*, p. 16.

<sup>28</sup> Olusegun Oladipo, *Thinking About Philosophy*, p. 16.

<sup>29</sup> Olusegun Oladipo, *Thinking About Philosophy*, p. 18.

<sup>30</sup> Olusegun Oladipo, *Thinking About Philosophy*, p. 7.

<sup>31</sup> Olusegun Oladipo, *Thinking About Philosophy*, p. 78.

institutions; security; energy; and industries for employment. One of the duties of the philosopher born in Nigeria or living in Nigeria is to use the tools of philosophy to produce philosophical knowledge or ideas that can replace the current ideas that are not working in Nigeria; philosophical knowledge or ideas that can work and bring about the desired re-construction or restructuring of Nigerian.

In the area of politics, for instance, there are often conflicting views from politicians as to what they will do for the masses. Citizens of Nigeria need logic to effectively “evaluate claims presented by leaders or those who would be leaders.”<sup>32</sup> The success of democracy in Nigeria “depends upon the reliability of the judgments we citizens make, and hence upon our capacity to weigh evidence and arguments rationally.”<sup>33</sup>

### **Conclusion**

All human persons are rational beings and therefore capable of doing philosophy and philosophizing in a professional way to produce philosophical knowledge. But not all persons have enough time to actually do philosophy, and not all persons are interested in disciplining themselves to undergo the thoroughness and rigour that the production of philosophical knowledge demands. But if we are to live a more meaningful life, a more coherent and logical life, and a life based on conviction then we must be ready to imbibe the philosophical spirit through the constant practice of philosophy and through refusing to dogmatize any conclusion we reach so as not to stifle the growth of philosophical knowledge.

One of the beauty of philosophy is the humility it imbibes in those who genuinely practice it in their lives, and teach it to others. And this humility comes from the fact that those who teach philosophy do not know it all. Like Socrates they are constantly in search of the truth and are rewarded with “the opportunity to continue learning about our subject, from our students and our colleagues, as well as from the great philosophers past and present.”<sup>34</sup> Thus, one is challenged by philosophy to keep developing oneself, improving on the knowledge of oneself, and be critical of the values and views society throws at us from time to time. The philosopher does not live his or her life by the whims and caprices of those who govern society, but through critical

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<sup>32</sup> Thomas Jefferson, Foreword, in Irving M. Copi and Carl Cohen, *Introduction to Logic*, Eleventh Ed., p. xiii.

<sup>33</sup> Thomas Jefferson, Foreword, in Irving M. Copi and Carl Cohen, *Introduction to Logic*, Eleventh Ed., p. xiii.

<sup>34</sup> Richard L. Purtill, Michael H. Macdonald, and Peter J. Kreeft, *Philosophical Questions*, p. xi.

reflection and evaluation lives responsibly in society and accepts responsibilities for the decision he or she makes.

Philosophical knowledge may not contain the last word about any given issue it confronts. To expect philosophical knowledge to say the final word about the reality it confronts is to forget that it is knowledge based on human wisdom (which is fallible), and that knowledge grows. Those who expect philosophical knowledge to be dogmatic will cease to wonder about reality, stifle the growth of philosophy and bring about the end of philosophy. One of the duties of philosophy is to stimulate ideas (in all sectors of the human life) that can change and govern the world for the better.

Like philosophers in other parts of the world, Nigerian philosophers as well as philosophers living in Nigeria are challenged to generate philosophical knowledge or ideas that will wake up this great country of ours from slumber and make Nigeria greater than it has ever being. And, for those who are contented with doing philosophy at the unprofessional level, there is the challenge to improve on their knowledge of logic. To this end, this paper advocates for the teaching of logic and critical thinking in all secondary schools in Nigeria, so that Nigerians can be more effective in bringing about the desired progress in Nigerian democracy.