

THE INDIVIDUAL IN AFRICAN COMMUNALISM

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ABSTRACT

Salah satu topik yang keras-kepalanya dalam filsafat politik adalah ihwal hubungan antara individu dan komunitas. Sepanjang sejarah kita temukan gerak mondar-mandir antara kedua kutub itu : di satu pihak ada tendensi memprioritaskan otonomi dan martabat individu sambil mengorbankan komunitas, di pihak lain sebaliknya, memprioritaskan komunitas sambil mengerdilkan martabat individu. Berdasarkan pengalaman dan paradigma Afrika, penulis menawarkan jalan tengah : kedua kutub mesti dilihat sebagai saling terhubung tak terpisahkan.

Key Words:

•*Individual* •*Individuality* •*Communalism* •*African Communalism* •*Community* •*Communalistic* •*Culture*
•*Principle of existence* •*Divine Essence* •*Autonomy*.

The question of the relationship between the individual and the community is an outstanding feature of the modern society. The history of mankind is one that is replete with an 'admixture' of various forms of relationships: there is on one hand, some form of suppressions and repressions of individual aspirations and capabilities in favour of some sort of collectivity; and on the other hand, an unbridled and exaggerated form of individual freedom and autonomy even at the expense of collective interests. Mankind's history thus, is hanging as on a pendulum tilting now right and then left depending on the prevalent social structure.

The type of social structure evolved in any particular society seems to be conditioned by the culture of the people which is given expression in their over-all philosophy of life. People with 'socio-centric' and 'organic' philosophic mindsets would like to take active interest in one another's affairs, and feel at ease in regulating and being regulated by others. Such a people will have no qualms in subordinating individual interests to that of the collectivity thereby making individuals to be no more than appendages to the entity (community). Others with 'egocentric' and 'contractual' philosophic mindsets, on the other hand, would see to the exaltation of individual interests over communal ones; the parts over the whole. For such groups, there is the tendency to exhibit some form of 'naked individualism' which exaggerates one-sidedly the distinctness of each of the units that make up the whole thereby leaving every individual progress / survival at the mercy of the fluctuations of demand and supply in the open market economy.

The challenge of unmitigated 'communalism' or 'individualism' has left its scars in the sands of history especially within the African heritage. In an attempt perhaps, to charter a middle course, theoreticians now question about the status of the rights of the individual whether these are so primary that they cannot be overridden in any circumstance? The place of duties how does the individual see his socio-ethical roles in relation to the interest and welfare of others? And the existence and appreciation of a sense of common life¹ how does the individual view his individuality amidst the over-all social group to which he naturally belongs? Indeed, where lays the heart of this symbiotic union between the individual and the community in African cultures? Here, we shall attempt to examine these questions with a view to establishing the place of the individual in African communalistic society.

Individuality as A Principle of Existence

Besides what is in the mind, only individual realities exist. The act of existing is proper to, and is exercised only by individual beings. This does not vitiate the fact that collective realities such as communities do exist, even though such realities are constituted of individuals. Maritain observes:

Individuality is opposed to the state of universality, which things have in the mind. It designates that concrete state of unity and indivision, required by existence, in virtue of which every actually or possibly existing nature can posit itself in existence as distinct from other beings.²

Individuality thus, is the principle of distinction and identity in existent realities. It is the uniqueness of the proper existence of the subsistent existent. Even though St. Thomas claims there is a subtle distinction between the 'Individual' and the 'Individuum' insisting that the former is wider in scope than the later, their descriptions virtually portray the same meaning: an entity that spurns all universality by reason of its intrinsic indivisibility and exclusivity. An individual, therefore, is "that which is in itself an undivided unit, and is distinguished from all other things".³ It does not inhere in another subject, and cannot be predicated of another, either generically or specifically. To denominate an individual from all other individuals, one needs to look into the properties the aggregate of which are never the same in another. This then, is individuation. Individuation makes this particular woman Chinenye O., an individual, singular and unique because she is the daughter of Agnes O., born at Nguru, Mbaise, Nigeria, twentieth of March, 1972, five feet three inches in height, eighty-five pounds weight. These stamp a woman with individuality.⁴

Scholasticism puts into perspective questions regarding individuation. Following the precedence of St. Thomas, and his re-employment of the Aristotelian categories of 'substance and accident'; 'matter and form'; 'act and potency' Scholasticism lays claim to the existence of three forms of individuation:

- A: Substance - that is, an entity which exists by itself individuates itself by itself;
- B: Accident - is individuated by the substance in which it inheres;
- C: Pure forms (e.g. Angels) - subsistent and independent of matter, individuate themselves by themselves.⁵

Nevertheless, in man, as in all other corporal beings like the stone, the

atom, the plant, the animal, etc, matter is the principle of individuation. The Angelic Doctor teaches that the individuality of these corporeal entities is rooted in matter in as much as matter requires the occupation in space of a position distinct from every other position. Matter itself is a kind of ability to receive forms, and is always subjected to substantial mutations. In every being made of matter, there is always a union with the “form” which together constitutes a substantial unit distinct from every other unit. The form, in such a union is thus particularized in such a material being which may share the same specific nature (form) with other material beings. The specificity of material beings sharing the same specific nature, then, lies in their material composition. Bogliolo observes:

It is matter alone, which makes possible a multiplicity of identical forms that are individually different, in the manner that Peter is not Paul, even if they are twins.⁶

In man, therefore, the form, which is the human soul, together with the matter, which it informs, constitutes one substance, which is both carnal and spiritual. Soul and matter are two substantial co-principles of the same being, of one and the same reality, individual and distinct from each other.⁷

The situation of pure forms or angelic realities is quite different. The angels as pure forms or pure spirits are, by reason of that which constitutes their substantiality, in the state of individuality. Pure forms individuate themselves by themselves. The Divine Essence is supremely individual. Angels are individual essences, which differ from each other, according to St. Thomas, as the whole species of lions differs from the whole species of horses. Hence, “each angel differs specifically from every other; each is an individual by the very form (absolutely free from any matter) in which its being consists and which constitutes it in its species.”⁸

The common characteristic of all existents, that is, 'individuality', does not issue forth from the same principle in corporeal beings as in pure spirits. Corporeal beings are individual because of matter. Their specific forms are not individual by reason of their own entity, but by reason of their extraordinary relation to matter. On the other hand, pure spirits are individual by reason of that which constitutes their substantial intelligibility. Man, thus, is an individual; a stone is an individual; a plant is an individual; a dog, as well as an angel is an individual. Every entity, which exists undivided and distinct from every other existent, is an individual. Individuality excludes from oneself all that other men are, and includes in one all that other men are not.

Man as An Existent Individual

The human being, as a subsisting entity thus, is an individual. He shares individuality with stones, trees, animals, etc because of their common patrimony in material composition. This is at the base of the manifestation of the principle of individuality which encompasses all material existent realities. But by reason of the extraordinary relation of the rational soul⁹ to matter, man attains an infinitely greater height of individuality than other material entities. He is more than a mere parcel of matter or an individual element in nature such as an atom, a tree or a dog. Where lies the dignity or liberty of an atom? On what do the rights of an individual piece of tree consist? It would make no sense to say that a dog or monkey gives its life for the liberty or rights of the dog or monkey. That would be a preposterous extrapolation. Man undoubtedly, is an animal and an individual, but unlike other animals or individuals, he stands out by his intelligence and will. Over against the merely physical existence, there is in him a richer and nobler spiritual existence through knowledge, and by which he can communicate to other selves / individuals.¹⁰ He is thus, an entity whose individuality is projected not only by material distinctness, but also by his capacity for evaluation and choice.

The capacity for intelligence, or at least the type of intelligence exhibited in this planet by humans, brings man's individuality into the arena of natural law and the enjoyment of rights and execution of duties consequent upon such a law. Human intelligence formulates laws which by reason and the will of man are ascribed to nature. These laws, when expanded give birth to the customs of a particular community. But fundamentally, they prescribe some inalienable rights to the individual person, like the right to the existence of life; the right to personal freedom; the right to the pursuit of the perfection of moral and rational human life; the right to the pursuit of eternal good; the right to private ownership of material goods which is a safeguard of the liberties of the individual,¹¹ etc. These confer to the individual the unquantifiable leverage to organize his life as it suits him. It means that the notion of individuality for man involves that of 'totality' and 'independence'. As an individual, man subsists as a whole, and in an independent manner no matter the imperfections impinged on him by the accidents of matter.

Human individuality is a project that emphasizes the individual's freedom, self-domination and self-selection. It is a theoretical expression of the individual's separated situation which insists that the end of all is the individual as such.¹² In his paper, "Characteristics of the Marxist Theory of

Collectivity”, Junzhong goes forth to insist that the emergence of individualism in real life reflects the demands of the development of capitalism. For him, it mirrors the separated situation of human beings which results from the competition introduced by a commodity economy, and “opposes external restraints and various dominations imposed on individuals by authorities, especially by the state”¹³ Elsewhere Junzhong also notes that “this theory (of individualism) does not encourage people to seek personal interests regardless of common interests and of the concerns of others”,¹⁴ which, in my opinion, is an apparent contradiction to some of his earlier claims. How can a doctrine which opposes external restraints and dominations not encourage people to seek personal interests regardless of common interests? How can such a philosophy justifiably advocate that individual interests should be subordinated to the interest of the state when the two conflict? I think Junzhong's problem here, may have arisen from his inability to pull the subtle difference between 'individuality' and 'individualism' thereby interchanging one for the other. Consequently, his manifest contradictory conclusions are only predictable.

Now, 'individuality' refers to the quality or characteristics that make one person or thing different from others; the quality or state of being an individual subsistent entity, while 'individualism' on the other hand, is rooted in 'egocentricism'. It confers the idea of 'self-assertion in disregard for others'; the position that private economic enterprise should not be restricted by government or social regulation.¹⁵ Any system of morals, feelings, ideas and institutions in which individuals are organized by their mutual isolation and defense is strictly individualistic in character. Stretched to its logical conclusion, 'individualism' represents the centralization of the individual in himself and the demonstration that the human subject can be nourished by auto-digestion.¹⁶ This is rarely a defensible position in real life situation owing to the interdependent nature of human life. Understandably, man is a distinct individual. But he is an individual whose uniqueness and identity are to be exercised within the community of humans.

Communalism in African Thought-pattern

In most African traditional cultures, the idea of the individual person is, for the most part, tied to the idea of the community. The community here is characterized as a life community in which there is an intimate personal interaction among human beings as opposed to the recently impersonal

modern urban set-up where every one minds his or her own business.¹⁷ In a typical African setting, community is neither to be understood in the additive sense of the aggregated sum of individuals comprising it, nor in the constituted sense of a non-organic bringing together of atomic individuals into a unit akin to an association. In African community, there is an assumed organic dimension to the relationship between the component individuals. Community here is constituted of a group of people who together experience reciprocity of awareness.¹⁸ The existence of common ties, and / or biological bonds, interdependent relationships, common interests and goals is crucial to an adequate conception of community; that existence in fact constitutes a people into a community, into a social train driven by communalism.

Each community embodies a traditional culture which is sacrosanct to all members, and by which the community life is structured. The primary requirement of tradition on the part of the individual is total compliance with the specific beliefs and customs prevalent in the community. Dissension here is viewed as a disruption to the community life and is effectively repressed by the punishment of the culprit(s) as prescribed by the tradition. Here, the interest of the community prevails over that of the individual, and all values that promote individual self-interest, as is common in urbanized societies, are effectively suppressed. Negro-African societies, according to Senghor, 'puts more stress on the group than on the individuals, more on solidarity than on the activity and needs of the individual, more on the communion of persons than on their autonomy. Ours is a community society'.¹⁹ For Dickson, communalism is a characteristic feature that defines 'Africannes'.²⁰ The personal life is the communal life and the communal life is the personal life. One cannot be without the other. An individual that tries to live outside his community will be like a fish cast out of water onto a dry sandy beach, panting.²¹

However, it is pertinent to point out that the concept of tradition does not in any way portray that the African socio-political ordering is communist in nature. Obiechina observes:

It would be wrong to interpret the concentration on common goals and the primacy of the common interest as a matter of suppression of the personality from the outside, of constraint on the part of an authority. Social conformity and the discouragement of deviation from the common norms of behaviour are not the same thing as the repressive curbing of individual freedom. Social freedom is in the final analysis related

to legality and this is commonly expressed as the principle of the greatest good of the greatest number. Traditional social philosophy is based on this principle and because it is fundamental to the very survival and general health of the society, is given validity by being anchored in customary practice and protected by divine and ancestral authority.²²

Even though the village community is not a police state, every breach of the tradition is detested by the entire community because its tragic consequence(s) will not only fall on the individual culprit, but also on the community to which he belongs. Hence, there is a strict obedience to the 'law of the land' even when it runs against the individual will. After all, 'the land' (community) is the custodian of the individual person.

Traditional African life was, and very much still is community-based: it moves from the community and revolves around the community. A man's achievement depends primarily on how much of his community's standards he accommodates. To exist is to exist in a group. To a large extent, the individual in an African society is subsumed within the requirements of his community. He, more or less acts out his community's scripts.

This community structure of African societies, especially within the sub-Sahara, engenders a high spirit of communalism. Every one contributes something to the common stock. Their cooperative community spirit goes a long way to portray their altruism: community interests come before personal interests, as the power of the community is superior over that of an individual. This is evidenced in such Igbo sayings like *Umunna bu ike* (the relatives or community is one's strength/power); *Anaghi eleli-amala eleli* (you cannot neglect the community); etc. Africans carry out their civic and social responsibilities according to the provisions of community tradition. At one time, it may require a participation in a communal labour, as in clearing of village pathways; at other times it may demand all the members of the community to cultivate a member's farmland. When one's palm tree is being tapped, it specifies certain days when one makes available the palm wine for general free consumption; and when one's daughter is married, it specifies the community's share of the dowry paid. These afford everyone the opportunity of contributing one's own quota to the growth of the community that has nursed one into existence. Indeed, every individual contributes his / her resources, human and material in times of communal conflicts, and as the need demands. Internal peace and order are maintained by everyone's unalloyed obedience

to the *Omenala* (tradition) even when such a tradition impinges on individual's well-being. In Achebe's *Things Fall Apart*, the conversation between Okonkwo and Obierika over their prohibition from tapping palm wine because of their *Ozọ* title, and Okonkwo's incisive conclusion that 'the law of the land must be obeyed',²³ is very instructive here.

The mark of a true African is his ability to put communal interests over and above his individual interests. Even when the community sponsors her talented sons in education or business, she sponsors them so that they will use their enhanced social status for the benefit of the community. When a member of the family or clan is honoured or successful, the whole group rejoices and shares in the glory, not only psychologically, as one would rejoice when one's local team has won a match, but ontologically: each member of the group is really part of the honour.²⁴ Individual persons compete not just for their survival, but also for the survival of the community, which competes in and through them. Individual competitive spirit is always engendered by communal competitive spirit. The members of the community could be bound together with the common aim of building up their own society more than their neighbours. Ottenberg has this to say:

Villagers compete to build the first and best schools, village groups, to improve the market. Many social groups strive to push some of their talented sons ahead in schooling and to obtain scholarship in competition with other groups. Individuals who acquire scholarship, wealth or political influence are expected to use their social stand for the benefit of the group with which they are associated²⁵

This, nevertheless, does not imply that the individuals' needs are unimportant. No, it rather suggests that in the symbiotic union between the individual person and the community, the individual realizes that he cannot achieve his selfhood in isolation of the community. His personhood is inextricably bound by the determinations of his community.

The Struggle of The Individual in a Communalistic Culture

The principal issue in the exchange of relationship between the individual and the community is to decipher which the individual or community has the ontological priority over the other, and in consequence, which has the ontological derivativeness. A clear-cut determination of this will undoubtedly delimit the influence of one over the other, and thus put

to rest the age-long enquiry enshrouded in ceaseless disputatiousness. But this is not so easy a task to require an either / or answer given the nature of the object under scrutiny who himself is the enquiring subject.

It is an undisputed fact that the individual human being is born into an existing human community, into a cultural society. The individual therefore, is never a pure, isolated individual. Using the Igbo saying, *mmadu anaghi agba ka ugba* a human being does not fall like a bolt by some inexplicable explosive mechanism, Okere maintains that there is no big bang that throws a human being from nowhere into the world. "Every one has a source, a link, a belongingness, the parents being the source of their children. Everyone comes into the world belonging and relating".²⁶ The community alone constitutes the social context in which the individual could actualize his potentialities and even express his individuality. The individual thus, is a congenitally communitarian individual, incapable of being, existing and really unthinkable except in the complex of relations of the community.²⁷

This all-encompassing primeval power of the community over the individual gives a strong impetus to the communalistic structure of African societies, which is manifestly expressed in virtually all aspects of their culture: in their arts and aesthetics, in their value system and over-all philosophy of life, and in their interrelationship with each other. There seems to be some form of communal spirit hanging over every individual action, determining and directing the flow of events. Many a time, the entire individuals within the community benefit from such a communalistic structure because it operates generally on the principle of the greatest good of the greatest number: the extended family system makes it imperative for one to be deeply concerned about the well being of others in the group; the 'community system of marriage'²⁸ safeguards the individual from getting himself entangled in a family known for her notoriety; the social security mandates a child to take care of his aged parents; the sense of hospitality and the promotion of communal social order are of course motivated by the well-being of the community, its solidarity, co-operation, mutual concerns and reciprocal obligations. Here, the good or love of the group as a whole is taken to include the good or love of the individual members so that enhancement of the good or love of the community implies the enhancement of individual lives.²⁹ Everyone's care is everyone's duty. Using Marx's expression, communality in Africa engenders a high sense of love and respect among individual members of the traditional community such that 'from each according to his ability to each according to his needs'.

At other times, and which are very many indeed, the individual

however, is completely subsumed within communality such that he becomes no more than a mere appendage to the group, with overburdening duties and without corresponding rights. Undoubtedly, the extended family system and other communal systems promote the general wellbeing of others, but they also tend to stifle the full development of the individual. The individual is not given any free and conducive atmosphere to develop his potentialities to maximal capacity. He is either discriminated against because of some socio-cultural stigmas (as in the caste system), or is constantly burdened with other people's problems and worries that he hardly has time enough to concentrate on his plans and projects. Individual decisions on matters of private importance, as in the choice of marriage partner, the modalities of marrying and the procreation of children, etc are often subjected to public scrutiny, which in the end may distort or even entirely destroy the primary intent of the individual concerned. The individual thus, is hemmed in all aspects, and discovers that his life is more or less a recycle of the old unadventurous traditional life.

Not only is the individual entangled in the web of exerting himself for the wellbeing of all traceable blood relations, the community itself seems to be invested with an all-engulfing functional and normative authority to determine everything about the life of the individual. The quality of his life and personhood depend, to a great extent, on his ability to conform to specific norms and values of his community. Menkiti captures the idea in these vivid words: "without incorporation into this or that community, individuals are considered to be mere danglers to whom the description 'person' does not fully apply."³⁰ 'Personhood' among Africans, as rightly argued by Menkiti is thus, 'processual' in nature, and is fully conferred on the individual by the community to which he belongs. Prior to this conferment, the individual has a somewhat worthless status in the community, and could not be entrusted with any task of importance. Once conferred, he enters into the state of responsibility whereby he inherits new rights, and new obligations are expected of him by the community.³¹ This is a very discriminatory practice and has been identified as ultimately responsible for a myriad of socio-political malaise that have long ravaged the entire continent.

In the first place, the communalistic structure of African societies places the power to rule in the hands of those who the society has conferred with the status of personhood in exclusion of others. This gives them undue leverage over others especially in matters of communal life. Little attention, if any, is paid to the contributions of the uninitiated. Often, objectivity is sacrificed at the altar of authority, while mediocrity is

celebrated under the pretext of maintaining tradition. *Okonkwo's* relegation of *Osugo* to the status of a woman, in Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* is a clear indication of such a flagrant abuse of power.

Second, this structure of personhood as arising from the community engenders a high sense of hospitality, communality and altruism for one's ethnic group especially at the micro level. At this level, the different sub-cultural groups organize themselves independently of each other such that all life activities evolve and revolve around the immediate community. In a typical communalistic society, the immediate community sets goals, and enforces reward or punishment for her individual members. Personhood, strictly speaking, is personhood within the immediate community. Beyond the immediate community, there is neither loyalty nor compelling force of authority.

A parochial structure of this sort does not leave much room for inter-community relationship at the macro level. Driven by the urge to satisfy the needs of her immediate members, each community competes with others for the scarce resources of nature. Often, the competition leads to confrontation, and confrontation to crisis. The preponderance of communal conflicts among the traditional Africans is consequent upon the structuring of their society. Any society that is segmented without a central organizing force is bound to constantly combat the whims and caprices of individual segments seeking for supremacy.

Third, the high rate of instability in the art of governance within African nations is ultimately traceable to the communal idea of the individual human person. This 'communal idea' brings with it a community consciousness, a consciousness that sees the communities fighting in and through their individual members.

Each time an individual is placed in a position of leadership, he sees himself first as a member of a specific community whose primary task is to promote his communal selfhood, before anything else. In doing so, he gives undue preference to issues pertaining to his primal community, while the problems of other segments of the same society are treated with levity. Political appointments are based not on merit, but on tribal sentiments, while policies of economic reconstruction are experimented only on the 'select' few communities. It is a 'win-and-take-all' jungle society where the Machiavellian principle of 'might is right' reigns supreme.³² This form of injustice and alienation of people from their main purpose of living together can only but give rise to uprisings, sabotaging of government policies, coups and counter coups, and various forms of dissension that lead to instability in governance.

African communalism as a theory assumes a stunning concern for communal values, for common good, and for the good of the wider society. In doing so, it attempts to provide a conducive atmosphere that will enable each individual to function adequately in a human community, with the interest of the community as the over-riding rule. Generally speaking, the idea of individuality is not antithetical to that of community; it even advocates that individual interest be subordinated to that of the community when the two conflict. Even in 'egocentric' societies, it is recognized that the interest of the state, the incarnation of the general will, is the highest good. Consequently, individual or family interests must be subordinated to that of the community / state when they conflict with the latter.

Although it is understandable that the communal structure will allow the community to exercise her primordial right over individual interests, yet it is expected that communalism should not deny individuals the exercise of their unique qualities, talents and dispositions. Communalism should not restrict the individual from the exercise of his basic rights and freedom even though it must see that he does not slip down the slope of 'stark selfishness' or 'naked individualism'. At the practical level however, African communalism, to its chagrin, has not given free rein to the exercise of these tremendous qualities of the individual, and as such has been a clog on the wheels of its socio-economic and political development.

End Notes:

1. K. Gyekye and K. Wiredu (eds.). *Person and Community, Ghanaian Philosophical Studies I* (Washington D. C.: the Council for Research in Values and Philosophy, 1992), p.101.
2. J. Maritain. *The Person and the Common Good*. (Indiana: University of Notre Dame press. 1966), p.34.
3. T. Aquinas. *Summa Theologia*. I, q. 29, a. 4.
4. A. Carrel. *Man, The Unknown*. (New York: Harper), in J.H. Hoban. *The Thomistic Concept of Person and Some of its Social Implications*, p. 6
5. T. Aquinas. *S.T.I*, q.19, a.1; III, q.77. A.2
6. L. Bogliolo. *Philosophical Anthropology*. Vol. 2. (India: Sacred Heart Theological College. 1984), p.141
7. J. Maritain. *op.cit.*, p.36
8. *Ibid.*, p.35
9. Aristotle in *De Anima* had already indicated that it is rationality which distinguishes man from every other form of animal.

10. J. Maritain. *Christianity And Democracy & The Rights Of Man And Natural Law*. (New York: Ignatius Press, 1942), p.88
11. *Ibid.*, p.158
12. X. Junzhong. "Characteristics of the Marxist Theory of Collectivity", in G. F. McLean (ed.). *The Human Person and Society*. (Washington, D. C.: The Council For Research In Values And Philosophy, 1997), p.57
13. *Ibid.*, p.57
14. *Ibid.*, p.57
15. J. E. Baltzel et al. (eds.). *The New Webster's Dictionary of the English Language*. (New York: Lexicon Pubs. 2004), p. 493
16. E. Mounier. *Personalism*. (trans. P. Mairet). (Notre Dame: Univeristy of Notre Dame Press. 1952), p.19
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22. E. Obiechina. *Culture, Tradition And Society In The West African Novel*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 1975), pp. 202-03
23. C. Achebe. *Log.cit.*, p. 48
24. E. A. Ruch, and K. C. Anyanwu. *African Philosophy*. (Rome: Catholic Book Agency, 1984), p. 143
25. S. Ottenberg. 'Igbo Receptivity to change', in *Continuity and Change*. (London: Oxford University Press, 1967), p.137
26. T. Okere. (ed.) *Identity And Change*. (Washington, D. C.: Paideia Publishers, 1996), p. 159
27. *Ibid.*, p. 160
28. By 'community system of marriage' we mean the involvement of the kin group in the enquiries and other rituals involved in it. Marriage in African culture is not just between two individuals in isolation. It is between two families, two lineages and two communities. This is why each member of the concerned families has a role to play in the ceremonies connected with it.
29. K. Wambari. " Person and The Community", in G. F. McLean (ed.). *The Place of the Person In Social Life*. (Washington, D. C. : The Council for

Research Values and Philosophy, 1991), p. 199

30. I. A. Menkiti. "Person And Community In African Traditional Thought", in Richard A. Wright, (ed.). *African Philosophy, An Introduction*. (3rd.ed.) (U.S.A.: University Press of America. 1984), p. 172.
32. J. S. Mbiti. *African Religions and Philosophy*. (New York: Doubleday & Co. 1970), p.159.
33. In the jungle, only the fittest animals survive. There is no restraint to action. Might is right. Animals that could subdue and feed on others do so without violating any Laws.