

***Ibuanyidanda* Philosophy or Complementary Reflection**

Introduction

Ibuanyidanda or complementary reflection is a philosophical movement in Africa founded at the University of Calabar, Nigeria. As the founder of the movement, I have outlined, in a systematic methodological mode, its basic presuppositions in my major writings. Not only the number of scientific projects anchored around its basic presuppositions attest to its transforming influence in the way philosophy is conducted in Africa today, but more so, the emerging philosophical variants drawing inspirations from its tenets. Besides myself, one can even be talking of core members of a budding philosophical movement in this regard.

Other notable core members, with their variants and accentuations, include Godfrey Ozumba and Joachim Chimakonam (University of Calabar, Nigeria), – Integrative Humanism or *Njikọka* philosophy;

Chris Ijiomah (University of Calabar, Nigeria), – Harmonious Monism; Chris Akpan (University of Calabar, Nigeria) – *Ibuanyidanda* and Basic Problems of Science;

Ephraim Essien (University of Cape Coast, Ghana) - Compatibility Theory; Edor John Edor (University of Calabar, Nigeria) – *Ibuanyidanda* and Basic questions of International Jurisprudence;

Mesembe Edet (University of Calabar, Nigeria) - *Ibuanyidanda* and Afroxiology (Values and African Experience of the World).

These approaches endeavour to work out what some call the stand points of “**The Calabar School of Philosophy**”. Notwithstanding the subtle differences between these approaches, we are united in exploring some basic integrative ideas that direct human consciousness as is captured in my “integrative principle of *ibuanyidanda* philosophy”, the metaphysical variant of the principles of *ibuanyidanda* philosophy, which claims that *ihe di, nwere isi na odu* (anything that exists serves a missing link of reality). With this I affirm an inherent necessary mutual relationship in complementary service between existent realities.

The theme for the 1991 **Ahiajoku Lecture**, organised yearly by

the whole Igbo intelligentsia for the promotion of Igbo culture, was on “IBU ANYI NDANDA”. The lecturer, Prof. Romanus Ohuche, endeavoured to show how what Igbo understand as the principle of *Ibu anyi ndanda* or *Ibu anyi danda* (Complementarity), which he used interchangeably, due to variations in Igbo dialects, plays a vital role in Igbo educational experience. Generally “*Ibu anyi danda*” is one of the most important observational statements in the language of *Igbos* of Nigeria and is constituted of the following words: *ibu* = *load*; *anyi* = *not insurmountable for*; *danda* = *a species of ant*. Hence, the expression translates to: “no task is insurmountable for *danda* the ant”. *Igbos* derive the statement by observing a colony of the ants “*danda*,” which have the capacity to carry successfully loads that appear bigger and heavier than them when they work in mutual unison. For most *Igbos*, therefore, this statement points, most especially, to a form of mutual dependence observable in nature by reason of which seemingly difficult challenges can very easily be surmounted. Hence, the concept *ibuanyidanda* has as its nearest English equivalent the word “complementarity” and is abstracted and derived from the descriptive statement “*ibu anyi danda*”.

When applied to human conduct, this statement claims that, just like *danda*, human beings and communities have the capacity to surmount difficult challenges and attain extraordinary heights when they persevere in mutual complementary dependence. *Ibuanyidanda philosophy*, the new integrative philosophy of mutual complementation in African, is a reaction to what this statement seeks to claim. It seeks to probe into its scope and conditions of applicability as to determine its truth worth. By so doing, it weighs its implications for the assessment of those human conducts that are geared towards mutual complementation. The very exercise that results from such an investigation is what I call “*ibuanyidanda* philosophy” or “complementary reflection”.

Taken on the surface value, the observational statement “*ibu anyi danda*”, for many, does actually recount true positive human experience with regard to addressing those difficult challenges where unified mutual complementary efforts are required. This is why, for many, this statement would, without much equivocation, be under-

stood to mean that such acts of mutual complementation, where they do occur, would invariably result in surmounting such difficult challenges and inducing those extraordinary achievements associated with them. Interestingly, many of us, without much hesitation, do accept aphorisms of this kind as true and valid. We do so because they evoke positive sentiments in us concerning those things we are likely to believe regarding acts of this kind; things we desire and expect. This is why we are compelled to accede to what statements of this kind claim – if only intuitively. When we act in this manner, we submit ourselves also, quite unknowingly, to an implicit moment of categorical command inherent in the nature of such statements. This is when they start to dictate the tune of our knowing, judging, willing and acting. Therefore, without our knowing it, approaching reality in this manner, can very easily become an unbearable burden; because statements of this kind have also an implicit hypothetical character that is not always obvious - one that is easily eclipsed by the overbearing categorical nature they exude. Hence, their truth claim and categorical character are not as self-evident as they impress themselves upon our consciousness. Adhering to them as pure categorical commands always is very likely to lead to false assumptions when it matters most.

By following statements of this kind uncritically in given concrete cases, we are made to believe, for example, that we can really address such difficult challenges successfully like building a just, peaceful and egalitarian society, if only such matters can be addressed in an attitude of mutual complementary unity of all stakeholders. This being the case, the very act of mutual complementation is immediately projected into our consciousness as the very cause of the state of equity, harmony and egalitarianism among human beings. Since stakeholders are enraptured by impressions of this kind, due to their apparent true and apodictic character, they actually go ahead co-joining, in a necessary causal mode, such values as justice, equity, fair play, compassion etc. with the type of attitudes they assume generate them. They thereby believe that adhering to injunctions arousing such attitudes are, not only the necessary, but also the sufficient conditions for bringing about the ideal states of justice, egalitarianism and harmony among human beings. However, by affirming the injunction *ibu anyi danda*

(no task is insurmountable for *danda* the ant) for example, what is thereby implied can vary, without our being very conscious of this. They can vary, because statements of this kind have an inherent moment of ambivalence that is often overlooked. Such ambivalence enters into what I call the **"the inconspicuous accessory conditions"** that compelled us into accepting statements of the kind *ibu anyi danda* as having a definite meaning that is in consonance only with our positive expectations and desires. They are inconspicuous accessory conditions because they have the character of accidentality. As such they are the types of things that are often neglected or forgotten. Being conditioned by factors of this kind, we, for example, associate statements like *ibu anyi danda* only with acts of mutual complementary harmony among human beings. This must not always be the case, because by affirm *ibu anyi danda*, believing that they are practicing genuine complementarity, actors may also, without being conscious of this, be pursuing objective that contradict ideals associated with this statement.

Indeed, innumerable cases abound, where commitment to the injunctions *ibu anyi danda* has often led to negative experiences. They have often contributed in complicating human interpersonal relationship without stakeholders being fully aware of this fact. At such moments, stakeholders, quite unwittingly, misuse what they think such statements proclaim to pursue privately motivated interests; even to the point of transgressing gravely against ideals they passionately believe in. This is when they act in unison to execute tasks they deem appropriate, noble and worthy, which however, quite unknown to them, are driven by vile motives of ruthlessness, injustice, tyranny, systematic exploitation and repression. At such moments, and bound in complementary unison, they go about persecuting and exploiting those they perceive as threatening their interests. Interestingly, they do this in the name of practicing genuine complementarity. Here, the feeling of strength in unity, characteristic of all such acts, heightens also the sentiment of genuine mutual complementation. This is one of the major reasons they easily forget or underestimate the excesses attached to their vile cravings and actions. They perceive such vile and unjust measures as wise, rational and prudent. Hence, they regard

these also as the very ideal of complementarity since these help them secure privately motivated interests against an outside they equally perceive as threatening and not good enough. In other words, they are misled into believing that they are pursuing the ideal of complementarity, their self-serving, unjust and exclusivist acts notwithstanding. The only valid reason behind such excesses, that is unfortunately concealed from them, is adherence to the feeling of intimacy holding them together. The same is applicable to what they sense as uniting to ward off the threat posed by an outside they perceive as alien and not good enough.

By every indication, they are being deceived at such moments, without realising this, because their actions contradict the ideals they believe in and proclaim. At least, one can say that, at such moments, they suffer an existential illusion that leads to self-deceit; and one also that leads to the contradictions we sense in their actions. Their ruthless, exploitative exclusivist tendencies and self-serving disposition contradict the ideal of mutual complementary harmony which was what they intended when they proclaimed and affirmed *ibu anyi danda*. Unfortunately, this would not be because they suffer existential illusion. Therefore, even if they proclaim and believe in ideals of this kind, realisation of such would ever remain unattainable since there is a deep-seated divide in human consciousness itself. It is therefore a paradox that by adhering to an injunction that should ordinarily lead to mutual complementary harmony among human beings, stakeholders, quite unwittingly, strive towards negating the very values and ideals such injunctions should enshrine and proclaim.

Now, the question arises: Why are actors deceived in this way, and who or what deceives them? Why can following the injunction *ibu anyi danda* (something that urges stakeholders to rally in complementary harmony), lead to anti-complementary acts; and such that can even compel stakeholders to negate the very values and ideals injunctions of this kind enshrine? Furthermore, why are actors not immediately conscious of their mistakes; but would rather pursue blindly the negative connotations of injunctions of this kind; as to violate the very ideals they cherish? Why can following injunctions of this kind make actors self-serving, exclusivist and intolerant; and most especially in

their dealings with those they perceive as alien; and who do not share the same bond of mutual complementary intimacy with them? Why do they go ahead repressing, discriminating and even persecuting these others by following the injunction *ibu anyi danda*? Why do they, quite unwittingly, consider the questionable measures they take at such moments the wisest, most prudent and rational things to do?

Answering these questions would help us understand more clearly the nature of the injunction *ibu anyi danda* and what it seeks to claim. Generally, the difficulties injunctions of this kind present have much to do with the fact of our being human. Here, we are, by and large, partially products of our existential situations that are tension-laden and ambivalent. Besides the ambivalence to which our perception of reality is exposed, we are also subject to the constraints arising from what I call in *Igbo* language *ihe mkpuchi anyi*. This ambivalence and *ihe mkpuchi anya*, as the inconspicuous accessory conditions of knowing, willing, judging and acting, are the very mechanisms and phenomena responsible for such illusions and deceit. They achieve this by projecting only the categorical demands of our most cherished interests immediately into our consciousness while withholding the hypothetical character of the same. The moment this happens, an unavoidable error of judgement ensues which invariably leads to paradoxical acts and weird wishes. Since accidental and inconspicuous accessory conditions of this kind are easily overlooked, they can have devastating effects in the way we relate to the world. They can enormously becloud our thinking and power of judgment; so much so that we start misperceiving our needs and misconstruing our relationship with people who do not share bonds of intimacy with us. These are people we, instinctively, assume constitute some stumbling block to us just because they do not belong to us intimately. Elucidating the complex character of matters of this kind, and how to handle them, constitute some of the cardinal foci of *ibuanyidanda* investigation.

The inconspicuous Accessory Conditions of Knowing, Willing, Judging and Acting

Now, an important question arises: What is the modus operandi of these inconspicuous accessory conditions of knowing, willing and

acting; the very phenomena and mechanisms underlying sense experience and descriptive statements? How do they impact on our sub-conscious world as to becloud our reasoning, our judgement, our willing and the way we act? This can be explained in the following way: Even if the human person is fundamentally rational, the same human person is subject to challenges of our fundamental instinct of self-preservation. Thus caught between being rational and being subject to our most primitive instinct, a tension is generated within the subject and in the sub-conscious. This is the foundation of the ambivalent tension that characterises our consciousness itself and in its relationship to the world generally. This is mostly the case with most mental and emotional acts dealing with knowing, willing, judging and acting. Due to this ambivalence, the world presents itself to our consciousness fundamentally in its double capacity. This is the one we feel most concretely in the varied character of our perception of reality. We feel this double capacity most when our most cherished interests are at stake. This is when this ambivalence can compel us into being oversensitive in view of protecting our interests, even at the risk of becoming excessively selfish and exclusivist; and most especially with regard to perceived threats arising from the outside. For this reason, we may be inclined to choose only those things always that appeal to us most, and which, in our opinion, help us safeguard such interests and repeal such threats. Oversensitive about our gains and advantages, we tend towards losing measured circumspection and are easily forgetful concerning some of the most severe consequences of our negligence and forgetfulness. In this way, and quite unknown to us, we are exposed to some of the most grievous danger of error of judgement.

Experiences of this kind, as noted, are possible because our experience of the world in its ambivalence is further characterised by an inherent moment concealment or the very thing I call "*the mkpuchi anya*" in *Igbo language*. This "*the mkpuchi anya*" or *phenomenon of concealment* has the capacity to radicalise the precariousness of our already tension-laden ambivalence experience and complicate it. The expression "*the mkpuchi anya*" is taken from the *Igbo* language of Nigeria; and I have translated it to the English equivalent of "phe-

nomenon of concealment”. Within the context of *Igbo* existential experience, this expression means “something that impairs vision” or “something that beclouds the eyes”. Hence, “*ihe mkpuchi anya*” or “phenomenon of concealment” is an existential condition that militates against the capacity to reason soundly, judge correctly and imaginatively; most especially in matters dealing directly with our most cherished interests. Overwhelmed by *ihe mkpuchi anya*, and in the face of our most cherished interests, Igbos question: *o nwere ihe na eme gi na anya* (is anything wrong with your eyes)? They still ask more pointedly: *anya o di kwa gi mma* (are your eyes at all in order)? They conclude: “*anya adigi ya mma*” (something is definitely wrong with his or her eyes!). What is implied by statements of this kind is that a person is so blinded by his or her passion, that he or she is passionate to the point of madness. It is precisely due to this its character that *ihe mkpuchi anya* (phenomenon of concealment) conceal from us the ambivalent tension-laden character of our existential conditions. Furthermore, it makes us blind to some of the most severe consequences resulting from our capriciousness, excessive zeal, negligence and forgetfulness. Thus victimised, actors actually seek only those persons and things that fascinate them; things only in tune with their whims and caprices. They thereby believe that these are the only options open to them; the only things most likely to lead to their happiness and ensure their overall wellbeing. In the same way, they despise and may seek to avoid those peoples and things they assume bring them misfortune and misery. This is why, out of sheer fascination and enthusiasm, we may very easily tend to be drawn, instinctively, only towards such persons and object that, in our estimation, stand to enhance our chances of success. Likewise, out of fear, hatred and sheer disgust, we seek to avoid instinctively also those things and persons that diminish our chances of success and bring us misfortune. Since this emotional and mental state constrains actors into attending to important decisions in a one dimensional absolute mode; and only in ways that favour their interests, they easily overstep allowable boundaries and, paradoxically, consider such measures most prudent, wise and rational. In the process, they become unduly bold and daring, both in their negligence, capriciousness and excesses. Thus lack-

ing in circumspection and insight, their selfishness and carelessness are enhanced. Worst still is that they may thereby easily lose every sense of decorum, become insensitive to the boundaries between right and wrong, good and evil. For these reasons, actors easily become absorbed by irrational wishes, vile fantasies, fears and desires; and so much so that they start to act only in a one-dimensional absolute mode lacking in wisdom. This is the very root of paradoxical and contradictory behaviour. This is why under such tense conditions, we may be affirming *ibu anyi danda*, believing that we are actually practicing the ideal of complementarity; in actual fact and quite unwittingly, however, we may be pursuing vilest forms of privately motivated interests; and to the point of negating the very ideals we believe in. This is all the more the case when we are acting in unison with our closest allies and against those we perceive as threatening our interests; and who do not share same bond of intimacy with us. Here, what we sense as the ideal of complementarity is nothing other than the shared bond of intimacy that sustains such vile wishes and privately motivated interests. In this case, what we perceive as the ideal of complementarity is what it takes to defend our egoism against an outside that is perceived as threatening, alien and not good enough. Quite interestingly; in the whole process we may even have that inner feeling of satisfaction that we are acting wisely and intelligently. This is because we are being deceived due to the constraints to which we are subjected. At such moments and in their semi-conscious state, and out of irrational fears, stakeholders would very probably proceed to resolve conflicts in their favour only; and through questionable means, and contrary to equity and fair play. This is what we mean when we say that all human existential situations are inherently ambivalent, in their double capacity; and are beclouded with the *mkpuchi anya* (the phenomenon of concealment).

This stressed emotional and mental state follows us in all we do, and determines our being no matter our levels of achievement; and no matter our status; no matter what we profess, and no matter how highly we rate ourselves. Even, the impact of this ambivalence and the *mkpuchi anya* can grow and be amplified by achievements, responsibility and self-perception; and so much so that the more we are over-

whelmed by our achievements and self-perception, the more these existential constraints gathers momentum and tighten their grips. This is why the moment these constraining mechanisms hold sway, actors are very easily thrown off balance; and tend to compromise and mismanage their positions, self-understanding and responsibilities in ways that can be very baffling and incomprehensible. This is that stressed existential experience by reason of which precisely those things actors cherish and praise very highly are the very things they may be most willing to compromise. Here, one easily acts against those ideals and norms one cherishes highly and believes in. Ironically also, one imagines, at such moments, that by so doing one is smart, acting in the most wise and intelligent manner. It is as if one is acting against ones will and convictions and considers this the wisest thing to do.

Here, actors respond, more or less, in a state of subdued insight with regard to their social and universal moral obligations; but may be willing to act with much more positive responsiveness towards their own personal needs and interests. They may also be most willing to extend the same positive consideration to those they imagine share some bond of intimacy with them; and who, in their estimation, would very probably contribute towards securing their most cherished interests and help them succeed. This is why in proclaiming *ibu anyi danda*, in the vile sense of complementarity, they may be most willing to persecute those who, in their estimation do not form a bond of intimacy with them, because these for them are mere nuisances and threats. With this, they believe that they are practicing the ideal of complementarity in its fullest; but they are merely being deceived and are deceiving themselves without realising this. Since actors, at these moments are prone to seeing the world from a stressed and compromised type of disposition, their actions and their intentions are bound to be at variance.

This is the foundation of all types of ambivalent behaviour and something that can distort the meaning we assign to things; and to the point of actors contradicting themselves without knowing that they are actually doing so. It is also one of the foundations of irreconcilable differences, where each party in a dispute is so absorbed by the correctness of its position that it hardly finds it necessary to listen to

other parties. This is why such a compromised type of mind-set can make people unbearably stubborn and capricious. Here, stakeholders are more inclined to stick to their opinions without realising that such are founded on deep rooted mistake or existential deceit. They are thus subjected to avoidable errors of judgement. Such difficulties are bound to persist because what is presented to our consciousness and what we intend or believe in, may be diametrically opposed to each other – and often without our being fully aware of this fact. In such cases, we are bound to err; but errors of this kind are not always intentional, because actors suffer an existential illusion which impacts on the way they think, judge, will and act. What this shows is that in most situations of life our actions may not always match with what we intend, even if we think otherwise. This is why under such conditions actors are more likely to choose only those things that enhance their most cherished interests, without caring much about all the implications. They only believe that these are the best possible options open to them, even if this is not always the case. Where the stakes are high, such dispositions can easily lead to our doing harm to others, our becoming unduly irrational and repressive, without our being fully aware of the full implications of our actions. On the contrary, we consider the measures we take quite appropriate, wise and smart.

One can say that human subjects are not completely to blame for lapses of this kind because at such moments they are not fully in control of their situation. Indeed, they are caught in a mental and emotional state of restricted self-consciousness. This is when we say of a person in Igbo language: *o magi onwe ya* (he does not know himself i.e. he is not self-conscious). Therefore, it is due to these inconspicuous accessory conditions, that we unconditionally assume that the statement *ibu anyi danda* can only be understood only in a positive sense that proclaims the ideal of complementarity. This is why we misuse the expression in this way; and go ahead submitting ourselves only to the ideal of mutual complementary harmony as the only true meaning that can ever be assigned to this statement. This must not be the case because the expression can also be misused in a way that contradicts the ideals they seek to proclaim. Ibuanidanda philosophy seeks to disclose the reasons for difficulties of this kind, that are often

forgotten or overlooked. Furthermore, it strives to offer viable tools towards their containment; and in the form of constructing a method and higher principles of legitimisation of human conduct at all levels of determination.

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“Ibu anyi danda” and the Inconspicuous Accessory Conditions

Now, when we affirm *ibuanyidanda* and assume that it is a true statement that conveys the feeling and meaning of mutual complementary harmony, this must not be the case always. Yet, in most cases, we tend to assume that statements of this kind are true and valid in all ramifications in view of what they claim. Furthermore, we assume that by adhering to the injunction of mutual complementation enshrined in the statement *ibu anyi danda*, we are bound to surmount such difficult challenges as building equitable, harmonious and egalitarian societies among human beings. Carried away by such sentiments, we easily transpose, quite uncritically, what is applicable to *danda*, the ants, to the way human beings conduct themselves. Now, the moment we proceed in this way, for example, we would most likely be compelled to assume also that what is valid for ants is automatically valid for human beings. Worst still, we proceed also in transposing what is valid for ants quite uncritically and unequivocally to the way human persons conduct themselves in society. When this happens, we are immediately liable to what I call **error of transposition** and **picture-type fallacies**. An error of transposition ensues the moment we transpose contents, from one context to the other quite arbitrarily, and thereby assume that they uphold identical meaning within the new context. Picture-type fallacy results when we erroneously assume that the impression we have of an object within any given context is all that can ever be known and said about it. Definitely, what is valid for ants is not valid for human beings in all ramifications if the analogy must uphold its usefulness. These are yet some of the reasons observational statements, such as *ibu anyi danda*, can always be mismanaged.

Such statements often enshrine premises we think are true, but which, as a matter of fact, can be fundamentally flawed, without our realising this fully. They do so because they are subject to the inconspicuous accessory conditions determining the way we know, will, judge and act. In this

case, they share in the ambivalence that characterises our experience of the world, and are subject to the impact of *ihe mkpuchi anya* . It is for this reason that we cannot transpose what such statements seek to express arbitrarily from one context to the other without running into serious conceptual and practical difficulties. The moment we accept such statements as true, unequivocally, within one context, we would also be inclined to extend such truths to all thinkable cases. This is the moment we seek to universalise such statements and assume that if it is true that *ibu anyi danda* (no task is insurmountable for *danda*), then it is very likely true that human communities would conduct themselves in society just like ants. Difficulties of this kind actually occur due to aforementioned reasons where we accept statements of the kind *ibu anyi danda* (no task is insurmountable for *danda*) as valid and true statements because they are the types of things we expect of human communities. Such statements enshrine the types of things we would like to believe about human communities; and the types of things we wish human communities. In other words, we are dealing, in these cases, directly with those expectations and highly cherished wishes that are in harmony with our interests – that of building the perfect human community, where justice, harmony and egalitarianism reign supreme. Overtaken by such ideal wishes, desires and expectations, our perspective is narrowed down; we easily become less circumspect, and can thereby easily forget to ask critical questions concerning the conditions of validity and applicability of the truth claim of descriptive statements like *ibu anyi danda*.

This type of forgetfulness provoked by the inconspicuous accessory conditions of human conduct restricts and beclouds our judgement in the face of those expectations and wishes we desire most. The constraining mechanisms and phenomena constituting these inconspicuous accessory conditions enhance the impact which habit has on judgement and thinking. Likewise, they boost the tendency to attach disproportionate attention only to those things that favour our interests at the cost of others. Being oversensitive about our most cherished interests therefore, we can become less circumspect; and can run into avoidable conceptual and practical difficulties. In other words, if on account of the constraints to which human consciousness is subjected, we subscribe to the incontestable evidence presented by sense impressions, we are likely also to hold firmly to the validity and veracity of conclusions derive from these; even when such are not completely rational and practicable. These are those moments when it would be difficult to convince ourselves otherwise that the contrary can ever be the case. Where we have made such a commitment, and believe that such statements are true and valid, we may not even bother much any longer about some of

the most grievous logical and practical implications presented by such commitments.

The Super-maxim or the Basic Rule of Danda

Now, one may ask: what do we mean exactly with the descriptive statement *ibu anyi danda* (no task is insurmountable for *danda*)? As we have seen, one of the most common modes of understanding this expression subsists in transposing what is applicable to ants to the way human communities conduct themselves. We mean with this that human being and communities can surmount difficult challenges if they work in concert and behave like these ants. Countless concrete examples that lend credence to this mode of abound. It is for this reason that we are tempted to accept it as the most credible meaning the expression can ever have. In this case, we refuse to go beyond what is presented to us as the incontestable evidence of sense impressions. For this reason, we refrain from asking critical questions. Thus we know from experience that human communities do actually surmount very difficult challenges in an attitude of mutual complementary unison. Experience suggests that such difficult task as building equitable, harmonious and egalitarian society can result from attitudes of mutual complementary harmony and not the other way round. Due to impressions of this kind, we are often compelled to accept as true that an attitude of mutual complementary harmony would invariably be the cause of difficult feats of this kind. These are the types of experiences that reinforce the apparent truth claims of observational statements of all kinds. These are statements that enshrine those ideals we all crave and expect and which we, for reasons of this kind, affirm their truth content without much difficulty. In other words, in such expectations are embedded their truth claims and the types of meanings we assign to them. In line with this, the statement *ibu anyi danda* (no task is insurmountable for *danda*) enshrines expectations and desiderata of the kind; and from which it draws its meaning: A) It is desirable and optimal to work in unison in view of surmounting difficult challenges and attaining best result. B) It is better to attend to difficult tasks in concert than working alone. Furthermore, such expressions enshrine wishes of the kind: C) If you desire to attain optimal results then work in unison. D) If you wish to surmount difficult challenges then work in concert with your closest allies. As earlier pointed out, wishes and expectations of this kind have implicit moments of hypothetical and categorical commands - all at the same time. But, due to the fact that they are the types of things we earnestly desire and wish ourselves most, they impact more forcefully on our consciousness as pure eternal categorical commands. For this reason we tend to accept them as true always; and based on which all actions desiring to be rational can be validated.

These are the reasons also we are misled into adhering only to their categorical meaning, forgetful of their hypothetical connotation. One can say that statements of this kind appeal directly to our primitive instinct of self-preservation in view of getting what we want and protecting our most cherished interests. In which case, we are compelled, quite instinctively, to yield irresistibly to their appeal. From here results, among other things, that we take the expression *ibu anyi danda* to mean that it is most reasonable and commanded always to unite with our closest allies in view of surmounting difficult challenges. Again, we take it to mean that it most reasonable and commanded to rely on such bonds of intimacy to get what we want; and most especially against an outside that is perceived as hostile and threatening. This is why when, we invoke *ibu anyi danda*, and the stakes are high, for example, we may be compelled to be only at the service of our comrades in arms, our kinsmen, our communities, our bosom friends and of all those who share some bond of intimacy with us. We thereby unite with these close allies to get what we want against an outside we perceive as threatening and not good enough. When we proceed in this way, we assume, without much difficulties and without qualms, that we are practicing the ideal of complementarity. We thereby forget that such acts are merely intended to shield us from those we perceive as threatening; those we think should be avoided at all cost or even eliminate because they pose a threat to our interests. In cases of this kind. In all such cases, we are compelled to believe that the ideal of complementarity is equivalent to conducts of this kind, even if they are despicable and run contrary to this ideal.

This becomes evident in those critical situations of life, where the stakes are high; and where stakeholders carried by the feeling of mutual complementary bond by invoking *ibu anyi danda* try to defend and perpetrate causes that might be injurious to others. In such cases, we are drawn to these close allies only and approach outsiders with feelings of repulsion because we perceive these outsiders as nothing other than threats to our most cherished interests. In such cases, we instinctively hold that it is most reasonable and commanded to help, prefer and protect the interests of those who belong to us intimately because they are nearer to us, and pose the least dangers to our most cherished interests. Furthermore, we thereby assume instinctively that since these are the ones that guarantee our welfare and security; are the ones nearer to us; therefore, they are also better and safer. In such situations, what we perceive as the ideal of complementarity can be summarised thus: We can surmount difficult challenges when we hold together as people sharing bonds of intimacy in view of safeguarding our interests against an outside that is threatening and not good enough. This, it

seems to me, is precisely why most human beings, would very willingly and instinctively submit themselves to the veracity and categorical appeal of descriptive statements of the kind “*ibu anyi danda*”, and are fascinated by them. Out of sheer fascination and impelled by their most cherished interests and wishes, they thereby easily forget that statements of this kind are not absolute eternal commands. This notwithstanding, they submit themselves to such statements as categorical commands. At such moments, they are, quiet blindly and instinctively, easily attracted only to those closest or nearest to them believing that these are their only true friends and succour: They are drawn only to their kit and kin, to people of their race, communities, religion, country, to people who share some bond of intimacy with them etc. Because they are easily carried away, in this way, by their most cherished interests, by their whims and caprices, by those things that fascinate them, they remain ignorant of the full meaning and implications of the expression *ibu anyi danda*. In these circumstances, they are merely victims of those inconspicuous accessory conditions that control human consciousness. This is when they are compelled to submit themselves to the vile meaning of complementarity; and one that negates the very ideals enshrined in this concept. In this case, they are misled, quite instinctively, into assuming that descriptive statements of the kind *ibu anyi danda* are designed for safeguarding privately motivated interests; and in view of defending ourselves against an outside that is threatening and not good enough. Since they accept statements of this kind as absolute commands, they become forgetful and ignorant of its hypothetical character.

Mistakes and errors of this kind are the types of things that can be explained based on the inconspicuous accessory conditions that constraint human consciousness - our tension-laden ambivalent existential experience of reality and *ihe mkpuchi anya* (phenomenon of concealment). These phenomena and mechanisms create the illusion that can complicate our mode of understanding reality and the way we react to them. Due to the impact they exert on us, actors are most prone to mistaking hypothetical injunctions for categorical commands or universal laws; and so much so that this can even impact adversely on their character. At such moments, they follow unilaterally and unconsciously dictates that may not be fully rational while believing that they are acting wisely. This is the case, when they believe that only those nearest to them are better and safer and the stranger not. Acting in this instinctive, unilateral absolute mode is what I call acting after **the super maxim of *ibuanyidanda* philosophy**. This super-maxim can be formulated more clearly thus: “**the nearer the better and the safer**” and it is what I designate as “**the basic rule of *danda***”. It summarises what all hypothetical

injunctions that are mistaken for categorical commands seek to express, and such where stakeholders assume that they are commanded always to seek and uphold a bond of intimacy with those nearest to them because these, in their opinion, are safer than those outsiders they do not know so well. Where attitudes of this kind persist, stakeholders equally develop near-inviolable sense of duty and commitment towards those they cherish and who, in their estimation, are most likely to protect their interests. They thereby assume quite instinctively that their lives and security depend inextricably on these types of intimate relationship. This is understandable, because they are conditioned into believing that the realisation of their most cherished interests can best be guaranteed in this way. Hence, they would also regard any statement that has the character of the super-maxim as an apodictic true statement always. In *Igbo* existential experience statements that have this character include: *ibu anyi danda* (no task is insurmountable for *danda*), *umunna bu ike*, (the kindred is strength); *igwe bu ike* (multitude or togetherness is strength); *njiko ka* (togetherness is the best strategy or togetherness is the greatest virtue) etc. Since these statements enshrine mere hypothetical injunctions that are mistaken for categorical commands, they can always lead to errors of judgement concerning our needs and wants. This is why also they can easily mislead stakeholders into making fallacious assumptions concerning the types of relationship needed to legitimise authentic relationship and human experience of the world.

Definitely, by submitting themselves to the dictates of this super maxim, actors are merely being deceived and are deceiving themselves. Statements of this kind present serious logical and existential challenges. To start with, it is not very correct to assume, for example, that those nearest to us are always better and safer as to elevate this to a methodological assumption for good and valid conduct. We know of innumerable cases, for example, where those nearest to us constitute the gravest dangers to our security and wellbeing. What this indicates is that the constraints arising from these inconspicuous accessory conditions can easily compel us into submitting ourselves to avoidable existential and logical fallacies. This is one of the reasons stakeholders, in such conditions, we may be most willing to draw apparently valid conclusion from seemingly valid existential premises that are inherently flawed. When this happens, we easily also elevate such conclusions, that are not fully rational and logical, to an imperative with the full weight of a command. Worst still is when we accept such injunctions as necessary and sufficient conditions for the realisation of set goals and execution of action. Because, the premises on which such conclusions are built have inherent moments of fallacy, that is not always evident to us - and one

that is concealed from us due to constraining character of sense impressions and common-sense experience, we are bound to err greatly in our judgements about the world and in the way we act. This is why adhering uncritically to super-maxims of this kind to legitimise human conduct, can always lead to negating, quite inadvertently, those ideals we desire and cherish most. This is the character of the descriptive statements: *ibu anyi danda* (no task is insurmountable for *danda*), *umunna bu ike*, (the kindred is strength); *igwe bu ike* (multitude or togetherness is strength); *njiko ka* (togetherness is the best strategy or togetherness is the greatest virtue) etc.

Unfortunately, these are the types of expressions that play major roles of legitimisation of human conduct in most philosophical undertakings that have a communalistic undertone. Since such expression enshrine hypothetical injunctions of the type “the nearer the better and the safer” they are not strong enough for such a rigorous task of legitimisation. They enshrine mere habitual assumptions that are inherently conditional in character: Something that is not always evident to us. Bearing some of these shortcomings in mind, one can say that all maxims that draw their legitimacy from the idea of intimate belongingness are not only critique worthy, but more so, in need of thorough overhaul and rehabilitation. This is why, it seems to me, that most theories of communalism in African philosophy that seek their legitimisation in maxims of this kind are in dire need of revision.

Ibuanyidanda and Some Existential Challenges within a Global Context

Most heterogeneous multicultural contexts, as we have them in the world today, are exposed to the difficulties associated with the inconspicuous accessory conditions of human conduct. Such very easily incite to exclusivist intolerant behaviour; where stakeholders deem it most appropriate to rely on the super-maxim of “the nearer the better and safer” to attend to contentious matters. This is why, it seems to me, that the very roots of most issues dealing with exclusivist extremist tendencies can be located in difficulties of this kind, where our passion to survive at the cost of those we perceive as alien and threatening, as weak and inconsequential overweighs our sense of fair play, compassion and compromise. We see this given when, either as individuals or as groups, we instinctively tends to cling only to those nearest to us, believing, if only erroneously, that these are our only true friends and succour. At such moments, stakeholders perceive those who do not share bonds of intimacy with them, a priori, as the untrustworthy distant dangerous other. These are the types of existential conditions that can make people harsh and resentful of anything that does not resemble their kind; and which they impulsively regard as dangerous and worthy of elimi-

nation. Since they cannot call these their own, they would also not mind discriminating against them; even persecuting them mindlessly - and hardly feel any compassion for them. This is why this distant other is approached with a compulsive air of suspicious, malice and near uncontrollable phobic inhibitions. Here, the human fundamental instinct of self-preservation is stirred; to the extent that it compels us to assume that those others who are not nearer to us are not good enough; and neither are they safe and trustworthy. With this, an avoidable irrational tension is created which makes coexistence of opposites difficult, if not impossible. Since resentful attitudes of this kind are easily reciprocated, the spiral of negative reciprocity tightens the grip of the kind of concealment that is responsible for such acts.

Attitudes of this kind are quite widespread today where many, quite instinctively assume that because they share some bond of intimacy with certain groups of peoples, hence these are automatically safer than those strangers they do not know so well. These are the types of attitude that can complicate the way we handle most pressing problems today; in questions, of harnessing and distribution of earth's resources, in matter of immigration and asylum for those unjustly persecuted. The same is applicable in matters dealing with security, both military and social; in matters of employment opportunities, in matters of ethnic and religious differences and in all important matters where differences can play a major. Where major decisions are determined by irrational impulses created by instigations of the super-maxim, by our tension-laden ambivalent experience and *ihe mkpuchi anya*, seeking viable solutions to most of daunting problems of our time is bound to be a very difficult task. Difficulties of this kind can account for some of the paradoxes we encounter day in, day out, among groups, human communities and even among nations - our subscription to lofty humanistic ideals notwithstanding. Here, people are easily helpless victims of our primitive instinct of self-preservation; and one that makes us almost always assume, without much resistance, that those nearest to us are better and safer. Unfortunately, since attitudes of this kind lack sustainable rational foundation, our lack of circumspection can, at times boomerang, where we assume that the inside is safe because it is nearer and intimate. It often turns out that this inside that is considered harmless can pose some of the gravest dangers. This is why many African communities that complain bitterly about being marginalised by the mainstream majority, are easily victims of the worst forms of exploitation in the hands of their own trusted leaders, and those insiders they call their own. Within such contexts, people are easily victims of their failure to address adequately the threats posed by existential conditions that make them victims their own fears and ignorance.

Not even the scientific community is immune from difficulties of this kind. More often than not, many theoreticians and technocrats tend to bend rules in ways that suggest vile ethnocentric allegiances. This is the very foundation of what I call “unintended ethnocentric commitment” within the scientific community itself. This is that tendency for theoreticians and technocrats to be narrow-minded and triumphal in their approaches; most especially in matters that extoll ethnic differences to their favour. These are some of the reasons the content of theories are at times, and embarrassingly too, ethnocentrically self-serving. The same is applicable when technocrats misjudge some of the collateral implications their decisions may have due to the disproportionate attention they attach to damages directed towards an outside they consider alien and not good enough. This is one of the many reasons I consider the challenges posed by all modes of ethnocentric reduction even more damaging than those posed by the issue of value oriented bias in inquiry. Whereas the issue of value oriented bias touches more on matters of scientific integrity, the challenges of “unintended ethnocentric commitment” goes still deeper as to have the capacity to complicate the relationship among scientists of diverse ethnic backgrounds.

Within all contexts where we instinctively assume that those nearest to us are our only true friends, what is immediately projected into our consciousness are often: people from our ethnic groups, those who belong to our race and communities, people from our clan, our tribe, people from our nation, those who share like values and cultural identities with us, or people who share some bond of intimacy with us. These, we assume, are only those worthy of honour and respect, because they are more likely to provide us with the much needed succour we crave; and are those most capable of helping us succeed. This creed is as wide spread as human groups and communities have special interests to protect. This is why being conditioned in this mode, many actually go ahead, slyly, building coalitions of the weak or the strong, as the case may be, in view of securing their highly cherished interests against an outside, that is from the outset declared alien and threatening. I strive through *ibuanyidanda* philosophy to show how difficulties of these kinds can be addressed more creditably. This is why I strive to provide a method and some higher principles of legitimisation of human action to address these matters. The ultimate goal is to demonstrate how units can coexist more creditably within any given framework of action and interaction; and how they can affirm their existence as missing links in mutual complementary relationship.

By “missing links of reality”, I refer to all the units that constitute an entity as these are interminably related to each other in mutual comple-

mentary service. Therefore, missing links of reality are, for example, human persons, institutions, communities, the ecosystem, ideas and ideas of ideas, units and the units of units, things and things of things, both spiritual and material, both animate and inanimate, eternal and temporal; and all imaginable modes of relations; as these can be abstracted and related to each other in a complementary mutually related mode. By reason of its understanding of missing links in this mode *ibuanyidanda* philosophy pursues an ontology where being is equally understood as that on account of which anything that exists serves a missing link of reality. This is why I conceptualise existence as nothing other than what it takes to affirm insightfully that all missing links can be grasped creditably within a mutual complementary framework.

The Method of *Ibuanyidanda* Philosophy

Within the context of a transcendent complementary comprehensive existential analysis, *Ibuanyidanda* philosophy or complementary reflection conceptualises method as disposition. By this I mean the type of disposition needed to approach sense experience (*ihe ahụ na anya ekwe*), and reality generally, with a transcendent complementary comprehensive type of mindset beyond the impositions arising from mere sensation. Method is the type of disposition needed to relate to missing links of reality in a vicarious mutually related mode. Expressed in another way: method is the fundamental disposition needed to think and act in an *ibuanyidanda* mode. It is the capacity to focus on the “*ibuanyidandaness*” of any given phenomenon or existential condition. In all given instances, method is co-intended and consummated, both formally and materially, in the process of noetic-propaedeutic (pre-education of the mind), where the human subject learns to convert the **transcendent categories of unity of consciousness** of *ibuanyidanda philosophy* into practical action. Based on its method, *ibuanyidanda* seeks to show why judgements concerning given empirical conditions are not necessarily objective statements of fact as they occur in our consciousness, but judgements that can be preconditioned by mechanisms and phenomena that influence the way we perceive reality. Therefore, in dealing with the world, such a method makes it imperative for theoreticians and actors to search always beyond mere sensations (*ihe ndi ahụ na anya ekwe*); and to delve into the phenomena and mechanisms that drive theories and action. Akpan elaborated, very creditably, how the method of *ibuanyidanda* philosophy can serve as an alternative paradigm of explanation and understanding in science. (Akpan, "Ambivalence of Human Existential Situation). Relying on the method of *ibuanyidanda*, we are immediately conscious of the fact that certain phenomena and mechanisms of non-rational and quasi-rational na-

ture are integral aspects of our experience of reality; such that they can invalidate the apparent incontestable and seemingly rational character of raw data of experience. The method of *ibuanyidanda* strives to unravel the type of determination to which human consciousness is subjected due to the constraining mechanisms and phenomena characteristic of our experience of the world. Its method further strives to show how these challenges can be addressed through the application of the principles of *ibuanyidanda* philosophy and other allied tools belonging to it. Over and above all, it endeavours to emphasise that, its predicaments notwithstanding, human subjects have an innate capacity deriving from aforementioned **transcendent categories of unity of consciousness** (*akara obi or akara mmuḡo*) to address, successfully, these existential constraints to which they are exposed. To these transcendent categories (*akara obi or akara mmuḡo*) belong “absoluteness”, “relativity”, “historicity”, “fragmentation” or “world-immanent predetermination”, “universality”, “comprehensiveness”, “unity”, “totality”, and “future reference”. Finally, its method shows why a type of pedagogy (noetic propaedeutic or pre-education of the mind) is indispensable for addressing the challenges posed by our world in its fundamental tension-laden constitution.

The Principles of *Ibuanyidanda* Philosophy and Rehabilitation of the Basic Rule of *danda*

The basic ontological claim of *ibuanyidanda* philosophy enters into the formulation of its principles. Hence, its **principle of integration**, the metaphysical variant of its principles, states: “*Anything that exists serves a missing link of reality*” (Asouzu Method and Principles 2004, 273-327; Method and Principles 2005, 281-285). I call the practical equivalent of its metaphysical principles **the principle of progressive transformation**. It claims that: “*All human actions are geared towards the joy of being*”. It is thus, an injunction always to act for the joy of being or for attainment of the experience of transcendent complementary unity of consciousness with all existent realities. Acting for the joy of being is captured by the *Igbo* expression - *jide ka iji* (keep it up i.e. hold firmly to the joy of being, always seek to retain it, now and in all future cases). Although the expression *jide ka iji* is rooted in sense experience as a descriptive statement, its entry into the formulation of the principle of progressive transformation legitimises it at a higher plane. The same is valid when descriptive statements are handled consciously as to portray their universal connotation. When this happens, we assume that such statements have undergone the type of transformation ensuing from their being exposed to the transforming effects of the transcendent categories of unity of consciousness (*akara obi*). At such moments, ac-

tors see the need to translate these **transcendent categories of unity of consciousness** into action in the process of existential conversion. (Asouzu, *Ibuanyidanda : New Complementary Ontology*, 323-332). On its side, **the imperative of *ibuanyidanda* philosophy** demands: “*Allow the limitations of being to be the cause of your joy.*” Though this imperative seeks universal applicability, it is not a categorical command. Hence, quite unlike Immanuel Kant’s deontological categorical imperative, it is merely a **universal imperative** (The Metaphysical Foundation of Morals 528-537; Asouzu, *Ibuaru* 210-221). The **truth and authenticity criterion** of *ibuanyidanda* philosophy states: “*Never elevate a world-immanent missing link to an absolute instance.*” Its method, principles, imperative and its truth and authenticity criterion are the very tools *ibuanyidanda* philosophy relies upon to address the broken unity we often sense in human consciousness; that between being and its attributes, and most especially incidents of broken unity between the subject and the world generally: Something that spells out clearly the type of existential challenges to which human consciousness is exposed. These are the very tools upon which human consciousness relies in view of addressing the constraints imposed by our tension-laden existential experiences and *ihe mkpuchi anya* (phenomenon of concealment); and the urge to act always after the super-maxim.

By reliance on these tools, it is hoped that the human subject should be in a position to address creditably some of the major difficulties posed by the super-maxim, by *ihe mkpuchi anya* and by our tension-laden existential ambivalent experience of reality. Over and above all, it should help the subject address the issue of undue reliance on data of sense experience only to build judgement. Hence, they help the human subjects relate with reality more universally, comprehensively and future referentially. It is based on these tools that stakeholders can creditably proceed in overhauling, transforming and rehabilitating all such synthetic descriptive statements as *ibu anyi danda* (no task is insurmountable for *danda*), *umunna bu ike*, (the kindred is strength); *igwe bu ike* (multitude or togetherness is strength); *njiko ka* (togetherness is the best strategy or togetherness is the greatest virtue) etc. to statements of more universal normative connotation. This is why, if for example, traditional *Igbo* philosophers, through the observational statement “*ibu anyi danda* (no task is insurmountable for *danda*)”, focus on the mutual dependence and feeling of intimate belongingness observable among members of their immediate communities and groups, I seek, through the concept *ibuanyidanda*, and the method of *ibuanyidanda* philosophy, to widen, more universally and analytically, the scope of applicability of what is intended in this observational statement (The difference between *ibu anyi danda* [syn-

thetic] and *ibuanyidanda* [synthetic-analytic] has to be noted very carefully). Whereas the synthetic expresses “the basic rule of *danda*” (the super-maxim), its synthetic-analytic variant offers the groundwork for the formulation of the principle of *ibuanyidanda* philosophy. It is by reason of this synthetic-analytic variant which seeks to capture the more exact meaning of mutual complementary interrelatedness as complementarity that the basic rule of *danda* or super-maxim is rehabilitated, overhauled and superseded. Therefore, in the expression *ibuanyidanda* we are offered, more fully, the exact universal connotation of what the basic rule of *danda* seeks to express. Hence, the nearest English equivalent of this synthetic analytic concept “*ibuanyidanda*” is complementarity. From this is derived the expression **complementary reflection (*ibuanyidanda* philosophy)** as the type of transcendent reflection needed to approach reality comprehensively, universally and beyond the impositions arising from mere sensation and common-sense experience.

***Ibuanyidanda* and the Idea of Philosophy**

As an undertaking that considers reality in mutual complementary interrelatedness, *ibuanyidanda* understands philosophy as a science of missing links of reality. An understanding of this kind stays in contrast to that approach to philosophy that bifurcates our conception of reality; as is already evident in Aristotle’s metaphysics when he makes a radical distinction between being and its attributes. Here, Aristotle sees a deep-seated division between substance or essence and its accidents. For him substance or essence is that which deserves the name being in its fullest; as opposed to accidents which depend on their essences for their being. Whereas substances subsist and endures, accidents merely inhere in substances such that “if these are not substance, there is no substance and no being at all; for the accidents of these it cannot be right to call beings.” (Book B, 5). With a bifurcating conception of this kind, Aristotle ushers in a style of philosophising that would be very influential in the way philosophical debates are conducted in subsequent epochs. He indeed influenced many later year philosophers who inherited his bifurcating exclusivist type of mind-set in the way they conduct philosophical investigation. This is how, for example, the central idea of Descartes metaphysics, is essence which he conceptualises in tune with Aristotle’s ideas as “the thing existing in such a manner that it has need of no other thing in other to exist” (cf. Solomon, 85). In all such and similar cases, philosophers see a deep-rooted divide between essences or substances and accidents as to handle, for example, the matters relating to mind and matter, essence and existence, phenomenon and Noumenon, spiritual and temporal, in a disjointed exclusivist mode. I categorise approaches of this

kind as “ **the philosophy of essence**” because in matter of this kind philosophers, unwittingly, concentrate on one side of the ontological divide that they consider essential. By seeing essence and accidents as discrete modes of existence, they paint a world of irreconcilable opposites that cannot be grasped within a complementary comprehensive framework. This is the case with most extreme one-sided ways of seeing the world as we have this given in: existentialism, phenomenology, idealism, realism, positivism, relativism, absolutism, Afro-centrism, Euro-centrism, rationalism, empiricism, etc., Here, stakeholders are more interested in charting a path of philosophical orthodoxy, which, inadvertently, seeks to exclude aspects of reality from its radar of consideration.

More often than not, and interestingly also, stakeholders, quite instinctively, pursue their own side of the ontological divide even at the risk of self-contradiction; and of evoking avoidable controversies that can complicate human interpersonal relationship. Such can be fully attested to by the long-drawn hostilities between some of the major proponents of rationalism and empiricism, in diverse shades, where each quite adamantly concentrates only on its own side of the ontological divide. With this, not only do contestants get themselves entangled in conceptual difficulties, but more so in practical ones that are healthy, neither for scientific investigation, nor for human interpersonal relationship. Aristotle’s approach shows clear signs of difficulties of this kind when he pursues an idea of a metaphysics that is superior to what he calls the ancillary sciences. It is obvious that an approach of this kind has all it takes to introduce, if only inadvertently, a mind-set that extolls differences and inequality into the way we do philosophy, and science generally. We are dealing here directly with an elitist discriminative type of approach which places the subject matter of one science above the other. Aristotle’s main contention is that metaphysics or first philosophy as he calls it is superior; it deals directly with the ultimate nature of things, with the first causes. For this reason, “the superior science is more of the nature of Wisdom than the ancillary” (Aristotle, *Metaphysica*, Book A, 2). Since, for him, “the wise man knows all things, as far as possible” he is bound to be superior to others. Even then, one wonders if this is a justification for Aristotle’s conclusion that “the wise man must not be ordered but must order, and he must not obey another, but the less wise must obey him.” (Aristotle, *Metaphysica*, Book A, 2).

Building theories and directing human action after an elitist, exclusivist bifurcating model of this kind can have very severe implications. One of the most obvious is that where those who think that they know assume also that they have the sacred duty to order and command those they consid-

er less wise, inconsequential and weak. With this, knowledge can very easily be degraded to a veritable tool of ideology; to an instrument of power, domination and conquest. Bifurcating exclusivist approaches of this kind are the types of things that can cast deep-dark shadow over the notion of philosophy as wisdom. Bearing in mind shortcomings of this kind that are peculiar to all modes essentialist, exclusivist, and absolutist types of philosophising, there is need to reconceptualise philosophy in an ontology that neither bifurcates nor segregates. This is the character of an *ibuanyidanda* philosophy in its self-understanding as a philosophy of mutual complementary interrelatedness.

In *ibuanyidanda* philosophy, therefore, I seek ways of overcoming difficulties inherent in any metaphysics that bifurcates reality and discriminates among contending alternatives. With this I wish to show how, in addressing reality, the propositions or statements of any given science or undertaking, intended for human interpersonal relationship, can be validated in tune with the dictates of all given relations within a complementary framework. Such an approach sees the need for a mutual complementation of the methods of different sciences; as against any approach that sees a deep-seated divide in their subject matters. Where metaphysics, for example, is seen as a superior science, as against the so called ancillary sciences, as Aristotle says it is, the impression is immediately created that the subject matters of different sciences are at odds with each other. This must not be the case if we remember that all the sciences are ultimately geared towards ensuring human happiness. Such an objective can hardly be achieved where our conception about the world rests on an ontology that bifurcates and discriminates. For this reason, *ibuanyidanda philosophy* wishes to demonstrate how unified statements about being, and the world in general, can be possible, within an integrated systematic framework; and one that allows freedom of expression; and which considers all things adequately, the fragmentation of their historicity notwithstanding.

If now the suppositions of a philosophy of essence leads to the polarisation of reality, *ibuanyidanda* philosophy explores a method and principles for reconciling the apparent contradictions we sense in human consciousness; and one that misleads us into assuming that essence (substance) and accidents exist in diverse regions of the ontological divide. We are exposed to such conceptual and practical difficulties because of the existential challenges to which human consciousness is subjected. This is precisely why I strive to offer a method by reason of which human consciousness can credibly coalesce successfully the real and the ideal, the essential and accidental into a system of mutual complementing units. It is a challenge to show how

philosophy can be relevant to all units constituting a whole, such that the essential and accidental, the necessary and contingent, the universal and the particular, the absolute and relative, the conservative and the progressive, the constructive and the deconstructive; both the consequential and inconsequential, both the essential and inessential, both the real and the ideal, both the transcendental and world-immanent, can more easily be grappled with within the same framework. The same is valid on how to handle the artificial divide we sense in human consciousness in the face of its highly cherished interests: Here also, *ibuanyidanda* philosophy seeks to mediate between contending alternatives – between mine and dine, between the community and the individual, male and female, between indigenes and strangers, between lords and slaves etc.

When *ibuanyidanda* philosophy performs this task of mediation, it immediately portrays itself as that undertaking that seeks to penetrate and explore the idea of being, complementarily, in the dynamism of its immediacy and considers all things that exist as missing links of reality. This is why for *Ibuanyidanda* philosophy, existence, and with it to be, is the capacity to be in mutual complementary relationship (*ka sọ mụ adina*) with all things that exist. Likewise, the negation of being is for it “to be alone” (*ka sọ mụ di*) and not **nothingness**. This is why it is a tragedy to locate the essence of existence in the capacity to be alone (*ka sọ mụ di*) i.e. in the capacity to act outside of the framework provided by all missing links of reality. In this sense, the act of being and with it existence, is all it takes to affirm insightfully that anything that exists serves a missing link of reality towards the joy of being. With this, I affirm that **being is dynamic in a complementary sense** and not dynamic in a world immanent pre-deterministic sense.

The major task of any philosophy subsists therefore in the harmonization of our perception of reality in the face of a world that presents itself as varied and fragmented. This task can be accomplished within the context of a philosophy whose goal is to harmonise and complement reality instead of one that seeks to divide, polarise and bifurcate it. It is within such a context, that we say that philosophy is the science of missing links of reality as against a philosophy of essence for which philosophy, as wisdom is a science of pure essences. We can then understand why an *ibuanyidanda* philosophy is the very limit of a pure empiricist-based and pure rationalist-based truth claims, for example. As against these extremist exclusivist and bifurcating approaches, I seek, in matters of epistemology for example, to reconceptualise epistemology in a way that harmonises reality. By so doing, an *ibuanyidanda* epistemology challenges the validity of a pure empiricist or a purely rationalist-based truth claim, as these form the foundation on

which the ideological tension that overheats and overshadows most scientific debates is located. Here, I aver that all matters of knowledge, both in their genesis and further development, are complementary (Ibuaru 242-255). One can then understand my contention that in the genesis and perfectibility of our ideas, members of the human family are interminably in a relationship of mutual dependence and interdependence in complementarity. It is for this reason that I maintain that the debate concerning the origin of philosophy, and with it the “Black Athena” debate, that have polarised the Eurocentric and Afrocentric camps are ethno-centric induced excesses far removed from genuine concerns of science (Asouzu, Ibuanidanda 110-114, Ibuaru, 287-292). The same can be said of much of the debates based on a positivist induced rationality that seeks to do away with a metaphysical knowledge. The same observation is valid for all attempts at conducting philosophical inquiry with an exclusivist absolutist type of mind-set under the cloaks of liberal cultural philosophy: Something that has pitched my position against the way some mainstream proponents of intercultural philosophy conduct philosophical investigation (Kimmerle, “Die schwere Last der Komplementarität”). In most of these cases, I sense attempts at doing philosophy with an unintended ethnocentric induced type of mind-set, quite unknown to individuals concerned. In other words, we are dealing, in such cases, directly with incidents of worst forms of the impact of *the mkpuchi anya* in the way theoreticians conduct their investigations. In the face of difficulties of this kind, I see the need for philosophy, most especially as a cultural enterprise, to consummate a complementary turn in order to remain credible today.

Hence, contrary to the pretension of all exclusivist hegemonic types of absolute reasoning masquerading as liberal rationality, I pursue a philosophy of mutual complementation that sees units as missing links of reality. This is precisely, why I aver that Philosophy originated neither in Greece nor in Egypt. As wisdom, it is an exercise that can only be pursued successfully in mutual dependence of all missing links in their complementary interrelatedness. For this reason, all ethnocentric induced modes of reasoning that see differences as the major point for building arguments can hardly satisfy some of the major demands of a philosophy of mutual complementation. Here, *ibuanidanda* logic strives beyond the logic of ethnocentric geographical categorisation that capitalise on differences to build arguments. Approaches of this kind focus more on such themes as Western Science, African Science, “Western thought system”, “Asian Logic”, “African Logic”, “Eastern Medicine” “African Medicine” etc. Hence, not fronting for any particular ideological divides, *ibuanidanda* philosophy is synonymous nei-

ther with African philosophy nor with Igbo philosophy, the contexts of its genesis. In matters of this kind, all cultures, peoples, races, tribes, sexes, languages, nations, religions, political affiliations etc. are in mutual complementary indebtedness to each other, in their privileges and responsibilities. For this reason, I avers that all forms of ideas and modes of knowledge, in their excogitation, in their acquisition, execution and further development are complementary. *Ibuanyidanda* thus pursues an idea of mutual indebtedness and interdependence in complementary service; and one that elevates mutual ethical responsibilities to an imperative. Just as a philosophy of essence, that considers being indefinable, has as its subject matter all things that exist in so far as they are pure essences or being as being without qualification, *ibuanyidanda* philosophy, likewise, has as its subject matter all things that exist, but insofar as they serve each other interminably as missing links of reality.

Transcendent Complementary Circle and the Process of Noetic Propaedeutic

The transcendent complementary circle of *ibuanyidanda* philosophy offers us the context within which the effectiveness of its assumptions can be validated. It is that context which provides us the opportunity to determine the “*ibuanyidandaness*” of any given judgement or action. One can say that in the transcendent complementary circle we see the conditions for translating the tools of *ibuanyidanda* into practical use in our judgements and actions. It thus consists of all the efforts we make to acquire a disposition that is permeated by an *ibuanyidanda* type of mind-set as its method. Hence, in all given cases, and in view of ensuring that the demands of *ibuanyidanda* philosophy are upheld, it may be necessary to ask always:

Is it in tune with the method of *ibuanyidanda*?

Is it in tune with the truth and authenticity criterion of *ibuanyidanda*?

Is it in tune with the imperative of *ibuanyidanda*?

Is it in tune with the principles of *ibuanyidanda*?

Answering these questions in the affirmative would guarantee that the *ibuanyidanda* circle is adhered to; something that does not happen perchance, but has to be acquired consciously and conscientiously in process of what I call “noetic propaedeutic” (pre-education of the mind). It is in this transcendent process that the type of complementary disposition needed to address reality as missing links ensues. In this subsists what I mean when I say that “method is disposition”: That is the disposition to think, judge and act in an *ibuanyidanda* way.

On its part, noetic propaedeutic is a self-imposed act of conscious experience of existent realities as missing links. Such a propaedeutic can also ensue thorough positive enlightenment from the outside: In this case, it always presupposes the type of complementary pre-disposition that makes it possible. It is in this sense that I understands method as a pedagogical process that is fundamentally co-intended, both formally and materially in the cognitive and volitional acts of the subject. It is co-intended in this mode only potentially; and as an inherent dimension of those transcendent categories of unity of consciousness that can be rendered inactive by the constraining mechanisms to which actors are subjected. In the very process of noetic propaedeutic, an actor seeks to approach the world with a type of self-consciousness that reactivates the innate transcendent categories of its own mind. This is why I consider this the highest act of self-consciousness or the state of *ima onwe onye* in Igbo language. This is why these innate categories of the mind (*akara obi/akara mmuḡ*) that are responsible for this are not transcendental categories: they are merely transcendent categories because through their reactivation, they enable the subject supersede the impositions of the senses and the constraints ensuing from *ihe mkpuchi anya* (phenomenon of concealment) and human tension-laden ambivalent existential situations. This is why it is an existential conversion or a form of consciously lived experience of a subject in view of reactivating these innate transcendent categories that bestow authenticity. Hence, there is need always to sensitise the mind, in the act of positive self-awareness and affirmation, concerning the precariousness of all human existential conditions that are tension-laden, ambivalent and beclouded by *ihe mkpuchi anya* (phenomenon of concealment) and the urge always to act after the dictates of the super maxim.

In this way, this noetic propaedeutic entails a form of personal-lived awareness concerning these constraining factors in our relationship to reality generally. It is the type of process that has the capacity to instil positive fear in us concerning the dangers to which we are exposed with regard to the possible existential threats to which we are imperilled at all times and in all places. Proactively, it subsists in the efforts we make to affirm insightfully that to be is to be in mutual complementary relationship with all existent realities - “that I may not be alone” (*ka sọ mụ adina*). It further subsists in the awareness that we are harming ourselves, either directly or indirectly, by indulging in acts of excessive selfishness that are geared towards subverting the interests of others. Such unilateral selfish acts do often boomerang since they are reciprocated, one way or the other; and even in ways that could make attainment of set goals difficult if not impossible for all stakeholders. What this entails is that acts of excessive selfishness contain an inherent

moment of self-negation that should make them unattractive. Therefore, one of the major aims of a noetic propaedeutic is the disclosure of difficulties of this kind; a disclosure of what is concealed from our consciousness through *ihe mkpuchi anya* (phenomenon of concealment).

By becoming aware of such dangers concealed from the subject, he or she is enabled to handle the fundamental double capacity of all ambivalent existential situations more efficiently. This is mostly the case with regard to choosing, properly, those things that are in harmony with our interests. In making such choices, actors realise that this has to be accomplished within a complementary context should they attain their worth. This is the type of disclosure that has the capacity to fire in us the passion for positive self-affirmation where the will to be is defined as the capacity not to be alone (*ka sọ mu adina*). Through noetic propaedeutic, our power of circumspection, which has been infringed upon and beclouded, is reenergised and rekindled. Likewise, the flame for more positive action, which has been doused by greed and excessive selfishness, is reignited. The same flame is needed to tread the path of more positive commitment to all missing links of reality. In the absence of this pre-education, the human subject is bound to have difficulties choosing, judging, willing and acting rightly.

Where we are able to consummate this noetic act, chances are that we seek complementary harmony with all existent realities and in the process attain a higher form of autonomy and freedom. One can say that it is by reason of this noetic propaedeutic that a completely new perspective can be opened to human consciousness. It makes us very much aware of the limitlessness of opportunities a world of mutual complementation can offer. It is a process that enables us see the world differently in a more positive sense. It bestows *i fu uzọ* or *i mepe anya* (eye opening) in the fullest and most positive sense. That is the capacity to see the world in a more broadminded, differentiated and richer mode. Seeing the world differently in this way entails victory over what I designate as “existential pessimism and scepticism” (Asouzu Method and Principles 2004, 254-265; Method and Principles 2005, 262-273). These are those existential conditions that delimit our views and make us believe that we are mere victims of our circumstances; victims who are condemned to be dependent on others for our existence. Existential pessimism and scepticism are such existential conditions that lead to self-pity, loss of self-confidence and self-esteem. Where conditions of this type persist, the basic principles of *ibuanyidanda* are put into very serious doubt due to the negation of their inherent mutual complementary dynamic. They are such conditions that can diminish creativity and positive self-affirmations of subjects in their relationship to the world. They are existen-

tial condition where stakeholders tacitly assume that they are not an integral part of the forces responsible for the positive changes we experience in the world. Where the process of noetic propaedeutic has been consummated successfully, stakeholders have the capacity the internal constraints or inhibition they sense while dealing with peoples or things that are different from themselves. These are the types of superiority or inferiority feelings diverse people entertain against each other where they perceive each other as rivals worthy of elimination due to the instigations of the super-maxim. Where the process of noetic propaedeutic has been consummated successfully, stakeholders are bound to be more broadminded; cognisant of the fact that they are merely integral aspects of mutual complementing forces seeking solutions for a better world. Such a process equally raises our sensibility concerning mutual responsibility in dealing with those problems that threaten the world.

Ultimately, the aim of this noetic propaedeutic is to attain a complete change of attitude in the way we relate to the world generally; not only in the realm of human interpersonal relationship, but with regard to the ecosystem, and all existent realities that are integral aspects of the missing links of reality. This type of propaedeutic aims equally at bringing about the types of healing needed among human beings of diverse, and often conflicting, cultural and historical backgrounds: Due to deep-rooted suspicion, historically conditioned guilt, feeling of violation and near compulsive type of aversion among human beings that have built up over the years, many often regard recourse to the super-maxim as the only necessary defence mechanism and escape route for most existential problems. These difficulties make a healing process among human beings of diverse background imperative. These are some of the themes the therapeutic dimension of *ibuanyidanda* philosophy seeks to address; as it strives to instil in the subject the highest form of self-consciousness and positive orientation towards the self and the world generally. In all cases, *ibuanyidanda* seeks ways of converting fragmentary relative historical conditions to very positive experiences through which the joy of being (*jide ka iji*) can result. The moment a subject becomes self-conscious in this way, we say that it is a being-in-control or being in control (*onye ma onwe ya i.e. a self-conscious individual*): That is to say, a being in control of its tension-laden ambivalent existential situations and *ihe mkpuchi anya* (phenomenon of concealment), and inclinations to always act after the super maxim of the nearer the better and the safer. This is why I consider the act of *ima-onwe-onye* (being-in-control) the highest form of self-consciousness. This is the type of self-consciousness that leads to the vicarious experience of transcendent complementary unity of con-

scious (*onye aghala nwanne ya i.e.* never forget the other, or always be mindful of the other i.e. **integrative otherness**), where being and its attributes are insightfully experienced as mutually complemented and as missing links of reality.

At all moments, I seek to overcome any form of artificial divide we sense in human consciousness. This is precisely why I take human relative historical condition very seriously and I integrate the same in the formulation of the imperative of *ibuanyidanda* which claims: “allow the limitations of being to be the cause of your joy”. With this I recognise that fragmentation and relativity are inherent dimensions of our being in the world. For this reason, we have chances of achieving our goals better, if we have credible ways of dealing with all relative conditions; with the unexpected, the unknown, the not-quite-familiar, the strange etc. The same is applicable in the way we relate to success, failure, joy, sadness, disappointments and all matters that can complicate and compound our experience of our relative conditions. In other words, acting with more positive awareness concerning our own fragility, as aspect of relative historical conditions of our world, can help us accommodate more easily the insufficiency we encounter in the world; including those of other human beings who share like experiences with us. Whenever actors are aware of this fact, there is the likelihood that they would try to cultivate a more positive and tolerant attitude towards relative historical conditions; knowing quite well how insufficient they themselves are. They are likely also to understand better why such relative historical conditions as, clan, tribe, religion, nationality, ethnicity, race, status, sex, achievement etc. should never constitute reasons for conflicts and exclusivist tendencies among human beings. On the contrary, and in line with the *ibuanyidanda imperative*, actors would be more gladly disposed towards embracing such relative historical factors as very good reasons for striving towards a higher form of constructive self-affirmation and the joy of being.