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Essay on Complementary Reflection

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Error of Transposition

Error of transposition according to Prof. Asouzu is a form of category mistake. This form of error arises for example when a particular tribe, nation, individuals or groups of individuals see themselves as superior to other individuals and thereby negate the complementary nexus that makes their existence possible. There should be a unification of thought, no country should see itself as superior to others. For instance like the USA, tries to impose its culture, policies, mode of trade, ethics on the generality of the world. Other cultural worldviews should equally be adapted by them and vice versa.

Picture Type Fallacy

The inability of philosophers to distinguish between content and form is what Professor Asouzu designated within the context of complementary reflection as *picture type fallacy*. This fallacy is often evoked in matters regarding traditional African philosophy where the essence of this philosophy is glossed over due to the type of weird images an observed might have concerning the traditional African. To remain condemned to the periphery of a people's worldview has been the bane of its misunderstanding. This erroneous judgment resulted for instance in seeing Africans as alogical and a form of out-of-history type of human beings. Whatever form of symbols and pictures one uses to capture a thing must be so structured that we do not mutilate the essence of the thing by clinging to the image itself. In picture type fallacy, the mind does not transcend the picture, it makes this the focus of its attention. Symbolic representations in matters concerning Africa requires one to penetrate to the motives and essences of these representations etc. Many odd conjectures about Africa and its people arise out of this fallacious representation of a picture type.

Experience of transcendent Complementary Unity of Consciousness

This experience shows that man can transcend his historical conditions to grasp proleptically into the content of the future through innate capacity of the mind. This he can do because the mind is fundamentally imbued with the transcendent categories of unity of consciousness. These categories include those of universality, totality, comprehensiveness, unity, and future referentiality. The experience of transcendent complementary unity of consciousness is very characteristic of the ontology of traditional African philosophers of the complementary school of thought. In this experience, the mind seeks to existentialise the transcendent categories of its unity in the day to day encounter. In this way an individual seeks authentic existence through the acquisition of a mindset that seeks to concretize the joy of being as lived experience. It is on the basis of this experience that an individual can say *jide ka iji*, as the Igbos say, and mean it.

Transcendent categories of Unity of Consciousness

The transcendent categories of unity of consciousness include universality, totality, comprehensiveness, unity, future referentiality. As an implication of complementary reflection, the acquisition of these categories as tools of reflection and action goes a long way to further

global peace and coexistence. Complementary reflection demonstrates the innate capacity of the human mind to transcend the fragmented moments of his historical existence, and to proleptically grasp into the content of the future as the legitimizing foundation of all relative forms of existence. One implication of this metaphysics is the advantage it affords man in adapting well to the challenges of his ambience. Rather than a particular race, tribe, culture or civilization seeing its own values as ultimate and superior, the mind sees all these as units within the framework of the totality that seeks legitimization. Thus by adhering to the dictates of the transcendent categories of unity of consciousness the mind of a cultured individual always seeks complementarity and supplementation of the inevitable inadequacies of human ontological relativity. Here the human mind in all moments and events reaches out to the universal, total and comprehensive and sees all things as moments of missing links of reality that complement themselves towards a perfect future referential synthesis.

In this way peaceful co-existence will be fostered by the world's citizens. Here racism, chauvinism, tribalism and other social ills of superiority in relation to inferiority would be removed and probable eradicated. Equally, Immanuel Kant in his doctrine of "transcendental unity of apperception" was hinting on this capacity of the human self to grasp realities in a totality. In spite of Kant's epistemological mistakes, he made a salient point in his alluding to the capacity of man to outlive his epistemological relativity.

Gilbert Ryle also contributes to the talk about peaceful coexistence in his "category mistake". He holds that to judge or evaluate a position against another position or brand the former irrational or mistaken, is itself a category mistake. This Ryle's position suggests the need for global complementarity. When the world is viewed through the prism of complementarity made possible through the transcendent categories of unity of consciousness, the chauvinistic positions of Hegel who dialectically kicked Africa out of history, Hitler who displayed an avowed hatred for the semantic race, would be corrected. Globalization can then be used not as a strategy of universal policing of the developing world by the developed countries, but as a natural evolution for peaceful co-existence.