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OBIORA IKE

INTEGRATING ETHICS IN HIGHER EDUCATION: THE IMPERATIVE OF VALUES-BASED FORMATION OF FUTURE LEADERS

THIRD INAUGURAL LECTURE OF GODFREY OKOYE UNIVERSITY ENUGU NIGERIA

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1. Introduction

It is indeed my great delight and a special privilege to be invited to deliver this Inaugural lecture at the 4th Convocation ceremony of Godfrey Okoye University (GOU), a Catholic University in Enugu State. From available information, this is the first tertiary educational institution on the African continent under the proprietorship of a Catholic Diocese to be formally licensed as a Full University within the Laws of the Federal Government of Nigeria in 2009. As a Full Professor with Chair in GOU- an insider one would say– and by the Grace of God-someone who has been part of the genealogy of this institution, past – present and future, I claim with all humility, the audacity to challenge higher educational institutions globally to dare the current trend of a world developing in reverse and regression instead of progression and re-state the principle that ethics and values-driven responsible leadership are not a superfluous source but represent basic intangible assets of our civilization. Such values are nurtured in a university through its programs. The most important insight

here is the identification of values as fundamentally important to the future of humanity and the prospect of its survival.

From a global perspective, there is noticeable consensus on the rejection of the world and its governance structures as it is currently experienced because many believe that it was meant to be different and much better. These situations do not leave humankind in apathy or lethargy but challenge to a renewed involvement in rational discourse for values-driven responsible leadership and action at all levels – Family, Society, Education, Politics, Business, Technology, Culture and Religion. The background of this presentation therefore finds its impetus in a statement of confidence in humanity, which has ability to gravitate intellectual and socio-ethical traditions inherent in the Christian worldview, but found also in other religions and cultures towards the center stage of discourse at a time when humanity faces fundamental questions of life and death. This urgent and dramatic situation refers to the apparent lack of meaning and the disorientation of values; of wars and the absence of peace; the growing abuse of the environment and the scandal of poverty in the midst of plenty. There is abundant evidence to show that whereas some people in some parts of our world are saturated with the advances made in technical, social, economic and political sophistication and have become ever more complex, some other parts of the world are still wallowing in horrendous superstition, physical and mental poverty, ignorance, curable diseases and lack of access equivalent to a bazaar of deprivation of all sorts.

The Global Ethics Forum of June 2016 held in Geneva, challenged universities worldwide to play a leading role in reversing this global slide through values-driven educational models for future leaders. Universities can apply -"*Transformative Teaching and Research Methods; Students Network for Ethics in Extracurricular Engagement; Trans-disciplinary Ethics Curricular; Teaching Business Ethics as a stakeholder discipline for sustainable value orientation; Research Ethics issues dealing with plagiarism and Ghost-Writing; Publication Ethics; Governance concerns*

regarding Recruitment of students and staff; Committees for research; Green Campuses; Measurement and Quality; New Management Models and finally Anti-corruption policies" (GEF, Higher Education - Ethics in Action, February 2017).
The vision, mission and values of this university with the Brand-Logo: "**Unity of Knowledge** "echoes this realization because it places the unity of faith and reason in its consideration and adds management as if faith mattered to its agenda. This is the strength of higher education.

At this Fourth Convocation of the Godfrey Okoye University, we are challenged as a university, also through the contributions of this Inaugural Lecture to reflect on one core dimension of the raisön d'être and essence of a university. As is widely accepted, education is both a means to an end and an end in itself. It is also an economic game changer and the key to life's many opportunities in the modern world. Permit me at this stage to ask the question: Why a University? To this question, there are many answers and they vary, like the old Latin would say: "Tot homines quot sententiae" – "As there are many people, so are there many opinions".

For Humboldt, a German philosopher and diplomat, "*a university has to do with the "whole" community of scholars and students engaged in a common search for truth. For Newman, it was about teaching universal knowledge. For Robbins, an economist commissioned by the government of the time in the United Kingdom to draw up a report on the future of higher education, universities had four objectives: "instruction in skills, promotion of the general powers of the mind, advancement of learning, and transmission of a common culture and common standards of citizenship*" (The Guardian, London, October 2011).What do these concepts translate to? Essentially the fact that a University is serious business which must fulfil among other services to the community, a component of being a "*Knowledge and Value Provider. It stands or fails in its ability or inability to deliver on this criteria*" (Ike, O/Nnoli-Edozien, N; Development is About People, Business is About Ethics; CIDJAP, 2003, p.70). According to the Magna Charta Universitatum: "*The University is an autonomous*

institution at the heart of societies differently organised because of geography and historical heritage. It produces, examines, appraises and hands down culture by research and teaching".

This essentially implies the integration of ethics in the entirety of higher education policies and programs by integrating Ethics as a product and central derivative for the orientation of science, governance, economy, technology and culture with life sustaining values to guide students, teachers and community. The aim is to target Ethics in Higher Education as a primary agenda in preparing the youth - future leaders for responsible leadership roles in the larger society upon completion of studies. "**Knowledge is Virtue**", so wrote Socrates. Virtue is the formation and moulding of character through conducts transmitted and from one generation to the next and considered "good" because they add to the overall good of Society (Aristotle, Nichomechian Ethics). Virtues correspond to values transformed to commandments, codes, rules of life and principles internalized by persons to achieve "the good life" – "Happiness – that which all men seek". For those who aim at a humanity integrated in justice, equality, dignity, freedom, peace and progress, there is a belief that faith in these values compels them to action. This in effect means to stand up with prophetic courage, armed with ethical, intellectual, rational, moral and spiritual strength to give hope, serve those in need, pursue peace, defend the life, dignity and rights of all peoples and maintain a fundamental option for the poor who are the most vulnerable in society.

In 1858, the distinguished American sociologist Edward Banfield published a book titled – "The Moral Basis of a Backward Society", and proved that in all countries of the world, the Crisis of Social Values is at the Root of the Economic Under-performance of the poorer societies and Nations. There is a correlation between High Ethical Standards and Economic Development. The higher the ethics and discipline, the more progressive a people and its economy. A society which allows its people to indulge in massive corruption cannot develop economically. Curbing corruption requires political will, public confidence, adequate time, resources, dedication and integrity (Banfield, E, 1858).

In 1997, Francis Fukuyama published his second book titled – “Trust - the Social Virtues and the Creation of Prosperity”. In this book, the polyvalent intellectual professor argues that the difference between poor and rich societies is the difference in the levels of Social Capital. Social Capital for Fukuyama is high Stock of Values like Honesty, Loyalty, Trust and Integrity, Discipline, Hard Work, to mention a few. Societies with substantial stock of these values are High-Trust and those where the values are absent are Low-Trust.

At the dawn of a new millennium in 1999, Harvard University organized a symposium to interrogate the powerful place of Cultural Values in Societal and National Development. The book published the conclusive papers which appeared in 2000 titled – “Culture Matters – How Values shape Human Progress”, edited by Lawrence Huttington who later wrote another book, namely: “The Clash of Civilization and the Remaking of the World Order”. This work shows how South East Nations like Korea and Singapore make progress while Ghana and Chad and Nigeria in Africa don’t.

Ethics is about values and values are not merely utopian. Values define us, and let it be said, whether we accept it or not, that values define Institutions, Cultures and Peoples. The entire efforts of Industry, Economy, Politics and Societies towards worldwide re-construction in the name of Civilization may not work without a strong values-driven and ethical orientation. These values are universal - beyond boundaries and beyond cultures. Take for example the values of freedoms and truth. What is freedom if people cannot say or stand for the truth? And what is truth if it is not knowable and only relative? And how can there be inner liberty if people are not authentic? Is not inner liberty obtained if there is fidelity to truth? Is not a culture rich in values higher than a society rich in material wealth? And what value is wealth if it did not have health?

The implication of all these plays out on the slogan of Godfrey Okoye University: “Unity of Knowledge”. They pose questions which gravitate the Catholic Intellectual Tradition, initiated by the great scholastic philosopher, St Thomas Aquinas to make theory realised in action; to make faith grounded on reason; to make truth part of life; to make so-called illusions reality and to ensure, grace is founded on nature; therefore, that here on earth. God’s work is essentially continued and completed

through humans who make creation their own and preserve it. These reflections introduce the argument for the imperative of integrating ethics in higher education – an agenda that is uncommon in the planning of curricula of many higher institutions of learning. The challenge therefore is to re-discover the imperative and significant role of ethics in higher education to produce future leadership who embrace "intellectual activism", as theorised by Patricia Hills Collins and ensure teachers and students engage in value discussions that link knowledge with practices that serve the public interest. This is possible when universities ensure that using "*moral reasoning"* and the *"power of ideas*" students and teachers together can work for social justice and promote ethics in Higher education for values-driven-life concerned with sustainable development.

In this search for solutions to global problems and paradoxes, measurable actions set forth by the United Nations Agenda on Sustainable Development Goals (SDG's)2015 and the UNESCO education Framework 2030 include: 1) "*Ensure inclusive and quality education for all and promote lifelong learning.2) By 2030, ensure that all learners acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including, among others, through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship and appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture's contribution to sustainable development* (SDG 4; UNESCO Education Framework, 2030). 3) *Substantially reduce corruption and bribery in all their forms; develop effective, accountable and tgrnsèpernt intuitions at all levels*" (SDG 16).

Four key areas emerge for universities to concentrate efforts on and make a difference through: **teaching**- to integrate responsibility in teaching in order to transform students into responsible citizens and future leaders; **research** – to integrate responsibility into research through ethical principles that create innovation and, promote scientific progress and respect the balance of the human and spiritual ecology of humankind; **governance** – to turn the spotlight into the institutions themselves by ensuring that codes of ethics and principles of balance of power

driven by values is inculcated in the institutional framework itself and put into practice at all levels – teaching by doing; **society** – to integrate the notion of responsibility in the discussion with higher education's main stakeholders such as regulators, Commissions, Ministries of Education and Governments. Is there any other viable alternative for humanity at this time? What future does society expect if the leaders of the future are not equipped with real life-skills during formation and training as medical doctors, lawyers, teachers, engineers, technicians, diplomats, academics, professionals, pastors, development practitioners, researchers, sociologists, community leaders, family members citizens of their countries?

2. Protocols

Allow me, Ladies and gentlemen to express gratitude to the Legal Holder, Visitor and Trustee of Godfrey Okoye University, the Catholic Bishop of Enugu, Most Reverend Doctor Callistus Valentine Chukwuma ONAGA, a social ethicist and theologian whose book on "A civilization of work through love" published in Bonn, Germany continues to adorn libraries in Germany with solid research and add voice to values. His constant presence, support and prayers for the progress of the university shall be subject of a Symposium in due time.

I pay respects and salute the ebullient Emeritus Bishop of Enugu (1997 -2009), Most Reverend Anthony Okonkwo Gbuji, whose tenure and service saw to the needed support for the emergence and founding of the GOU by our own brother, friend and colleague, Professor Father Doctor Christian Anieke.

Christian is a highly acclaimed academic, a man of Letters and an Alumni of English Language Department and Lion of the first University of Nigeria (UNN); a professor at the Enugu State University of Science and Technology (ESUT); an honorary citizen of Mitterkirchen, Austria; the Director of Godfrey Okoye Group of Institutions; including the Go-Uni-Radio 106.9fm; Director of Institute of Chinua Achebe Studies and Pastor/Rector of the Omnium Sanctorum Chaplaincy, Enugu. Christian is an Awardwinning Fellow of the Scholarship of the Jesuit fathers at Collegium Canisianum, Innsbruck Austria; concluding his doctoral degree studies in

Comparative English Literature in the United Kingdom. Besides authoring works in German, Igbo and English languages, he is active in community and cultural development at various levels. A dynamic and dedicated teacher and leader, his time and talents are spent for the public good, and this realisation is expressed, without any exaggeration. We are here today because of him, - his loyalty and services, his hard work and skills at both human and resources management, and all this, achieved at an early age in life to the glory of God, the good of the Church and the progress of humanity. We appreciate your talents and good will.

To all Members of the Board of Trustees of the university, led by our dedicated and performing Chairman, Professor Bartho Okolo, emeritus Vice Chancellor of the University of Nigeria, I pay homage and pledge continued support to the work of the Board. I recognize the Chancellor of the University, His Excellency Archbishop Ignatius Kaigama, Bishop of the Archdiocese of Jos and President of the Bishops Conference of Nigeria. His role in this institution guides the geography of this institution towards Christian ethics and values of subsidiarity, solidarity, human dignity, personality and the common Good for integral development.

I acknowledge the members of Senate and Chairman of Council, a Legal Luminary and Professor at the Golden Gate University, California, Christian Nwachukwu Okeke for the great work done to advance the university and position the youth as future leaders - who emerge from this institution. Your belief in high ethical reputation for the university and your standards with codes of ethics grounded in rules and regulations make the GOU tick. My acknowledgement is hereby extended to all Faculties, Institutes and Departments within the institution; the entire Academic community and Congregation.

In a special way, I congratulate the graduands at this Fourth Convocation Ceremony for hard work which yields its due rewards. History has knocked very loudly on your doors. Will you answer? To all the students of the university, I call upon you to stand out and shine. It is your opportunity. Take the mantle of leadership and be the future we need in Nigeria and Africa for a better world! Here, you have the opportunity to be persons integrated in mind, body and spirit, graduates fully rounded, who, with confidence, can take their place on the world's stage. We are inspired and cautioned

by the words of Nelson Mandela, the greatest African, perhaps world figure of the 20th century who said in 2003 that "*those who conduct themselves with morality, integrity and consistency need not fear the forces of inhumanity and cruelty*".

Distinguished ladies and gentlemen, all protocols duly observed, permit me now to present my Inaugural Lecture. I shall start by inviting you all to stand for a while, as we relish the thresholds of history, recall the unity of past-present-and-future, an action symbolic of our valuable traditional and authentic African culture which believes in commemorating the ancestors, gone before us, "*marked with sign of faith*"(St John, Revelations). These have sown the seed, watered the plants and worked hard to build the foundations upon which we stand today. It is the spirit of universality expressed as Catholicity and founded on the tradition of trans-generational rendering as Gift- Challenge - reason for Action.

We recall with gratitude, the memory of:

The Irish, French and German missionaries – uncountable in number, but led by that great man, Bishop Joseph Shanahan of Southern Nigeria, whose lives, selfless works and graves adorn our landscapes and parishes and schools. They laid the foundation stones for the Christian evangelizing enterprise in our territory which today has risen to become the largest garden of religious and priestly vocations for humanity. Those brave men and women, religious and laity, at home in Ireland, France and Germany as elsewhere, working on the African soil, gave Christianity its greatest success in 19th and 20th century missionary historical expansion (Vatican sources). While the British colonised the land, disrupted the local cultures, transgressed traditional institutions and took the people and their minerals without permission or adequate sustainable value added, these Irish, French, German and other missionaries planted the seeds of education, helped groom character, learning and knowledge which form part of the authentic beginnings of the Igbo emergence and rise within modern Nigeria, Africa and globally to this day.

Bishop John Cross Anyogu, founding Bishop of the Diocese of Enugu (1962 -1967) who started the first secondary school - St John Cross Seminary (founded 1964/65), located at Isienu, Nsukka for the training of youth in the territory of Enugu Diocese.

He saw the future of an independent ecclesiastical circumscription built on well trained and educated youth, students, teachers, future clergy and pastors of souls. A majority of the clergy working in Enugu State– including the Bishops of Awgu, Enugu and Nsukka – and our humble selves - are products of the seed sown at that St John's seminary.

Bishop Godfrey Mary Paul Okoye (1970 -1977), on whose name this University is officially licensed by Government and whose footprints on the sands of time remain indelible. He started such Foundations as the Daughters of Divine Love (1969), the Knights of St Mulumba and the Cistercian Monastery at Awhum (1971). At the end of the most brutal and fratricidal civil war dominated by genocide and committed against the people of Eastern Nigeria – in the Republic of Biafra - by the Federal Government of Nigeria, Bishop Okoye came from far away Port Harcourt, as the Second Bishop of the Diocese during a post-exilic period to challenge the general apathy in Igbo land and restore Hope to the people. He acquired property and lands for the Church, challenged the takeover of Christian Mission Schools by a hostile Federal Government, built infrastructure and sent many people for training abroad. His sagacity and openness to the world and the Church made him deepen the roots of cultural authenticity, theological writings and the dimensions of a local Church leading with integral development to the people.

Bishop Michael Ugwu Eneja (1978 – 1997), that saintly Servant of God and man of the People, a teacher who lived what he preached and practiced what he believed; the man who believed and established educational institutions as the core means of transmitting value, virtue and knowledge. Michael Eneja led within Nigeria and indeed the entire African continent as the "Servant-Leader" who saw tomorrow. He invested massively in the training and further studies of large number of priests, religious and lay faithful within the country and overseas, not comparable to any other territory at the time. Most of those who lead the local Church and society today in Awgu, Enugu and Nsukka dioceses, as Bishops or Clergy, Religious and Lay faithful are products of his drive and belief in Higher Education founded on Ethics. The Convocation Lecturer at this event and the Vice Chancellor of this University, to mention but a few, are what they are, because Bishop Eneja, believed and trusted in them as he did the youth, to take responsibility, allowing them the freedom to fly with

two wings – Knowledge and Character; faith and reason, virtuous and entrepreneurial, human and divinely configured to grow into responsible leaders of the community. These fruits we reap today. This exceptionally humble and saintly man of God worked to protect the land for the permanent site of Godfrey Okoye University at Ugwuomu Nike, acquired by the Church from the good people of Ugwuomu Nike, which project was managed and vitalised through the instrumentality of the Catholic Institute for Development Justice Peace and Caritas (CIDJAP) as "Justice and Peace Farms" (1986 to 2006), until handover to the Godfrey Okoye University as a Permanent Site.

Father Professor Stanislaus Chiedu Ani, the innovator and catalyst, the mover of men and materials, who "conquered ambients" and saw to the establishment and legislation by Law of the approval for the Institute of Ecumenical Studies (IECE) licensed by Government and State House of Assembly in 1982, during the tenure of Chief Ifeanyichukwu Nwobodo, Governor of Anambra State. Stan Ani, being a man of culture and political astuteness, negotiated further land and buildings at the Thinkers Corner upon which we stand with various indigenous stakeholders such as Chief Chime and other names several to mention here. It is this heritage that the current administration has inherited and transformed by alignment of space ecology, miracles we experience daily here on this Campus.

Finally, Professor Julius Onah (Okosisi Orba), the first Chairman of the Planning Committee for this university, a man of knowledge and service for the public good who used his tools as the first professor of Marketing in Nigeria, to assist the process of facilitating contacts that helped alongside other actors, to the founding of this university by the Vice Chancellor.

May their souls and the souls of all the faithful departed through the mercy of God rest in Peace, Amen.

3. A WORLD IN DISARRAY

This is no time for naive optimism – because the challenges facing humanity are stark, and the voices of hostility are strident. All across the world, there are rising levels of xenophobia and intolerance and a narrowing of political vision focused on

parochial introspection. Most of us are witness to the dramatic events taking place in various parts of the globe, causing harm and pain to millions of people who suffer hunger, conflicts resulting in wars, forceful migrations, climate-related climate change and ecological disasters due to environmental pollution, the flagrant abuse of human rights, poverty and terrorism, the search for meaning in life and economic hardships. In the past few years, agonizing news items have confronted Television viewers, watching fleeing refugees and asylum seekers from war torn countries such as Syria, Iraq, Sudan, Afghanistan, Yemen, Ukraine, North East Nigeria, Burundi, Colombia who seek acceptance and new life in new territories, albeit often rejection and unwelcome by the rest of humanity. Many of Africa's youth have drowned in the bowels of the Mediterranean Sea on their way to Europe, leaving home to die far away from home, in an illusion of a better life beyond the seas, many of them buried without address. "The prevailing public mood in prosperous nations of the West is not one of compassion but suspicion, resentment and often outright racism", Kofi Annan, former Secretary General of the United Nations wrote these words recently in an interview with the Newsweek Magazine of America.

Without prejudice or giving any judgment, we are currently witness to unpredictable, contradictory and mind-boggling events unfold in the United States of America under a President Donald Trump, sworn in as the 45th President of that large country whose utterances and actions leaves on one in doubt that populism is back on stage in our common globe. Across the world and within countries, global situations depict a growing lack of international and intercontinental integration, the reality of poverty, the horrendous dimensions of ignorance, lack of education, lack of proper information, the denigration of women and growing sexual abuse, neglect of children and the elderly, the denial of human rights and even the lack of participation for the citizenry. Outright oppression of minorities, refugees and migrants is on the increase, and the issues of drug trafficking, arms production and trafficking, corruption, and the business which thrives on a culture of death challenge the consciences of all truth seeking people. The situation in Nigeria is one in which the people were promised "Change for the better" by the leading political elites but received the "Reverse" in whichever form this is considered. In this connection, Kofi Annan, former Secretary General of the United Nations leading the Elders Forum mentions that "*universal*

values of human rights, freedom from torture and freedom of expression are imperilled when public discourse turns toxic, and racism and misogyny are legitimised by leading politicians".

Mary Robinson, Former Prime Minister of Ireland and Former Head of the United Nations Commission on Human Rights, writing in the Financial Times of London, January, 2017 as the World Economic Forum 2017 opened in Davos Switzerland stated thus "…*it feels as if a lid has been taken off a simmering global pot of tensions and discontent, and views on race, gender and religion that only a few years ago were deemed unacceptable are now commonplace. Over the last twelve months, we have seen how public discourse is tarnished by harsh and ugly rhetoric…millions of people feel left behind by the actions of governments and corporations…If we are to have any hope of making any constructive progress in 2017, and stopping this rising tide of anger turning into destructive nihilism, all responsible politicians, civil society and business leaders must stand firm and reassert our basic, common values of dignity for all*". The great son of Africa, Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela urged the Elders to "Speak Truth to Power" and confront complex global problems by standing for what furthers the interests of our common humanity.

What is even more worrisome is the challenge to truth within institutions of higher learning, in the often scientifically postulated "post-truth-era". The confusion of the present times and the lack of certainty, call it perhaps, the lack of a definite and sure orientation to guide people's lives and societal destiny emerges as a great challenge. There were times, "in those days", when people were sure of their beliefs and the customs of their fatherland. Today it is fashionable to question everything including oneself. Rightly or wrongly, many young people, lacking in family and moral background and without mentoring see a world where "the old certainties are gone. Virtue is not known. Truth is relative. Shame is non-existent. Integrity and credibility are meaningless and the traditional answers to questions believed settled in the past seem redundant. Thorny questions occur with ever increasing frequency. Today, the vocabulary of right and wrong, of duty and the neglect of duty, of sin or of shame has

become difficult to use. In his Templeton Prize Award speech a decade ago, Michael Novak, the American democrat, intellectual and leading Catholic lay director of the Enterprise Institute made these scathing but revealing thoughts on what teachers teach the young, which bear repetition here: "*There is no such thing as truth they teach even the little ones. "Truth is bondage* ". *Believe what seems right to you. There are as many truths as there are individuals. Follow your feelings. Do as you please. Get in touch with yourself. Do what feels comfortable. This is the language of the times and they speak thus who prepare the jails for the young. For, those who undermine the truth perform the work of tyrants".*

Our age is confronted by decisions, which previous generations did not have to face. The problem is exacerbated by the fact that many people have rejected the traditional sources of ethical illumination. Yet a further source of complication is the new global and pluralistic environment. Globalization makes people live in a global village environment which sometimes gives the impression that culture is a thing of the past. John Scally in his editorial to the book: *"Ethics in Crisis* has demonstrated that: *"Although pluralism is not new, the scale of it in contemporary society is marked by an almost bewildering proliferation of opinions, beliefs and world views. This pluralistic ambience is potentially of great value to ethics, bringing a more vigorous intellectual confrontation with basic ethical problems and a more open and public debate about ethical questions* " (refer ", Scally, Ethics in Crisis; Veritas, 1997, Dublin p.9).In the light of the moral diversity, and the proliferation of moral languages issuing from our plural and global world, what must remain central to humanity after the fact of relativity is acknowledged? Nothing? Something? What? Several questions emerge: Could legislation cover these ambiguities in life? Are any ethical principles universally applicable? What are they? How do we cope with the contending characteristics of our age, its evident cultural pluralism, its rapid social change, its linguistic distrust of authoritarian and centralistic claims?

These are the challenges young students face as they leave home for the first time and enter tertiary institutions. Some lose all they got from their parents in one week or semester. They imbibe the new slogans of the new peer environment, loose their original roots and end up with nothing new, as the bird called "*Usu*" the *"Bat",* "*neither here nor there*", using the words of Chinualumogu Achebe in Things Fall Apart (1958). Some join bad company, lose direction and end up without orientation, values or integrity. They become dropouts or even criminals – despite all the opportunity to become better citizens given to them by parents, guardians and the university environment– A great pity! And this explains the destructive nihilism of the present times.

4. NIHILISM – A PHILOSOPHY OF DISARRAY

Permit me to offer a modest rational attempt at an explanation concerning the confusion and crisis in which our society finds itself. It is an excursion into philosophy. Philosophy, from the Greek word "*Philos-Sophia" -"love of wisdom*" is the search for meaning, interpretation, knowledge and value in life. As "Philos" (love) it has continued as an "art" and as "Sophia (wisdom) it has remained a "science" to provide the intellectual and rational "humus soil" upon which theories and actions are founded.

The problems emanating from the lack of adequate ethical orientation in institutions of higher learning and university premises demand of a rational explanation and receive such in what philosophers call *Nihilism,* from the Latin ~ *nothingness.* According to Peter A. Angeles in the dictionary of philosophy, Nihilism in epistemology is: *"The denial of any objective and real ground or state of truth; the theory that nothing is knowable. All knowledge is illusory, worthless, meaningless, relative and insignificant. No knowledge is possible. Nothing can be known* ".

Friedrich Nietzsche (1844-1900), the German philosopher of the 19th century spent his time speculating and writing on the powerful of an individual to change all that is

inherited , thus, ideas of "*transvaluation of all values" – "Die Umwertung aller Werte*". A professed atheist, cultural critic, poet and scholar of philology, Nietzsche's body of work touched on religion, tragedy, polemics, irony, culture and science and his writings had a profound influence on Western philosophy and modern intellectual history. Some prominent elements of his philosophy include his radical critique of reason and truth in favour of relativism; his theory of the master-slave morality; his rejection and criticism of Christian religion and morality as pretentious; his existentialism which announced that God is Dead; his influential concept of the "Superman" - "*der Uebermensch*" and his characterization of the human subject as the expression of competing wills, collectively understood as the "*Will to Power" – "Der Wille zur Macht*". Nihilism in epistemology has come to cover the philosophy that "everything is perspective or point of view and there is no valid objective truth". This strange denial of truth and the faked belief in nothing positive or good helps to explain the survivalist Machiavellianism of political, economic, social and cultural bigotry and experimentation current in today's subjectivism.

Nihilism refers to the psychological and philosophical state where there is loss of all ethical, religious, political and social-cultural values. It is this skeptical denial of all that is regarded as real or unreal, knowledge or error, being or non-being. Illusory and non-illusory that makes nihilism what it is - the denial of the value of all distinctions. Nihilism in ethics refers to the theory "that moral values cannot be justified in any way not by reason, not by God, not by intuition or conscience, and definitely not by the authority of any state, or law". Moral values are expressions of arbitrary and capricious behavior; expressions of loose feelings and reasonless social conditioning and they are worthless, meaningless and irrational. Under this school of thought, what type of society would emerge? Where does law have its scope and space? How can one plan? And what type of world emerges?

Nihilism helps us also to explain the lack of intellectual vigour in high institutions which push students, rational beings to cultism, a condescension to various forms of

abuses prevalent, such as violence, secrecy, drug addiction, drinking human blood, planning evil, harming people, sadistic infliction of pain and occulted tendencies. This nihilism manifests itself in other untruths, which has led the Nigerian State and people to failed orientation of values evident in the current socio-psychological cultural and historical realities of the country. The media is awash with such news and incidents. Boko Haram, the ignominious destroyer of lives and property in Nigeria, acting as a fundamentalist Islamic terrorist organization is one dimension of the phenomenon of nihilism. And there are many other examples - the failed utilization of resources and personnel as well as the cult of mediocrity and meaninglessness prevalent. The Nigerian environment is colored by primordial tribal sentiments and ethnicism, religious syncretism and bigotry; corruption of the entire system with bribery, inducement and mistrust in the civil service, the armed forces, business and industry, educational, social and cultural institutions.

Universally, studies show that people are fixed into "*having more*" instead of "*becoming more*"(J. P Satre). The random acquisition of property (having) even where the acquirer remains dwarf in his/her personal, spiritual and intellectual development (Sein) is an apt description of this current tendency. People spend time to grow rich in material acquisition of titles, honour, and land only to die, often in unprepared circumstances. How fulfilled? The "anything goes" philosophy of life lacking in any ethical principles, standards or values, apparent lack of patriotism and principles of life express this nihilism. Evidence of financial misdirection, false investments, misappropriation, materialism and acts which portray inferiority complex abound. These and many more are the banes of our society. How else could one explain a life-style that cannot stand the test of truth, of value, of liberty and the future, except to resort to nihilism as a philosophical hermeneutic, an interpretation of a paradigmatic phenomenon of cultism and its attendant scenario?

These problems resonate with the outline of the thematic issues around the topic of this presentation which essentially desires to explore the imperative of value-based

education through proper formation of future leaders in ethics. Should we engage and how do we engage? The questions to ask and the lesson to derive are the following: What Core Values for responsible leadership could be applied to nations, regions and the global community that take its roots in Ethics and applicable for human Development? What values for practitioners could apply to particular contextual situations? The Global Ethics Forum in Geneva in 2016 proposed the entrenchment of evolutionary ideas that can spur our collective progress without the wake of destructive violence that threatens to undermine the huge but fragile political, social, financial and ecological infrastructure on which we depend and strive to build a better world.

5. ETHICS MATTERS AND VALUES DEFINE LIFE

"When wealth is lost, nothing is lost.

When health is lost, something is lost.

When character is lost, all is lost.

But when shame is lost, nothing else can be salvaged"

The topic of Ethics, though ancient in its origins, has in our time and clime become a novel and compelling subject, both in its theoretical and practical engagements. Globally, issues of ethics are legion. In the media reporting on local and international cases of scandals around the themes of corruption, bad governance, abuse of public trust, value-less lifestyles, unethical behaviour, conflicts of interest and insider dealings, nepotism and mediocrity, it makes common sense to accept the fact that there is better way to conduct the affairs of men and women, namely: The Ethical Way. This conclusion leads the engagement needed to advance the agenda of stakeholders in leadership at all levels – political, social, economic, religious and cultural. As a fundamental point of departure, it is generally agreeable to say that, to guide our life and the affairs of communities and nations in the right path and to embellish behaviour with acceptable "good" qualities, we need values. A life without proper values will become chaotic and disastrous. It will be like a boat without rudder. This agenda defines the orientation and values which calls on all

stakeholders, working and sharing its products as teachers, students, and the community of Godfrey Okoye University including all the governance levels to action.

Sir Nnamdi Azikiwe, The Great "Zik of Africa" gave the pre-eminent national newspaper - "The West Africa Pilot" - that made waves in the 1940's and helped usher in Independence for Nigeria from colonial Britain the memorable motto: "*Show the light, and the people will find the way"*. Today, as we stand once again on the thresholds of history, that challenge is re-echoed for Godfrey Okoye University and the human elements who found, guide and pilot it at this occasion of the 4th Convocation Lecture to award degrees to deserving graduate students - a dream come true. Zik led by personal example and changed our history. The challenge before the present generations to continue from where he stopped.

In addressing the topic of values, it is to be stated right away that values have several connotations. Yet, core values are generally understood and accepted as *"a set of principles or standards of behaviours regarded as desirable, important and held in high esteem by a particular society in which a person lives; and the failure to hold them results in blame, criticism or even outright condemnation*" (Ike, Global Ethics for Leadership, 2016, p.).

- Values give meaning and strength to a person's character and occupies a central place in one's life;
- Values reflect one's personal attitudes and judgments, decisions and choices, behavior and relationships, dreams and visions;
- Values influence the thoughts , feelings and actions of people;
- Values guide persons to do the right things;
- Values help human beings to act morally and be morally sound;
- Values give direction and firmness in life and give meaning to actions;
- Values give motivation for a person to live and act;
- Values identify a person, giving him name, face and character.

Values and Ethics are inter-related and are often used inter-changeably. Ethics which are founded on values are necessary codes of human conduct. Ethics promotes harmonious life of integrity. It is also a general framework within which harmonious societal development is facilitated. Ethics deals with the integrated development of human personality. It touches the human person, human dignity and all the obligations that flow from the nature and dignity of human person in relation to oneself, others, community, society and the world. Ethics focuses the attention of people on the ultimate human goal which influences all good values to replace every evil value in the world.

The education of the heart of man in its originality as creation made it is one that calls for a genuine concern. Unfortunately, the opposite is the case as many modern societies through education destroy the human heart and innocence. This is where the debate must begin, namely, to apply ethical considerations in moving the agenda of development forward. Ethics after all is the establishment of right and wrong, founded on reason and what is ought, a category of good conscience, sound moral judgment and the free choice of a rational mind. This realization helps the dialogue and engagement of religious development practitioners. Although expressed in different ways in each individual, culture, custom and forms of diversity, the human heart is one and the same for it reflects the same substance.

Education is at the centre of every human settlement. It is necessary for character formation for the young. Through education, the realization of meaning and purpose in society is enabled and beneficiaries are empowered to gain more access to opportunities, resources and power. Education if acquired continues to increase the value chain of any nation. States, Governments, religious Organisations, Cultures and Peoples all through the ages engage in education as a vehicle to transform. This explains why the agenda for “Education Reform” remains priority for almost every country in the world. Under such transformational situations, there is urgency to adapt the world’s educational systems to consciously evolve and transform in order to support the critical swifts and transitions happening around the globe. Through education, the young and future generations receive knowledge and traditions that

help them enter into the totality of reality. Therefore, a primary concern of society essentially is to teach the young. Religions engage in development because through values driven sources, sustainable development is achieved. Society can only successfully rebuild itself through the younger generation. This is the opposite of what currently happens. But what do we teach the young? Can the teacher give to students what the teacher does not possess? How do we educate ourselves? How does education take place? Is education anything, nothing or something? Does this something stand for a system that educates what is human in humankind, especially the young, leading to recognition of the needs of humanity through all ages by pointing to their source, origin and end?

From the viewpoint of looking at things from their essence, purpose, last end and primary goals, values are needed. But values do not fall from the sky. They are taught and transmitted from one generation to the next. They adapt, change, mutate and transform, yet retain ingredients and some essentials which make them relevant. Values come through education of the young. These values help the young grow with orientation. Orientation is offered through education. To educate means to help the human soul enters into the totality of the real. This real is what we call life. Life itself is a gift, received freely and reflected by humans in their ability to think and reason. This is described as rationality, considered by the ancients sages of Africa, Asia and noted down in writing by the Greek philosopher Aristotle over two thousand years ago as unique to humankind. Integral Education makes possible the emergence of all-round persons, equipped upon completion of education to transform society positively. This is the business of religion in development in the current times. In defining education therefore for the purposes of development in the context of society in the twenty first century, 'true education' must be an 'education in criticism'. It is the exercise to question things from their origin, allowing doubt and examination of the problem to come to a balanced conclusion and position.

Therefore, '*krinein', 'krisis'* which is the original Greek word for 'critique' means to 'take hold of things' and explore their content. This exploration of the content, such as the received 'tradition' is compared with the other realities including the 'longings of the heart'. To criticize helps the inquirer to arrive at the need for the true, the

ultimate, the beautiful and the inner standard of judgment which is identical for all humans. It is the search for the Good.

For this reason, Pope Benedict XVI, in his speech to the United Nations on the sixtieth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 2008, proposed a return to cultural and religious traditions where human beings are at the heart of society's institutions, laws and interventions. He also called for "the respect and promotion of human rights in their universality, indivisibility and interdependence as a common language and ethical bedrock of international relations".

6. INTEGRATING VALUES-BASED FORMATION FOR FUTURE LEADERS

Integrity is the most important capital of an individual, an institution or a community. This is what our African traditions teach. One member of the community who commits public crime brings community opprobrium to the entire clan and family. "*Ofu mkpisi aka mita mmanu olue mkpisi aka nine" (one finger touching oil can spread it to all the remaining fingers*" Igbo Proverb)

In a recently published book co-edited by the author of this paper alongside Walter Fust and Christoph Stueckelberger titled: Global Ethics for Leadership – Values and Virtues for Life, Geneva, Globethics.net, 2016, the thirst for ethical orientation and the call for virtues resounding across the globe is manifest. The book in thirty two articles contributes to various goals which apply to the current work on a partnership of religion and development. It highlights challenges of global values and virtues in a multiplier inter-connected and divided world, shows normative needs for global and contextual values and virtues; develops in each article the content of one value or virtue in a specific geographic, cultural or religious context; gives an input to the understanding of the value-basis of the United Nations Sustainable development Goals (2015 -2030); and contributes to the deeper meaning of the new Strategy 2016 -2020 of Globethics.net with its slogan: Values driven leadership for life and sustainable development".

The few and simple questions to ask for the purposes of this audience include the following but is not necessarily exhausted or even in order of priority, namely:

1. What does development and education consist of and how does it take place?

2. How can parents, teachers in schools, the responsible agents in the educational system and institutions within the larger society assist the education of youth and leaders of tomorrow with curricula that contain Ethics and promotes freedom, truth, responsibility, skills, knowledge and virtue?

3. Is there a link between Ethics and Technology and how do we balance technological innovation with social and organizational motivation?

4. Does diversity and difference in contextually independent realities make a unity on global values and virtues impossible?

5. What possibilities exist to strengthen classroom curricula of studies that enhance both character and learning?

6. Is it possible to combine distant-learning education with formation of character in the on-going available platforms of distant education?

7. How can religious leaders teach by example and help governments and institutions and responsible agents systematically strengthen an ethical culture of integrity?

8. What rules mechanisms are available in the community of practice around religion and development to protect whistle blowers and the young confronted with corrupt employers in a permissive society? Finally, are there mechanisms available to support and promote values-driven education for religions and development of the youth in their professional life?

For the purposes of this paper, we shall single out some core values relevant, useful and indispensable for Responsible Leadership by political, social, educational, religious, economic actors alongside cultural leaders and captains of industry.

i) **Wisdom, Vision, and Knowledge**: Whoever portends to lead others must be clear of the direction to which the followers are led. Wisdom remains an ancient virtue understood as a gift beyond what simple knowledge could give. Wisdom comes with experience and knowledge that helps leaders formulate vision for their communities. In the biblical language: “The blind cannot lead the blind. For both of them shall fall into a pit”.

ii) **Justice**: The ability to be fair and Firm and to give each one what is due. Justice is founded on truth and practiced in charity.

iii) **Freedom**: Freedom is inalienable as the universal Charter of the United Nations declares. It is part of being human and has dimensions within the divine, law, the natural law and human positive law. Freedom grants the human ability to move, speak, own property, practice ones faith and exercise natural and intellectual qualities and talents. To be free is to allow others freedom, in a complex society, within ambient of the law which are properly legislated by a constituted authority and proclaimed in fairness to all for the common good..

iv) **Respect for the Human Person and the integrity of entire creation**: For leaders of nations, teachers of the youth and practitioners in religion and development, respect for life, that is, respect for diversity and the entirety of the human person’s rights to individuality and privacy, as well as rights guaranteed under lawful legal instruments to assure general welfare and happiness are essential. The Universal Declaration and various constitutions of nations worldviews give fundamental respects place in their formulations and practice.

v) **Courage, and inner strength**: Courage includes the ability to say No and to stand firm by principles, without being populist or dishonest, knowing that one may even not win the majority. Courage is served by inner strength which is character and a firm principle in life and belief in what is lawful.

vi) **Responsibility**: The wise application of the use of freedom to higher ends

vii) **Modesty, Restraint and Patience**: A virtue that allows the human being realise limitations and avoids pride which does not promote restraint and patience.

viii) **Reliability, Trust, and Honesty**: The core value that helps leaders keep their words and retain confidence because one is steady, calculable, transparent and truthful.

ix) **Integrity**: The key value and virtue which summarises all other virtues and speaks for itself. It is the unity of identity and authenticity standing out as the virtue which is hard to get by since integrity is wholeness and completeness.

x) **Hard Work**: A virtue that is fundamental aspect of life for through work one renews the face of the universe, feeds the people, fulfils aims and gains meaning in existence.

xi) **Compassion**: Compassion helps the human person see the limitations of the other and share in the pains and concerns of others positively through sharing of burdens, action to give help where needed, solidarity, support, kindness and show of empathy..

7. PRACTICAL APPLICATIONS

On its own, a university is a big industry. It would seem that many higher institution proprietors in Nigeria are motivated by what Adam Smith famously called the “profit motive” which topic was discussed in the classic work “The Wealth of Nations”. C’Don Adinuba, a prolific public writer and well known Nigerian columnist has analysed some local factors which lead to foundations of universities. “Education in a country whose population is near 200 million is a huge market. The number and sizes of the existing universities are grossly inadequate for the large number of admission seekers. The gap arising out of this educational need is being capitalized on by shrewd investors to establish universities. There are also people motivated by a sense of grandeur in establishing universities. They feel good to be seen as

university owners, just as a number of Nigerians now proudly declare they church owners. There is a third group: people driven by a sense of competition". Such competition leads to siloing, which does no one any good.

a) From Siloing to Synergy

There is wisdom in joining efforts towards mutual advantage for a common benefit instead of dissipating energy. It is useful and important for higher institutions of learning in the south east zone to engage in a joint consortium and engage in a dialogue from the prism of cooperation and synergy and not necessarily unhealthy competition. As C'Don Adinuba has rightly argued in his article on the establishment of yet another University in his hometown Ihiala where Madonna University is sited. The method of moving from siloing to synergy helps the participating institutions become mutually reinforcing. They share common resources, talents, library, teachers and collaborate in institutional efforts at maximising resources. This is building on the wisdom of inter-dependence like the relationship between St John's University and Fordham University, both in New York.

An example of this moving from siloing to synergy is Massachusetts in the United States, famous for its world class educational institutions. The small city of Cambridge, for example, hosts Harvard University and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. In neighbouring Boston and Amherst, there are such great institutions as Boston University, Boston College and Amherst College. Locating great institutions in one place or near one another produces spillover effects which benefit society enormously. By so doing, Enugu assumes the educational centre of the South-East, South-South and middle-Belt regions of Nigeria. Here at Enugu, the collaboration of the leading knowledge providers such as the campuses of the University of Nigeria Enugu Campus (UNEC), the Enugu State University of Science and Technology (ESUT), the Caritas University, the Bigard Memorial Seminary (BMS), The Spiritan International School of Theology, Atakwu (SIST), the Catholic

Institute for Development Justice Peace and Caritas (CIDJAP), the Institute of Management and Technology (IMT), the various tertiary institutions and Colleges of Education dotting the city, the University of Nigeria teaching Hospital (UNTH) Ituku, the College of Medicine of ESUT would synergise to unleash unimaginable potentials for value and job creation, research collaborations and educational co-operation at all levels. Godfrey Okoye University has the ability to anchor this co-ordination and with its partner, Globethics.net at Geneva, convoke a Consortium on Governance and Ethics in Higher Education, already envisaged and in the pipeline.

b) Discipline and Thrift

It is important to emphasize the value of thrift for business growth and economic expansion because we live in an era and place known for what the Great Zik of Africa called “squandermania”. In her fascinating book, “World on Fire: How Free Market Democracy Breeds Hatred and Global Instability”, Amy Chua, an economist and distinguished professor at Yale Law School, shows how Chinese deny themselves basic comforts in order to save money and grow their businesses. It is self-evident that a university must recognize the imperative of good savings. Economists, management experts and others involved in national development processes identify a high savings rate as one of the critical success factors for both business and national economic growth. A favourite example cited by scholars is the rapid growth of Asian nations and territories. As C’Don Adinuba writes in his article already mentioned in this lecture: “I have in recent times attended a number of social functions around us, and I often ponder over the expensive razzmatazz we display at funerals and weddings. A fraction of the fortunes spent on these occasions can build industries and educational institutions which can employ our people”.

C’Don Adinuba registers the 1994 interview by the CNN famous journalist **Fareed Zakari** who was then editor of the influential Foreign Affairs journal in the United States of **Lee Kuan Yew**, the legendary founding

Singaporean prime minister. In this interview, Yew identified a high savings rate as one of the core Asian values which he argued was a major driver of the phenomenal growth of Southeast Asia. Lee was to make the same argument in his famous book, titled: “From Third World to First - The Story of Singapore from 1965”. In discussing ethics and institutional growth, application on the governance of management of limited resources and materials including manpower is critical.

This convocation is eloquent testimony to the agenda of GOU positioning itself to lead the transformation of itself becoming a world class university established in our homeland. And it does not have to cost a fortune. Information and Communication Technology (ICT), for one, has driven business costs down considerably. It is possible to profile on major academic or professional journals, being made available online, with some free of charge. At Globethics, a repository of over 4000 documents and over 100 million works are available free of charge and online, that is, readable and downloadable for free from anywhere. When a university subscribes to it, the journal automatically becomes accessible to every student and staff member. It, therefore, becomes more affordable for a university to have hundreds of thousands of journals, books and newspapers in its library. This is what the Globethics.net can support and provide to the GOU. Already, GOU has the largest ICT and state of the art centre, located on these grounds and funded by the Federal Government for access by the entire south eastern region of Nigeria.

c) Specialisation of Programme and Thematic in Ethics

A university need not offer every academic programme. It can specialize. An example is the Lagos Business School in Lagos which enjoys a good ranking by Financial Times and is well regarded by corporate Nigeria. Most senior seminaries in Nigeria do not offer degree programmes outside philosophy and theology, and they do fairly well in these two disciplines. The GOU may specialize in Ethics and Values-Driven Academics, or in health sciences and DNA studies or it may choose to

specialize in engineering or business management. A Catholic university can be a pathfinder in Nigeria, if not Africa. It can decide to replace the regular examination method of evaluation with continuous assessment which will include students' active participation in classroom discussions. The continuous assessment is followed at the end of each course with a mini project by every student which will reflect the principles taught in the course and demonstrate the level of internalisation of knowledge by each student. Of course, everything will be done online, thus eliminating abuses like a lecturer mischievously denying receiving a work submitted by a student. In keeping with the principles of transparency and information or knowledge exchange, all the contributions by participants will be displayed on the electronic class board for all to read and discuss. To guarantee the integrity of essays by students, all the more so in view of the fact that ours is what world class thinkers like Edward Banfield and Francis Fukuyama in their well received books call a low-trust society, a software programme like Turnitin should be employed by the university. In some European universities, once the programme dictates up to 30% resemblance between an essay by a student and an existing work, the red flag goes up. Students are, therefore, advised to paraphrase or summarise the work they refer to in their assignments, rather than quote them extensively. Plagiarism is a particularly serious offence in the academic community. In a forthcoming journal article, I argue that the traditional examination in Nigeria is fraught with risks like learning by rote and a dubious kind of luck which may make a student score an A in paper in which he knows little because the few things he or she has managed to know are the only ones the person is required to write down. Other malpractices encouraged by the traditional method include plagiarism and other forms of brazen cheating.

It is important for a university in Nigeria to do things differently. Universities in California like Stanford played a pivotal role in the state's emergence as the ICT capital of the world. They are critical in California's reputation as the world

headquarters of startup businesses. Bangalore has enabled India to become a superpower in software technology because of the Indian Institute of Technology, among other key educational institutions. If we are able to make our GOU become internationally recognized centres of learning, rather than institutions which churn out in large numbers graduates with fancy degrees, we will be fulfilling our role as a people who understand the role of strategic thinking and strategic action in the 21st century. Peter Drucker as early as the 1960s described this century as the era of knowledge economy.

d) Hard work pays

In his seminal work on dimensions of cultures and their impacts on organisations, Geert Hofstede, a scintillating Dutch social scientist, identifies indulgence as one of the cultural values well pronounced in Africa, contrasting it with self- restraint. By indulgence, Hofstede means zest for life while self restraint refers to the tendency to engage in self-sacrifice and self denial. Studies have shown that societies where the people generally behave like epicureans do not make as much economic progress as cultures where the people are generally stoical. Hofstede also identifies the cultural value of short term orientation, as opposed to long term orientation, among Africans. By short term orientation he means the tendency by many people in a given culture to care so much about today while by long term orientation he has in mind the tendency by members of a society to always act with tomorrow or the future in mind. Many people would not disagree with the notion that our short term orientation which emphasizes tradition and the past, at the expense of the future, does not aid economic development.

e) Planning the Future with Vision and Mission founded on Values

It is an old proverb which recognises that failing to plan is planning to fail. Every organisation or government or society which wants to compete effectively in today's

world must be future-oriented, with mission, vision and planning all in place. These goals are constantly reviewed, measured and evaluated according to strategic benchmarks. This is why organisations and countries as well as cities have vision statements. In top universities and research institutes across the world, the principle or theory of dynamic capability is taken seriously. Governments and institutions and organisations invest heavily in research and development because they lead to innovation. In dynamic capability theory, research is referred to as exploration and differentiated from the routine which is known as production. The use of "exploration" and "production" terms may have been borrowed from mining.

8. LESSONS ON ETHICAL VALUES FROM AFRICAN CULTURE

a) Looking back gives sustainability to looking forward

The cosmo-vision of the many African traditional societies drives this dialogue on re-inventing traditional cultural wisdom to integrate them as ethical values in higher education. It is the potential of utilising culturally rooted models, tried and sustained over centuries into the context of ethics in higher education. For too long, Africans have sourced for answers to its myriad of problems from outside. This argument raises questions about the inherent rationality in the cosmology and interpretation of the universe of African traditions and religions, often expressed in holistic and interconnected terms. The point being made here is that culture matters precisely because it provides the key to a proper understanding of reality, as well as solutions to problems that emerge from this reality. The oral interview I once conducted with Ozor Neife Ozoike, a wise old centenarian from Umana Ndiagu in the Ezeagu land of Eastern Nigeria comes to my mind. During the interview Ozoike said in part: 'People who do not look back to their past cannot look forward to prosperity'. The contribution in this paper presentation is to rejuvenate authentic cultural values, establish the philosophical and ethical foundations that are suitable and relevant for the proper inculturation of ancient values into modern concepts that is dignifying for human beings in a modern world.

My attempt is to insist on the promotion of cultural values as human values by bringing both the old and the new to an acceptable and mutually agreeable level of spiritual conviviality, based on the principles of social entertainment, educational content, Omenala preservation and continuity of the good in culture, the metaphysics of bonding the past, the present and the future in an Igbology mixed with Natives and Moderns who must integrate the philosophy of "live and let live" (*onye anwuna ma ibe ya efula)* for the common good of all and for a sustainable future

b) African Time as a Way of Life?

Without taking into account this reality of African culture, how could one explain the "concept of time "understood in many African societies as a servant, vis-à-vis a concept of time in western societies that takes time as a master and therefore regulator. The proverb has emerged thus: "When God made the world he gave the Europeans the Watch and gave Africans Time". There is certain 'ease' in the African mind and its elastic attitude to time, vis-à-vis the mentality of a clear mechanical dependence on the electronic clock or watch found particularly amongst peoples of the Western hemisphere? Thus, the term 'African time' has emerged and has become both entrenched and readily accepted as a *modus operandi* in African lingual expressions. One encounters it wherever one may travel within the continent. Lateness is excused on the grounds of African time! If one may be allowed to generalise on this topic, it seems that there is more to this phenomenon that makes an African live life 'leisurely'. In comparison with people from other continents, Africans relax more; they laugh a lot and tell many stories. This mentality certainly affects business and ethics in the African context as in Africa, it has a universal application.

All over the African continent, there is an amazing identity as to how people regard both business and ethics and as to how they understand the concept of time, not just as an exact moment but as something around or 'surrounding' an event. To repeat: 'Why is this so?' To avoid biases or prejudices, it is critically necessary to be allowed to present an African perspective without the use of interpreters in a search for knowledge and its transfer across cultures. As has become clear in intercultural exchanges, cultural divergence amongst the peoples of the world has led to much

misunderstanding, prejudice, injustice, exploitation, xenophobia and even war. These consequent, negative tendencies are unhealthy for the peace of nations and for the sustainable balance needed for individuals and communities worldwide – that is, if they are to be happy and fulfilled in their essence. The challenge is to launch a new intercultural and intercommunicative dialogue that presents itself as a fundamental human right as we engage in conversations as this in a new millennium.

c) African Cultural values applied to contemporary concepts

Numerous questions can be asked when dealing with this topic: What are the ideas and the underlying philosophy in African societies that have given rise to such concepts and practices as the understanding of the Earth, the attitude and use of land, property and ownership, family values, respect for the elders, reverence of the ancestors, the role of gender – men, women and youth? What is the African attitude to life, to the divine milieu, to God, religion, the spirits and the spiritual realm? How is consensus built in communities? What does community mean to the African and how is the spirit and practice of community life conducted? Is there governance and needed structures in village social affairs?[i] What are the concept and the purpose of law? What of the adjudication of cases where legal cases arise? What of the concepts of morality, democracy, management, profit and price allocation, transparency, environment and ecology? An innovation of Igbo culture bears the promise to showcase the positive cultural values of the people to the larger universe of the ICT, the audiovisual and print media, the television and radio houses, participants, indigenes, nationals, tourists and the African Diaspora as a whole.

d) Work and Industry

The rediscovery of cultural and religious values translated into ethical values would also focus on other areas of production and work such as industry and enterprise, manufacture and commerce, trade and agriculture, hunting and game, taxation issues, contracts and labour relations, money and capital, including the factors of production, markets and competition, and supply and demand factors in the economy. One overriding question remains to be reflected upon, namely, how community harmony takes precedence over individual rights. Is there an ethics in business in the African worldview? Can there be an African business ethics?

e) African Business Ethics as Social Responsibility

Even though the study of ethics is classically distinguished from morality and emerges on the philosophical and scientific scene, especially in modern times, as the rational basis for the rightness or wrongness of actions by humans, ethics here does not refer simply to cultural beliefs, traditions or religions, but to the rational idea that it is fair or unfair to treat people outside the ambience of justice. This Western model of ethics, which continues to gain ground in the many humanistic and speculative sciences and other areas of human endeavour, elicits its scope and array in such disciplines as business ethics, media ethics, bioethics, social ethics, political ethics, economic ethics, environmental ethics, legal ethics, gender equity, and more. In an African setting, doing business is always an ethical matter. In this context therefore, business ethics must entail social responsibility, where community is an extension of business and business an extension of community. The fundamental thrust of this paper is to give a background for the ambitious claim that there is in fact an African business ethics; the challenge is to rediscover the traditional African values and to apply them in modern Africa. In this way, an attempt can be made to build up a sound foundation for doing business in an ethical manner and to make African business values and ethics known to the rest of the business community. Such values and such an ethics are pre-eminent virtues; many of these are still known and operative in various communities all over the continent. The point is to reiterate them to bring out their impact for our study.

Some of these values include respect for the divine and the sacred, respect for elders, keeping one's promises and standing by one's word, being honest at all times, acting with justice and fairness in dealing with others, exercising legal conscientiousness and observing the rules, giving priority to the interest of the community over private and individual interests, avoiding conflicts of interests, practicing transparency, disclosure and accountability in every situation, preserving the common good, respecting and protecting life and the environment (humanity and

nature), being prudent in speech and not harming others, being content and eschewing greed.

Such espoused traditional values should be regulated and applied to modern issues of sustainability, corporate governance and the service of the common good. Our search, therefore, is not to invent new codes of conduct, but rather to rediscover these inherent traditional values and principles of sustainability, subsidiarity and solidarity. The next step would be to apply them to the modern models of a global culture that speak of corporate governance, corporate social responsibility, and business ethics so as to maintain the best practices contextually within an African milieu. In doing so, we should be able to establish the integral nature of African cultural and religious values considered as ethical values.

f) African identity as a unity of past, present and future

African cultures and philosophies as found from the Horn of Africa to the southern Cape, from the Western Atlantic shores of Senegal through the massive forests of Central Africa to the Indian Ocean washing the shores of Kenya, express three levels of existence that incorporate the past (ancestors from whom traditions, ethics and cultures derive their origins), the present (the community to whom the individual belongs); and the future (as yet unborn generations: one has to ensure continuity and sustainable management for those who will come after us). These three levels are cardinal points in understanding the African view of the relationship between culture and religion, tradition and ethics, private and public interests, the human community and the world of nature in general, including animals and trees, and animate and inanimate beings. Although customs vary from community to community in matters such as marriage, burial rites, title taking, there still prevails a central link for various African communities on the 'ultimate questions of life concerning the origin of human existence, the purpose of life, death, the why and how of things, moral laws, land and markets, to mention but a few'.

9) CONCLUSION – INTEGRATING VALUES-BASED-FORMATION FOR FUTURE LEADERS – AN AFRICAN MODEL

African philosophy is a philosophy of community that is well expressed in the phrase *'I am because we are, and since we are, therefore I am'*. In the original African society, culture, religion, law, economics, politics, history, morality and trade are not easily separated; this tradition identifies the peoples at their deepest levels of consciousness and accompanies their every activity. Any external evaluation needs to take into consideration the interplay between the sacred and the secular: '*the connection of the seen and the unseen, the union of the dead with the living, the spirit with the ordinary human and the dependence of the earthly human who is seen on the spiritual which is unseen'.*

The following ten categories offer deeper insights into the wide spectrum of African values, ethics and culture:

a. **Culture (*omenala*) as the traditional law** in African societies is understood as the people's whole way of life (past, present and future), a central thread that guarantees protection of life and property, harmony between the members of society and with nature, as well as linkage to the divine through ancestors and deities. It is said that every people has a culture, a way of life that links their past to the present and points to the future. Even though culture is not static but steadily dynamic, some of the elements that provided the rationale for cultural practices in the past may have disappeared in the face of modern realities such as migration, new technologies, scientific discoveries, war – among other factors. There is an urgent need in the face of the modern age to strengthen the linkage and sustainability of cultural development and its interpretation at least on the levels of principles that identify these societies. In the African milieu, whether amongst agricultural peoples or nomadic tribes, culture (*omenala*) provides a proper foundation to a sustainable economy where the preservation of the environment, the enhancement of principles of

equity and fair play, as well as the promotion of an economy integrating individual interests and communal protection exist side by side without any contradictions.

b. **Oral transmission**: Aspects of African culture (*omenala*) are transferred from one generation to the next by oral tradition through symbols and rituals, in fables and dances, and in the moral formation and religious traditions of the African peoples: 'as soon as a child is born into the community of "*umunna*" (brethren), life is affected by the intricate network of restrictions and all that they represent. Immediately a child is able to speak and understand issues,… it is exposed daily to the do's and don'ts of the society and parents drum it into its ears, through fables told in the night around the fireside and exposure to the various forms of rituals and other observances, the gravity of committing abominable acts'.

c. ***Ubuntu*in property rights**: Private property, understood as a 'social mortgage', emphasises the right of access of all people who belong to the community to the gifts of nature, including the various factors of production such as land and labour. Even though the community respects the right of individual ownership of property, this does not imply the amassing of wealth by a few to the detriment of the majority. In other words, ownership of property is subjected to its universal destination and use by all members of that community. A philosophy founded on the principle of 'it belongs to me but I belong to the community' (*umunna*; *ubuntu*) ensures that property rights are guaranteed, but not in an absolute system as found in capitalist societies. A property right is limited by overall social (stakeholder) interests.

d.Religion as a natural phenomenon is understood in African cosmology as relating human beings to the unseen universe of the deities and the gods in a sense conveying humanity's dependence on the world and spirits beyond. This interconnectedness between the spiritual and the secular signifies an interrelatedness of past, present and future generations. These factors are to be considered in decision-making. Thus, the taboos of many African societies, even in unwritten and pre-literary symbols and traditions, protected the overall

environment, including land, animals, water, forests and nature via religious codes. Respect for nature is noticeable in the many traditional societies on the continent, since humanity attained both continuity and history through the elements – a truly organic understanding of ecological sustainability and a philosophy still practicable and noticeable in many business practices in contemporary times. In short, there is no African without a sense of religion, a practice of religion and a link to some form of religious adherence.

Many therefore say that atheism is un-African, a point corroborated by the various experiences of daily life in the reality of traditional religions present on the continent and 'in the many African cultures and societies all of which show that to be African is to be religious'. About the Africans John Mbiti once said that 'they eat, drink and live religiously. There is no unreligious African'. African religion is thus not an isolated abstract, but is embedded in culture, in people's very way of life. The Igbo cosmology of Nigeria, for instance, does not distinguish between religion and the secular society, but creates room for an interdependent world where 'the secular is so interwoven with the sacred that one does not exclude the other, nor could one be conceived without the other, thereby giving religion an anthropocentric outlook'.[ii]

e. **Culture, society, economy and religion are interwoven**: From the above emerges 'interwovenness' between religious beliefs and cultural practices. Attempts to loosen this 'interwovenness' during the Islamic and Christian religious missions proved impossible; these mistakes are currently being corrected under the agenda of 'inculturation'. Win-win scenarios emerged from this worldview and practice, thus making it possible to evolve from the *omenala*'s unique principles that provide an integral understanding of the economy, society, culture and the environment. It is in this way that traditional African religious values, philosophies and cultural practices are now being unearthed and re-branded in the new and emerging religious space on the continent.

f. **Values-guide life**: We have seen that African traditional religion is essentially a philosophy and a spiritual way of life that permeates, pervades and animates the traditional social institutions, norms and celebrations. Every Igbo ritual act

in south-eastern Nigeria, including sacrifice, dance and festival, has a philosophy or idea behind it. In other words, action is motivated by and grounded on values that involve a basic belief, a philosophy, an underlying principle or an idea. These values thus generate action and behaviour that in turn influence individuals and groups.

g. **Ethics as culture**: A discussion of ethics within an African ambience must necessarily involve a discussion of both African philosophies and cultures and their moral and overall ethical practices. The point of linkage between religion, morality, law, and social as well as economic realities is the domain where Africans locate tradition, the *omenala*, which is the foundation for ethics, and therefore the rational background for living together. In summary, this African contribution promotes stakeholder participation, enhancing communal living and values based on principles of *onye anwuna ma ibe ya efula* (live and let live), and implying the age-old social ethical principles of justice, fairness, solidarity and subsidiarity.

h. **Life as the highest moral and ethical value:** The integral nature of African cultural and religious values as ethical values begins with an understanding of life as sacred and as something to be preserved, protected, promoted and generated. Homicide, murder, suicide and other unnatural forms of death inflicted on another are thus considered crimes against the earth and a breach of the bond between human beings, the deities and the earth itself. Such breaches damage the communal foundations upon which society is based, and have to be repaired by all means by the entire community even where the culprit and his family have to undergo expulsion from that environment. In serving life, the *omenala* in its ethical dimension seeks to serve communal harmony, to respect the past heritage of ancestors and the laws of the land founded also on religious beliefs, and to help in the progress of the economy by protecting the earth and by making laws to discipline those who thwart the laws of the land.

i. **Modernity still contains tradition**: It may amaze some, but reality 'on the ground' shows that the traditional *omenala* still serves as a link between the ethical, religious and secular realities as well as the basis for the legal system and morality in general. It still exists as strongly today as it did yesterday.

Africa's beliefs in traditional religious practices and cultural practices are still found even in present-day lifestyles in the many big cities on the continent. Many modern cities carry the cultures of their peoples, as we find them in Lagos, Abuja, Accra, Cape Town, Johannesburg, Enugu, Cairo, Tunis, Nairobi, Lusaka and Harare, to mention but a few. The main issues from an African perspective on the integral linkage between religion, culture and ethics – which unfortunately do not fit into the modern categories of many Western philosophical paradigms, actions or thought patterns – are as follows:

j. **A broad understanding of culture**, which encompasses a people's entire way of life. African culture (*omenala*), as it is founded on cultural rationality (that is, derived from the past) and is able to project into the future, has the potential to assist and guide modernisation in a sustainable manner. In the face of radical and rapid changes worldwide, globalisation, migration, technological advances, and the danger of losing original sources (including cultural integrity) also remain threats in Africa. There is an urgent need to look again into the primary sources of traditional cultural rationality in order to enable a significant yet sustainable development. One may do this by promoting intercultural dialogues that look into Africa's past history so as to retain or reclaim elements that are relevant and applicable to modern economies.
k. **Religion as an integral reality**, that is, a non-dualistic relationship between the sacred and the secular in promoting an integral understanding of creation. Those presently living, the yet unborn and the living dead all share in a cyclical bond that determines the being and consciousness of all Africans. This kind of religion determines the relationship between humanity and divinity; it has formed the basis for the reverence of creation governed by God and a respect for the earth (*ala*) that has its own ethical implications. One of these ethical implications is a deeply rooted respect for nature as an organic understanding of ecological sustainability.
l. **Law as a service to harmony**, regulating issues of justice and community by prescribing the rules that govern society. It is indispensable in building consensus, social harmony, reconciliation and equitable relationships. The essence of the law and of justice in traditional society is not to blame this or

that person, but to settle the matter for the social harmony of the entire community and its continued existence.

m. **An economy where business is not separated from ethics** and where nature is preserved. Land is understood not as a good for absolute ownership, but one for being used and respected as such. In many cases, land in traditional society is not sold but allowed only for use, since the earth is recognised as what provides sustenance to the agrarian economy of traditional society upon which everything depended, to cover the needs of the past, the present and the future. Besides, an absolute sale of land was conditioned and practised only as leased on a temporary basis, to enable the transmission of this scarce good for future generations. This traditional cultural value translated today as a business ethical model may serve as a deterrent to the greed of those wealthy enough to buy all that is available. Wealth has significance when it is used responsibly to further community interests and not hoarded just for individual aggrandizement. In Africa one acquires reputation by adding value through one's wealth that is to be shared with the village community.

n.Win-win scenarios in business. The principles that find relevant application in this context include: recognition and promotion of win-win scenarios in the economy; social responsibility of business; a "we and- I" consciousness in social relations; property as a social mortgage and a natural right; interconnectedness between spiritual realities and the material world.

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