

ORIGINAL ARTICLE

A Critique of Asouzu's Notion of *Ihe Mkpuchi Anya* (the Phenomenon of Concealment)

Agabi Gabriel Akwaji¹ | Aniah Undie Paschal²

^{1,2}Department of Philosophy
University of Calabar,
Calabar, Cross River, 540242, Nigeria.

Abstract: This research work is a conscious participation in African philosophy, precisely on Asouzu's notion of *Ihe Mkpuchi Anya* (The Phenomenon of Concealment). The work attempts to address some of the challenges of human ambivalent situations that are visible in the way we judge, act, will, value, conceive reality and so forth. In this work we argued that human beings are conscious beings. Due to this consciousness, their actions are difficult to predict. Actors themselves often act against their interests because of the unfathomable nature of their actions. Often time they cannot predict themselves, what appeared to be good from the onset may turn out to be bad once it is done. We deduced that if actors can sometimes act against their interests and/ or act to promote their most cherished interests, regardless of negative consequences then, there must be something responsible for that. We concluded that human beings act under the influence of *ihé mkpuchi anya* (the phenomenon of concealment). This phenomenon has the capacity to impair our vision, becloud our sights, affect the way we reason and cause us to pass wrong judgments on issues confronting us as individuals and/ or as a community. Finally, we recommended that human beings can act rightly by suppressing and avoiding things that are detrimental to him and or to another. It is only when man does the above recommended things that the society can grow harmoniously in every aspect. We employed the critical, analytical, expository and complementary methods in the course of researching.

Keywords: *Ihe Mkpuchi Anya*, Ontology, Human Nature.

INTRODUCTION

Philosophers, psychologists and social theorists over the years have tried to find out why human beings behave the way they do, which is evidently seen in the way the society is being coordinated. This led many theorists into propounding different theories concerning human behaviours and actions. Some argue that human actions are being informed by human act of valuation, others argue that human actions and decisions are complex, indeterminate and devoid of human control. Asouzu in his notion of *Ihe Mkpuchi anya* which is an element of *Ibunyanidanda* philosophy, holds that, human knowledge, actions, judgments, perceptions and so on are beclouded and influenced by *ihé mkpuchi anya* otherwise known as the thing that covers the eye (Complementary Ontology 6).

This work, A Critique of Asouzu's Notion of *Ihe Mkpuchi Anya* (the Phenomenon of

Concealment) is borne out of the need for or necessity of a high moral standard in our society. It is conceived as a result of a vision of a society where the ‘Culture of Normalizing Anomalies’ will be eradicated. In the words of Akpan and Egbai, these anomalous and unethical ways of life are driven by certain human interests, which of course, are ambivalent portraying something positive and something negative at the same time. Thus, to act morally is to act in view of overcoming this phenomenon of ambivalence (Complementary Ethical Reflection 34).

‘Had I known’ is one of the common phrases frequently used by men when actions, judgments and behaviours that seemed contradictory to their interests are carried out. According to Asouzu, the inconspicuous accessory conditions of knowing, willing, judging and acting are the very mechanisms and phenomena responsible for such illusions and deceit (*Ibuanyidanda* Special Edition 6).

In support of the above position asserted by Asouzu, Plato, asserts that all that are given through the senses are reflection. To further expatiate on this, he posited the theory of allegory of the cave (Republic VII 514a, to 517a).

Francis Bacon also seems to be in support of this view in his theory of “Idols”. His principal objective was the total reconstruction of the sciences, arts and human knowledge, where idols that becloud human vision could be cleared away. Toeing the same line, Heidegger posited his theory of the hidden nature of being.

The work shall do an exposition on the phenomenon of concealment. Particularly, analysis of Asouzu’s notion of *Ihe Mkpuchi Anya*, its effect on human value system; most especially on existential issues evidently seen in the society, after which conclusions based on our findings will be drawn.

The society ought to be a place where peace and tranquility would reign amidst people of different races, beliefs, cultures and orientations, if human actions are meant to promote the common good. Due to human will, perceptions, judgments and the aim oriented nature of human actions and behaviours, the reverse is the case. Man’s actions and behaviours have generated disharmony, hatred and suspicion among people. People are now careful about whom to relate with and/ or be close to. This gave rise to attacks, fight, quarrel and killing of one another. Human beings now constitute threat to one another due to asymmetry of interests, actions and behaviours that are done in one dimensional mode (self-interest) lacking in wisdom and rather beclouding their sense of judgment and vision for the future.

The solution to the above problem is that men should critically evaluate their actions, behaviours, judgments and decisions and suppressed those that seem to promote self-interest and allow those that will promote the common good. Thus this work explores Asouzu’s notion of phenomenon of concealment as a paradigm that can help us overcome this problem.

DEFINITION OF TERMS

***IheMkpuchi Anya* (the Phenomenon of Concealment).**

IheMkpuchi Anya is gotten from Igbo language of Nigeria within the context of Igbo existential experience, this expression means “something that covers or beclouds the eyes” (Asouzu *Ibuanyidanda* special edition 7).

Asouzu in an attempt to further expatiate the notion of *Ihe Mkpuchi anya* asserts that *Ihe Mkpuchi anya* which is translated to mean phenomenon of concealment in English Language,

is an existential condition that militates against the capacity to reason soundly, judge correctly and imaginatively most especially in matter dealing directly with our most cherished interests.

Super-Maxim

A super-maxim is a law like dictate that fundamentally controls our actions, such that we mistake their hypothetical character for a universal imperative. Within the context of complementary reflection, all maxims relating to the realization of human interests can be reduced to this one super-maxim that 'The Nearer the Better the Safer'. All human beings are susceptible to this fallacy and illusion. We tend to think that the more intimate or nearer a thing is to us the better and safer we judge its being. Stated negatively, we tend to think that the more removed or distant a thing is from our intimate region of belongingness, our immediate neighbourhood, our ethnic, clannish and tribal world of reference, for example, the less are we obliged to it and the more we can exploit it freely with impunity for our own survival, and in most cases even without remorse. (Asouzu, as cited by Edet, The Super Maxim 59).

HUMAN AMBIVALENCE SITUATION

Ambivalence is articulated around the Igbo aphorism *Mma-du-bu a jo ala*. Meaning human beings have the capacity to tie and untie, to be good and bad, to do and undo, and to blow hot and cold at the same time.

Asouzu adumbrated that, it is the tendency towards grasping the human person only in the relativity of his existential condition. It is on account of this existential situation that the person, who shares in this ambivalence and tension often, has the propensity to misidentify and analyze wrongly (New Complementary Ontology 57).

Being

According to Asouzu, the notion of being is grasped in its intrinsic interrelatedness devoid of polarization and exclusiveness. Being is the capacity to be in mutual complementary relationship with all things that exist.

Being can also be seen in the sense of not being alone (*Ka so mu adina*) which is another way of saying that anything that exists serves a missing link of reality or that whatever exists has head and tail-end *ihe di, nwere isina odu* (10).

The negation of being is the capacity not to be in any form of relationship whatsoever, as to be alone (*Ka so mu di*).

AN ANALYSIS OF ASOUZU'S NOTION OF *IHE MKPUCHI ANYA* (THE PHENOMENON OF CONCEALMENT)

Origin of the Notion of *Ihe Mpkuchi Anya*

The concept of *ihe mpkuchi anya* has its English equivalent as 'phenomenon of concealment'. The concept was formulated and discussed succinctly in *Ibuanyidanda* Philosophy; a philosophy propounded by innocent I. Asuozu. According to Asouzu,

The mpkuchi anya is taken from the Igbo dialect of Nigeria and it is translated to mean phenomenon of concealment in English. Within the context of Igbo existential experience, this expression means something that impairs vision or something that

beclouds the eyes' (*Ibuanyidanda* Special Edition 6).

Asouzu further adumbrates thus:

Ihe mkpuchi anya is found in Igbo vocabulary, it is used by the traditional Igbo philosophers of the complementary system of thought. For instance, when the traditional Igbo philosophers are overwhelmed by *ihe mkpuchi anya* especially in the face of some most cherished interests, the tradition Igbo philosophers would sask: *o nwere ihe na eme gina anya* (is anything wrong with your eyes?). They could even ask more pointedly: *anya adigi ya mma* (are your eyes at all in order)? They conclude, *anya adigi ya mma* (something is definitely wrong with his or her eyes!)(8).

The foregoing analysis typifies a situation where one acts as if he was or ignorant of the weight or consequence of an action simply because of the immediate benefit not minding the future.

It is also imperative to note that *ihem kpuchi anya* is a conglomeration of three Igbo words:

Ihe: means Something

Mkpuchi: means Cover

Anya: means Eyes

The origin of this existential situation is as old as man's history, that is, if we consider the frailty and facticity of man in history.

The Nature of *Ihe Mkpuchi Anya*

The nature of *ihe mkpuchi anya* can be deduced from Asouzu's description of it. According to him *ihe mkpuchi anya*, is an existential condition that militates against the capacity to reason soundly, judge correctly and imaginatively. It is precisely due to this its character that *ihe mkpuchi anya* conceals from us the ambivalent tension laden character of our existential conditions. (*Ibuanyidanda* Special Edition 12).

Suffice it here to say that *ihe mkpuchi anya* is immaterial, super sensual and not physical. More properly, it is beyond that which is physical. It is rather a condition or situation that blurs our thinking, will, act and judgment. Put differently, *ihe mkpuchi anya* is concealing in nature, though it manifests itself through human actions, judgments, behaviours, choices, and so forth.

***Ihe Mkpuchi Anya*/ Human Ambivalence Situation**

We cannot deny the fact that our daily activities are offshoots of our most cherished interests. Human beings, more often than not act in ways that will jeopardize their own desires, values and visions. We want at this juncture to establish that there is a correlation between *ihemkpuchianya* and the ambivalence of human situation, the two are seen working unanimously when we always act to promote our most cherished interests even at the detriment of others, forgetting the fact that since we are social beings (live in the society with others), we ought to act in an objective way that will promote the common good. It is in support of this that, Akpan and Egbai argue that,

'We are often being misled by our shallow parochial and quasi insightful drives toward what we think is positive only to achieve what in the final analysis would be

negative, and as such the consequence of such an action would be sadness rather than the joy which was intended'(Complementary Ethical Reflection 3).

Being aware that human beings has a bilateral way of acting (positive and negative) at the same time *ihem mkpuchi anya* conceals from human beings actions and behaviours that will promote the common good and cause us to act in a way that appear to promote our interests but in the final analysis according to Akpan and Egbai would be negative. In this work, it is observed that this is where *ihem kpuchi anya* conjoins or collaborate with the ambivalence of human situation and influence man's way of acting often time to his own detriment and by extension to that of other people. Akpan and Egbai also state that,

'This anomalous and unethical way of acting are driven by certain human interest which of course, are ambivalent portraying something positive and something negative at the same time, this to act morally, according to complementary ethics, is to act in view of overcoming this phenomenon of ambivalence and concealment'(5).

The only way to overcome this as we have viewed through ethical lens is to be able to manage it. Managing it entails or suggests choosing interest that is authentic, objectively and ethically justified. The inability to manage the ambivalence of human interest well is a fundamental sign of bad-will and this is the basis of unethical conduct.

We noted that this indeed is the paradox of human ambivalent situation causing human beings to ignorantly choose those things that can even work against those things they cherished most. This is evident in the declaration of St. Paul:

'For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do. Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwells in me. I find then a law, that when I would do good, evil is present with me. For I delight in the law of God: after the inward man: I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. O wretched man that I am: who shall deliver me from the body of this death?' (Romans 7: 19-24, kings James).

We can deduce from the declaration of St. Paul that it is this phenomenon of concealment and the ambivalence of human interest that holds individuals and/ or societies to ransom because of their devastating and concealing nature by hindering human beings to act justly and reason soundly. Due to this the society has been held captive from progressing geometrically as against arithmetically.

The Mkpuchi Anya/ the Super-Maxim

We had earlier noted in our work that a super-maxim is a law-like dictate that fundamentally control our actions, such that we mistake their hypothetical character for a universal imperative. According to Asuozu,

'This expresses itself in our propensity to secure our interest first at the expense of those of others. To survive better than others, we have the general tendency to highlight certain things we imagine are special or exceptional about ourselves. We encounter this tendency in almost all forms of exclusive tendencies they derive their force from the primordial human natural inclination to self-preservation' (Leadership 68).

We can deduce from Asuozu's assertion that human beings through the influence of *ihe mkpuchi anya* (phenomenon of concealment) always seek those things that are conducive towards self-preservation. Our instincts of self-preservation cause us to share interest only with those we assume are nearest to us, those we believe will guarantee our survival most. This to us emerged as a result of the manipulation of the phenomenon of concealment. It presupposes here that *ihe mkpuchi anya* and the super-maxim collaborate and manifest themselves where individuals, groups, religious bodies, organizations, and societies believe that it is better and safer to relate with those nearest to them, where people are inclined to stay close to those who are close to them alone; where common interest are shared with only those closest, and worst still where we are only drawn to those from our clan, our ethnic group, our church, our sex, our race, our political group, our family and so forth. And also attempts to elevate the maxim which is subjective to a universal state. Edet argue that:

‘Problem arises when we elevate the maxim to a general law of human action, or a methodological principle of action. We know from experience that those closest to us are neither better nor are they safer always. But unfortunately and tragically, we often find ourselves adhering strictly to this maxim of co-habitations a strategic instrument of survival. We find ourselves elevating this maxim which has limited ranges of applicability into an operative law guiding our action and judgment and become thoroughly bound by it’ (International Researcher 60).

This elevation of the maxim according to Asuozu can be evidently seen in Aristotle's work, where he bifurcates reality and tend to make it a universal maxim. According to Aristotle, the superior science is more of the nature of wisdom than the ancillary: for the wise man must not be ordered but must order, and he must not obey another but the less wise must obey him (Essence *Filosofia* Theoretical 84).

Actors tend to promote and make explicit their subjective ideas and make it a universal maxim – where everyone will be made to follow believing that it is the best.

THE EFFECT OF *IHE MKPUCHI ANYA* (THE PHENOMENON OF CONCEALMENT)

At this point we shall bring to limelight some of the practical anomalies caused by the said phenomenon in our societies; through human valuations choices and judgments.

The Impact of *Ihe Mkpuchi Anya* on Societal Norms and Traditions.

It is no gainsaying the fact that *ihe mkpuchi anya* has caused a lot of discomfort and disharmony in our societies. Suffice it to say that on the issue of societal norms, values and traditions, the effect and influence of *ihe mkpuchi anya* cannot be over emphasis. It is very obvious that laws and traditions are formulated out of value systems that are predominant in a given society or culture. It is imperative to note that there is no society without laws to regulate the conduct of members. Our points of emphasis here is how these laws are formulated and what gave rise to the laws. Some laws that are detrimental to members of a given society are seen here to be formulated out of the influence of the said phenomenon of concealment. Ottong, argue that human actors attached to their actions subject-meaning in an attempt to formulate laws for the society. (4)

What this implies is that, leaders in societies do allow their value, emotion, interest, goal, sentiment and so forth to bear in the laws that are to govern members of the society. Suffice it here to say that in such situations the objective nature of such laws is defeated. It can also be deduced here that when leaders bring their subjective interest and sentiment to bear in societal laws they are under the influence of *the mkpuchi anya* (the phenomenon of concealment). For human beings not to rely on their self-interest to manifest in laws, the natural school of law argues that laws should be dictated by nature. According to Uduigwomen,

There exist objective moral principles which depend on the essential nature of the universe and which can be discovered by nature (reason), and that ordinarily; human law is truly law in so far as it conform to these principles. These principles of justice and morality are valid of necessity, because the rules for human conduct are logically connected with truths concerning human nature' (Jurisprudence 141).

Uduigwomen's argument here is that there is an objective norm that is immutable and universally applicable. For him such law should be the standard or basis by which all laws and human behaviours are appraised. Man should not act out of his egoistic tendency by promulgating laws that are at the detriment of others.

There are communities that through their laws restrict members from eating certain meats, going to stream on their market day with the reason that the gods will come there to fetch water. They also put a demarcation on who to marry, compelling everyone to be at the shrine on a given day and worship their god and so forth. All these are as a result of the influence of the phenomenon of concealment. Man's inability to reason soundly, or see clearly can give birth to some obnoxious laws and customs that are not only detrimental to others but are capable of bringing disunity among members and cause them to act always in opposition to one another. Such customs will make man to see his fellow man as a threat and therefore cause enmity between them and by extension between the two families.

The Impact of *Ihe Mkpuchi Anya* on Knowledge, Production and Technological Developments.

In view of some of the salient issues adumbrated above, this aspect of our research seeks to discuss some of the hindrances to knowledge, production and technological development, which according to this work are as a result of the influence of the phenomenon of concealment. This phenomenon conceals human beings from acquiring the right knowledge to bring productivity and technological development in our society.

It is also imperative to note that knowledge serves as the bedrock of productivity and technological advancement. Where there is a lacuna in knowledge there will be no productivity and technological development. The point we are making here is that it is through knowledge that technology is advanced and in turn yield good productivity. It is in line with our position that Hosea exclaimed that his people are suffering. According to Hosea 4:6a 'My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge'.

For there to be progress in our societies, we must acquire the right knowledge about what we ought to do and how to do it. What Hosea is saying is that, it is only through the right knowledge that we can do what is right in the society. Ijomah holds that,

'Since knowledge is the classificatory factor in all human experience and human experience constitutes the scope of philosophy, epistemological problem is therefore

the most important problem in philosophy. An answer to it must either be presupposed or discovered before one can treat adequately any specific question in science art or even philosophy' (Conceptualizing 10).

What Ijomah is saying is that before any discipline should embark on research of any kind, the knowledge of such things should be properly acquired.

In the earlier part of our work, we admitted that *the mkpuchi anya* is found in all spheres of human endeavours. Suffice it here to say that in the sciences this phenomenon is also manifested. But you may still question this position since science is seen as a rigorous discipline that gives an explanation to what nature is.

In the words of Okasa, science is the attempt to understand, explain, and predict the world we live in through the construction of theories, experimentation and observation of facts (1).

In the course of giving explanation to phenomena and predicting the future, scientists make statement about their finding. Often time scientists make statement and judgment that are contradictories, Asuzu asserts that, for Aristotle, the essential or substantial structure of reality is wisdom par excellence, and in this capacity, the very ideal of science. It is for this reason that he considers metaphysics a more superior science than other science (Essence 19).

From Asuzu's perspective, Aristotle's statement and judgment are not devoid of *the mkpuchi anya*. Aristotle's statement is derogatory, it places one higher and better than others, and other sciences are degraded to mere ancillary status.

Scientific judgment, that is, interpretation of result is not also consistent. Most time there are disagreements over what a given result or finding is, that is one of the major reasons why there is disagreement in the scientific community. The question is, do result change? That is do given result produce conflicting and different ideas in scientists mind? If no then, the changes and different results gotten may be as a result of the influence of *the mkpuchi anya* beclouding them and also causing impairment to how they see and conceives reality. It is in support of this position that Paul Feyerabend argues against the methodology of science. According to Ojong in his book; philosophy of science for African, Feyerabend argues that,

'The whole notion of a methodology of science is illusive; science is an essentially anarchistic, enterprise. There is no single procedure or set of rules that underlies every piece of research and guarantees that it is scientific and therefore trustworthy. Every project, theory and procedure has to be judged on its own merit and by standards adapted to the processes with which it deals'.(Science 91).

We can deduce from Feyerabend's position that the methods used in carrying out scientific enquires are faulted therefore scientific knowledge only progresses in a dogmatic manner. For him we must do away with such scientific endeavours. Akpan, stresses that

In this contemporary world, science and its application - technology provide the most important index for distinguishing a developed society, country or continent from an underdeveloped. Africa has been tagged a third world continent because of her underdeveloped status in the sphere of science and technology. The reason is that Africa is mainly dependent on the first world in its scientific and technological needs. (Feyerabend's Philosophy of Science 46).

It is very obvious that the phenomenon of concealment has also impaired and/ or beclouds human beings most particularly Africans from knowing the right thing to do in order to improve their productivity and salvage the fast decaying economy. Where there is a lack in

technological development, there must necessarily be a lack in productivity. If there must be progress in our nations, societies and communities, we must to return to the acquisition of right knowledge, using the knowledge acquired to bring technological development thereby using those equipments to increase our productivity in all field of study; Agriculturally, Economically, and so forth.

The Buddhists, according to Edet, holds that, for there to be peace, progress and development in the society, we must have adequate knowledge about those things that makes human life sick and unwholesome such as ignorance, selfish craving, grasping of what does not belong to you and so forth (Oriental 40).

The implication of this Buddhist's assertion is that there are certain things that serve as impediments to societal growth. According to them, selfishness, ignorance and so forth hinder the growth of a society. Their position agrees with our position on the phenomenon of concealment. As long as right knowledge is not gotten due to the influence of *the mkpuchi anya*, technological development and productivity cannot be guaranteed. Therefore we must as a matter of necessity return to craving for adequate and right knowledge.

THE IMPACT OF *IHE MKPUCHI ANYA* ON RELIGIOUS BELIEFS AND PRACTICES IN NIGERIA.

Religion is an important feature in human history that cannot be easily ignored. Religion has contributed to social progress, educational development, economic growth and societal emancipation (Bassey and Nwoye, 19) . It has also contributed to both personal and interpersonal development, irrespective of all these wonderful acts done by religion, there are still some aspects of religion that if one critically investigates, one may be tempted to deny that religion is concerned about the good of humanity. In his book titled: *A Philosophical Look At Religion*, Omoregbe holds that,

‘Religion is a striking and interesting phenomenon in human life, there is no other phenomenon which moulds and controls man’s life as much as religion does. Men have given up not only their possessions, but even their lives for their religious beliefs. Men born into wealth and destined to inherit wealth have renounced wealth and turned themselves into beggars for their religious beliefs’ (xiii).

Following this argument of Omoregbe, any unbiased reader will agree that religion has brought a lot of development to man and the society at large. Religion tries to mould man’s life to suit its beliefs and practices. Religion has also caused many to abandon their family and acquaintances to pursue its teachings that seems appealing to the individual in question. Omoregbe further stresses in the negative form that,

‘Religion has also been the underlying force behind conflict, civil as well as international wars, social stagnation or even retrogression, oppression, discrimination and so forth. Thus religion is a two edged sword which can cut either way with serious consequences. It is a powerful and very delicate phenomenon which needs to be handled with utmost caution. The effect it has produced in human society cannot be ignored’ (Comparative1).

It is very obvious that religion has made and also marred so many lives; people jump into religious tenets, take them upon themselves and began doing all manner of atrocities in the name of religion without deep reflection. Examples of such religious tenets are, ‘if one dies in the course of fighting holy wars he is going to make heaven and also be given seven

beautiful virgins to marry'; 'don't listen to anybody that is not of the same faith with you'; 'do not marry anyone that is not part of your religion'; 'do not eat a particular food'; 'you must fellow tenaciously all the rituals provided without questioning its authenticity and genuineness'; and so forth. Human beings have turned against one another because of religious beliefs and teachings. These acts to us are nothing but emanation and or product of the phenomenon of concealment (Bisong, Joseph and Asira, 25). It is only a man that is suffering from the phenomenon of concealment that can formulate beliefs about religion just to capture his fellow man to him and make him his slave. It is because of these ill norms found in religion that caused philosophers to say some unfriendly things about religion.

According to Uduigwomen, Karl Marx sees religion as an instrument of oppression and exploitation in the hands of the capitalists. It is predominantly practiced by the poor or the suffering masses who are deceived by their capitalist's oppressors to resort to religion instead of revolting in time of hardship or suffering. Thus religion is the opium of the masses. (Companion 96).

Marx's argument is right to some extent, according to Bassey because religious leaders out of the influence of the phenomenon of concealment and curiosity to amass ungodly wealth expose their members to suffering, struggling to eat while they are riding big cars, flying in personal jets, living in good houses and so forth (54).

It will also interest you to know that religious fanaticism is nothing but a product of *the mkpuchi anya* (the phenomenon of concealment). It is only when someone's reasoning is incorrect or his vision impaired that he can kill, destroy property, engage in wars and so forth in the name of religion. It is on this note that Omoregbe asserts that, religious fanaticism is the product of ethnocentricity and narrow-mindedness which prevents the fanatic from seeing clearly and reason correctly and/ or pass the right judgment over the ought (Comparative xi).

Man is made to do anything in favour of his religion when he is glued to some teachings and codes that appeared to be appealing to him.

From the above assertions, it is very obvious that some religious norms and practices in Nigeria are basically done out of the influence of the phenomenon of concealment, hence causing enmity among the various religious groups in Nigeria.

THE IMPACT OF *IHE MKPUCHI ANYA* ON THE NIGERIA EDUCATIONAL POLICY/SYSTEM.

So far it has been noted that the phenomenon of concealment, blurs people's vision from seeing clearly, beclouds the mind from reasoning soundly and also hinders man from passing the right and unbiased judgment about the state of affairs. It is very obvious that such impediment does not exempt the educational system and policy. This phenomenon is found in the educational field through policies and systems of operation generated by those in authority. According to Chris Udofia,

'Humanization and dehumanization constitute historical realities that dialectically illumine each other in the existential experiences of humans through the course of history. The latter is a distortion of the former; the vocation and the given destiny of man are marked by injustice, exploitation, oppression, violence and so forth' (162).

What Udofia is saying is that, man out of his good intention for his fellow men, goes into making educational policy and system that will help the younger ones to learn what is right based on their own standard, not really knowing that these policies are also being influenced

by another thing unknown to them - the phenomenon of concealment. Some of this policies and system of operation in the educational sector are enshrined in the national policy on education. The policy states:

‘A nation’s policy on education is government’s way of realizing that part of the national goals which can be achieved using education as a tool. No policy on education, however, can be formulated without first identifying the overall philosophy and goals of the nation’ (National Policy 1).

A critical view of this portion of the national policy on education will reveal that, education in Nigeria is done as a tool of realizing the national goal. First and foremost, we noted here that educating the masses or citizens of Nigeria is a means to an end, which according to Kantianism is an immoral act. Formulating such policies whereby man will be used as a means to an end is an anomalous act aided by the phenomenon of concealment. In an opposition to this policy Uduigwomen, quoting from Kant holds that,

‘A human action is morally good, not because it is done from immediate inclination still less because it is done from self interest, but because it is done for the sake of duty. An action done from duty has its moral worth not from the result it attains but from a formal principle or maxim: the principle of doing one’s duty, whatever the duty may be. So act as to treat humanity, whether in your own person, or in that of any other, in every case as an end withal never as a means only’ (Introducing Ethics 54).

From the above premise, it is noted that this policy that its priority is to use man as a tool, is formulated out of the influence of *the mkpuchi anya* by implication.

Another shocking aspect of this policy is that no policy on education, however, can be formulated without first identifying the overall philosophy and goals of the nation. The implication of this is that Nigerians shall not be free at all from this bondage. Making an attempt to bring out something new that appears to be in opposition to the ones enshrined in the national policy shall be considered heresy. This, to us is a high level of dogmatization caused by the said phenomenon of concealment. Harns, according to Udofia, admitted that,

‘Education is a distinctively non neutral political mechanism or institutionalized process that largely provides and legitimizes the ways and perspectives by which and from which we come to know the world: it is also a process that in certain political circumstances transmits as knowledge structured distorted misinterpretation of the world’ (163).

From the above premise it is very obvious that education ought to be free of personal and or national interests attached to it. But it is not the case in Nigeria, rather the national interest is given the utmost priority while that of an individual are swept under the carpet through suppression and oppression. Our country Nigeria can be far better than what it is now, if and only if such policies are revisited and amended.

Another painful part is in the dichotomization of the science and humanity which is evidently seen in the admission quota, where the sciences are given 60% while the humanity 40%, the establishment of ministry of science and technology, awarding of scholarships regularly in an appreciably percentage to students in sciences and neglecting students in the arts and humanities. One cannot deny without contradiction that all these anomalies emerged as a result of the influence of the phenomenon of concealment *the mkpuchi anya*, beclouding the policy makers from making the right policy that will be all encompassing and also help to

create a good system of education for the nation. If such policies are not critically checked and amended it will continue to aid the furtherance of the capitalists' agenda of enriching certain class while making other class to suffer.

THE IMPACT OF *IHE MKPUCHI ANYA* ON NIGERIA POLITICAL SYSTEM

It is imperative to note that Nigeria as a country got her independence in the year 1960. By implication Nigerians were allowed by the Colonial fathers to make decisions, propound theories and have a political system of their own to enable them have stable and good governance beginning from the above stated date. The question then is how far has Nigeria as a nation and her citizens gone since independence, precisely, politically? Asouzu asserts that,

'Within the context of Nigeria political experience, there is a noticeable tendency for people to confuse good governance with democracy. One central issue of governance is to determine the ideal type of government or the ideal people most adaptable to the act of government. Thus, some preliminary critical questions arise: is there such a thing as an ideal form of government? Are there people most adapted to the act of governance? It is important to remark that no system of government is intrinsically most adaptable; the same thing is applicable to the individuals. Forms of government become necessary as situations demand likewise those entrusted with the affairs of government' (Ikwa Ogwe 189).

Asouzu's position that no form of government is intrinsically good or those entrusted with the act of governance but insisting that situation of the country should be the determinant factor is largely collaborated by us. The country had been in great tumult of leadership simply because we allow sentiments of nepotism, tribalism, and all manner of self-interest to bear in who becomes and or what form of government to support. It is these sentiments that lead us into electing those whose interest are to mortgage all that belongs to the populace, therefore making policies that are highly detrimental to the citizens and nation at large. These sentiments are informed and prompted by the said phenomenon of concealment.

In Nigeria, the means of acquiring political power is not seriously questioned. That is why political opponent fight and kill one another. The questions then is, is it all about serving the people that political opponents slander, murder and assassinate one another? It is only when a man is suffering from the impairment of vision and or beclouding of the mind from reasoning soundly that such atrocities can be perpetrated. According to Ebegbulem:

'Nigeria is operating on federal system of government, the emergence of Nigeria federalism is not without problem. Some of the problems with the federal structure includes better ethnic rivalry, creation of economically unviable state, especially from the north, politicization of population census, neglect of the minority, corruption, poor leadership, lopsided revenue allocation and so forth' (2006).

Ebegbulem, captures the sad state of the kind of thing that is allowed and or predominant in the system of government or political structure in Nigeria. It is very obvious that Nigeria political system is weak and encourages things that are detrimental to humans. Individualism is at the crux of Nigerian political system. Ikegbu argue that;

In our daily affairs, we are completely saddled with the responsibility of seeking for



our personal intensions and goals. Selfish and parochialism, disregarding the existence of others around us. We are only interested on things that would improve our personal ego, welfare, and other personal achievement (5).

It is pertinent to note that the major problem that Nigeria political system is facing is the problem of selfish and parochial interest. A scenario where policies makers make policy to favour them and their immediate family is a clear indication that the phenomenon influences and beclouds them from doing what is right and just for the interest of all.

CONCLUSION

In the course of this research that centres on *the mkpuchi anya* (the phenomenon of concealment), we realized that man is a conscious being and that his actions and behaviours are not easily fathomed, or deciphered. This is sequel upon the fact that man often acts against the interest of his fellow human being and sometimes against himself. That is why man sometimes exclaims: 'Had I known' Man usually acts under the influence of the phenomenon of concealment.

The work has discovered that there are some devastating effects of '*the mkpuchi anya*' with regard to societal norms, knowledge, production and scientific development. It has also been discovered that this phenomenon blurs our sense of religious beliefs, sometimes making people religious bigots and fundamentalists. Also the phenomenon affects negatively educational systems and inputs, political and sound policies. It is the position of this paper to overcome this existential problem, man should try to suppress those things that look appealing to him but are at the detriment of others.

Complementarity will remain a theory until, man begins to ask himself certain questions, such as: 'if I do what am intending to do what will be the result' will my neighbour be happy if I proceed with what I want to do? The society can only grow when we begin to act with the view of promoting the common good. We must learn how to act objectively.

Finally, it is imperative to note that man began to value wrongly through the influence of *the mkpuchi anya* because he falls out of the original plans of his maker. We are of the view that for man to live above the control of the said phenomenon he must as a matter of necessity return to his maker, so that his act and sense of valuation would be correctly and objectively formulated.

WORKS CITED

- Akpan, Chris O. "*Ambivalence of Human Existential Situation: Veritable Index of Rational Explanation. American Journal of Social and Management Science.*(March 2011): 1-10.
- *Feyerabends's Philosophy of Science and Its Implications For National Development in Africa. Indian council of Philosophical Research.*(2005): 40-55
- *Man or the Machines: Who is in Control? A Re-evaluation through Philosophical Buffers. Interaction in the History of Philosophy*(Eds) E.Duyan and A. Gunger.(2013):152-166.
- Akpan, Chris O. and Lucky U.Ogbonna. '*Between Sartre's Cat and Mouse Ontology and Asuozu's Ibuayidanda: How not to Implore Interpersonal Relations*' *America Journal of Social Issues and Humanities.* 2013.



- Akpan, Chris O. and Mary J. Egbai 'Complementary Ethical Reflection and the Culture of Normalizing Anomalies in Nigerian'. *Journal of Complementary Reflection: Studies in Asouzu* (2010):33-40
- Asouzu, Innocent I. *Effective Leadership and the Ambivalence of Human Interest*. Calabar: University of Calabar Press, 2003.
- *Ikwa Ogwe*: Saesprint Publishers. Calabar.2007.
- *Ibuanyidanda Special Edition*. University of Calabar Press. Calabar, 2013.
- *Ibuanyidanda: New Complementary Ontology*. Transaction Publishers. New Brusuick. 2007.
- *Ibuanyidanda and the Philosophy of Essence*. *Filosofia Theoretical: An African Journal of Invention and Ideas*. Calabar: Jochrisam Publishers. (2011):79-118.
- 'The Challenges of Super-Maxim to Judgment and Actions'. *Journal of Complementary Reflection*. 2008.
- Bassey, Samuel Akpan. "Karl Marx Alienation and the Nigerian Workers." *Imperial Journal of Interdisciplinary Research (IJIR) 8th ser 2* (2016): 1550-555.
- BASSEY, Samuel Akpan, Leonard NWOYE, and Timothy Adie OKPE. "Happiness, Limitations Religiosity." *Journal of Research and Multidisciplinary* 1.1 (2018): 33-39.
- Bisong, Peter B., Joseph N. Ogar, and Asira E. Asira. "The abortion debate: a contribution from Ibuanyidanda perspective." *Online Journal of Health Ethics* 12.2 (2016): 6.
- Brian, Mc Clinton. *Bacon's Advancement of Learning*. *Humanism Journal of Ireland*. (2010):124-130
- Durant, Will. *The Story of Philosophy*. Simon and Schuster Publishers, Fifth Avenue, New York. 1961.
- Edet, Mesembe I. 'African Philosophy of Value (Afroxiology) From the Perspective of Ibuanyidanda Philosophy'. PhD Dissertation, University of Calabar. 2014.
- 'The Super-Maxim and Social Changes in Nigeria'. *The International Researcher. A Multi-Disciplinary Journal*, University of Calabar, Vol.1.No.5 (August 2010):56-64.
- Ebegbulem, Joseph. *Government and Politics of the Modern State*. Kings View Publishers. Calabar. 2012.
- Essien, Ephraim Stephen. 'Human Rights and Its Implications'. *Journal of Complementary Reflection: Studies in Asouzu*. 2005.
- Heidegger, Martin. 'Being and Time'. Harper and Row Publishers. East Street. New York. 1996.
- Ikegbu, E. A. 'Complementary Reflection and the Hierarchy of Social Order. *Journal of Complementary Reflection*': *Studies in Asouzu*. 2005.
- Omoregbe, Joseph. *Knowing Philosophy*. Joja Educational Research and Publishers, Lagos 2001.
- *A Philosophical Look at Religion*. Joja Educational Research and Publishers, Lagos 1993.
- *Comparative Religion*. Joja Educational Research and Publishers, Lagos 1999.
- Ojong, K. A. *A Philosophy of Science for Africa*. African Pentecost Communication. 2008.
- Plato. *Republic*. Wordsworth Publishers Ware, Hertfordshire. 1997.
- Stumpf, S. E. and James Fieser. *Philosophy, History and Readings*. McGraw-Hill Publication, Avenue: New York. 2012.
- *Socrates to Sartre and Beyond*. McGraw-Hill. Avenue. New York. 2003.