

A Critical Reflection on African Ontology In The Light Of Thomistic Metaphysics of Logos

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Abstract

A reflection of African ontology in the light of Thomistic metaphysics of logos is an attempt to understand the nature of African ontology in the light of Thomistic metaphysics of logos. Thomas Aquinas is here taken by the writer as an authentic representative of Western culture in both Christian civilization and analytic culture in Western society. In essence, Thomas Aquinas represent perfectly the Western analytic and synthetic ontology, be it in religious or in scientific arena. By reflecting African ontology in the light of Thomistic metaphysics of logos, this paper assumes that there is a disparity in thinking process between the Westerners and Africans. This disparity is reflected in economic, scientific development and in the conception of Christianity. The writer wants to understand the nature of those differences in order to answer the basic question “to what extent the African ontology fits or does not fit into Western analytic culture, the culture that has affected their perception of Christianity, science and development?” In a like manner how the perimeter of logos is embedded in them? This paper attempts also to explore whether there is a point of convergence in a seemingly conflict world views. The first assumption (fundamental disparity in the thinking process between the Westerners and Africans) paves a way to the second assumption: “the Western people and African ontology have the different ontology”. The paper then seeks to explore the nature of these ontologies and how one fits into the other. The conclusive assumption is that, a study of kind will help to trigger the process of self-reflection. It will put the Africans in a better position in understanding themselves and the position they hold in the world. In the like manner, it enables Africans to understand who they are and who they are not and what are their possibilities of manipulating the world.

The writer is of the thought that since Western analytic ontology as was synthesized by Thomas Aquinas is embedded and directed by logos, it then deserves to control the basis of Christian faith, science and the directives of development. The paper then wants to determine how this ontology fits into Africans ontology.

Coming to this point, the paper forges ahead to determine the nature of African ontology as developed by various African philosophers and theologians. The writer then moves forward to see how the determined ontology is manifested in daily African activities particularly as presented by preachers or practitioners. Then the paper forges ahead to presents analytical ontology as presented by Thomas Aquinas in the metaphysics of logos. This enables the writer to determine the possibility of African ontology to be incorporated in Western analytic ontology particularly in assimilating Christian analytic religion and scientific premises. This process would allow the writer to determine whether there are substantial differences between these two lines of thoughts and the nature of their differences.

Thomas Aquinas by using metaphysics of logos, he succeeded to unlock or understand the reality of ‘being’ and with great success, he achieved solving the mysteries of the Western thought that had stuck during the medieval period. This work relies on the fact that Aquinas’ influence on Western thought is considerable and much of modern philosophy is derived from his ideas particularly in the areas of ethics, natural law, metaphysics and political theory¹. The greatest of Thomas Aquinas lies on his ability to synthesize faith and reason through his treatise on philosophy and theology. In doing so he laid the benchmark of Western analytic ontology.

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I. Introduction

One should bear in mind that if it is the matter of logos as *reason*, *word* or *idea*, Augustine’s philosophy of history was also rich in philosophy and more of theology. Augustine used philosophical propositions in explaining the *City of God*, bringing the intelligible in the trans-history or development of events

¹Wikipedia, “Thomas Aquinas” in Wikipedia free Encyclopedia, [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thomas_Aquinas]. Retrieved 25th March 2022.

in time.² What is brilliant in Thomas Aquinas is that, by using the metaphysics of logos, he analyzed being scientifically. He was able to reach a depth and breadth of the Western culture that no one has yet achieved at his magnitude.³

Jacques Maritain calls Thomas Aquinas the scientist because he had defined science as an organization of body and knowledge of both facts about some areas of study and causes or explanations.⁴ James F. Aderson says that Thomas Aquinas did not limit himself to the so called rational order. He used both revelation and rational grounds.⁵ For Alice Ramos, the intellectual peak of Thomas Aquinas is revealed through the metaphysics of logos.⁶ Alice Ramos defines the metaphysics of the logos in St. Thomas Aquinas as knowing 'being' by using reason, in which through that Being all men share their reasoning. According to Alice Ramos, the metaphysics of the logos in St. Thomas Aquinas is his creation to express or manifest the divine, making possible our knowledge of God without recourse to faith. This divine light is also the source of the light of natural knowledge participated in by all men in God.⁷

Pope Benedict XVI delivered a speech on September 12, 2006 at Regensburg. In his speech, he summed that the central meaning of logos is reason. For Ratzinger, theology incorporates logos in both its Greek philosophical mode as rationality and its Judeo-Christian theological mode as Divine Word.⁸ Ratzinger defined logos as a reason that is creative and capable of self-communication, precisely as reason.⁹ Peter Kreeft concurs with the idea that the logos should be understood as reason. According to him, there are three questions that correspond to the meaning of logos in Greek language and Greek philosophy: (a) intelligible being, (b) intelligence, and (c) communication; or (a) essence, (b) concept, and (c) word.¹⁰

It is therefore logos or reason, intelligence, word, scientific communication and concepts, not faith or anything else that made Thomas Aquinas to be considered the Angelic doctor of the Catholic Church (and Western ontology).¹¹

Aquinas brilliant attempt to unite faith and reason based on the analysis of logos has more convinced the researcher to take Aquinas as an exemplary thinker who can perfectly be used to direct Africans in the process of understanding the world and their self. This is precisely because Thomas Aquinas has made magnificent synthesis which has enabled us to understanding with depth, breadth and clarity; the basis of Western culture. He then deserves to be the benchmark of Western culture. In virtue of this, he becomes the Western yardstick of analytic thinking and a world classic thinker.

The epic of Thomistic genius intellectuality was also seen in his ability to synthesize two extreme sides existed in the 19th century. Since the nineteenth century, there were two extremes attitudes which were spreading throughout, rationalism (reason without faith) and fideism (faith without reason).¹² In the metaphysical synthesis of logos, Thomas Aquinas achieved the principle of golden mean¹³ both in matters of faith and reason.¹⁴ In *Summa Theologiae*, Aquinas mirrors a structure of reality into three categories, i.e God,

²Jacques Maritain, *On the Philosophy of History*, edited by Joseph W. Evancs, [New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1957], page 2.

³Christopher M. Brown, "Thomas Aquinas" in the Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy [iep.utm.edu]. Accessed on 22nd July 2022.

⁴Edward Feser, *Aquinas: A Beginners Guides*, [Oxford: One World Press, 2009], page 9.

⁵Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Contra Gentile*, page 19.

⁶Alice Ramos, "A Metaphysics of the Logos in St. Thomas Aquinas: Creation and knowledge" in Catholic eBooks Project, CAURIENSIA, Vol. IX, 95-111, ISSN: 1886-4945, 2004, [catholicbooks.wordpress.com], page 95.

⁷Alice Ramos, "A Metaphysics of the Logos in St. Thomas Aquinas: page 96.

⁸Francis Mohan, "Ratzinger's Logos Theology and the Healing of Human Rights: a Critical Engagement with the Regensburg Lecture", [University of Birmingham, 2006], page. 5.

⁹Francis Mohan, "Ratzinger's Logos Theology and the Healing of Human Rights: page 2.

¹⁰Thomas Aquinas, *A shorter Summa*, page 136.

¹¹Matthew Love, "Aquinas, Doctor of the Church, Doctor Communis, Doctor Angelicus, "The Dumb Ox' in the Adult Catechesis and Christology, in Jan 2013 [https://www. soul-candy.inform]. Accessed on 22nd July 2022.

¹²Ralph McInerny, *The First Glance at St. Thomas Aquinas*, A Handbook for Peeping Thomists, [London: University of Notre Dame Press, 1990], page 26.

¹³The "Golden Mean" is Aristotle's theory presented in this work called "Nicomachean Ethics" in which Aristotle explain the origin, nature and development of virtues which are essential for achieving the ultimate goal, happiness, which must be desired for itself.[by InsightsIAS, August 9, 2019 in https://www.insightsonindia.com]. Retrieved on 20th July 2022.

¹⁴John Finnis, "Aquinas' Moral, Political, and Legal Philosophy" in the Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, [https://www.plato.stanford.edu]. Accessed in 22nd July 2022.

nature and man.¹⁵ Aquinas begins by providing the understanding of God, he then holds that reason without revelation can arrive at truth about God, and he thinks the same when it comes to certain truths concerning what is not divine.¹⁶ He then proceeds to the act of creation and a consideration of creatures, centering on man, who alone is created in the image of God. Aquinas then moves to man's return to God through his life of morality and religious decision making and ends with Christ and his Church even to the point where Aquinas says that there are sciences of knowing God which are philosophical science and sacred doctrine, both contain the principles of science, one being from natural light of intelligence, and the other being from the light of higher science.¹⁷ Aquinas uses radical metaphysical words and concepts of causation, essence, existence, matter and form, substance and attributes, in order to underline his philosophical, theological and ethical doctrines.¹⁸

After the accumulation of thoughts of Aquinas, the researcher moves to examine to what extent the scientific and religious depth, breadth and clarity found in Thomistic metaphysics of logos can shed a reflection in the understanding of the African self.

One should here bear to mind that in making a critical reflection on African ontology in the light of Thomistic metaphysics of logos, does not necessarily mean that the writer puts African ontology at the inferior level but he simply recognizes the fact that Thomistic synthesis of logos in its climax in natural law theory, has provided a classic benchmark in our understanding of the relationship between science (reason) and faith, God and the World (nature), the achievements of which no one has reached to his level. In view of this the paper takes Thomas Aquinas to be a true representative of Western culture, the culture of humanity or the civilization of humanity. He is also a benchmark of scientific reasoning. His ideas are ruling the world of science and Christian faith of which Africans are part.

1.2 Background of the Problem

Thomas Aquinas laboured much on the relationship between faith and reason, in achieving this he made the synthesis between faith and reason, faith seeking understanding by appealing to Hellenic philosophers. It is from them, he established the rationality of Christian faith and the basis of Western cultural values.

Though this work does not primarily deal with Christian faith, however in virtue of its nature, it is primarily centered on the theocentric point of departure, the central ontology in both African and Thomistic system of thought. It is in the Hellenic philosophers that Thomas Aquinas found a philosophical and rational explanation of Christian faith, the central theme in Thomism.¹⁹ In this sense, both Thomas and Africans depart from theocentric point of view in their quest to understand the world. However, they differ in their methodologically point of departure. While Thomas moves from epistemological realism to the metaphysics of Being through the process of abstraction, Africans moves from the intuitive existence of life preserving pragmatic metaphysics in the mystical relation with deities, then to the perception of God, man, nature and morals. While Thomas pre-occupation is the understanding of being, the African pre-occupation is the presentation of being. While Thomas pre-occupation is the quality of being or existence, the African pre-occupation is the mere existence or being. You will hear them saying that "Bora uhai" literally meaning that "Life is enough".

This work intend to explore the African ontology in the light of Thomas metaphysics of logos for the better understanding of the world, God, nature and man as Thomas made a remarkable intellectual depth, breadth and clarity on the relation between God, man, nature and world. Aquinas used the metaphysics of logos to comprehend the nature, man and the essence of God.

The journey of metaphysical logos did not begin with Thomas Aquinas; it started with ancient Greek in the city known as Athens. It started with Homer with his Homeric myth or Homeric gods.²⁰ Homer with his hierarchy of powers, the cosmologist with the answer to what might be the basic stuff of the universe, Stoics with the logos as the generative principle of the universe, Socrates with Socratic method and the a priori theory of knowledge, Plato with epistemic state and Illusion state, Aristotle with *logos* being a standard in the Category, Philo with the divine logos, Plotinus who influenced Augustine with the principle of emanation, Augustine with the theory of Illumination, and at last Thomas Aquinas with the metaphysics of logos.

Before one answers the question that, what is metaphysics of logos of Aquinas, one should remind oneself the meaning of logos. *Logos* is the Greek term which means *word, reason, study of* or plan, plural *logoi*.

¹⁵ Thomas Aquinas, *A shorter Summa*, page 37.

¹⁶ Brian Davies, *Thomas Aquinas's Summa Contra Gentiles A Guide and Commentary*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016, page 7.

¹⁷ Thomas Aquinas, *The Summa Theologica of St. Thomas Aquinas*, page 9.

¹⁸ Edward Feser, *Aquinas: A Beginners Guides*, page 8.

¹⁹ Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, page 5.

²⁰ Scott Gordon, *The History and Philosophy of Social Science*, [London and New York: Routledge, Tarlor and Francis Group, 1991], page 28.

In ancient Greek philosophy and early Christian theology, the logos is equated to the divine reason implicit in the cosmos, ordering it and giving it its form and meaning.²¹ This kind of logos is manifested in Greek early philosophers' search for the basic principles of the universe despite the apparent existential experiential of diversities in things. Thomas used the philosophical explanation of the universe of these Greek philosophers and early medieval thinkers to establish the relationship between reason and faith, man, nature and God. He constructed a rational metaphysical philosophical system of unity between faith and reason, science and religion particularly by using Aristotelian theory of abstraction. Through this theory, Thomas was able to see God as *Being qua Being*. In virtue of His (God) being a *Being qua Being*, God lacks nothing but *to be*. In this sense, His existence is His Essence.

Based on what is said above, the metaphysics of logos of Thomas Aquinas is then, defined as a rational metaphysical method upon which, he was able to treat God's Essence as His Existence, the manner of His Existence or what is not His Existence and concerning His operations, namely the Knowledge, Will and Power.²²

By using method of metaphysics of logos, it made Aquinas to synthesis reason and faith. Grabmann finds unique synthesis in Aquinas; he then concludes that it is the '*logos*' which made the Church to canonize Aquinas as the first saint to be the theologian and the teacher.²³ Joseph Pieper insists that due to Aquinas's method, the Church has made Aquinas's doctrine her own, and called him, '*doctor communis seu universalis*', the general and universal teacher.²⁴ Through Aquinas, one can know the Western knowledge system.

One may not be able to make sense on the depth and breadth of Christianity theological and philosophical principles, if he does not pay keen attention to its philosophical synthesis. According to P. Kreeft, no other person in Christianity has achieved this depth and breadth than Thomas Aquinas. Thomas Aquinas made a clear synthesis of faith and reason (logos), he used philosophical concepts of the Ancient philosophers (Heraclitus, Parmenides, Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, Plotinus, Stoics) and theological concepts of theologians (Augustine, Boethius, Abelard, Anselm, Bonaventura, Maimonides) to make a philosophical synthesis of Christian faith.²⁵

In essence, Thomas Aquinas applied reason extraordinarily, attempting to achieve a deeper understanding of faith. Aquinas says that, "sacred doctrine makes use even of human reason, not, indeed, to prove faith (for thereby the merit of faith would come to an end), but to make clear other things that are put forward in this doctrine."²⁶ Aquinas' book of *Summa Contra Gentile*, investigates how far the truths of Christian faith can be expounded on the basis of principles available to non-believers. It is only in the 4th book of *Summa Contra Gentile* where he depends on Christian revelation.²⁷ For Pieper, Aquinas' work is too rich; its special virtues lie in its not seeking to be anything special, but he refused to be selective; he undertook the enormous task of choosing everything. Pieper continues saying that, Aquinas seeks to faithful to the deeper intention of Augustine as well as to Aristotle the deeper aim of human reason as well as of divine faith.²⁸ Hence, we can say that, in achieving the synthesis of faith and reason, Aquinas was helped by Platonic method and Aristotelian predicate logic. From Plato, Thomas borrowed the idea of *participation*, from Aristotle, he was able to solve the puzzle by distinguishing the two metaphysical principles of act and potency, or actuality and potentiality.²⁹ From Aristotle also he borrowed the idea of *causation* and epistemological principle of abstraction and the principle of identity, excluded middle, and non-contradiction.³⁰

The medieval theology was largely based on the doctrine of the newness of the world; they excluded man from any relationship to God by placing Man's ultimate end in a union with a separate intellect which is not God, God being conceived as an utterly transcendental entity, which must ever remain in its ineffable unity inaccessible to the human spirit.³¹ The French Dominican Geiger, who discussed the concept of '*Participation*'

²¹The Editors of Encyclopedia Britannica, "Logos Philosophy and Theology" in Encyclopedia Britannica, [www.britannica.com/topic/logo]. Accessed on April 8, 2021.

²²Thomas Aquinas, *A shorter Summa*, page 37.

²³Josef Pieper, *Guide to Thomas Aquinas*, translated by Richard and Clara Winston, [San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1991], page 17.

²⁴Josef Pieper, *Guide to Thomas Aquinas*, page 18.

²⁵P. Kreeft, *The Philosophy of Thomas Aquinas, the Modern Scholar, Course Guide*, [Boston: Recorded Books, 2009], page 7.

²⁶Thomas Aquinas, *The Summa Theologica of St. Thomas Aquinas*, page 22.

²⁷Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Contra Gentile*, Book II, page xi.

²⁸Josef Pieper, *Guide to Thomas Aquinas*, page 21.

²⁹P. Kreeft, *The Philosophy of Thomas Aquinas, the Modern Scholar, Course Guide*, page 54.

³⁰Thomas Hibbs, *Aquinas, Ethics, and Philosophy of Religion* [Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2007], page xiii.

³¹Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Contra Gentile*, page 14-15.

says that, “Aquinas attempts to show the Platonic elements. Aquinas was neither Platonic nor Aristotelian, he was both.”³² Gilson also praised the approach of Aquinas by saying that St. Thomas is not Augustine or Albert Magnus or Bonaventure, in his work he succeeded in stating the whole truth in a unique, exemplary fashion, that is why is called the ‘doctor communis’ of Christendom.³³

The metaphysics of logos of Aquinas is the synthesis that allowed Thomas to see in clarity of intellectual perception of the Biblical statement ‘Yahweh’, “I am Who I am” translated as “I will become what I choose to become”, “I am what I am”, “I will be what I will be”, “I create what (ever) I create”, or “I am the Existing One”.³⁴ From this Thomas managed to establish the logical relation of ideas from phenomena to non-phenomena. In the book of *Summa Theologiae*, the most read book of Aquinas, he divided it in three parts, (i) God, one and three, the Creator, (ii) The Journey of the image of God to Final Union with God, (iii) Christ as the way. Aquinas uses his method to affirm the axioms that, Grace does not destroy nature, but perfects it.³⁵ This makes Thomas to see God as an abstract, a being of spirit (the absence of materiality). As a being of spirit, God is the most intelligible being and the unity of all beings. In essence, He is the Supreme logos. This logos is His own essence. Thus, to reach the relatively depth of Him, one has to use reason as a primary instrument.

1.3 Statement of the Problem

There are two systems of thought or ontology; one is analytic, expressed by Thomas Aquinas and the other looks to intuitive ontology mediated by ancestor metaphysics or spirituality. The survey we can make on African philosophers despite their differences in the point of departure, they all seem to indicate the following points.

- i. The emphasis on public identity as against individual identity as the primordial principles in African ontology (Mbiti, Senghor, Nyamiti, Tempels, Nyerere and Ramos).
- ii. The presence of the ontology of the ancestor spirituality named as ancestor metaphysics (Mbiti, Ramos).
- iii. The elimination of the individual self in favours of the commune self (Mbiti, Ramos, Tempels, Nyerere, Senghor).
- iv. The emotional attachment to nature or object (Senghor).
- v. The emotional return to the intuitive ancestor communitarian spirit (Nyerere)
- vi. Building African (Bantu) public identity on ancestor metaphysics, the ontology of the invisible being (Ramos).
- vii. The dialectical synthesis spirit built on cultural and material foundation (Nkrumah’s consciencium)

Then Thomas Aquinas is presented by this paper as a benchmark of the philosophical synthesis of Western culture as he made a significant synthesis of reality through the application of logos. In doing so he becomes one of the most influential authors in the Western thought paradigm especially on the thoughts of God, Man, Man’s purpose and Christianity.³⁶

Up to this point, we can ask the basic question: How can the spirit of analytic ontology embedded in Thomistic metaphysics of logos be permeated into African deistic intuitive³⁷ ontology? If at all is it fully or partial? Where are the points of convergence and the point of divergence if they are at all? What do these points of similarities and diversities mean in the whole process of comprehending the basic doctrines and assumptions entailed in Christianity as well as the Western world in general?

From here, it is clear that we are confronting two ways of understanding reality, one that is rationally and abstract based reality with the other which is intuitively based reality. Through Thomas metaphysics of logos, one is aware of the principles of reality that are always abstract, linear, focused, deliberate and subjective

³²Josef Pieper, *Guide to Thomas Aquinas*, page 21-22.

³³Josef Pieper, *Guide to Thomas Aquinas*, page 19-20.

³⁴Wikipedia, “I am that I am” article Talk July 2022 [en.m.wikipedia.org]. Retrieved by on 9th July 2022.

³⁵Fergus Kerr, *Thomas Aquinas, A Very Short Introduction*, [Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009], page 33.

³⁶Thomas Aquinas, “Summa Theologica” in Talk: Summa Theologica, March 2012. [en.m.wikipedia.org]

³⁷C. B. Parselle defines intuitive as that which has no time, is very dynamic, non-linear, concern many things, non-focused, too instantaneous, taught by experience, subjective-based, workable option only, needed when there is action, doesn’t require explanation, constructive-based, historically, not clear, good for firefighters, concrete, heart centered, pattern matching and oriented. [“Analytical/Intuitive Thinking” in the Mediate Everything Mediation, November 2005, [www.mediate.com]. Accessed on March 22, 2021.

spirituality. These principles are supposed to find a space in the intuitive mind of the Africans. The question rises here is that, does the two ways of understanding reality be the same, or can the two be compatible?

II. Discourses on African Ontology

2.1 Ethnophilosophy

It is believed that the founder of ethnophilosophy in African philosophy is the Belgian Roman Catholic priest, Fr. Placide Tempels in his influential book *Bantu Philosophy*, 1945.³⁸ In this book he described the ontology of the people who live in the Sub-Saharan Africa, known as Bantu people. Tempels being a Belgian missionary and a priest in Catholic faith, ministered unto the Baluba of present-day Zaire. In his missionary activities, he came to discover that the Bantu people have the formidable force that guides them in day-to-day life. Such formidable force is seen in philosophical elements embedded in the language and institutions, in tales, narratives and proverbs.³⁹

Tempels' observing Bantus' behavior in their daily activities came the conviction that there must be an underlying imperative force which guides them in all activities. He reached this conclusion by observing the behavioral regularity of the faithful people of Baluba at Kasai as they lived Christian faith. They were good attendants of Sundays mass and many of church liturgical celebrations, but in daily lives at their homes, they lived their traditions. Tempels believed that among the Africans, exist the strong vital force which works among them all. This "force" distinguishes Africans from non-Africans.⁴⁰ According to Tempels, the essential energy or "force" of the Bantu, is contained in all their being or is permeated in their being as to form their second nature. They express it through greetings, sympathy, hunger and farewell or best wishes. He says that, "Force is not an adventitious, accidental reality. Force is even more than a necessary attribute of beings: Force is the nature of being, force is being, being is force."⁴¹ As reported by Tempels, in Bantu, there no words which indicate the opposite of vital force. "...*kufa* and *kufadi* in Chichewa, for instance, indicating different degrees of loss of vital force the superlative of which signifies total paralysis of the power to live, should not be translated in English as to die."⁴² The vital force can diminish but not die. Every African struggles to get an object that can increase the vital force and avoid anything that can diminish it.

We can say that, the nature of Tempels philosophy was to show that the nature of African thought is assumed to be hitherto unthoughtful, yet philosophical by nature and presentable as such, is that system of unconscious to the Bantu themselves, yet commonly agreed upon belief.⁴³ According to Tempels, there is no way if one wants to help the African in a new direction and denies this truth. He says that, "if only we set out from truth, good and the stable in native customs shall we be able to lead our Africans in the direction of a true Bantu civilization."⁴⁴

Another ethnophilosopher is Leopold Sedar Senghor. The philosophy of Senghor seems to be immediate and result of events that were taking place especially during slave trade. He sees the position of Africans being ignored and people oppressed simply because they have not valued their identity as black people, *Negroes*. According to Senghor, the mental aptitudes that constitute races are consequence of human and environment conjugation.⁴⁵ In Senghor's own words, negritude is a complex of civilized values, is traditionally socialist in character.⁴⁶ It in this basis, Senghor provided his famous state that, "Classical European reason is analytical and makes use of object, African reason is intuitive and participates in object."⁴⁷ Senghor sees that, it is a matter of environment which affects Blacks to think emotionally and Whites to think reasonably.

According to Senghor, negritude is a kind of act of faith in Africa, in its past and in its destiny. According to him, this is the way Africa could recover its identity and freedom.⁴⁸ Senghor says that, if Africans want to win recognition in the world as a whole, then they must gain respect for their sculpture, their music, their dance, their literature, their philosophy.⁴⁹ He insisted even the African culture should be productive. He

³⁸Josias Tembo, "African Identity: The Question of Conceptual and Theoretical Purchase", page 23.

³⁹K. Wiredu, ed. *A Companion to African Philosophy*, page 233-234.

⁴⁰K. Wiredu, ed. *A Companion to African Philosophy*, page 335.

⁴¹K. Wiredu, ed. *A Companion to African Philosophy*, page 335.

⁴²K. Wiredu, ed. *A Companion to African Philosophy*, page 335.

⁴³Josias Tembo, "African Identity: The Question of Conceptual and Theoretical Purchase", A Dissertation Submitted in Fulfillment on the Requirements for the Degree, Master of Art in Philosophy, [University of Pretoria, 2016], page 24.

⁴⁴Josias Tembo, "African Identity: The Question of Conceptual and Theoretical Purchase", page 25.

⁴⁵Josias Tembo, "African Identity: The Question of Conceptual and Theoretical Purchase", page 97.

⁴⁶S. Gbadegesin, *African Philosophy, Traditional Yoruba and Contemporary*, page 167.

⁴⁷Josias Tembo, "African Identity: The Question of Conceptual", page 97.

⁴⁸Cf. B. BUJO, *African Theology*, page 48.

⁴⁹B. BUJO, *African Theology*, page 48.

doesn't see the need of highlighting more on socialism, while Africans are by nature socialists. According to him, Negro-African society is collectivist, or, more exactly, communal because it is rather a communion of souls than an aggregate of individuals. Africans should learn that they had already achieved socialism before the coming of the Europeans, what is now left is negritude.⁵⁰

Senghor although acknowledges the heterogeneity of African cultural practices, yet within it he found the homogeneity of black cultural values expressed in term of Negritude. Attention is drawn to the varieties of indigenous cultures beside the infiltration of foreign cultures which have been domesticated.⁵¹ On his side, Senghor, if the material could be well utilized which have a direct compatibility to the Africans, could bring changes. Tembo commenting on Senghor notion of Negritude, says that, "The ontological and epistemological conditions that Senghor sets for himself appear to be practically irreconcilable and epistemologically contradiction."⁵² The two systems of reasoning are not reconcilable.

Alexis Kagame, on his attempt to address the African ontology he advances his arguments from the analysis of African languages and the ontological meaning embedded in them. His major problem was to find out a system which can accommodate the African thought ontology. He accumulates everything which concerned the African languages. Kagame believed that African cultural languages had a challenge of not being systematic and not following language principles in representing reality. According to Kagame, this is unacceptable if really Africans want to address themselves understandably. According to him, in a culture without writing, such as that of the Bantu, the philosophical conceptions are either incarnate in the structure of words, or condensed in some proverbs, or developed in one or another literary genre (tales, stories, narratives, poems), or finally mixed with religious doctrines or social institutions; it is impossible to analyze the categories of being.⁵³

It is from that ground of finding local language, that, it should receive its own linguistic categories which do not depend on religious doctrines or social institutions, made Kagame to study *Kinyarwanda* language and introduce his written art, both in his own language, *Kinyarwanda*, and in French. Through his study on *Kinyarwanda*, Kagame discovered that other Bantu-speaking people of central Africa and eastern Africa, had linguistic structure similar to those of the Bantu of Rwanda which reveals the unique way in which all the Bantu-speaking people conceive being.⁵⁴

From there, Kagame exhausts himself in making a comparison of scholastic branches of philosophy as is correlated within Africans.⁵⁵ Kagame uses a category that is similar to the systems of Plato, Aristotle, Thomas and Kant. He maintains that in *Kinyarwanda*, all terms are divided into groups and classes, and the substantive are not divided, and this is similar to other languages.⁵⁶

Kagame thinks the words which exist in *Kinyarwanda*, are similar also to the Bantu, in which each word is made from one of the four elements, which have some philosophical role depending on the class to which the word belongs, and it is from such elements that the four general categories of speech are derived. This kind of understanding according to Kagame has no difference to Thomas understanding of the categories. According to him, the class of a word can be recognized by a sound or group of sounds which preceded the stem and this Kagame calls determinative. Kagame stated that the stem is ineffectual without the determinative in Bantu language. Kagame discovered that the Bantu ontology is laid in one stem which is "Ntu". According to Kagame the stem "ntu" has no meaning in itself, nevertheless, it is the universal force which when acted upon, it produces, the four categories.⁵⁷ These four categories according to Kagame are: *Muntu* - 'Human being' (Plural: *Bantu*) *Kintu* - 'Thing' (Plural: *Bintu*) *Hantu* - 'Place and Time' and *Kuntu* - 'Modality'. According to Kagame, all that there is must necessarily belong to one of the four categories and must be conceived not as a physical substance but as force. *Man is a force; all things are forces including place and time, modalities.*⁵⁸ According to Kagame "ntu" has the generic meaning of something. *It is the ultimate unifying notion*, it is a generic of being but God does not belong here. Kagame explained God when he speaks of *muntu* as the highest being.⁵⁹ Negedu made a comment on Kagame that if Man (*Muntu*) is therefore a force, dog (*Kintu*) is also a force, West and yesterday (*Hantu*) are also forces, also beauty and laughter (*Kuntu*) are forces. Being and forces, they are related to each other, their relationship to each other is seen in the determinative *Ntu*; then it is clear that African

⁵⁰S. Gbadegesin, *African Philosophy, Traditional Yoruba and Contemporary*, page 166-167.

⁵¹S. Gbadegesin, *African Philosophy, Traditional Yoruba and Contemporary*, page 169.

⁵²Josias Tembo, "African Identity: The Question of Conceptual..", page 99.

⁵³K. Wiredu, ed. *A Companion to African Philosophy*, page 232-233.

⁵⁴Nelson Udoka Ukwamedua, "A Critical Review of Alexis" [www.ajol.info>article], page 253.

⁵⁵K. Wiredu, ed. *A Companion to African Philosophy*, page, 239.

⁵⁶Nelson Udoka Ukwamedua, "A Critical Review of Alexis" [www.ajol.info>article], page 254.

⁵⁷Nelson Udoka Ukwamedua, "A Critical Review of Alexis" [www.ajol.info>article], page 253.

⁵⁸Nelson Udoka Ukwamedua, "A Critical Review of Alexis" [www.ajol.info>article], page 253.

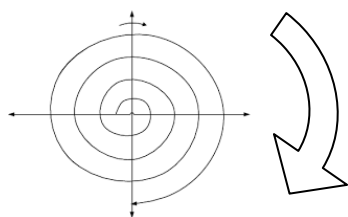
⁵⁹Nelson Udoka Ukwamedua, "A Critical Review of Alexis" [www.ajol.info>article], page 254.

ontology rely on African culture does not assume that reality can be perceived only through reason but through imagination, intuitive experience and personal feelings.⁶⁰

On his side John Samuel Mbiti opens his discourse on African ontology by stating that, ‘Africans are notoriously religious, that they take religion in the beer parties, in the parliaments, in the fields and in the schools, whenever an African is, there is religion. In such a case there is no separation between the profane and the secular, everything is bounded together as one in such a way that the secular is wrapped into the spiritual in manner that the spiritual orders the secular.

According to Mbiti the determination of the nature of African ontology could be obtained from cosmological point of view, their conception of time. Time is defined by Aristotle as the number of motion according to after and before. From that angle, time is seen as linear infinite and mathematical. Plato on the other hand defines time as the moving image of eternity. The moving image here is the phenomena as is seen in his allegory of the cave where the world of phenomena is seen as the world of change or motion. It is in this conception where we can fix time with events. Thus time is perceptible from events. According to Mbiti, for Africans time is a composition of events, those that have happened, those that are now happening and those that are about to happen. What has not yet happened or is not happening or has no likelihood of immediate occurrence falls into the category of what he calls ‘‘No-time.’’⁶¹

Here events become the genesis of time. Events are either of the past or the present. The present is vividly observed. Since time is limited by events and events are either of the past or present, time is limited to the past and the present, the future can only be potential and highly obscured because there are no events to be observed to produce it. According to Mbiti, African people, time is composition of events. This means that no events no time. This would mean that there is no abstraction conception of time which is basically mathematically and linear. The implication is that the past is the most important temporal dimension, while the future barely exists beyond the tiny span ahead, a mere continuation of today’s events.⁶² Fitting this cosmological understanding into their ontology Mbiti says that the African myths seem to indicate that, the African time begins with the story or the events of creation, and moves up to the present (sasa) and the goes back to the past (zamani). It is a cyclical motion or ontology such as this:



This makes the African movements of thought to be limited to the past and present, there is little concern for the future. The African time is therefore phenomenological time which defines their ontology. Such a concern is typically a characteristic of intuitive mind. According to Africans, since the phenomena is enveloped into the spiritual, God controls everything and orders everything to be what they are, so their work is only to act according to the rhythm of nature. According to Mbiti, this kind of faith is the African religion, whereby everything is controlled by God. He says that, ‘‘By giving people a way of interpreting the world, a way of understanding their existence, African Religion has equipped them emotionally, intellectually and culturally to go through life and face its many experiences.’’⁶³

According to Mbiti, there is no any angle which an African can be understood apart from his religion. Religion has wrapped all his thinking, actions and belief; for the matter of facts, it covers all spheres of African people’s life. Mbiti insists that, religion has dominated the thinking of the African peoples to such an extent that it has shaped their cultures, their social life, their political organizations and economic activities. Religion is closely bound up with the traditional way of African life, while at the same time, this way of life has shaped religion as well.⁶⁴ According to Mbiti, religion is the African ontology. He says: ‘‘People apply their religion to

⁶⁰Isaiah Adujo Negedu ‘‘Beyond The Four Categories Of African Philosophy’’ in the International Journal of African Society Cultures and Traditions, 2014,[www.eajournals.org]. Accessed on 10th July 2022.

⁶¹K. Wiredu, *ed. A Companion to African Philosophy*, page 9.

⁶²Article on ‘‘African Philosophies, Major Themes’’ in [science.jrank.org]. Accessed on April 3, 2021.

⁶³John Mbiti, *An introduction of African Religion*, [Oxford : Heinemann Educational Publishers, 1975], page 198..

⁶⁴John Mbiti, *An introduction of African Religion*, page 9.

their social, emotional, economic, intellectual and spiritual life. They believe that religion is relevant in all these areas of their life.”⁶⁵

It from that angle Mbiti goes further and tries to understand the nature of the African deity. According to Mbiti, the African understanding of God is different from that of the Western. The African God’s omnipresence is distributed throughout space and time. Such associations help people to focus their attention on God’s presence.⁶⁶ According to Mbiti, the Africans cite the presence of God in every terrifying place, particularly in the sky, in falling rain, lightning and thunder. Furthermore, Africans concepts of time lay greater emphasis on the “past” and “present” than on “future” making the “future” virtually non-existence beyond a few months or years.⁶⁷ According to Mbiti, Africans express the conception of God’s transcendence in relation to something parallel and in comparisons. It can be in relation to other beings, divinities, objects and human institutions.⁶⁸ According to Mbiti, African understanding of religion is awkward because it does not provide hope for the future particularly for the death. Mbiti says that African religions must admit a defeat, they do not offer for mankind at large a way of ‘escape,’ a message of redemption, a rescue from the monster of death.”⁶⁹

Ernst Wendland comments on Mbiti that, African religion on one hand is typically materialistic, pragmatic, based on *sasa* and *zamani*; such a religion has proved failure because it cannot offer hope for the life after physical death, nevertheless people cannot neglect it because it quenches their thirsty on the present; on another had they feel to join Christian religion since it provide hope for the future and defeat of death, but it is more analytical; as the result, Mbiti says that, the Bible is taken as almost sacrosanct, emphatic statement ‘*Nothing can substitute for the Bible*’.⁷⁰ From Mbiti, this might be the reason why the Bible is interpreted literally among Africans. Mbiti compared Akamba and New Testament eschatological beliefs and sacrifices and claimed that the Akamba ceremonies lacked a reference to God and focus on Christ. The focus on Christ because is perceived easily intuitively.⁷¹

Umbutu Philosophy, in explaining African ontology starts with the opening phrase that, “we are because I am”. This is a bit contrary to Mbiti’s notion that “I am because we are”. The first emphasis on the role of the community (we are) on an individual. Here the community becomes the community depending on the role it plays towards an individual. While the later (Mbiti’s notion), it emphasis that the individualistic clique (I am) is towards the community (we are), an individual becomes a person not because he/she is morally good but simply because he confirms with the community, regardless the community is evil. The ubuntu articulate the same southern Africa Bantu saying that, “*Motho ke motho ka batho/Umntu ngu muntu nga Bantu*” a person is only human through the community.”⁷² Out of the community, there is no human being. This means that the Ubuntu believes that there is something deep within the Bantu people which make them believe that they can act as the driving force towards anything (an individual person). The centrality of Ubuntu is the community; the community becomes the binding rope to human actions and beliefs. From that angle, we see that African Indigenous Religion(s) and the foreign written scriptures and religion founders are not prominent since these are embodied by the community.⁷³ Then the question comes, where does the community obtain ethical values in such a way that any member finds it on the table? The ancestors and Divine being created ethical values, community is demanded to promote, transmit and maintain them through within this realm that rituals, songs, stories, myths, proverbs, sayings, riddles, and taboos are taught and executed. Ramose calls it, “the ontology of invisible beings.”⁷⁴ According to Ramose, the ontology of the invisible beings is part and parcel of the community. The community has to assure the children and individuals are socialized in order to get in touch codes of values. If this is done well, it assures the society’s survival and the healthy co-existence with the Ancestors. According to Ramose, “Ubuntu philosophy and religion have no separate and specific theologies.”⁷⁵ According to Ramose, Ubuntu imitates from other cultures, especially by adopting methods and techniques

⁶⁵ John Mbiti, *An introduction of African Religion*, page 198.

⁶⁶ John S. Mbiti, *Concepts of God in Africa*, page 7.

⁶⁷ John S. Mbiti, *Concepts of God in Africa*, page 12.

⁶⁸ John S. Mbiti, *Concepts of God in Africa*, page 15.

⁶⁹ John Mbiti, *African Religions and Philosophy*, 2nd ed., [Portsmouth, NH : Heinemann International 1969] page 96-97.

⁷⁰ Ernst Wendland, *Companion to African Religions*, [Blackwell Publishing, John Wiley & Sons, 2007], page 275.

⁷¹ Ernst Wendland, *Companion to African Religions*, page 252.

⁷² Ernst Wendland, *Companion to African Religions*, page 137.

⁷³ Ernst Wendland, *Companion to African Religions*, page 137.

⁷⁴ M. Mawere – T.R. Mubaya, *African Philosophy and the Thought of Systems*, 102.

⁷⁵ M. Mawere - T.R. Mubaya, *African Philosophy and the Thought of Systems*, page 104.

which will later on serve as a reformer. Within Ubuntu, all interactions are oriented towards the common ground, the community, the family, the birthed relationships, and in relation to the physical land.⁷⁶

Another African philosopher worthy to our discussion is Nyerere, some say he is merely an ideologist. He was able to develop a concept on African ontology based on Ujamaa. In his *Essays on Socialism*, he depicts the African attitude of mind. He provided a collective epistemology. Nyerere says, “*The Purpose is Man.*”⁷⁷ Nyerere did not bother to find the epistemological meaning of man rather than relying on the traditional way of thinking. According to him, “the basic purpose of socialism is the well-being of people, the basic assumption is the acceptance of the human equality.”⁷⁸ Nyerere was capable of organizing an indirect authority of knowledge, in which, outside socialism no man existed. The African through Ujamaa was to empowered from within. According to Nyerere, he saw that the brotherhood which in an African nature, had been disrupted by colonialism. Ujamaa was to differentiate a civilized man from the barbaric one, a socialist from the capitalist. Nyerere says that, “Ujamaa is the socialistic attitude of mind that differentiates a socialistic society from non-society and a socialistic person from a non-socialistic person.”⁷⁹ According to Nyerere, ‘brotherhood’ or ‘familyhood’ could be achieved within a society. Nyerere says that, “the purpose of society and the reason for its existence must enable man to pursue his individual interests and his own inclinations and the freedoms which can be obtained through life in the society”.⁸⁰ The priority of Nyerere was the society not the individual.

According to Nyerere, the society’s prominence is based on its services to the individuals. In that case, the society is more important than individual, that the reason which made Nyerere to prioritize the society on the expense of the rights of individuals. Nyerere says, “There must be equality, because only on that basis will men work cooperatively. There must be freedom, because the individuals are not served by society unless it is his. There must be unity. Because only when the society is united can its members live and work in peace, security and well-being.”⁸¹ Nyerere started to organize the society (nation) for strong economic aptitudes, by acquisition of the land, self-reliant policy, discouraging private property and wealthy. Both the rich and the poor individuals were completely secure in Nyerere’s community.⁸²

Knowingly or unknowingly, Nyerere achieved on constructing the communitarian thinking through which all people think and act homogeneously. According to Nyerere that was the African nature of surrendering oneself and wholeheartedly to the community. Nyerere believed it was not his own idea and formulation, but that is its ontology, found to be that way. According to Nyerere, Ujamaa should not be interpreted as that of Marx, because by itself, Ujamaa is not the product of class struggle but born from the nature of African society.⁸³ Nyerere says that, “In our traditional African society we were individuals within community. We took care of the community, and the community took care of us.”⁸⁴ Nyerere appeals in the metaphysical principles of human equality in order to justify his Ujamaa. According to him, the idea of socialism has its foundation in the principle of human equality, which equality has to be applied to the different sectors of society, namely, economic, social and political, this is an equality of benefits.⁸⁵ Nyerere says that, “The equality of all members is fundamental to any social grouping to which an individual freely belongs...the ideal society is based on human equality and on the combination of the freedom and unity of its members.”⁸⁶

Kwame Nkrumah’s ideology tried to conceptualize Africa ontology. He came up with the concept of Consciencism. This was his concept of new African ontology (new culture of humanism) achieved out of the synthesis of traditional African values, Western-Christian values and Islamic values, the result of it, is new African humanism. According to Nkrumah, this is an intellectual instrument which is to serve the African ways of life and the encounter of the Western challenges. Consciencism according to Nkrumah becomes a rediscovery, in modern terms, the African communalism which is the basis of traditional African society. Nkrumah’s political ideology, he argues that there must be seen as a consequence of colonialism and its

⁷⁶M. Mawere - T.R. Mubaya, *African Philosophy and the Thought of Systems*, page 98.

⁷⁷J.K. Nyerere, *Ujamaa, Essays on Socialism*, [Dar es Salaam: Oxford University Press, 1968], page 91.

⁷⁸J.K. Nyerere, *Ujamaa, Essays on Socialism*, page 78.

⁷⁹J. K. Nyerere, *Freedom and Unity*, (Dar es Salaam: Oxford University Press, 1966), page162.

⁸⁰E. Lema, *Nyerere on Education: Selected Speeches* Vol 21971-1967 [Dar es Salaam: E &D Limited, 2006], page 7.

⁸¹E. Lema, *Nyerere on Education Vol. ii: Selected Speeches 1971-1967*, [Dar es Salaam: E &D Limited, 2006], page 11.

⁸²B. Hallen, *A Shot History of African Philosophy*, [Bloomington: Indiana University Press. 2009], page 105.

⁸³Maurice M. Makumba, *Introduction to African Philosophy*, page 140.

⁸⁴J.K Nyerere, *Freedom and Unity*, page 166.

⁸⁵J.K Nyerere, *Ujamaa: Essays on Socialism*, [New York: Oxford University Press, 1968], page 79.

⁸⁶J.K Nyerere, *Freedom and Unity*, page 8.

attendant capitalist economic exploitation.⁸⁷ Nkrumah did hate directly capitalism. Socialism in Nkrumah's view was not to recapture its structure, but the communal spirit in traditional African society.⁸⁸ According to Nkrumah, people in the pre-colonial African society were supreme. There was no sectional interest, which could be regarded supreme, nor could the legislative and executive power aid the interest of a particular social stratum. Post-colonial Africa was no longer the old society of authentic African values, but rather a society enlarged by Islamic and Euro-Christian influences, a new harmony becomes imperative ideology that solidifies in a philosophical statement and at the same time uphold the original humanist principle of Africa.⁸⁹ According to Nkrumah, that could only be achieved by analyzing matter. The nature of phenomena, primacy of matter, meaning it remains in a motionless state unless acted upon by an external force. Matter, Nkrumah explains, is not inertia; rather it is capable of self-motion, both in the sense of change of relations, and in the sense of change of property.

According to Nkrumah, though matter is capable of dialectical change, Philosophical Consciencism does not assert the sole reality of matter. It rather asserts the ordinal reality of matter. While Nkrumah desired socialism to bring change among Africans, however he did not want it to be revolutionary. According to Nkrumah, matter and materialism is different. He denied is theory to be based on matter but on materialism. According to Nkrumah the minimum assertion of materialism is the absolute and independent of matter. Matter, however, is also a plenum of forces which are in antithesis to one another, and which is thus endowed with powers of self-motion.⁹⁰ Nkrumah suggests that African unity of thought would definitely be as a result of organic unity (as the unity of water and sugar when sugar dissolved into water) with his concept of socialism.⁹¹ It is in this basis that Nkrumah accepted natural revolution which is from traditional communalism.⁹² Not as Karl Marx believed, according to Nkrumah dialectical materialism is consistent with both Christian theism and the metaphysics of the African traditional worldview. According to Nkrumah, like how matter provides energy and physical quantities give rise to emergent qualities in science, this is the model in which consciencism acts to bring self-conscious to the Africans, this is the philosophy.⁹³ We can say that, Nkrumah philosophy of consciencism made its momentary look in the communitarian structure. According to Nkrumah, African communalism is regarded as the socio-political ancestor of socialism.⁹⁴

2.2 Sage Philosophers

One of the prominent sage philosophers is Odera Orika. He distinguished philosophy in a strict sense and philosophy in a debased sense. Orika aimed at defending Africans who had been termed as non-thinking people (as referred to Hegelian designation) and Senghor who had considered Africans as people who think emotionally.⁹⁵ Orika considered philosophy as connect to the contours of traditional worldviews or cultures.⁹⁶ What is considered philosophical in western has different meaning in Africa as well as in America. The Kenyan, Henry Odera Orika humorously remarks:

What may be a superstition is paraded as African religion, and the white world is expected to endorse that it is indeed a religion but an African religion. What in all cases is a mythology is paraded as African philosophy, and again the white culture is expected to endorse that it is indeed a philosophy but an African philosophy. What is in all cases a dictatorship is paraded as African democracy, and the white culture is again expected to endorse that it is so. And what is clearly a de-development or pseudo development is described as development, and again the white world is expected to endorse that it is development — but of course 'African development.'⁹⁷

Odera Orika sees African way of reasoning is divided into categories of people, the philosophical sage, culture philosopher or ordinary sage.⁹⁸ Philosophical sagacity is one sage among many who can give a

⁸⁷K.B. Asamoah, *Kwame Nkrumah's Politico-cultural Thought and Policies*, page 19.

⁸⁸K.B. Asamoah, *Kwame Nkrumah's Politico-cultural Thought and Policies*, page 19.

⁸⁹ Kwame Nkrumah, "Consciencism: Philosophy and Ideology for De-Colonization" [<https://www.PanafBook.com>, 1970], page 82.

⁹⁰ K.B. Asamoah, *Kwame Nkrumah's Politico-cultural Thought and Policies*, page 43.

⁹¹K.B. Asamoah, *Kwame Nkrumah's Politico-cultural Thought and Policies*, page 17.

⁹²Maurice M. Makumba, *Introduction to African Philosophy*, page 137.

⁹³Kwame Nkrumah, *Consciencism*: page 20-21.

⁹⁴Kwame Nkrumah, *Consciencism: Philosophy and Ideology for De-Colonization*, page 82.

⁹⁵O.H. Chemhuru, "Odera Orika's Four Trends...", page 4.

⁹⁶S.O. Imbo, *An Introduction to African Philosophy*, page 31.

⁹⁷P. J. Hountondji, *African Philosophy; Myth and Reality*, 2nd ed. translated by Henri Evans with the collaboration of Jonathan, [Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1996], page 60.

⁹⁸M. Mawere – T.R. Mubaya, *African Philosophy and the Thought of Systems*, 68-69.

systematic description of the speeches, symbols and history. The one who is both a sage and a critical thinker is a *philosophic sage*.⁹⁹ Another category is that of culture philosophers, this is the group of uninfluenced by modern education, there are genuine philosophers – individuals capable of fundamental reflection on man and the world, and able to subject the folk philosophy of their own communities to criticism and modification.¹⁰⁰ According to Odera Oruka emphasized that there some people who are “*ordinary sages*”, because a person can be a sage and not a critical thinker.¹⁰¹ He is a sage in a traditional or cultural level. Some of the sages are simply moralists and the disciplined, die-hard faithful to a tradition, others are merely historians and good interpreters of the history and customs of their people.¹⁰² These deserve to be called sages. According to Oruka, the folk sagacity is a communal ethos, in which the habits and customs of the host society, although cannot systematically be analyzed by a lay member, still have an explainable meaning and have gone into a series of interpretation. According to Oruka, the large number of Africans is culture philosophers, folk and ordinary philosophers; they cannot reason in universally, their wisdom is only limited in certain culture. It is in such basis Oruka suggests indigenous education and philosophy to be deepened more within their culture and society, depending of their experiences and environment.¹⁰³

Pauline J. Hountondji, in his publication, *‘African philosophy: Myth and reality’*, understands philosophy from a Western point of view. According to Hountondji traditional African stories are only myths, they become philosophical if they are well crafted and fit into the criterion of philosophy such as being independent, critical, auto-critical, systematic and methodical. According to him, what is said to be philosophy in Africa, are just pretext for conservative cultural practices and advocate the dissolution of African particularities.¹⁰⁴ The work of making African philosophy can only be done by philosophers who have studied philosophy. Hountondji, for example, used the term ethno-philosophy to refer to the philosophy that Placide Tempels and many others across the African continent such as Alexis Kagame as were just ‘discovering’ or rather unearthing, not philosophical, but as material which help in philosophical reflection.¹⁰⁵ Hountondji emphasized philosophy to be understood as a critical discipline which does not depend on one’s race or continent. If Africans want to do or live philosophy, should be capable of respecting the categorical stand and think in the line of collective philosophy and analytic.¹⁰⁶ Hountondji was aware that the Africans are juveniles for doing philosophy, but still they have no alternative. According to Hountondji, Africa is a primitive society; in any primitive society everyone is in agreement with everyone else – from which it is concluded that there could not possibly exist individual philosophies in such societies, but only belief-systems.¹⁰⁷ Philosophy as such is delivered from a reconstruction of the worldviews and system of thoughts of the traditional cultures. However, if the enthophilosophy is engaged by class of professionals, who can take that solely responsibility on behalf of the society, to make it capable of reconstructing the vital dimension of theory and practical philosophy, it appear really as a philosophy. Hountondji says, “A fake science is not always, or necessarily, a false science.”¹⁰⁸ The good thing is that, Africa still has all that of possibilities. Hountondji would say, “The African field is plural, like all fields, a virgin forest open to all possibilities, to all potentialities, a host to all contradictions and intellectual adventures like all other sites of scientific production.”¹⁰⁹ Hountondji sees that Africa has point to begin in doing philosophy. According to him, Africans can start doing philosophy as “*episteme*” instead of “*doxa*”, meaning science rather than opinion and that one will introduce it worldwide, instead of being scientific marginalization or called *bantustanization*.¹¹⁰

2.3 African Theologians

Here we are trying to look how the African theologians have been understanding, affected and responding to the African ontology. By the researches done by theses African theologians, it reflects exactly that there are some predicaments somewhere.

⁹⁹M. Mawere – T.R. Mubaya, *African Philosophy and the Thought of Systems*, page 68.

¹⁰⁰M. Mawere – T.R. Mubaya, *African Philosophy and the Thought of Systems*, page 68.

¹⁰¹M. Mawere – T.R. Mubaya, *African Philosophy and the Thought of Systems*, page 68.

¹⁰²M. Mawere – T.R. Mubaya, *African Philosophy and the Thought of Systems*, page 69.

¹⁰³O.H. Chemhuru, “Odera Oruka’s Four Trends...page 8.

¹⁰⁴Cf. P. J. Hountondji, *African Philosophy; Myth and Reality*, page 17.

¹⁰⁵M. Mawere – T.R. Mubaya, *African Philosophy and the Thought of Systems*, page 67.

¹⁰⁶P. J. Hountondji, *African Philosophy; Myth and Reality*, page 62-70.

¹⁰⁷M. Mawere – T.R. Mubaya, *African Philosophy and the Thought of Systems*, 57.

¹⁰⁸P. J. Hountondji, *African Philosophy; Myth and Reality*, page 19.

¹⁰⁹M. Mawere – T.R. Mubaya, *African Philosophy and the Thought of Systems*, page 59.

¹¹⁰P. J. Hountondji, *African Philosophy; Myth and Reality*, page 17.

Charles Nyamiti was born in 1931 in Tanzania. He belonged in Nyamwezi tribe. He was ordained as the Catholic priest in 1962. A most admirable trait of Nyamiti is his choice to spend his career teaching in Africa, resisting the drive to the West that has seen African lose so many of its best its *brains*.¹¹¹ He died in 2020 at the age of 90 years. He wrote about 36 works. Among of his works include *Christ as Our Ancestor* and *Christology from an African perspective*. In the book of *Christ as Our Ancestor*, Nyamiti believes that Christian tradition and the Bible address the similar character. Nyamiti says that, “African Christian theology has been in existence since the era of the early missionary enterprise.”¹¹² According to Nyamiti, Christ has become a child born in the African clan lineage since the early of missionary enterprise.

African culture and Christian mystery became the points of departure according to Nyamiti to explain the compatibility between the Africa ontology and the Christian theology. Why did Nyamiti choose African culture as the point of departure? Muya says that, African culture is very systematic and composing categorical propositions that can accommodate Christianity.¹¹³ According to Nyamiti too, African cultural disposition can accommodate Christianity easily. According to him, Christianity is an historical event that is now unavoidable in Africa theology. Nyamiti admits inculturation to be the method that can help to reach the consensus with the Magisterial.¹¹⁴

In his book *Christ as Our Ancestor: Christology from an African Perspective*, Nyamiti seeks to inculturate Christ into African understanding of ancestor. In his endeavor to respond to Christ’s perennial question in Matthew 16:13, “Who do people say that the Son of Man is?” Nyamiti explains Christ as the Ancestor par excellence as he qualifies him as the perfect model, elevation and finality of ancestors.¹¹⁵ The work of *Christ as Our Ancestor* influenced more Nyamiti to many of his works. With such endearments, Nyamiti was naming Christ to be conceived intuitively like other clan or tribal ancestors.

Another person is Laurenti Magesa. He says that, all the principles of morality and ethics are based on preserving and enhancing life and its power or force. Magesa makes a strong case for recognizing African Religion as a world religion with its own distinctive view of the abundant life.¹¹⁶ According to Magesa, African religion comes not as something strange within the Africans, but rather an entity that recognizes human life as being central and a driving force in all aspects of a human person. This is the standard to judge good and bad leader, good and bad systems and structures in politics, economics, cultures, religions or environments.¹¹⁷ According to Magesa when life is threatened or weakened, prayer request to remove all that is bad and anti-life in society, and demand restoration of all that is good. Petition, as a form of prayer, shows the pragmatism of Africans: They ask for needs that comply with their religious perception of life.¹¹⁸

Magesa shows how African religion regards the universe, with all that it contains, as being lent by God to humanity for the promotion of life, good relationships, and peace.¹¹⁹ Magesa sees the purpose of belief in God according to the Africans, is more horizontal than vertical or transcendental because it concerns peoples life here on earth especially on their abundance of life.¹²⁰

In his book, *Anatomy of Inculturation*, Magesa admits the same that African Region is the religion of moral traditions of abundant life.¹²¹ He recommends the inculturation to be the promotion of life, which is the ultimate goal of both the Gospel and African culture; polygamy must not be considered part of the picture of sexual relationships.¹²² Magesa shows little emphasis to why African religion is lesser that to that of Christianity in such a way that it need to be enculturated. He shows abundance richness of African ethics and how it practically lived.

2.4 African Practitioners

In Zambia, Emmanuel Milingo the Archbishop of Lusaka since 1969 was compelled to resign from the office by Rome in 1982, because in April 1973 he began a ministry of healing. At times Milingo compared

¹¹¹B. Bujo – J.I. Muya, ed. *African Theology, the Contribution of the Pioneers*, page 150.

¹¹²B. Bujo – J.I. Muya, ed. *African Theology, the Contribution of the Pioneers*, page 153.

¹¹³B. Bujo – J.I. Muya, ed. *African Theology, the Contribution of the Pioneers*, page 154.

¹¹⁴B. Bujo – J.I. Muya, ed. *African Theology, the Contribution of the Pioneers*, page 155.

¹¹⁵B. Bujo – J.I. Muya, ed. *African Theology, the Contribution of the Pioneers*, page 158.

¹¹⁶Laurenti Magesa, “African Religion: The Moral Tradition of Abundant Life” in *Spirituality Practice*, ed. Frederic – M.A. Brussat, 2006, [www.spiritualityandpractice.com]. Accessed on March 24, 2021.

¹¹⁷Andrea M. Ng’weshemi, “Magesa, Laurenti, African Religion: Accessed on March 24, 2021.

¹¹⁸Andrea M. Ng’weshemi, “Magesa, Laurenti, African Religion: Accessed on March 24, 2021.

¹¹⁹Andrea M. Ng’weshemi, “Magesa, Laurenti, African Religion: Accessed on March 24, 2021.

¹²⁰L. Magesa, *Anatomy of Inculturation*, [Nairobi: Paulines Publications Africa, 2004], page 15.

¹²¹L. Magesa, *Anatomy of Inculturation, Transforming the Church in Africa*, [Nairobi: Paulines Publications Africa, 2004], page 276.

¹²²L. Magesa, *Anatomy of Inculturation, Transforming the Church in Africa*, page 276.

himself with Jonah or another prophet, his power as from God and Christ, and his gift being personal.¹²³ Milingo says that, "I told a group of priests that I was able to speak with the dead and the evil spirits. They almost uttered the word '*Anatemasit*' meaning '*May he be cursed*'."¹²⁴ For Milingo, there are incidences where traditional western medicine and traditional Catholic '*medicine*' of praying together in conventional way, confession and mass, don't work in Africa. It is from such standpoint Milingo adopted healing as the central to all his work and self-understanding.¹²⁵ Milingo's healing work brought him into conflicts with his priests, both whites and blacks, his fellow bishops and definitely with Rome. Milingo was considered a sheer fundamentalist and having anti-scientific convictions.¹²⁶ The Church in Rome could not tolerate Milingo's unscientific and unsystematic theology, it considered it as just a matter of hypnosis rather than supernatural terms. The Church wrote a letter to him, as Milingo himself puts it, "The letter from the Vatican stated clearly that what I was doing was not becoming a man of my standing as Head of the Archdiocese of Lusaka."¹²⁷

Solomon Swallo, a leader of Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania (ELCT), since year 1976 to 1980 and a Bishop of the South Central Diocese in Tanzania from 1989-1991, has been in pastoral activities for a long time. Swallo completed a study titled *Ushirikina Katika Ukristo* (Superstition in Christianity) in order to find out a cause of superstition, which weakens Christian faith among church members.¹²⁸ He concluded that superstition is the main deterring block of many faithful in church where he is serving. In his research, Swallo discovered that there is no difference between the baptized Christians and pagans.¹²⁹ According to Swallo, African Christian faith is not firm; the members have fear of losing this earthly life. Therefore, they have created other gods.¹³⁰

Bishop Kilaini who was the auxiliary bishop of the archdiocese of Dar es Salaam for many years and now the auxiliary bishop of Bukoba diocese, had his views on Catholic revivalists (*wanauamsho*) and on The Marian Faith Healing Ministry of Fr Felician Nkwera, the revivalist. According to Bishop Kilaini, the biggest challenge to the Catholic Church especially in Africa comes from Pentecostal Churches.¹³¹ Kilaini believed that the Pentecostal Churches are a kind responding to African ways of expressing joy and practical signs of inspiration and sentimental.¹³² According to Bishop Kilaini, there is nothing bad to be sentimental or inspired, but the challenge is when those things become extreme.

According to Kilaini, the New Movements within Catholic Church, such as the Catholic Charismatic Movements, have responded very well to this challenge of the Pentecostals, but this Catholic response, usually called *Uamsho*, must be careful not go to the extremes.¹³³ According to Bishop Kilaini the challenge of *Uamsho* is higher within the faithful only, compared to the clergies or Church leaders. When he was interviewed on the case of Fr Kwera who was conducting the Healing Ministry, Kilaini said, "Nkwera (the revivalist) has embraced too much cultural elements in his movements that put him at the risk of doctrinal errors."¹³⁴

Prophet Tito of Tanzania, Dodoma, would dance while drinking bottles of beer and kissing his wife and house girl; saying that there is no problem of drinking alcohol, sleeping with house girls and dancing while in the church or outside.¹³⁵ The police officers arrested him and sought to prove his mental state and validity of the mission. Later on was freed and continued his mission as a prophet of God.

Joseph Gwajima, the founder and Archbishop of Glory of Christ Tanzania church and an international anointed preacher seems to be closer to Tito.¹³⁶ He has written several books, one of them is *Jinsi ya Kuondoa Vifuniko vya Kichawi* (How to Untie People from the Witches). He is the bishop who claims to himself that he possess supernatural powers of healing from bodily diseases, exorcising demons and making people to richness

¹²³ Adrian Hastings, *African Catholicism, Essays in Discovery*, [London: SCM Press, 1989], page 141.

¹²⁴ Adrian Hastings, *African Catholicism, Essays in Discovery*, page 142.

¹²⁵ Adrian Hastings, *African Catholicism, Essays in Discovery*, page 138.

¹²⁶ Adrian Hastings, *African Catholicism, Essays in Discovery*, page 139.

¹²⁷ Adrian Hastings, *African Catholicism, Essays in Discovery*, page 139.

¹²⁸ F.I. Ilomo, *A Relevant Christian Eschatology for African Context Today*, [Dar es salaam: Dar es Salaam University Press, 2013], page 3.

¹²⁹ F.I. Ilomo, *A Relevant Christian Eschatology for African Context Today*, page 4.

¹³⁰ F.I. Ilomo, *A Relevant Christian Eschatology for African Context Today*, page 4.

¹³¹ L. Magesa, *Anatomy of Inculturation, Transforming the Church in Africa*, page 60.

¹³² L. Magesa, *Anatomy of Inculturation, Transforming the Church in Africa*, page 60.

¹³³ L. Magesa, *Anatomy of Inculturation, Transforming the Church in Africa*, page 60.

¹³⁴ L. Magesa, *Anatomy of Inculturation, Transforming the Church in Africa*, page 60-61.

¹³⁵ O. Machibya, "Tanzania: Police don Arrest Drinking and Kissing Pastor" on 24th January 2018, BBC NEWS, [www.bbc.com]. Accessed on March 22, 2021.

¹³⁶ J. Gwajima, "Bishop Dr. Gwajima's Biography" in 2020 GCTC, [Ufufuonauzima.org]. Accessed on April 22, 2021.

(abundance of life). According to Gwajima, he himself can bring many people who have been afflicted by forces of darkness to complete freedom including raising the dead.¹³⁷

Adrian Hastings who has spent a substantial part of his life in Africa between the year 1950's and 1980's, engaging himself in many different roles of understanding and living Christianity, and the professor of Theology in the University of Leeds, published his book titled *African Catholicism*. According to his research, there are more than seventy million members in Africa who are members of Roman Catholic Church.¹³⁸ According to Hastings, collectively the Christian denominations including Roman Catholic Church in Africa, in the last half of twenty one century, constitute the majority of the religion of Bantu Africa. According to Hastings, this kind of combination and inclusiveness has made Christianity in Africa to appear differently as compared with Christianity of the other continents. Christianity in Africa has already become a religion of tradition, genuinely African traditional religion.¹³⁹

In addition, Tabona Shoko, from Zimbabwe, in his book "*Karanga Indigenous Religion in Zimbabwe*" describes that religion and healing as intricately intertwined in African religions. The religion of the Karanga people of Zimbabwe sheds light on important methodological issues relevant in African religions. The traditional Karanga views the causes of illness and disease, mechanisms of diagnosis at their disposal and the methods they use to restore health.¹⁴⁰ Shoko's findings demonstrated in emphasis that the healing is so evident in traditional beliefs and practices; such healings have become adopted by an African Christian community, adapted to fit into Christian concepts.¹⁴¹

On the same line, Maboe Mokgobi, from South Africa, who is the cluster manager of Monash South Africa, speaks that Africans believe on traditional medicines and healings throughout their lives. In his research Mokgobi discovered that there are some Western trained health care practitioners who express different views about traditional healing.¹⁴² According to Mokgobi, it is common among Africans to think that those (Africans) who consider themselves 'Westernized' and therefore 'civilized' tend to consult with Western medical practitioners' during the day and with African traditional healers at night when people cannot see them.¹⁴³

Kanayo Nwadiolor & T. Agunwa, the Nigerians, on their article Religious Ambivalence in Igboland, they discovered that: If really there is a problem among the Igbo Christians by embracing two practices. The researchers saw that Igbo Christianity wanted a form of Christianity that would enable them to interpret, understand, and come to grips with their own rapidly changing society.¹⁴⁴ The researchers found out that Christians believed that, what they were practicing was not a matter of double faith, but the response to what is seen in the Bible.¹⁴⁵ The findings showed that the Christians were comfortable with prophesying, faith healing and stress on spiritual gifts, trances, visions and dreams.¹⁴⁶

Another notable indigenous Christian church, in Congo called Kimbanguism. The church has more than 22.5 million believers.¹⁴⁷ This new Christian religious movement professed by the Church of Jesus Christ on Earth by the special envoy Simon Kimbangu in the Belgian Congo (today the Democratic Republic of the Congo) in 1921. The new Christian religious movement has its headquarters at Nkamba Kongo Central, Democratic Republic of Congo. David Garbin who conducted a research on "Sacred remittances: money, migration and the moral economy of development in a transnational African church", wanted to see the role of money (sacred remittances) in African religions. Garbin discovered, when it come on the matter of sacred remittances, the situation is the same in Pentecostals, Catholics and Kimbanguists.¹⁴⁸

¹³⁷J. Gwajima, "Bishop Dr. Gwajima's Biography" in 2020 GCTC, [Ufufuonauzima.org]. Accessed on April 22, 2021.

¹³⁸Adrian Hastings, *African Catholicism, Essays in Discovery*, page xi.

¹³⁹Adrian Hastings, *African Catholicism, Essays in Discovery*, page xi.

¹⁴⁰Adrian Hastings, *African Catholicism, Essays in Discovery*, page xi.

¹⁴¹Tabona Shoko, *Karanga Indigenous Religion in Zimbabwe: Health and Well-Being, Vitality of Indigenous Religions*, [Ashgate Publishing, Ltd., 2013] page xii.

¹⁴²Maboe Mokgobi, "Health Care Practitioners' Attitudes towards Traditional African Healing" in the HSOA Journal of Alternative, Complementary & Integrative Medicine, 2017. [www.heraldopenaccess.us]. Accessed on 16th June 2022.

¹⁴³Maboe Mokgobi, "Health Care Practitioners' Attitudes towards Traditional African Healing" page 1.

¹⁴⁴K. L. Nwadiolor & T.V.C. Agunwa, "Religious Ambivalence in Igboland: page 5.

¹⁴⁵K. L. Nwadiolor & T.V.C. Agunwa, "Religious Ambivalence in Igboland: page 5.

¹⁴⁶K. L. Nwadiolor & T.V.C. Agunwa, "Religious Ambivalence in Igboland: page 8.

¹⁴⁷Kimbanguism [En.m.wikipedia.org]. Accessed on 12th May 2022.

¹⁴⁸David Garbin, "Sacred Remittances: Money, Migration and the Moral Economy of Development in a Transnational African Church." in Kent Academic Repository, 2018 [http://kar.kent.ac.uk/65921 also in https://doi.org/10.1080/1369183X.2018.1433528], page 3. Accessed on 17th June 2022.

3.5 The African Writers on Africa Ontology

One of the most prominent African scholars is W. E. B. Du Bois, the first Black American to earn a PhD from Harvard University. He was born in Great Barrington, Massachusetts, in 1868 and died in 1963, at the age of 95 in the West Coast of Africa. He wrote three autobiographies and books. He studied philosophy at the University of Harvard, where he met William James who advised him to study history thinking that it could benefit him more and his people. Du Bois, following the advice of William James, he went in Berlin for further studies. He then published books known as *The Souls of Black Folk*, published in 1904 and the *Dark water* published in 1920, hold a great legacy in the prose of Americans and Africans.

Dr. W. E. B. Du Bois was a scholar as well as what an older generation of Negroes referred to as a Race Leader. Du Bois' major contribution to our epoch is not the shelf of books he wrote or the scores of articles, nor even the 30-odd leadership years with the N.A.A.C.P., but is rather the contribution of a life lived experimentally and self-documented, a restless, seeking, ever searching quest, a life journey which began in New England, carried him over the whole.¹⁴⁹ As an American, he discovered that Black People in America suffer the challenge of double races within themselves. They are told that they are Americans (equal to Whites) by history of slave trade and by blood they are reminded of being Africans. According to Du Bois, it is only the Black Americans who suffer double racism. Du Bois invited all Black people to solve the problem of *double consciousness*. Du Bois proposed unity that Black Americans especially soldiers should go back to Africa and struggle towards economic hardships together with their people of similar kinship.¹⁵⁰

III. Thomas Aquinas' Synthesis of Logos

Thomas was born the son of a powerful Italian count of Aquino, called Landulph, in 1225 at Roccasecca, near Aquino, in Italy and died on March 7, 1274 at Abbazia di Fossanova, Fossanova Abbey, Italy. He is well honored as the Angelic Doctor. He was the pupil of St. Albert the Great, an Italian Dominican friar, philosopher, theologian, Catholic priest and the Doctor of the Church. He is a philosopher and theologian, and the one which the Catholic Church pays much attention on his philosophy than any other philosopher. His method made Pope Leo XIII on August, 4, 1879 to write an encyclical to the world. The letter has an opening words '*Aeterni Patris*' which in English was named '*On Christian Philosophy*'. Pope Leo XIII urged Catholic schools and colleges and universities and especially seminaries to give pride of place to the thought of Aquinas.¹⁵¹ The product of the encyclical '*Aeterni Patris*' was completed in the Vatican Council II, especially on the documents *Optutum totius* (on priestly formation), and *Gaudium et Spes* (the pastoral constitution on the Church).¹⁵² Ralph says that the method and doctrine of Aquinas have a special honor due to completeness, balance, depth and clarity of his style.¹⁵³

In *Summa Theologiae*, Thomas mirrors a structure of reality into three categories, i.e God, nature and man.¹⁵⁴ Aquinas writes the book of *Summa Contra Gentile* in order to investigate how far the truths of Christian faith can be expounded on the basis of principles available to non-believer. He aimed at using the methods of logic (philosophy) which have been used by non-believers (Greeks), in order to make them understand God. It is only in the 4th book of *Summa Contra Gentile* where he depends on Christian revelation.¹⁵⁵ In so doing Aquinas' method has no difference of what can today be called Cartesian, Lockean, Humean and Kantian.¹⁵⁶

Thomas accepted the early idea of Augustine that soul is in the whole body, (On the Trinity, book 6, chapter 6) and whole in each part of it. In the *Summa Theologiae*, He was able to explain the content of the divine revelation. He understood that the content include two kind of the truth: truth accessible to natural reason (such as God's existence and uniqueness, spirituality and moral truth found in the Ten Commandments) and the inaccessible to natural reason (such as the Trinity of persons of God's one nature, Christ in the Eucharist, Christ as the Son of God).¹⁵⁷ Even to that truth which is inaccessible to natural reason, Thomas was able to provide the

¹⁴⁹ C. Drake, "Dr. W. E. B. Du Bois: A Life Lived Experimentally and Self-Documented" *A Journal of African and Afro-American Studies*(1986), *Stanford University* [<https://scholarworks.umass.edu>]. Accessed on 12.02.2021.

¹⁵⁰ W.E.B DuBois, "Returning Soldiers" [www.americanyawp.com on WEB DuBois, "Returning Soldiers" published in May 1919, *The American Yawp*], page 13. Accessed on 15th June 2022.

¹⁵¹ Ralph McInerny, *The First Glance at St. Thomas Aquinas*, page 20.

¹⁵² Ralph McInerny, *The First Glance at St. Thomas Aquinas*, page 26.

¹⁵³ Ralph McInerny, *The First Glance at St. Thomas Aquinas*, page 27.

¹⁵⁴ Thomas Aquinas, *A shorter Summa, The Essential Philosophical Passages of St. Thomas Aquinas Summa Theologica*, edited and explained by Peter Kreeft, San Francisco: Ignatius Press, Page 37.

¹⁵⁵ Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Contra Gentile*, Book II, page xi.

¹⁵⁶ Edward Feser, *Aquinas: A Beginners Guides*, page 8.

¹⁵⁷ John F.X. Knasas, *Thomism and Tolerance*, [Scranton & London: University of Scranton Press, 2011], page 9.

explanations of the revealed truth and God's revelation by natural reason.¹⁵⁸ Thomas was able to provide the proofs on the existence of God and explain His ontological attributes. Aquinas morality has realistic and analytical principles especially on justice and the ultimate happiness of man. Natural law ethics grounded in the human dignity, and the basis of human dignity being man's rationality.¹⁵⁹

Thomas Aquinas was influenced much by the Aristotelian philosophy, and thus in his metaphysics, he buys the concepts and ideas from Aristotle. St. Bonaventure complained the purpose of Thomas to use Aristotelian methods that it was to defeat the pagans, but Thomas replied: 'No, I am transforming water into wine.'¹⁶⁰ Not only that St. Bonaventure was not interested to Aquinas by using Aristotelian method, but also he believed that anything conflicted the revealed truth was false. Under such two reasons, Aquinas was to take a painstaking on the *Commentaries on Aristotle*.¹⁶¹

Thomas had read the works of Boethius who came up with the division of theoretical sciences in three (natural science, mathematics and divine science), but Thomas was unsatisfied with this classification and thus he pointed out that; the subject matter studied by a science must be proportioned by the end of that same science, thus he gave a distinction between theoretical science¹⁶² and practical science.¹⁶³ Aquinas made a crucial philosophical move beyond Aristotle in distinguishing creation from change. According to Thomas, creation causes very existence of a thing; change just changes its nature.¹⁶⁴ Not only that Thomas believed that God had revealed the truth that the universe was created, and not eternal, but also such truth could be arrived by reason (theoretical sciences).

Thomas introduced self-evident proposition which contained in the meaning of the subject. According to Thomas, the good also means the notion of being, the *ratio entis*. By introducing the notion of '*ratio entis*' as the basis of the first principle of speculative reason, he maintains the principle of non-contradiction. Aquinas says that, "It makes sense to call being the good because being is an eminently rich in intelligibility. By 'Intelligibility' I mean a commonality that can be grasped in the particular things presented by sensation."¹⁶⁵ According to Aquinas, metaphysics is beyond physics. It is the study of being as being dealing with the fundamental type of being or substance upon which all other depend and with the most fundamental causes.¹⁶⁶ Thomas calls metaphysics the first philosophy because it is occupied with what comes first in the ontological order, the first causes of being, on the other hand, other sciences rely on it for their first principles.¹⁶⁷

These are logical formulae and verbal formulation recommended by Aquinas as he engages in studying practical science. Principle means '*source*' not '*formula*' according to Aquinas, so science is knowledge that is deduced from self-evident principles, and theology is knowledge that received its principles from God, the source of all principles.¹⁶⁸ The first principles have originality from Aristotle. Aristotle regards things of non-linguistic, non-psychological, non-propositional entities as first principles; actually existing things are first

¹⁵⁸John F.X. Knasas, *Thomism and Tolerance*, page 12.

¹⁵⁹John F.X. Knasas, *Thomism and Tolerance*, page 13.

¹⁶⁰P. Kreeft, *The Philosophy of Thomas Aquinas*, page 13.

¹⁶¹Ralph McInerney, *The First Glance at St. Thomas Aquinas*, page 46.

¹⁶² According to Thomas, Theoretical or Speculative Science is a type of science that deals with theories and hypotheses to explain natural phenomenon. They depend the relation of truth they contemplate; can be on physics (in a broad sense) and metaphysics.

¹⁶³According to Thomas Aquinas, Practical Science or the theory of arts is the kind of science which selected, arranged logically and investigated in advance as a principle of an art such as ethics, economics and politics. They lead to applied truth.

¹⁶⁴P. Kreeft, *The Philosophy of Thomas Aquinas*, page 42.

¹⁶⁵John F.X. Knasas, *Thomism and Tolerance*, page 14.

¹⁶⁶Merriam-Webster, "First Philosophy Definition & Meaning" [www.merriam-webster.com]. Retrieved 25th June 2022.

¹⁶⁷Jan Kielbasa, "What is First? Metaphysics as Prima Philosophia and Ultima Scientia in the Works of Thomas Aquinas" in *Spring Nature*, [https://doi.org/10.1007/s11406-013-9484-8] also found in [link.springer.com]. Retrieved 25th June 2022.

¹⁶⁸Britannica, "Epistemology: St. Thomas Aquinas" [https://www.britannica.com/topic/epistemology/St-Thomas-Aquinas]. Retrieved on 25th June 2022.

principles because they explain other things and our knowledge of the world requires us to know the explanatory relations in it, what is prior and better known by nature is both the propositional principle about, e.g., atoms.¹⁶⁹ He uses Aristotelian first principles of logic to sustain the substantiality of unity, morality, providence and soul e.g. $2+2=4$. For Thomas, when using the first principles, there is a close parallel between the two orders of knowledge, theoretical and practical, or intellectual and moral.¹⁷⁰ The maintenance of principles in theoretical science brings harmony or beauty in practical science. They act as generative principles which determine the syntactic and semantic characteristics of a natural language depend. Let us pass through main principles which Thomas Aquinas used.

Firstly, Law of Non-contradiction: It is based on the general ontological insight that whatever is, insofar as it is, is not not, i.e., it cannot not-be, and is not what it is not. This principle is based on the all-embracing nature of being. Sophists who maintained that “*whatever seems, is true*,” and that consequently contradictions are true simultaneously.¹⁷¹ Hence, a thing cannot be and not-be at the same time under the same respect. The distinguishing mark of the principle is the phrase: at the same time under the same respect. The validity of this principle is a pre-condition for all knowledge. The truth of faith cannot contradict the truth of reason of the same being, for example God, if both of them faith and reason are from the same source, there is no way they can contradict each other. Aquinas says that, “There is nothing to prevent a man, who cannot grasp a proof, accepting, as a matter of faith, something which in itself is capable of being scientifically known and demonstrated.”¹⁷² Here we are not considering truth of faith that which is doubted due to weakness of intelligence, like an owl is dazzled by the light from the sun. Aquinas says that, some happen to doubt about articles of faith is not due to the uncertain nature of the truths, but to the weakness of human intelligence.¹⁷³

Secondly, Principle of Identity: This is the fact of being one and the same. According to this principle everything is what it is. Whatever is *is*; and whatever is not, is not. Everything is its own being. Everything is itself, but in a way proportionate to its nature. A common feature does not prove an identity.¹⁷⁴ The particular judgment ‘this is’ or ‘I am’ contains a general judgment which embraces all judgments. Whatever is, insofar as it is, is and is what it is. According to Thomas, it is also called the principle of individuation. He provides the example that, you cannot say that ‘*the Word of God, which is God, is an uncreated form. And a form is part of a compound. Therefore God is part of some compound*’. According to Aquinas, the Word is an exemplar form; but not a form that is part of a compound. Simple things do not differ by added differences for this is the property of compounds.¹⁷⁵

Thirdly, Principle of Truth and Affirmation: It states that ‘there is truth’. Truth is conformity (correspondence) between the mind and the object. It is self-evident that truth exists; for even denying, it would mean to admit it. Affirmation is the assent of the mind to that which is. By affirming that there is any natural things which ‘is’ and ‘good’ this leads to the affirmation also that there is first being that which all beings participate and share their ‘beingness’ and ‘goodness’ i.e God.¹⁷⁶ Affirmation is the primary form in which the principle of truth manifests itself to us in judgment. This affirmation can be expressed in several ways: ‘there is something’, ‘something is’, ‘something exists’. Thomas Aquinas says:

¹⁶⁹Melina G. Mouzala, “Aristotle’s Method of Understanding the First Principles of Natural Things in the Physics I.1” in P E I T H O / E X Amina 1(3)/2012, 2016 page 44, [philarchive.org]. Retrieved on 25th June 2022.

¹⁷⁰P. Kreeft, *The Philosophy of Thomas Aquinas*, page 80.

¹⁷¹P. Kreeft, *The Philosophy of Thomas Aquinas*, page 65.

¹⁷²Thomas Aquinas, *The Summa Theologica of St. Thomas Aquinas*, Second and Revised Edition, translated by Fathers of the English Dominican Province, [http://www.newadvent.org/summa/100308.htm], page 35. Retrieved on 30th May 2022.

¹⁷³Thomas Aquinas, *The Summa Theologica of St. Thomas Aquinas*, Second and Revised Edition, translated by Fathers of the English Dominican Province, [http://www.newadvent.org/summa/100308.htm], page 15. Retrieved on 30th May 2022.

¹⁷⁴P. Kreeft, *The Philosophy of Thomas Aquinas*, page 65.

¹⁷⁵ Thomas Aquinas, *The Summa Theologica of St. Thomas Aquinas*, Second and Revised Edition, translated by Fathers of the English Dominican Province, [http://www.newadvent.org/summa/100308.htm], page 58. Retrieved on 30th May 2022.

¹⁷⁶Thomas Aquinas, *The Summa Theologica of St. Thomas Aquinas*, Second and Revised Edition, translated by Fathers of the English Dominican Province, [http://www.newadvent.org/summa/100308.htm], page 68.

The various natures of things differ less as to their mode of existing than do affirmation and negation. Yet, as to the way in which they are known, affirmation and negation have something more in common; because directly the truth of an affirmation is known, the falsehood of the opposite negation is known also.¹⁷⁷

Fourthly, Principle of Causality: It states that every event necessarily have a cause in it. Whatever passes from a state of nonexistence into a state of existence must have an efficient cause for its existence. Aquinas says that, “every composite has a cause, for things in themselves different cannot unite unless something causes them to unite. But God is uncaused since He is the first efficient cause.”¹⁷⁸ Cause is that which produces an effect: cause is an ontological principle that exercises a positive influence in the production of something else. There are four main causes that can be grouped into two: intrinsic cause and extrinsic cause. God is the cause of the universe; the principle does not concern Him. “If God is to be located there as the principle of everything, it is because he exists in the supreme degree, since he is supremely immutable.”¹⁷⁹

Fifthly, Principle of Relation: It states that a framework to understand reality or a physical system in such a way that the positions and other properties of objects are only meaningful with relative relation to other objects.¹⁸⁰ The term “relation” comes from the Latin word, *referre*, which means bring back, the reference of one thing to another, mutual inter-directedness. In relation to this Thomas sees that a series of cause and effect is in inter-directedness. ‘Being’ is the being of beings, one knowledge is preferable to another, either because it is about a higher object, or because it is more certain. Hence if the objects be equally good and sublime, that virtue will be greater which possesses more certain knowledge.¹⁸¹ Thomas then moves forward to show that, ‘being’ is the ‘being’ of beings, it is always related to beings and all beings are also simultaneously and what is radically means related to ‘being’ (hence relative to ‘being’) as for example “B” is related to “A”, “C” is related to “B” and “D” is related to “C” then “A” related to a being of beings. Aquinas applies this principle to explain the relationship between creatures and God. According to Aquinas, a relation of God to creatures is not a reality in God, but in the creature. For it is the creatures that goes back to God, God is in our idea only: as, what is knowable is so called with relation to knowledge, not that it depends on knowledge, but because knowledge depends on it.¹⁸²

For there is no doubt that Aquinas thought that God had revealed to men that his essence is to exist. He is not lavish with epithets.¹⁸³ In God, *esse* is pure act itself. According to this principle, we must deny that God is composed of matter and form, for matter is in potency, and since God is pure act, without any mixture of potency, it is impossible that he is composed of matter and form.¹⁸⁴

Coming to his argument on the existence of God, Thomas uses heavily the insights obtained from Aristotle on his doctrine of realism (beginning from what is exactly perceptible by senses to what is not perceptible by senses) to his Biblical affirmation in the synthesis of Christian faith. From the Aristotelian starting point, he moves to Platonic affirmation, to see God as pure form and pure essence devoid of any materiality, then from it he applies the principle of efficient causality in which he sees God as Unmoved Mover, hence the source of motion.

Firstly, Thomas argues that there is motion in the universe (argument from motion). Since nothing can move itself, an external agent or force is/was necessary to cause or instigate the motion that is in the universe. Now in the movement whereby one thing is moved by another, three things are required: first, the motion of the mover; secondly, the movement of the moved; thirdly, the consummation of the movement, or the attainment of the end.¹⁸⁵ Thomas Aquinas argues that if we don’t admit the universal mover, we must admit the abstract of an

¹⁷⁷Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, Christian Classics, written in the year 1265 – 1274. [www..ccel.org] page 650

¹⁷⁸ Thomas Aquinas, *The Summa Theologica of St. Thomas Aquinas*, Second and Revised Edition, translated by Fathers of the English Dominican Province, [http://www.newadvent.org/summa/100308.htm]. page 56.

¹⁷⁹E. Gilson, *Thomism: The Philosophy of Thomas Aquinas*, page 43.

¹⁸⁰Wikipedia, “Relational Theory” [en.m.wikipedia.org]. Accessed on April 7, 2021.

¹⁸¹Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, Christian Classics, written from 1265 – 1274. [www..ccel.org] page 1982.

¹⁸²Thomas Aquinas, *The Summa Theologica of St. Thomas Aquinas*, Second and Revised Edition, translated by Fathers of the English Dominican Province, [http://www.newadvent.org/summa/100308.htm]. page 64.

¹⁸³E. Gilson, *Thomism: The Philosophy of Thomas Aquinas*, page 95.

¹⁸⁴E. Gilson, *Thomism: The Philosophy of Thomas Aquinas*, page 89.

¹⁸⁵Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, Christian Classics, [www..ccel.org], page 2589.

infinite regress. Hence there must be a first separated mover that is absolutely immovable, and this is God (an appeal to Biblical YAWHEW).¹⁸⁶

The second argument which Aquinas makes is from efficient cause. It is based on the premises that every effect has a cause and that everything that begins to exist or happen is an effect, the cosmological argument holds that there must be an ultimate first cause. It is therefore necessary to posit a first efficient cause. Aquinas again says that this first cause is what everyone calls God.¹⁸⁷ Aquinas affirms this conclusion from the Biblical statements, Wis. 11:21: "Thou hast ordered all things in number, weight and measure."¹⁸⁸ It is written in (Job 41:25): "He is king over all the children of pride." Now it belongs to a governor to lead those whom he governs to their end.¹⁸⁹ For Aquinas consider God's might as is over all creatures (1 Jn. 2:2) which that: He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for those of the whole world.¹⁹⁰ It is written (Ecclus. 1:10) that God "poured" wisdom "out upon all His works." Hence, just as it is better to be taught by God than by man, so it is better to receive our knowledge from sensible creatures and not by man's teaching.¹⁹¹

The third argument is from perfection: The universe contains a pyramid of beings (from simple, basic organisms to advanced organisms such as humans). This 'ever-increasing degree of perfection' points toward a final being that must be perfect and ideal. Not every kind of union causes perfect goodness, but only that on which the perfect being of a thing depends.¹⁹² Hence we can conclude that there exists something that is being in the supreme degree, and this is what we call God.¹⁹³

Fourth, is the argument from design: Thomas says: "The very order of things created by God shows the unity of the world. For this world is called one by the unity of order, whereby some things are ordered to others. But whatever things come from God, have relation of order to each other, and to God Himself."¹⁹⁴ If nature tends toward an end assigned to it by an intelligence, then that first being, from which it has both its end and its disposition to that end, must have created it not by natural necessity but by intelligence and will.¹⁹⁵

Fifthly, is the argument from necessity: Certain beings are born and perish, but there is one with no possibility of perishing and that possesses necessary existence, namely, the first being, which is God.¹⁹⁶

Thomas Aquinas having at hand the Aristotelian abstract process of knowledge which led to the possibility of attaining being qua being (a being devoid of any determinations by either essence or quality), he was able to reach at the knowledge of God as pure being (not quantified) or by anything except to be. Hence His being is His essence (there is no separation between His being and essence). This enables Aquinas to see the transcendental properties of God as being abstract entities as He is Himself. In such a manner the transcendental properties of God as unity, goodness, truth and beauty abstract entities attributed to the inferior creatures, analogically through the analogy of attribution and negation. Since we have affirmed that God is perfect being, we attribute all perfection in Him by negating what is in creatures which seem to be imperfect, in view with what is stated above.

Thomas was able to posit four transcendental properties, true, unity, good and beauty. By transcendental, refers all those things or all attributes that goes beyond human reason.¹⁹⁷ From these transcendental properties (which are the benchmark of perfection), Thomas sees that by his own nature man always strives for perfection, the perfection which could only be attained if he is in union with these transcendental properties in which their perfect unity is found in God. Thomas says: "Man ultimately strives for perfection, which takes form through the desire for perfect attainment of transcendental. Therefore, the transcendental relations of unity, truth, goodness and beauty are inseparable from being, and from God".¹⁹⁸ Starting with 'a thing', Thomas says that, "thing can be self-evident in either of two ways: on the one hand,

¹⁸⁶E. Gilson, *Thomism: The Philosophy of Thomas Aquinas*, page 59.

¹⁸⁷E. Gilson, *Thomism: The Philosophy of Thomas Aquinas*, page 63.

¹⁸⁸Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, Christian Classics, [www..ccel.org], page 4682.

¹⁸⁹Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, Christian Classics, [www..ccel.org], page 4698

¹⁹⁰Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, Christian Classics, [www..ccel.org], page 4716.

¹⁹¹Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, Christian Classics, [www..ccel.org], page 4735

¹⁹²Thomas Aquinas, *The Summa Theologica of St. Thomas Aquinas*, Second and Revised Edition, translated by Fathers of the English Dominican Province, [http://www.newadvent.org/summa/100308.htm], page 2942.

¹⁹³E. Gilson, *Thomism: The Philosophy of Thomas Aquinas*, page 68.

¹⁹⁴Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, Christian Classics, [www..ccel.org], page 548.

¹⁹⁵E. Gilson, *Thomism: The Philosophy of Thomas Aquinas*, page 130.

¹⁹⁶E. Gilson, *Thomism: The Philosophy of Thomas Aquinas*, page 66.

¹⁹⁷ Thomas Aquinas, *The Summa Theologica of St. Thomas Aquinas*, Second and Revised Edition, translated by Fathers of the English Dominican Province, [http://www.newadvent.org/summa/100308.htm]. page 15.

¹⁹⁸E. Gilson, *Thomism: The Philosophy of Thomas Aquinas*, page 407.

self-evident in itself, though not to us; on the other, self-evident in itself, and to us.”¹⁹⁹ From that statement Thomas moves to treat one transcendental property after the other.

On Unity: Unity is that which gives identity of a thing. Unity is established by logical union alone. In God (divine Trinity) not only is there unity of order, but also with this there is unity of essence.²⁰⁰

On Truth: Truth is the conformity between the intellect and its object. Truth is that which is. Aquinas says that, “The existence of truth in general is self-evident but the existence of a Primal Truth is not self-evident to us.”²⁰¹

On Good: Aristotle defines good as that which is desirable. Goodness is the ontological reality of the object (that is whatever *is* is good because it is desired to be that way).²⁰²

On Beauty: Beauty is defined by Thomas as that which pleases when behold (seen). In accordance with Thomas, beauty is essentially the object of intelligence.²⁰³ Beauty is the splendor of truth.²⁰⁴

In things, Thomas Aquinas identified three necessary conditions for objective beauty to be present in something i.e *Integrity, Clarity, and Composition*. Others have used “Harmony” and “due proportion” in translating consonantia.²⁰⁵ The essence of beauty is therefore in the abstract conception of clarity, integrity and composition perceived by reason. The obscured power of reasoning or the absence of it overshadows or annihilates the sense of clarity and integrity in things hence beautiful. As a result there will be no priority of value as well as no sound practical judgment He will lack harmony between human and God, no priority in meaning and value of the good.²⁰⁶

Man has to struggle to know God because in Him there are transcendental properties. It is here, that Thomas tried to explain the notion of intentionality. Freeman defines intentionality as the circular process of generalization/abstraction of input and specification/concretization of output by which brains achieve understanding of their environments through the cycle of prediction, action, sensation, perception, and assimilation by learning.²⁰⁷ The stages of intentionality according to Thomas are:

Firstly, Sensation and imagination: This is the preliminary stage. In line with Thomas, sensation is the act of a bodily organ suited for the reception of a particular object as such, that is, a universal form existing in a material individual.²⁰⁸ It is in this stage that we have in common with animals. Any sensible object that appears before our senses is a complex of various qualities, visible, audible, odorous, tactile, or gustatory. Thomas writes: "And there is yet another intellect, namely, the human intellect, that is not its own act of understanding, nor is the first object of its act of understanding its own essence, but something external, namely, the nature of a material thing.”²⁰⁹

Secondly, Intellection: Through intellect, one is capable of reasoning and making judgment. Thus, ‘choice’ is attained under this level. What is choice? According to Thomas, it is an act depending in part on the intellect and in part on the will. Aristotle speaks of it as "desirous thought or intellectual desire.”²¹⁰ For example, “Once the end is willed, it is an intellectual virtue that will deliberate and choose the means appropriate to the end. There must, then, be an intellectual virtue that will put reason in a condition to decide fittingly the means to that end.”²¹¹ Phantasm: According to Aquinas word for sensory representations-sensible species-as they are

¹⁹⁹Thomas Aquinas, *The Summa Theologica of St. Thomas Aquinas*, Second and Revised Edition, translated by Fathers of the English Dominican Province, [<http://www.newadvent.org/summa/100308.htm>], page 32.

²⁰⁰Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, Christian Classics, [www.ccel.org], page, 370

²⁰¹ Thomas Aquinas, *The Summa Theologica of St. Thomas Aquinas*, Second and Revised Edition, translated by Fathers of the English Dominican Province, [<http://www.newadvent.org/summa/100308.htm>], page 33.

²⁰²E. Gilson, *Thomism: The Philosophy of Thomas Aquinas*, page 100.

²⁰³E. Gilson, *Thomism: The Philosophy of Thomas Aquinas*, page 331.

²⁰⁴E. Gilson, *Thomism: The Philosophy of Thomas Aquinas*, page 312.

²⁰⁵Cam, Studio Cameron Smith Online Academy. Aug. 2017, [smithacademy.teachable.com/blog/10838/aquinas-three-conditions]. Accessed on April 8, 2021.

²⁰⁶J. Goyette – al., ed, *St. Thomas Aquinas and the Natural Law Tradition*, page 144.

²⁰⁷W.J. Freeman, “Intentionality” in the Scholarpedia, University of California, page 2007, [www.scholarpedia.org/article/intentionality]. Accessed on April 8, page 2021.

²⁰⁸ E. Gilson, *Thomism: The Philosophy of Thomas Aquinas*, page 253.

²⁰⁹E. Gilson, *Thomism: The Philosophy of Thomas Aquinas*, page 256.

²¹⁰E. Gilson, *Thomism: The Philosophy of Thomas Aquinas*, page 291.

²¹¹E. Gilson, *Thomism: The Philosophy of Thomas Aquinas*, page 300.

found within the internal senses of the brain. What indeed is a phantasm? According to Thomas, it is the image of a particular thing. Still more precisely, phantasms are images of particular things impressed on, or preserved in, bodily organs.²¹²

Thirdly, Abstraction: According to Thomas, this is an act of the agent intellect to dissociate the two factors in order to furnish the possible intellect, first with the intelligible and second with universal element that are involved in the sensible object.²¹³ In order to have the intelligible species according to Aquinas phantasms need to be transformed into what Aquinas calls intelligible species, which are simply mental representations at the level of intellect. This transformation requires abstraction.

According to Thomas Aquinas, we know God through negation and analogy method. By Negation way (via Negativa): The knowledge about God derived from the five proofs doesn't clarify positively what the essence of God is, we know what we do about God only in a negative way by knowing what God is not. By analogy: All human language is inevitably derived from our experience with things in our sensed world. For this reason as Aquinas realized, the names men apply to God are same ones they distinguish among three ways in which God might be related to human beings. Univocal (words about God mean same about humanity), Equivocal (terms applied to both but mean entirely different to each) also analogy (partly the same and partly not the same). "For being is not said of many equivocally or univocal, but analogically, and thus must be reduced to unity."²¹⁴ The following figure can help in understanding Thomas Aquinas theory of intentionality (from experience to abstraction).

IV.

V. Critical Reflection of African Ontology in the Light of Thomas Aquinas

Thomas Aquinas' major concern was to establish relationship between faith and reason (science and faith) and from that to deduce the truth about man, nature and God. In doing so he made a synthesis of faith by first establishing a philosophical synthesis through the application of the Aristotelian epistemological approach (theory of abstraction, realism and causality) as the starting point of departure and ascending it through the theory of abstraction up to the Aristotle metaphysics of "being qua being", from it he incorporates in his philosophical system the Platonic theory of the Forms and Participation, Augustine theory of Illumination and Stoics theory of logos. It should be noted that Platonic theory of the Forms and Participation was the result of the synthesis of Parmenides theory of Being, Heraclitus theory of Becoming and Pythagoras theory of the Forms, while the doctrine of causality of Aristotle was highly a re-examination of Platonic theory of the Forms, a movement from dualism to monism, dualism according to Plato and monism according to Aristotle. On the other hand, the Augustinian theory of Illumination was based on Platonism. Augustine saw in Platonism the best philosophical expression of Christianity. Stoics built their philosophy, the Law of Logos on Heraclitus' doctrine of change as the universal reason or logos.

Thomas Aquinas by making a philosophical synthesis of the above named philosophers, he in essence established a reasonable basis for the best philosophical and scientific expression of Christianity, man and nature. In doing this, he found in Aristotelian realism the best starting point. From Aristotelian realism and through the theory of abstraction, Thomas Aquinas was able to move from Heraclitus to Pythagoreans up to Parmenides through physical abstraction, mathematical abstraction and finally to metaphysical abstraction, whereby a being was seen as being qua being, the unlimited and undetermined being or being devoid of any quantitative determination. This is the spiritual being, a being devoid of material determination or forms. This being is static, unmovable and uncreated, whose essence is only to be. Thomas attributed this being to the Biblical Being YAHWEH (God), hence the divine attributes appears to be well motivated from the perspective of religions praxis as well as systematic reasoning about it.²¹⁵

Thomas sees this Being as a Prime mover, Pure act or the One who puts everything in motion. Then how this Being is revealed or related to other beings, man and nature? Thomas tackled this question by appealing to Platonic theory of the Forms and Participation as is elaborated in the allegory of the cave, whereby the *doxa* world (the phenomena world) participates in the epistemic world in time and space partly different partly the same. And since God's essence is His existence, meaning that God does not receive His existence

²¹²E. Gilson, *Thomism: The Philosophy of Thomas Aquinas*, page 252.

²¹³E. Gilson, *Thomism: The Philosophy of Thomas Aquinas*, page 253.

²¹⁴Cf. E. Gilson, *Thomism: The Philosophy of Thomas Aquinas*, page 409.

²¹⁵Ciro De Florio, Aldo Frigerio & Georg Gasser, "One the Importance of Reflecting of God's Attributes" in the Springer Link, July 2016, [https://doi.org/10.1007/s11245-016-9414-z]. Retrieved on 9th July 2022.

from essence, His essence is to be. While Man receives his existence from God, the created things participate in God only in their existence in time and space. Then since God is the Prime cause of everything and since man operates in a certain order suggesting a kind of intelligence, these things operate for a certain purpose (reason). Thus man in participating God's existence, he also participated the law of reason (logos). Thomas got this from the Stoics law of reason.

However, since God is the Prime mover of everything, it means that everything is in the mind of God from eternity, so the clear knowledge of man and nature will automatically lead to the knowledge of God as a Prime condition for the ideal knowledge of man and nature. This comes from the logic that, the knowledge of the whole is a prior condition for the knowledge of the parts because the parts participate in the whole. It is in this sense Thomas joins with Augustine on the doctrine of illumination whereby the enlightenment of the human mind by God is an essential part in understanding truth. In this sense God illuminates the human mind and as a result of this illumination; the human mind is made to know things clearly. Aquinas expresses this kind of illumination in his doctrine of intentionality whereby the natural tendency of knowledge is the understanding of the essence of things. So knowledge tends towards essence, particularly the Pure essence (God).

The difference between Thomas and Augustine is in the epistemology process in coming to the knowledge of God, that is while Thomas puts emphasis in the deliberate mental operation of the mind particularly the process of intellectual intentionality, Augustine puts emphasis on mystical illumination of God generally through the process of contemplation and meditation in the One (God) and through that act, one becomes in union with God through the process of interiorization by elimination of material entities of being. It is only through this union one's mind is enlightened to know things clearly. Both methods intended to create a process of elimination of doubts and possibilities and acquire the certainty of the knowledge of God, one is more psychological (Augustine) while the other is metaphysical (Thomas).

This analogical relationship between God and nature is mediated by logos man's light of interior reason. The principal principle of reason is the law of non-contradiction. It is therefore in paying deep attention on the principle of non-contradiction; the inconsistencies in the phenomena of change are either given explanation or eliminated. In this case man ascends to God through reason that first seeks to understand nature and from it to understand God. Here then the clarity of logos (reason) is the clarity of both God and nature. Logos is here the unity between God and nature.

It is clear here that for Thomas reason was incarnated in man as potency that needs to be actualized through the act of reflection, meditation and contemplation through the process of abstraction. This is the way in which one gains psychic intellectual strength. It is in this sense we can make sense as to why Thomas gives much emphasis to the development of consciousness of the self (consciousness of truth) and of the social responsibility (This consciousness is not phenomenological consciousness, it is abstract consciousness, the consciousness of the pure self). It is in this way we can also make sense of the Biblical statement that the "word became flesh" meaning that God being is completely just, holy, loving and omnipresent.²¹⁶ And again that "Jesus is the reason" meaning that it is reasonable to love the absolute.²¹⁷ It is in this way we can make sense of Thomas' emphasis on personal responsibility.

From this insight gained in the synthesis of the Aristotelian theory of causality and abstraction, Platonic theory of the Forms and Participation, Augustinian theory of Illumination and the Stoics theory of Logos and Biblical notion of YAWHEW, Thomas come to answer the basic question how nature and man relates to God? Here again he appeals to the doctrine of participation of Plato, how the epistemic world relates to the phenomena world or how the world of the Forms relates to the world Phenomena as it is in the allegory of the cave. In the allegory of the cave the imperfect world of images in the Phenomena world participates the real in the Epistemic world. Thomas applies this analogy to explain how man and nature relates to God. But what is this kind of relation? Thomas goes back to Aristotle to seek insights in the theory of abstraction. In the theory of abstraction, the movement from sensible mutable being to *being qua being* is achieved through the elimination of quality and quantity, the elimination of material property or determining properties of being (imperfect beings). This *being qua being* of Aristotle is immovable, spiritual and imperishable, it does not undergo decomposition, and it is perfect being. This perfect being is participated by existential imperfect being partly the same partly different. They are the same as all are beings; they are different as they differ in their mode of being.

²¹⁶Stephanie Englehart, "The Beautiful Meaning Behind the Word Became Flesh" in iBelieve [www.ibelieve.com]. Accessed 9th July 2022.

²¹⁷Peter Kreeft, "Jesus is the Reason" in Quotes Starts, [quotestats.com]. Accessed on 9th July 2022.

Applying this to the question how God relates to man and nature, Thomas says that the relation between God and nature is not univocal (man does not participate in God the same way as God Himself Is), neither is equivocal (man does not participate in God totally in a different way), but analogical (he participates partly the same and partly different). This analogical participation takes two different forms, “*via negavita*” (through negation) and “*via attributa*” (through attribution). Thomas finds a similarity of this in the Biblical statement, “we are created in the image of God” (Genesis 1:26-27). Indicating that we are not the same as God Is, neither are we totally different from Him.

In the *via negavita*, we negate all the imperfections we experience in man and in nature. This negation leads us to the idea of perfection, we then attribute this negated imperfections to God whom Thomas has already established in the theory of abstraction as *Being qua Being* or being *per-see*. The methodological process that Thomas takes is to move from phenomena to God and from God to phenomena. Through the theory of abstraction, Thomas moves from the observable phenomena to the epic of their unity in being *per-see* (God), Thomas then descends or deduces all the truth from the One (God) to the inferiors through the theory of participation by analogy. The theory of participation by analogy is most noted in his theory of natural law²¹⁸ (a theory that Thomas lays a formidable ground of ethics) transcendental properties (unity, truth, good and beauty) and in his proofs on the existence of God. From this theory of participation by analogy, Thomas was able to come up with the natural law theory, the benchmark of his ethical theory. This natural law theory stands in relation with other theories, eternal law, temporal law which is divided into natural law and positive law. Positive law is again divided in Divine positive law and human positive law. Human positive law also is divided into civil law and religion law.

Therefore, any law that contradict reason is not a valid law, be it eternal law or positive law manifested in Divine positive law or human positive law. The reason for which these laws are promulgated is the common good. This common good is discovered by human reason. It belongs therefore to the perfection of one’s reason to discover the ideal common good and to make a distinction between real good and that which appears to be good which may not be good at all. It is therefore, the Logos which determines the common good both divine and temporal. The exclusion of reason in the determination of the common good is a blind journey.

Since the natural law is the law promulgated through the light of interior reason, it is the light interior reason which determines which sensible signs and facts are for the common good. In this sense both positive law and eternal law are determined by reason for the common good. Does God orders evil? Thomas says that everything that God created is good, and in order to avoid contradiction delivered from the Omniscience and *Sonum Bonum* of God, he says that evil comes from good and is ordained towards good. Evil is not an essence nor a reality, but a pure negation in a substance.²¹⁹ It is upon the enlightened mind to discover good out of evil. It is again Thomas throws the responsibility to human intelligence. Human law is the determination of reason of the human authority of what is ought to be right and what is ought to be wrong for the common good. They may choose the seemingly good instead of real good if they are not by proper human reason.

We say human positive law pre-supposes natural law and natural law pre-supposes eternal law, because natural law is the imprint of God’s intelligence and order in nature for the common good. It is God who orders human mind to order things as He is the principle cause of everything. Thus, human positive law should not go against natural law (should not go against the dictates of right reason). The state should here then guarantee its adherence. This is what is reflected in John Lock as natural rights. As it is stated above, the positive law is participated by human positive law and divine positive law. Both human and divine positive law presupposes the natural law and the eternal law. The human positive law is being participated by civil and religions law. As the civil law and religious law are components of human positive law, they are required not to violate the dictates of right reason or right consciousness. It is the reason which is supposed to understand nature and ascend it to God.

What we see here is a chain of participation from the Prime mover or Logos to human judgments and phenomena, and from God to science. In this sense, reason (science) cannot contradict faith for both come from

²¹⁸From Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy defines Natural law theory is a theory that identifies the rational nature of human beings as that defines moral law. The rules and the measure of human acts is the reason, which is the first principle of human acts (Aquinas, ST I-II, Q.90, A.I). Aquinas wrote about natural law. He stated: “the light of reason is placed by nature [and thus by God]in every man to guide him in his acts.[ref. <https://www.crf-usa.org> on St. Thomas Aquinas , Natural Law and the Common good].

²¹⁹E. Gilson, *Thomism: The Philosophy of Thomas Aquinas*, page 186.

the same source. Thomas after reaching the possibility of knowing God through the theory of abstraction, he comes to establish how man and nature relates to God; they relate to God by participating His existence or being in time. So in this series of participation in time, positive law presupposes natural law since natural law is promulgated through the light of interior reason. The positive law promulgated through sensible signs or facts should pre-suppose the order of the light of interior reason in order for it to be reasonable and to be for the common good (here we see the importance of right reasoning). Science is assessed by reason and should not go against the dictates of right reason. This also holds true to both spiritual and material good. The spiritual good is superior to the material good. The material good is there to perfect the spiritual good. Thus, the pleasure of the intellect is superior to the hedonistic pleasure of the material good. This means that both science and moral law should not go against right reason. It also holds true to human positive law (that is civil law and religious law) and Divine positive law.

This is what makes Thomas to see natural law (the light of interior reason) as the mediator between eternal law and positive law. The light of interior reason should ordain all of us towards the common good. This light of interior reason is not possible if one is not in tune with the law of hierarchy of pre-suppositions. This natural law is subjective for it depends on the development of human consciousness, but it is always guided by the law of hierarchy of pre-suppositions, the inclusion of eternal law in everything. Thomas doctrine of the natural law places heavy responsibility on the individual human consciousness not on the collective consciousness. This is where the concept of human rights draws its theoretical basis, man as an individual person, his individuality and choices ought to be respected however, it should not go against natural law (the dictates of right reasoning or logos). My rights are limited by the recognition of others' rights and so rights should go hand in hand with responsibility to the other. This is the essence of intersubjectivity proclaimed by the philosopher Martin Buber. According to Buber, intersubjectivity presents an innateness of the *You*, whereby it fosters in us a longing for relation, bringing the *directness of love*, which implies acts of responsibility toward *the other*.²²⁰

Again from the theory of abstraction as is stated above, Thomas was able to see God as Being qua Being. Since He is *Being qua Being*, He is a perfect being and so, all the attributes of Him, must be perfect attributes. This made Thomas to see that the Aristotelian transcendental attributes of being (being qua being) must be attributed to God perfectly as being primarily belongs to Him and others are being by participation. Hence, the transcendental attributes of unity, truth, good and beauty that every being has, must be attributed to God perfectly. For these attributes primarily belong to the Prime mover (God) and creatures participate them in time. As they are participated in their temporal nature through facts and sensible signs as particular human experiences, they are participated through the light of interior reason.

To contemplate these sensible signs and facts, eliminate these properties from their limitations of time and space or material determinations. The perfection of them is again attained through the process of abstraction where we eliminate individualization notes of accidental qualities and come to a *being qua being* of truth, unity, good and beauty. This means the elimination of their cultural embodiments and social embodiments. As the result of this elimination they are seen from abstract point of view as abstract unity, truth, good and beauty which need to acquire specific determination. The more the abstract mind is the more the good and dept determination are on reality. For instance the abstract beauty is manifested in the masterpiece of the works of art that mirrors the human conditions. Beauty is defined as that by which it is delightful or pleases to behold. It is the object of attraction. It should meet the criterion of perfection, harmony and splendor. It is the product of contemplation of the goodness. Anything which is perceived as beautiful attracts the desire the effect of which it brings delightfulness. The more abstract beauty is the more perfect it becomes and the more it attracts the desire. It is this way Thomas says that since God is the perfect being, He is the perfect beauty, hence He is the most desired being. On the other hand, material things have imperfect beauty and so cannot bring perfect happiness as God would. The masterpiece of the works of arts is essence being given a form. The clarity in the essence reflects the higher form of the works of art, the works of that transcend the limit of time and space due to as the magnificence in scripture. The abstract art coming as a reflection of abstract beauty, the imaginative representation of humanity in Scriptures in its sign of contradictions depicting the image of war and the image of peace, the image of order and the image of chaos.

²²⁰Márcio Junglos, "The Nature of Intersubjectivity in Buber, Husserl and Waldenfels: An Encounter, an Intentional Constitution, or a Happening?" in the Instituto Federal Sul-rio-grandese- IFSUL/Brazil, 2017[www.metajournal.org]: Retrieved on 9th July 2022.

We should note here that the process to reach perfect unity, truth, good and beauty, is an abstraction process, a process of reaching these properties as ideas devoid of any cultural determination. This is what classic art is all about (It is no wonder why Hegel removed Africans from classic art and Romantic art because he saw them having to power of abstraction). Thomas again by applying the epistemological theory of realism and abstraction together with the theory of participation and with the combination of the theory of causation of Aristotle and Platonic doctrine of the forms in its expression of epistemic-*doxa* relation, he moves forward to prove the existence of God from the experience of the behaviour of phenomena. The theory of the Unmoved mover as the benchmark of the rest theory of efficient cause, finality, necessity and gradation and equates it to the Biblical statement, “this is what all say God.” Because He continues to show man love, grace, mercy, generosity and favor, even when man does not deserve.²²¹

Mbiti speaks of Bantu people as being notoriously religious, they take religion to the beer party, to the parliament, to fields, wherever an African is, there is religion. On the other hand, Nyamiti wants to equate Christ with African ancestors whose interests are in giving life abundance in terms of security, health, fertility, material abundance and rain. Tempels speaks of ontology of African Vital Force, force increases in terms of health, rain, fertility, and material abundance, while this Vital Force diminishes in terms of sickness, death, infertility and material poverty. The ancestors of which Nyamiti relates to Christ are reduced to pragmatic function so much so Christ and God. One wonders when Mbiti says that “Africans are notoriously religious” what kind of religiousness Mbiti refers here, is it a transcendental analytic Christian religion or he limits it to African ancestor religion which is pragmatic or he equates Christ to the functions of Vital Force principle?

Thomas Aquinas in reaching on the possibility of the knowledge of God made a philosophical analysis and synthesis of almost all the ancient and medieval philosophers before him. This made him to see God as a spirit devoid of any pragmatic function and any of imperfections found in material thing, through the beauty of material things manifest His beauty analogically. His order is the order of purpose and reason in everything. This made Thomas to conclude that since God is all good, then all what he created is good, therefore evil comes from good and has a good end. Thomas says:

There is no good counsel either in deliberating for an evil end, or in discovering evil means for attaining a good end, even as in speculative matters, there is no good reasoning either in coming to a false conclusion, or in coming to a true conclusion from false premises through employing an unsuitable middle term.²²²

Does the African ancestor religion or ontology (pragmatic God) explain the transcendency notion of evil as it is in Thomas Aquinas? To what extent does the African religious celebration manifest spiritual transcendency or material reward? In equating Jesus with the ancestor do we not perceive Jesus only to the act of healing, material abundance, fertility, health and fortunes? How Africans perceive fortunes and misfortunes in the eyes of God? The African ancestor religion in reducing Jesus to the ancestor, are they not equating God’s grace with material reward and abundances? This makes Africans to justify individualism and social evils such as corruption, irresponsibility, injustice, lies, theft and hypocrisy to the person concerned. They only consider the end and equate it to God’s grace. What does the diminishing of Vital Force mean in relation to evil? Does the African notion of the diminishing of Vital Force leave a space to contemplate good out of evil? From the notion *Christ as our ancestor*, the African ethical and moral notion is either pragmatic or cyclical and static. Ancestors are seen a receptors of wisdom that has to be swallowed uncritically.

Thomas Aquinas deserves to be the benchmark study of the Western culture and in virtue of that, he is a Western yardstick of Western critical and analytical thinking. It seems that throughout the history, the system of involving logos in arguments was adopted by thinkers. We see from Homer, the hierarchy of powers, the cosmologists with the answer to what might be the basic stuff of the universe, Stoics with the logos as the generative principle of the universe, Socrates with Socratic method as *the a priori* theory of knowledge, Plato with epistemic state and Illusion, Aristotle with logos as a standard in the categories, Philo with the divine logos, Plotinus who influenced Augustine with the principle of emanation, Augustine with the theory of Illumination, and at last Thomas Aquinas with the metaphysics of logos (in each being). If a keen attention is given to all these approaches, there is no doubt of the primacy given to the analytical method in the approach to truth. Analysis consists in rewriting sentences of natural languages in such a way that these sentences will exhibit their

²²¹Clarence L. Haynes, “What We Must Understand When We Say God Is Good” in Bible Study Tool, Jan 20022, [www.biblestudytools.com]. Retrieved on 9th July 2022.

²²²Thomas Aquinas, *The Summa Theologica of St. Thomas Aquinas*, Second and Revised Edition, translated by Fathers of the English Dominican Province, [https://www.microbooksstudio.com], page 4837.

proper logical form. When put into their logical form, their meaning will become clear, and Philosophical ambiguities or difficulties will be easily eliminated.²²³ Some writers say that there is also analytical philosophy, whereby a philosophy has to take any problem, dissect it to show which questions in it are capable of being answered and how they are being answered; in it there is a common positive commitment among the language analysts.²²⁴ Analytical philosophers include the philosophy of Hegel and Neo-Hegelian, G.E. Moore and Bertrand Russell.²²⁵

We can say that there is no history of the spirit in favor of Hegel in Africa; similarly there is no upholding of logic categories according to Aquinas because Aquinas's method of explaining reality as being is consistent and analytical, highly scientific.²²⁶ This is the reason which made Hegel to exclude Africa in the world history. According to him, African art is very primitive and does not lead to pure aesthetic art. Art is primitive or beauty proper according to Hegel when is unworthy of scientific treatment because it remains only a pleasing play, and even if it pursues more serious ends, it still contradicts its nature.²²⁷ That is why at primitive level for Hegel, art keeps on changing day after day. This kind of philosophy of art or aesthetic according to Hegel is very primitive. It fits only to the science of perception. Africans may certainly feel humiliated with Hegel by limiting them to beauty proper. But before one take that position, he has critical look.

It is the metaphysics of logos that made Pope Pius V to calls Thomas Aquinas '*the most brilliant light of the Church*'; Pope Paul V calls Aquinas as '*the defender of the Church and the conqueror heretics*'.²²⁸ Tempels says that Africans have their ontology, but it is a religious ontology, and to understand their religion we must penetrate it.²²⁹ Milingo, Gwajima, Prophet Tito and many other African practitioners, are truly responding to the African ontology and so African Christianity. African theologians, who practice or follow Aquinas's method of logos, will find themselves not being able to communicate persuasively to his Africans.

On his side Professor Ramose defended Africans that, they are able to transform the living from the *un-born* and the living to the "living dead" in which he calls this "the ontology of invisible beings" or African metaphysics.²³⁰ According to him Africans are capable of transcending from the physical world. This is also doubtful because it seems whenever the Africans are tangles in the dilemma or uncertainties in which they have to maintain logical metaphysics, they tend to rely on the supernatural power which is expressed in their genres such as fables, proverbs, myths, riddles and story-telling. Any invisible thing is categorized as religion. African genres do flow, are not innate but are rather acquired in society and transmitted from one generation to another.²³¹ It seems that the Westerners can stop going to the Church and not become active participants in prayers, but always will respect rationality (consciousness) because the concepts of God in philosophy are entwined with concepts of God in religion.²³² Rick cited another reason which causes people of the Western not to attend in the Church for worship that is due to strictly hierarchical way of worship and the exclusion of women in celebrations.²³³

According to Duignan, it could have been impossible to achieve a synthesis between faith and reason, if Aquinas could not have been able to use logic.²³⁴ If that isn't enough, according to him, one cannot understand the laws of nature (physis) if one doesn't know the facts that permit the construction of science according to the logos rational structure.²³⁵ Duignan believes that Aquinas's approach helped him to avoid sacrilege of anything

²²³Okorie Onwuchekwa, "Analytic Philosophy" in the NOUN Press, 2022, [www.nou.edu.ng]. page 7. Accessed on 10th July 2022.

²²⁴Okorie Onwuchekwa, "Analytic Philosophy" in the NOUN Press, 2022, [www.nou.edu.ng]. page 35. Accessed on 10th July 2022.

²²⁵ Okorie Onwuchekwa, "Analytic Philosophy" in the NOUN Press, 2022, [www.nou.edu.ng]. page 10. Accessed on 10th July 2022.

²²⁶Edward Feser, *Aquinas: A Beginners Guides*, page 9.

²²⁷D.E. Coopers, *Aesthetics, The Classic Readings*, (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers Ltd, 1997), page 142.

²²⁸Brian Davies, *The Thought of Thomas Aquinas*, page 17.

²²⁹M. Henry – C. Ntozakhe, "Contribution of John Mbiti to....." Accessed on April 3, 2021.

²³⁰M. Mawere – T.R. Mubaya, page 104.

²³¹M. Mawere – T.R. Mubaya, page 98.

²³²Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy, "Western Concepts of God" in the IEP [iep.utm.edu]. Retrieved on 9th July 2022.

²³³Rich Pidcock, "The Evolution of Consciousness and Modern Worship" in the Center for Christogenesis, 2021, [christogenesis.org]. Accessed on 10th July 2022.

²³⁴B. Duignan, *The 100 Most Influential Philosophers of All Times*, page 121.

²³⁵B. Duignan, *The 100 Most Influential Philosophers of All Times*, page 121

as being related to naïve recourse of the miraculous or the Providence of God.²³⁶ We find that in Christianity the way of explaining being, whether that concerns about God or Man or Nature, the principles of logic are always strictly maintained. According to Jason Lisle the Scriptures (1Peter 3:15, Isaiah 1:18, Acts 17:17, Ephesians 5:1, Psalm 36:9) shows the Christian faith is not a “blind faith”. It is a faith that is rationally defensible. It is logical and self-consistent.²³⁷

When Senghor said that Africans are intuitive or emotional and the Hellenists are rational, does not imply that all Africans lack reason or all Whites have no emotions. He simply meant that the West and Africans are not the same in terms of their approach to reality. The West approaches the reality rationally while Africans approach to reality intuitively. They are emotionally attached to the objective while Westerners based on their analytic culture, they always tend to detach to the object. For Senghor, all human cultures manifest the human longing for fullness of life.²³⁸ The West manifest it rationally while the Africans manifest it intuitively mediated by ancestor metaphysics as Ramos would call it. The difference is that, culture mold two races differently. It is from the African culture that made Nyamiti to evaluate the strength of African Christianity from the ancestor metaphysics. For Nyamiti, culture is very systematic and composing categorical propositions that have theological or pastoral purpose.²³⁹ Nyamiti proposed inculturation to the Africans as the means towards understanding Christianity. It is doubtful how the two systems of thought can complement each other the intuitive ancestor metaphysics and the rational philosophical metaphysics.

Wiredu Kwasi on his book *Philosophy and an African Culture* criticized Leopold Sendar Senghor on the idea that *Africans are emotional*. For him, “Life is not all logic and rationality; it has room for both emotion and logic.”²⁴⁰ What Wiredu says is true, but one has to admit that whether his ways of life is rational or emotional. What Wiredu seems to tell Senghor is in effect affirming him. Senghor does not limit life to logic and rationality, what is simply saying is that, the thing which separates the West and the Africans is their mode of thought nurtured by their culture that becomes their second nature. If Africans have their own reasoning nurtured by their culture, it is dangerous. It is impossible to take legal actions whenever people perpetuate evil within their societies such as corruption, civil wars, gender harassment, tribalism, regionalism, dictatorship, favoritism, regionalism and so forth.

Hountondji had suggested that philosophy is to be understood as a critical discipline which does not depend on one’s race or continent. If Africans want to do or live philosophy according to Hountondji, they should be capable of respecting the categorical stand and think in the line of collective philosophy. Mubaya thinks that African can be really a ‘primitive’ society in which everyone is in agreement with everyone else. This is an indication that in Africa, there are no individual philosophies, but only belief-systems.²⁴¹ Philosophy as such is delivered from a reconstruction of the worldviews and system of thoughts of the traditional cultures. Philosophy has its own historical constitutions and essential nature. It has also passed through critics of different kind and persevere philosophical critiques of the elites. Senghor puts it clear this way: “if Africans want to win recognition in the world as a whole, then they must gain respect for their sculpture, their music, their dance, their literature, their philosophy.”²⁴² For Senghor ‘respect’ does not mean embracing or adhering to all what concerns Africans. It is not the question of falsification or validating this or that, but rather to find the point of departure.

Thomas Aquinas revitalized reality by engaging Aristotelian philosophy. The Greek people were the first people to find the first principle of everything. There is always the point of departure, continuation and the nexus of the logos since Ancient Greek to Thomas Aquinas. From the beginning, Western philosophy expresses itself as intellectual enterprises in understanding the social reality. The Stoics, Christians and Western intellectual culture, share the same terminology on the Spirit, conscience, logos, virtue, self-sufficiency, freedom

²³⁶B. Duignan, *The 100 Most Influential Philosophers of All Times*, page 121.

²³⁷Jason Lisle, “Is the Christian Worldview Logical” in *The New Answers Book 3*, 2014, [answersingenesis.org]. Accessed on 10th July 2022.

²³⁸B. BUJO, *African Theology*, page 54.

²³⁹B. Bujo – J.I. Muya, ed. *African Theology, the Contribution of the Pioneers*, page 154.

²⁴⁰F.Ochieng’ – Odhiambo, *Trends and Issues in African Philosophy*, [New York: Peter Lang, 2010], page 95.

²⁴¹M. Mawere – T.R. Mubaya, *African Philosophy and the Thought of Systems*, page 57.

²⁴²B. BUJO, *African Theology*, page 48.

of speech and reasonable service.²⁴³ If Africans will not have a point of departure which is ontologically analyzed, they will keep on playing a game of try and error for the rest of their life. It is of no doubts that, what Africans call “Christianity” seems not to be Christianity in its real understanding as described by Thomas Aquinas.

Nyamiti places Christ as in the biological lineage clan, calling him, “Brother-Ancestor” and Bujo develops the idea of Nyamiti places Christ at the transcendental level, “Proto-Ancestor” *Christ as our ancestor*, Proto-Ancestor.²⁴⁴ When they consider Christ as their ancestor, they expect of him to “perform ancestral functions”. Mbiti shows that the ancestors are not in another-world or future time, but they live among Africans. The ancestors are responsible for the vital force as Tempels had said. So Africans expect Christ as their Ancestor to participate fully in their cultures. From what they have been taught by missionaries, what they read in the Bible and what their culture teaches them, many Africans expect Christ to be the *Ngoma dancer, the fertilizer, misfortunes terminator, rain maker, healer, standard approver, clan protector and consolata*.²⁴⁵

Odera Oruka has demonstrated that there many sage people in Africa. Both Hountodji and Odera Oruka supports that we should never judge Africans on the bases of Western culture especially Christianity. If one maintains that Hountodji and Odera Oruka’s views were correct, and supports them that let each race (Africans and Westerners) follow its own way of living Christianity and to hell with Thomas Aquinas who was able to use the Aristotelian logic especially the “Three Acts of the Mind”: understanding, judging and reasoning with their respective logical expressions: terms, propositions, and arguments, to treat any being,²⁴⁶ then it is clear that Africans will either be excluded in the class of human beings or will be studied as different species. One cannot make a proposition that, *man is a rational animal* and includes an African, while Africans themselves deny following the principles of rationality.

Thomas Aquinas was able to treat God’s Essence as that He really exists, the manner of His Existence or what is not His Existence and concerning His operations, namely the Knowledge, Will and Power.²⁴⁷ It does not means that Aquinas put logos in Christianity, but rather he was showing the logos in Christianity. Christian religion does not consist in trying to make its theological mysteries comprehensible or reasonable, but in showing that the mysteries are entailed in the truth of certain indisputable historical facts.²⁴⁸

Thomas Aquinas says that, “if what reason tells us is true and if what the Christian faith tells us is true, then there can never be any real contradiction between the two, since no truth can contradict another truth.”²⁴⁹ For Thomas ‘truth and unity’ belong to reason or logos. Goyette says that, “Aristotle and Aquinas believed that our beings are designed to grasp the truth about reality.”²⁵⁰

Thomas used principles of logic which he borrowed from Aristotelian philosophy in explaining being, to differentiate the terms which are clear and unclear, propositions which are true or false, and arguments which are either logically valid or invalid.²⁵¹ In that sense, he followed the structure of syllogism, the basic form of deductive argument that connects the subject and predicate terms of its conclusion through the middle term in its two premises, the first of which is the major premise that states a general principle, and the second is the minor premise that brings a particular case under that principle. It is difficult to live principles or theories of life, if there are not acts which regulates the body system (homeostasis), which maintain the established environment without being overcome by external stimuli that exist to disrupt the balance.²⁵² Principles or theories never compromise with an individual. Aquinas says that, “The universality of the first principles of practical reasoning is manifest in the ordinary remarks and disputes that human beings engage in with respect to good and evil.”²⁵³

²⁴³L.E. Dalton – S.S. Dalton, *Jesus Never Lived! Vol I Jesus Christ: A Pagan Myth, Evidence that Jesus Never Existed*, [www.jesusneverlived.com, 2013], page 195.

²⁴⁴Francis Anekwe Oborji, “Nyamiti, Charles” in Dictionary of African Christian Biography, [www.academia.edu]. Accessed on 11th July 2022.

²⁴⁵Jaco Beyers, “Jesus Christ as Ancestor: An African Christian Understanding” in HTS Theological Studies [https://www.ths.org.za]. Accessed on 11th July 2022.

²⁴⁶Thomas Aquinas, *A shorter Summa*, page 16.

²⁴⁷Thomas Aquinas, *A shorter Summa*, page 37.

²⁴⁸W. Craig, *Reasonable Faith, Christianity Truth and Apologetics*, page 214.

²⁴⁹P. Kreeft, *The Philosophy of Thomas Aquinas*, [Boston: Recorded Books, 2008], page 12.

²⁵⁰J. Goyette – al., ed, *St. Thomas Aquinas and the Natural Law Tradition*, page 21.

²⁵¹Thomas Aquinas, *A shorter Summa*, page 16.

²⁵²S. Libretti & Y. Puckett, “Physiology, Homeostasis” in StatPearls Publishing LLC, May 8, 2022. [http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/]. Accessed on 11th July 2022.

²⁵³J. Goyette – al., ed, *St. Thomas Aquinas and the Natural Law Tradition*, page 38.

Odera Oruka believes that in Africa there are genuine philosophers, individuals capable of fundamental reflection on man and the world like that of Socrates.²⁵⁴ However, the contribution of African sage philosophers especially to the world is seen not to support Oruka's claim. It is not even clear when Oruka speaks of African philosophical sage, does he want to say that Africans and the Westerners think the same way? If that is true, then how do we explain the huge difference we see in culture and development.

Here is an authentic question of this paper that if we have seen the Africans being depending on the vital force which is empirically measured through fertility, external peace, health of the people, lack of conflict and the rain, as Tempels had stated, or if *Africans are emotional*, means they respond to the nature spontaneously as Senghor had stated, or if Africans have neither future, but rather depend on the immediate events as Mbiti had exposed, why are they unable to formulation induction theories? The Africans are unable to involve induction theories or principles in their arguments, is it because their nature of induction is intuitive? Africans use intuitive induction method. Being intuitive refers to what Charles B. Parselle had said that, intuitive reasoning has no time, is very dynamic, non-linear, concern many things, non-focused, too instantaneous, taught by experience, subjective-based, workable option only, needed when there is action, doesn't require explanation, constructive-based, historically, not clear, good for firefighters or emergence, concrete, heart centered, pattern matching and oriented.²⁵⁵ That of Westerners is analytical induction, as Herbamas has stated that analytic philosophy is science content with rules for the logical construction and choice of general theories.²⁵⁶ The Westerners do take time in evaluating the object, they falsify a theory after they have discovered another new theory, they gather data and focus on the object for a long time to avoid dynamism and relativism and after a long toil of finding a theory, they respect it. One will be right if he says that, whenever any problem happens in Africa, Africans fail to get appropriate solutions because they are not scientific in formulating theories or principles. Peter Medawar puts it that, 'science is the art of the soluble'²⁵⁷ Many problems in Africa are not tackled successfully because there are no theories which are developed by African scholars.²⁵⁸ The Africans rely in most cases on examples and studying the events partially from the Western, such a habit Ted Sun says that it is like using another's shoes that does not fit or have a purpose to you.²⁵⁹ In that way, Africans seems not to understand the essence of Christianity. They are likely to believe in Christianity intuitively and practice intuitive Christianity.

African pastors and practitioners have no wide scope of logical truth. The desire for ultimate good is inscribed in man's natural intuitive. Thomas Aquinas says, "The emphasis should be on prudence and the moral virtues guides."²⁶⁰ Mubaya had stated that, in primitive societies, everyone is in agreement with everyone else, forming a belief-systems, believe in gods or God (fate).²⁶¹ This might be again the reason why Swallo say that both baptized African Christians and the pagans love miracles and believe in witchcraft or superstitious activities.²⁶²

According to Aquinas, man can struggle to know God. Aquinas tried to explain the notion of intentionality to capture that struggle. Intentionality is the circular process of generalization or abstraction of input and specification or concretization of output by which brains achieve understanding of their environments through the cycle of prediction, action, sensation, perception, and assimilation by learning.²⁶³ The stages of intentionality according to Thomas are two: i. sensation and imagination ii. Intellection (phantasm and abstraction).

²⁵⁴M. Mawere – T.R. Mubaya, *African Philosophy and the Thought of Systems*, 68.

²⁵⁵Cf. C. B. Parselle, "Analytical/Intuitive Thinking" in the Mediate Everything Mediation, November 2005, [www.mediate.com]. Accessed on March 22, 2021.

²⁵⁶Jurgen Herbamas, *On the Logic of the Social Science*, page 5.

²⁵⁷Scott Gordon, *The History and Philosophy of Social Science*, page 629.

²⁵⁸Ted Sun, "The Problem with Applying Western Theories that Don't Fit" in the University World News, March, 2019 [www.universtyworldviews.com]. Accessed on 11th July 2022.

²⁵⁹ Ted Sun, "The Problem with Applying Western Theories that Don't Fit" in the University World News, March, 2019 [www.universtyworldviews.com]. Accessed on 11th July 2022.

²⁶⁰J. Goyette – al., ed, *St. Thomas Aquinas and the Natural Law Tradition*, page 34.

²⁶¹M. Mawere –T.R. Mubaya, *African Philosophy and the Thought of Systems*, page 57.

²⁶²F.I. Ilomo, *A Relevant Christian Eschatology for African Context Today*, page 3.

²⁶³W.J. Freeman, "Intentionality" in the Scholarpedia, University of California, 2007, [www.scholarpedia.org/article/intentionality]. Accessed on April 8, 2021.

Firstly, Sensation and imagination: This is the preliminary stage. “Sensation is the act of a bodily organ suited for the reception of a particular object as such, that is, a universal form existing in a material individual.”²⁶⁴ It is in this stage that we have in common with animals. Any sensible object that appears before our senses is a complex of various qualities, visible, audible, odorous, tactile, or gustatory. Thomas writes: “And there is yet another intellect, namely, the human intellect, that is not its own act of understanding, nor is the first object of its act of understanding its own essence, but something external, namely, the nature of a material thing.”²⁶⁵ Leopold Sendar Senghor, in viewing African way of thinking, came to conclusion that their way of thinking depends on their relation to particular phenomena. It is from such bases he suggested that positive contributions of colonialism such as the economy and technical infrastructures should be incorporated and accommodated.²⁶⁶ This is what Nkrumah did; he believed that if changes will be made starting with an individual, family and then society, it will automatically change people’s way of thinking. He saw that Africa continent was in mixture with varieties of cultures: Western [Christian], Arabic [Islamic] and Traditional cultures. According to him, the point was to integrate all the three in a way that will not compromise the material and spiritual well-being of the African in the technological age.²⁶⁷ Both Senghor and Nkrumah saw the need to start with the material or particulars believing that it could affect the spiritual.

Secondly, Intellection: Through intellect, one is capable of reasoning and making judgment. Thus, ‘choice’ is attained under this level. “What is choice? It is an act depending in part on the intellect and in part on the will. Aristotle speaks of it as desirous thought or intellectual desire.”²⁶⁸ For example, once the end is willed, it is an intellectual virtue that will deliberate and choose the means appropriate to the end. There must, then, be an intellectual virtue that will put reason in a condition to decide fittingly the means to that end.²⁶⁹ If the intellection is not achieved, it remains a phantasm. Phantasm: According to Aquinas is a word for sensory representations i.e sensible species as they are in themselves, are found within the internal senses of the brain. For Aquinas, phantasm is the image of a particular thing. Still more precisely, phantasms are images of particular things impressed on, or preserved in, bodily organs.²⁷⁰

For Tempels, the Africans and non-Africans differ on the essential nature of beings and entities in general, and human beings in particular due to the existence of the vital force.²⁷¹ For Aquinas in the intellect there is also abstraction process. For him abstraction is an act of the agent intellect to dissociate the two factors in order to furnish the possible intellect with the intelligible and universal elements that are involved in the sensible object.²⁷² In order to have the intelligible species according to Aquinas phantasms need to be transformed into what Aquinas calls intelligible species, which are simply mental representations at the level of intellect. This transformation requires abstraction.

This is also what Alexis Kagame did. Kagame was cited one particular case from African culture, for instance the ethical sayings then he deduced it to become a representation of ethics subject. For Kagame, Bantu philosophy is the collective philosophy of a whole ethnic group, a philosophy without individual philosophers and without philosophical texts.²⁷³ Kagame provided the difference of *Umuzinma* and *Umuzimu*, the Bantu concepts as only the “U” which is at the end. While *Umuzinma*, means a living human being with intelligence, *Umuzimu* means a nonliving being with intelligence.²⁷⁴ This stresses more that the ancestor, *Umuzimu*, has an intuitive background. The metaphysical being, having a phenomenon background, Negedu says that in African culture, man is therefore linked to man.²⁷⁵

From Kagame we can assert that the Bantu philosophy of Being or the center of African humanity is the mere intuition of Muntu. Perhaps it is the intuition of Muntu that determine the conception on how man ought to be. From Kagame’s perspectives, we can say that the Bantu metaphysics of Being is arrived through a mere intuition of human consciousness built within the consciousness of Hantu. It is not a result of abstract

²⁶⁴E. Gilson, *Thomism: The Philosophy of Thomas Aquinas*, page 253.

²⁶⁵E. Gilson, *Thomism: The Philosophy of Thomas Aquinas*, page 256.

²⁶⁶S. Gbadegesin, *African Philosophy*, page 171.

²⁶⁷S. Gbadegesin, *African Philosophy*, page 169.

²⁶⁸E. Gilson, *Thomism: The Philosophy of Thomas Aquinas*, page 291.

²⁶⁹E. Gilson, *Thomism: The Philosophy of Thomas Aquinas*, page 300.

²⁷⁰E. Gilson, *Thomism: The Philosophy of Thomas Aquinas*, page 252.

²⁷¹K. Wiredu, ed. *A Companion to African Philosophy*, page 335.

²⁷²E. Gilson, *Thomism: The Philosophy of Thomas Aquinas*, page 253.

²⁷³K. Wiredu, ed. *A Companion to African Philosophy*, page 240.

²⁷⁴Isaiah Adujo Negedu “Beyond The Four Categories Of African Philosophy” in the International Journal of African Society Cultures and Traditions, 2014 [www.eajournals.org]. Accessed on 10th July 2022.

²⁷⁵Isaiah Adujo Negedu “Beyond The Four Categories Of African Philosophy” in the International Journal of African Society Cultures and Traditions, 2014 [www.eajournals.org]. Accessed on 10th July 2022.

philosophical synthesis. Muntu conception as it is in ancestor metaphysics in Ubuntu is centered around the relationship between invisible (ancestor as the receptory of wisdom) and the visible. This is also reflected in the Tempels theory of Vital Force. The morality of Muntu (of Kagame and Tempels) is always limited to his cordial relation with the invisible force known as ancestors. It is a mere mystical or mythological relation. While in Thomas the morality of Muntu is centered around the interior light of reason. It is this interior light of reason which ought to justify the validity of both God and natural phenomena. Here man relates to God and the world through the mediation of reason. The Ubuntu / Muntu morality can easily fall into contradiction particularly when the events fall into confusion. It lacks the instrument of value clarity.

From the above impression, we can now understand why the corrupt leaders in Africa seem to be honored. There are constantly statements like: “that man is clever, or that man is a winner”. Here the word “clever or winner” does not mean the literal English meaning but rather “the worst corrupt man” or “a distinguished professional thief”. Kagame argued that only the essence of God goes beyond the confines of the categories and hence, beyond the category of *NTU*. The Bantu never speaks of the dead in terms of separate conceptual category distinct from that of persons.²⁷⁶ Then here we can know that, it is in such grounds, thief leaders and the corrupt persons are being rewarded with praises in many places in Africa. If the unjust or corrupt person receives a death penalty, it means he goes to become an ancestor, and then as the consequence that ancestor can diminish people’s life and impose calamities in the society. This make African easily compromise the truth and justice.

Nyerere developed his African ontology from the view vantage point of Ujamaa socialism. Ujamaa-socialism ontology is the concept of ancestral brotherhood. Nyerere relates it to the concept of extended family. From his conception of extended family he deduces the concept of man and society.²⁷⁷ People within “Ujamaa” are one and the same. There is no particular subject, the “I” become the “We” and the “Mine” becomes the “Ours”. Nkrumah says that, if there is any reality to African personality, it is the African genius.²⁷⁸ What is that African genius to which Nkrumah refers to?

According to Falola, African elite behaviors are not necessarily conforming to the logic of established political theories, constitutions and laws. The existing few theories, constitutions and laws are broken to justify the pursuit of ethnic interests and corruption. The rules of politics and general elections are sometimes broken in order to get one’s ethnic member into power.²⁷⁹

For Nkrumah, by consciencism each one should be called a brother or sister. He says that, “We are all Africans and Peoples of African descent, and we shall not allow the imperialist plotters and intrigues to separate us from each other for their own advantage.”²⁸⁰ Consciencism does not aim at understanding *being as being*, but there as an historical consciousness which aim at responding at certain historical events. Dr. Du Bois believed that God brought the Negro to America and Christianized him so that he might go back to Africa and redeem that land.²⁸¹

Ubuntu states very clear that Africans are One and not Many. Ubuntu have the same objective, which seek to explain where they come from and where we are going.²⁸² In Ubuntu, African can accommodate any religion, philosophy and theory as longer as it quenches their thirsty without losing meaning of life.²⁸³ Ramose admits that Ubuntu philosophy and religion have no separate and specific theologies.²⁸⁴ This seems to indicate that African philosophy and theology are without philosophical and theological principles. Here then philosophy and theology are equated to mere mystical stories that seems to explain reality imaginatively. What does this differ from a mere Greek mythology of Homer?

Ubuntu system is not innate but is rather acquired in society and is transmitted from one generation to another by means of oral genres such as fables, proverbs, myths, riddles, and story-telling.²⁸⁵ Africans follow anything and everything for Ubuntu’s sake, not for the sake of knowing the “*isness*” of what they worship. The same applies in Christianity, they believe in Christianity so as to quench the Ubuntu’s excellence. According to Shillington, Africans will be the principal losers of any physical war which they will battle because they have

²⁷⁶ Isaiah Adujo Negedu “Beyond The Four Categories Of African Philosophy” in the International Journal of African Society Cultures and Traditions, 2014 [www.eajournals.org]. Accessed on 10th July 2022.

²⁷⁷ J.K. Nyerere, *Ujamaa, Essays on Socialism*, page 78.

²⁷⁸ K.B. Asamoah, *Kwame Nkrumah’s Politico-cultural Thought and Policies*, page 31.

²⁷⁹ Toyin Falola, *The Power of African Culture*, page 10.

²⁸⁰ K.B. Asamoah, *Kwame Nkrumah’s Politico-cultural Thought and Policies*, page 98.

²⁸¹ K.B. Asamoah, *Kwame Nkrumah’s Politico-cultural Thought and Policies*, page 298.

²⁸² M. Mawere –T.R. Mubaya, *African Philosophy and the Thought of Systems*, page 104.

²⁸³ M. Mawere –T.R. Mubaya, *African Philosophy and the Thought of Systems*, page 104-105.

²⁸⁴ M. Mawere –T.R. Mubaya, *African Philosophy and the Thought of Systems*, page 104.

²⁸⁵ M. Mawere –T.R. Mubaya, *African Philosophy and the Thought of Systems*, page 98.

proved so during colonialism.²⁸⁶ According to Anaxagoras, mind is a source of everything. Mind is in composition of things, distinguishes the living things from the dead ones.²⁸⁷

For Aquinas, moral acts are sustained in the first principles of logic. According to Aquinas, principle means 'source' not 'formula'. Aquinas uses Aristotelian first principles of logic to sustain the substantiality of unity, morality, providence and soul. When using the first principles, Aquinas sees that there is a close parallel between the orders of knowledge, theoretical and practical, or intellectual and moral.²⁸⁸

A virtuous life is not enough, for the virtues of pagans without the true faith are only splendid vices. Being baptized is not enough, for the baptized may fall into heresy. Orthodox belief is not enough, for even the most staunch Catholics may fall into sin. Devotion to the sacraments is not enough: no one knows whether he is receiving them in such a spirit as to qualify for Jesus' promises of eternal life.²⁸⁹

According to Walter Rodney in his book *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa*, he argues that Africa was equal with Europe before the coming of Whites.²⁹⁰ According to Rodney, everything in African continent which is bad, is in one way or another connected to colonialists. One wonders if what is said by Rodney is the whole truth about Africa, what happened after African countries independency? How can we account for a massive corruption and irresponsibility of African political leaders and those declared educated people? According to Walter Rodney Africa was a growing-heaven before Colonialists. If we are really faithful to what Walter Rodney says of the destruction left by the West to Africans through colonialism, then before us we face very fundamental question that requires an adequate response: Is it only Africans who were colonized? Assume we hold that it is only Africans who were colonized, then another question comes, since colonialists left Africa, to what extent has Africa been able to prevent civil wars, famine and diseases? Let us assume again that Westerners have always been with bad intention to the Africans, then another question comes, how many funds (grants) from Westerners which is donated for development to the Africans, is misused and used for person interest by Africans themselves? How do we explain all these questions?

The pragmatic nature of African ancestor religion based on the principle of Vital Force whereby life increases in terms of *fertility, health, wealth, rain and fortunes*, and diminishes in terms of *barrenness, sickness and death, material poverty, drought and misfortunes*, is currently manifested in the rapid growing number of Africa churches. This African ancestor pragmatic intuitive ontology is clearly centered around the ontology of Vital-Force. It is primarily a religion ontology as Haar would state that: Such kind of mind has no eschatological ability.²⁹¹ Such ontological perspective is far from eschatological perspective embedded in Christianity.

The cyclical thinking makes Africans unable to see Satan or God beyond the ontology of the Vital-Force (the diminishing Vital-Force and the increasing Vital-Force). They see Satan or God through the cycle of pragmatic relation or material relation in the myth of natural phenomena. From that perspective we can say that, for Africans any success is equated as a blessing of the principle of Vital-Force normally with huge logical contradictions. According to Haar, there are many charismatic churches which prefer themselves to organize in a more pragmatic and *ad hoc* manner.²⁹² The capacity of the unlimited possibilities is not possible if one's mind is confined to the limitedness of material things or material forms. When the mind is limited to the material forms alone, it becomes a cyclical mind. Here teaching philosophy and critical thinking becomes absolutely necessary for the all agents of information, pastors, priests and all decision makers, because it is in philosophy and critical thinking which disposes the mind to abstraction and hence opening it to foresightedness, open-mindedness, and unlimited possibilities. It does open to both linear economy and eschatological Christian religion.

In this sense, one wonders how he can make sense of Wiredu's statement that, life is not only about reason or logic, or the Sage philosopher who says that, Africans have their philosophy. Assuming what all what is said is true, one is faced with the basic questions, the opposite to reason is a mere teachings or emotions. Is that what Wiredu means? If he does not means that, what else does he mean? On the other hand if we hold the statement that Africans have their own philosophy, we need to point out what is the nature of that philosophy. Both Wiredu and Sage philosopher have not provided the answer.

Kreeft tells us that, the reason for Aquinas's greatness is because of his habit of inclusivism and synthesis, Aquinas stood at the center of the history of philosophy up to his time and still he is an eternal benchmark. He tried together ideas from Heraclitus, Parmenides, Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, Plotinus, the Stoics,

²⁸⁶Kevin Shillington, *editor, Encyclopedia of Africans History*, page 1467.

²⁸⁷B. Russell, *History of Western Philosophy*, page 93.

²⁸⁸P. Kreeft, *The Philosophy of Thomas Aquinas*, page 80.

²⁸⁹A. Kenny, *Medieval Philosophy*, page 13.

²⁹⁰W. Rodney, *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa*, [Washington: Howard University Press, 1982], page

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²⁹¹G. Haar, *African Christians in Europe*, [Nairobi: Action Publications, 2001], page 261.

²⁹²G. Haar, *African Christians in Europe*, page 261.

the Church Fathers, Augustine, Boethius, Abelard, Anselm, Bonaventura, Maimonides, Avicenna—just about everybody except the Sophists, postmodernists.²⁹³ Indeed his synthesis did not only provide a strong vision of Christian ontology but all the Western ontology, Western consciousness of reality. Africans are not used to the culture of philosophizing *being as being*. Mbiti says: “Africans have no “belief in progress,” the idea that the development of human activities and achievements move from a low to a higher degree. The people neither plan for a distant future nor *build castles in the air*.”²⁹⁴

Thomas Aquinas learnt properly and carefully the past great philosophers such as Plato and Aristotle. He learnt the reasons and historical background of the terms which they used. It is unlucky that even though it claimed that there is African philosophy, but nothing is taken into developmental consistency use of the terms. Adrian Hastings sees there is difficult in Africans in understanding Christianity. He attributes this difficult primary to the facts that the belief of African Catholicism shares their place in the consciousness of most Christians with the concepts of African traditional religion in its pre-Christian form. He says that even though Christians struggle to suppress it, and reinterpret the ideas with Christian paradigm, in which the two are united by common vocabulary, yet in public and ritual terms they still come into conflict.²⁹⁵

It appears that the Africans are easily confused in long analytic and synthetic arguments which require deep analytic thought and critical thinking. Whenever they are engaging in critical discourse against each other, one is automatically rouse emotionally and very often their arguments turn into a physical battle. When an African says, “I am a Man” it does not mean that he is well prepared to argue, but rather to through a punch to another fellow. Most of philosophical theories of Africans such as Ubuntu, Ujamaa, Afrocentricity, negritude, Pan-Africanism and many others, were and are created to give a respond against Europeans.²⁹⁶

Up to here one is caught into wonder whether the ontological presupposition embedded in the Vital-Force ontology or any other claim on “Brother-Christ” or “Pro-Ancestor” really fit into the logic of Christianity without huge contradiction. African Christianity which includes inculturation or Christ as Proto-Ancestor, contradict the logical principles as were used by Thomas Aquinas. For instance, in the tradition of the Ambundu of Angola, every individual is born with a “life tree,” or kilembe. The growth and fate of the kilembe reflects the person’s life. When the person dies, the kilembe also dies.²⁹⁷ Kenneth Kaunda who was the president of Zambia once said, “For me, God is more a Presence than a philosophical concept.”²⁹⁸

African method of thinking being intuitive is highly inclined to lead them into contradictions. Drawing from what Mbiti says: we can say that even though Africans will be attending to churches on weekends and make pilgrimage to Rome and Jerusalem, or even though their churches becomes full of miracles of healings and other amusements, still it is impossible for them to understand Christianity. It seems exactly that Christianity for them is a sociological gathering. Since Africans are intuitive, they are only keen to the relation of events as they appear in particular and concrete.

Assuming we support Kwasi Wiredu’s claim which emphasize that development in its most fundamental sense, is measured by the degree to which rational methods have penetrated thought habits and not the technological and scientific advancements as is the case today.²⁹⁹ Accordingly, Wiredu says that, even with all these, the Western world still suffers shortcomings in terms of religion, morals and politics. According to Wiredu, technological sophistication is only one thing among numerous sort of development, so it should not be taken as the benchmark of the whole. Here again are astonishing incidences. If we say, the despite of its analytical rationality still the Western world suffer immorality, impiety, autocracy and inhumanity, then we would expect Africa to be a place of lesser evil. The truth on the ground shows different, corruption, egocentrism, social injustices, mismanagement of public funds and conflicts are the rules of the day in Africa. What can we make out of it?

VI. Conclusion

It is right time now to question all the propositions we hold to be true and certain in African ontology and try to apply logos to establish their logical, ontological and epistemological basis. In this we need the process of cultural deconstruction and reconstruction of Africa if we really need to progress otherwise it is doubtful if Africa will make advance at all, both in knowledge, religion and science. Africa continent need to explain its acts in enumeration.

²⁹³P. Kreeft, *The Philosophy of Thomas Aquinas*, page 7.

²⁹⁴K. Wiredu, ed. *A Companion to African Philosophy*, page 9.

²⁹⁵Adrian Hastings, *African Catholicism, Essays in Discovery*, page xi.

²⁹⁶Toyin Falola, *The Power of African Culture*, page 22.

²⁹⁷P.A. Lynch – J. Roberts, *African Mythology A to Z*, page 125.

²⁹⁸J. Hatch, *Two African States-Men, Kaunda of Zambia and Nyerere of Tanzania*, page 236.

²⁹⁹M. Mawere – T.R. Mubaya, *African Philosophy and the Thought of Systems*, 201.

If philosophers like Placide Tempels, Leopold Senghor, John Mbiti, Hegel, Pope Paul II and Trevor-Roper had commented incredibly on the Africans intuitive way, then it might be true that there is something unique within the African way of thinking. More research should be conducted to see whether there is something in African way of thinking which differentiates the Africans from other races.

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