Scientific Research

Character and Culture: Towards a Man of Character

—The Relevance of Traditional Igbo Family Values

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Character and culture describe man both as an active and a passive agent in life. It is by being fashioned by culture that man cultivates character and by the use of this character so acquired that he develops and upgrades his culture; for culture is dynamic, that is elastic; as such there is need for eternal vigilance on the part of man to see his culture evolve and become better at every point in time. This can come about either spontaneously or through an agency; it is the duty of an agency to act upon what is given, required to produce a good result, in our instance to act on Igbo-African family values. This entails a dialogue of man and his milieu, for character grows form a healthy and salutary agent, so knowledge of, belief in and application of values is indeed a precondition.

Keywords: Character; Culture; Family Values; Morality; Philosophy; Authority; Commitment; Love

Introduction

Experience has shown us that man has a problem or else why expressed resentment indicated in defiant difference, silent resignation and dauntless violence against groups and leadership? Man's existence arouse fundamental questions, why is man different from every other created thing? Why has he unspecialized nature? Why must he struggle to survive? Why is it that nature refused to take care of him as it takes care of other creatures? Barclay Harold (1986: p. 43) wonders:

What is so peculiar about humans that would result in the genesis of such a unique entity as cultural behaviour and its total demand over the nature and character of the human.

You can see then that there is a link between culture and character. Linton recognized that man has both primary and secondary needs but sees the origin of these as obscure.

Socrates realized that man is confused and admonished him to know himself. Man has not made strides in this assignment due to his failure to know who he is, and his mission on earth. Culture which is a normative and developmental concept stands a chance of helping man to not only understand himself but equally understand and realize his mission on earth. Our problem is that we talk glibly of culture. Culture is a vast universe of discourse. By normative development Chuta (1992: p. 5) refers to

A harmoniously, progressive and purposeful advancement of human civilization in human history. It is to be a harmonious advancement in the sense that despite the diversity and variety in the cultivation and application of resources, there should be a recognition of a leadership of mutuality, common interest and destiny among different peoples of the world.

With the additional terms like character which involves virtue and will and traditional Igbo family values my universe of discourse is further "voluminous" But it might interest you to know that an Igbo-African academic Prof. Maduabuchi Dukor has done an in depth study in the area of values. For him, the study of values requires a rigorous and vigorous logical analysis and it is largely epistemic and ontic in its origin. Dukor (2010: p. 15) emphasized that many see values as limited to ethical values and pointed out thus, "… the values of a people go beyond ethic to values of technology, architecture, food habit, poetry, music, sculpture, painting, farming, swimming and a whole arts".

As the structure of what I want do permits, I will examine the concepts involved in this paper, thereafter, I will look at the relationship between character and culture in history of man's thought; and then dwell exclusively on how the traditional Igbo family values could help in the cultivation, development and emergence of a man of character. As soon as I have done that, I will recapitulate what this paper holds.

Some Basic Terms

Culture is often used and yet frequently misused. Culture is from the Latin verb "colere" from the Latin term "colo", declined thus "colo, ere, -ui, cultum" meaning to cultivate or to worship. It is equally from the Latin word "cultura" meaning cultivation or tending. Ogugua (2004) writes, "Besides cultivation, the idea of nursing, improving and rendering fertile is implied."

Culture can be said to be the "modus vivendi" of a people. By this we imply not a way of life, but a mode of life which is shared among the people and transmitted from one generation to the other for the survival of the people and preservation of their identity. Culture is strictly a human phenomenon, hence is dynamic. It is a normative and developmental concept. In the words of Taylor in Ogugua (2004) culture is that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, moral, law, custom and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society.

Popenoe in Oddih Elebo (1988: pp. 150-151) holds it is the system of shared values and meaning of a group or society, including the embodiment of those values and meaning in material artifacts. That shows we have the material and non-material aspects of culture. Reyter in Oddih Elebo (1988: p. 9) says it is "the sum total of human creation…" Ogugua (2004: p. 62) wrote elsewhere that;

> Culture should then refer to those elements which help in refining, cultivating, reshaping, designing and developing man towards mental and physical endowment.

We can then say that culture is metaphysical as it deals with meaning; historical since it can be located within space-time and within specific period of time, and trans-historical as it is transmitted from one generation to another.

For the Igbo people, culture simply put, can be translated as "Odinani" which is the embodiment, personalization and totalization of the Igbo people's beliefs, knowledge, values, art, action, etc. This "Odinani" is a body of norms; its practical aspect "Omenani" means the doings of the land, it involves the application of the depositions in the "Odinani".

Character although a household word is slippery, very difficult to define as many have confused it with personality. After looking at personality briefly then we will delineate what character is. Reading Hugo (1978: pp. 150-151) sees personality as:

1) Social-stimulus value of an individual.

2) aggregate of an individual's dispositions

3) organization of an individual's dispositions.

4) organization of an individual's socially-relevant dispositions.

5) pattern of adjustments of an individual's dispositions.

6) pattern of adjustments of an individual

7) an individual's unique pattern of dispositions.

8) sum of individual's roles.

9) an individual's variant reactive system.

10) subjective awareness of self as distinguished from other objects.

Morgan et al. (1984: p. 512) say that practically everyone uses the term "personality" with something slightly different in mind. It is to the fact that confusion will definitely creep in for not being properly defined. For MIschel (1976: p. 2) it: refers to the distinctive patterns of behaviour (including thoughts and emotions) that characterize each individual's adaptation to the situations of his or her life.

Allport (1937: p. 48) defines it as: the dynamic organization within the individual, of those psychological systems which determine his unique adjustment to his environment.

Personality is derived from the word "persona" meaning mask. That shows that it is symptomatic, not definite (rigid), something that can be put off and on at will. Personality can be influenced by temperament, intellectual power and tastes. Personality is the appearance of character hence can be said to be shadowy, changeable, flexible and undetermined. Now let us examine the concept-character.

Character is the reality while personality is the appearance. Character is essential, fundamental and deep rooted. It indicates strength and is measured by it; a hard-won achievement through struggle, though modifiable through (education) teaching and effort, but not by innate and constitutional things. It is the essence of virtue.

One can think of character in an ethical sense or in a psychological sense. In the ethical understanding it rhymes with will-power. According to Donceel (1967: p. 218); "Ethically considered, character may be defined as the power of self-control or the capacity of regulating one's life according to principles."

In this sense, one can think of character development, or development, or education and self-control. I have expressed elsewhere that we cannot rightly hold that a person has no will-power, everybody has will-power, rather we can maintain without fear of being in error that a person has a strong or a weak character.

Donceel (1967: p. 218) continued; "Psychologically considered, character may be defined as the organized totality of the tendencies of an individual". The multifarious tendencies possessed by man as a species make it possible for one to develop one kind of character and another; character is of course streamlined and determined by the individual's goals and visions. "A person or character" pursued purposes without being distracted by passing impulses".

Will is related to character. Will is equally measured by strength. Quinton (1985: p. 439) writes:

> To have a very weak will is the next best thing to having no will at all.

Little wonder, the intellect shows the object and the will shoots the arrow. Will has to do with activities, hence effort. Spontaneous character will then exclude the will. Only in controlled character has the will a place, controlled character is organized totality of man's tendencies and reactions towards reality under normal self-control. Donceel (1967: p. 219) explains:

> In weak-willed people who lack self-control the difference between these two aspects of character is negligible. On the other hand, in people who have learned to control themselves there may be a considerable difference between what they would do if they "let themselves go" and what they will actually do.

He continued; "Perfect self-mystery makes it very difficult to discern a person's spontaneous character".

Conclusively, we can say that character refers to the strength and/or goodness of personality. It is durable and stable. Now we turn our gaze to the term family, Hawkins Joycee (1995: p. 145) says it means "Parents and their children; a person's children; set of relatives; group of related plants, animals, or things".

In this work, we are not concerned with family in relation to animals, plants or things. Reading Hugo (1978: p. 226) writes family means "Two or more persons living together related by blood, marriage, adoption.

In this context, we are not concerned with adoption for it is foreign to the traditional Igbo people. Harris Odimegwu (2000: p. 184) says that "The term 'family' refers primarily to a household, …" If left as it is, it is incorrect, because household means people eating from a pot. Even his addition of: "A group of people who have blood relations with each other and who are bound by kinship ties and feelings" has not and cannot remove the stress on "primarily".

The family is essentially and fundamentally a cultural institution and natural society of man which springs up from a marriage between a man and a woman particularly; ties between kindreds existentially. The family is a cultural unit and instrument that is too fundamental in building, cultivating and form-

ing character of every person.

Has this given us the African understanding of family? Igbo-African understanding of family is wider and more extensive. The family involves not only a man and woman, their offsprings, or even the extended family; it includes the dead, the not yet born and even God himself.

Value in a nutshell means according to Reading Hugo (1978: p. 226).

1) the object of an interest, terminal or instrumental
2) object possessing a valence.
3) a character trait culturally-defined as desirable.
4) anything culturally-defined as desirable…

Be it as it may, Dukor (2010: pp. 15-16) insists that discussion of moral normative cultural values of the African requires logical analysis in terms of prepositions, predicative and entailment and finally into magisterial, legislative and universal law-like statements or prepositions which can be true or false. He stressed that the moral normative values consist in what can be called ethical or axiological values while aesthetic and artistic values make up the non moral normative values in African Philosophy.

This work concerns community values from the postulation of Dukor; and we are of the opinion that these values apply to what man does to generate what he termed aesthetic values. It is not in contest that God is the foundation of African cultural values, for Dukor who argued that African cultural values are anchored on Theistic Humanism. Why?

Probably because African man's idea of God is anthropomorphic.

According to Dukor (2010), most of the precepts of moral values deducible from community values are in the form of proverbs and wise-sayings that they need to be translated or converted in a logical way to categorical prepositions. These values are respected by the people as they have theistic origin; and work for the consciousness of the community, that is building, maintaining and upholding of the community. So, we can hold and rightly too that the Igbo-African have an inbuilt mechanism for guaranteeing ethical, moral and peaceful relations, that is stability in the community as these values are seen as laws and respected as such.

"All in all, the Igbo cultural values and philosophy is an adventurous philosophy that abhors laziness and promotes right conduct within the calculus of Theistic Humanism. It particularly lays emphasis on hardwork and accordingly recognizes merit and achievement". As such, "it is really not necessary to get the Police to enforce moral values in Igbo society since the spirit of moral responsibility and communalism or kingship takes care of deviances", Dukor (2010: pp. 6,20,17).

Character and Culture in the History of the Modern Man

Character is the goodness of personality. Man is a cultural animal and cannot be anything outside that; we can see that character and culture are tied together. Culture becomes the process and the instrument of getting at character. Boethius (n.d) said the person is an individual substance of rational nature. Many are men by constitution and not by actions, are they not rational creatures? They are.

To be really rational is to tend consciously and continuously towards the end of the human "animal". If one does it, there is the propensity that one will become a man of character. Char-

acter is the essence of virtue; for every virtuous man is a man of reason who pursues his targets, visions and goals without letting innate and constitutional things i.e. temperament, passion, etc to interfere.

Character formation has been attacked severally; some of these attacks are what we have set out to examine in this subtheme, in 19th century the Will was central in ethical and psychological discussions, but not today. Why" Hundreds of years back, virtue and character were central topics in ethical theory discussions, today duty has usurped this position. Lionel Trilling in Quinton (1985) observed the situation and poignantly expressed:

The concept of Will will no longer figure significantly in the systematic psychology of our day. Those of us who are old enough to have been brought up in the shadow of the nineteenth century can recall how important the Will was once though to be in the conduct of the personal life; … "How confidently our parents and teachers pointed to the practical as well as the moral advantage of having a will of developed strength and discipline".

Anthony Quinton thinks that character is not substantive, rather it is procedural for there is no set of desires which one (man) has particularly. For him, character is the same as self-control or strength of will. Man is different from other animals because of his ability to think about things which are outside his immediate perception with the aid of language. Language and culture are exclusively human. It is by meeting our environment with thought and humanizing it that culture which is already present as it is God-given becomes all the more 'modified to meet the needs of the period. Through this process character emerges, for Quinton (1985: p. 439) character is:

Comparatively unspecific, unlike abilities and skills … It is in essence resolution, determination, a matter of pursuing purposes without being distracted by passing impulses.

A frontal blow came with the sexual liberation which the Victorian period thinkers and 20th century rationalist thinkers espoused. Before this period, character and will occupied a central place in morality. Strenuous self-discipline, or one may say asceticism was stressed. This was against the nonstrenous morality of the 18th century which preceded it, and this nonstrenous morality was a reversal of the gloomy fanaticism of the 17th century and the epoch characterized by religious wars. Long-terms aims approved during this period were secular and terrestrial. By implication, those things which were seen as "agreeable or useful" were done. Does it not look like the principle of Machiavelli, the end justifies the means?

The morality of the 18th century was relaxed. This suited the ideal life of the protestant commercial middle class which according to Quinton (1985: p. 441) "Has been progressively reconciled to life on this sinful earth by the worldly success that had accrued to its hard word and foresight".

The authority and presence of Benjamin Franklin helped in maintaining this "culture" till the middle of the 19th century when a more severe ascetic idea of life replaced it. Victorianism was concerned with all aspects of an ideal of self-reliance so to speak. Industry, hardwork, honesty and fidelity to promises were stressed as they were of great importance to the business world. Sexuality was confined to monogamy; benevolence

was confined to the unfortunate and not the merely pitiable; waste was deplored. Quinton (1985: p. 441) writes. Decorum must be maintained, serving as a kind of fireproof of matting to keep down smoldering impulses to passion and extravagance. Victorian morality was attacked by rationalists of the late 19th and early 20th centuries i.e. Butler, Bernard Shaw, Russell, B who were eager to revive the enlightenment. They attacked the Victorian ideas on sex, relations of men to women, adults to children; property; and the decorum or "easy calm" which preserved this order replete with moral ills (errors). They looked forward to a new morality-rational, which will help people to perfect themselves. They were people of strong character and will; hard workers; Shaw was ascetic above the demands of Victorian morality.

Consequently hedonism came to the fore. There was the 1890's decadence; innate private sensation. After 1918, old pieties were ridiculed as sensation's pursuit went off gear Quinton (1985: p. 442) writes. Vulgar Freudianism, the idea that all inhibition is bad, unhealthy, the cause of neurosis, helped to fill the sails of this pleasure-boat.

What of the Instinctualism of Lawrence D.H?

Another attack was initiated by aestheticism, i.e. Ruskin and Pater; which gave room to permissive morality quite inimical to character and will. The emancipation from the Victorian messy situation took two forms of moral reform. Firstly, is negative permissive morality which was characterized by passive consumption, recreational satisfactions. The society ensured that the means of satisfying these pleasures were affordable. The most admired quality during this time was amiability. Secondly, is the ecstatic morality which advocated the enjoyment of instinctual pleasures unrestricted even beyond a level necessary for self preservation. It was confined to the young mostly. Quinton (1985: p. 443) writes:

> On this view all frustration or inhibition is bad and unhealthy. Older ideas of the natural goodness of mankind are reanimated, often with the qualification that innocence can survive only in communities sequestered from the corrupting influences of the urban, industrial world.

Both forms of morality are hostile to character and will hence, juvenile. There is no doubt that Freud through his psychoanalysis, by stressing on forces which can affect behaviour without the agent's knowledge buried responsibility. His account of the superego as the product of aggression destroyed the individual and forced him into a kind of self-mutilation. Quinton (1985: p. 444) stressed,

> There is an instructive aspect to his account of conscience in what he says about civilization. Although, he sees it as having some of the qualities of a collective neurosis. He takes the renunciation of instinct it requires to be preferable to the alternative of uncontrolled aggressiveness.

The suicidal blow of character and will formation was ontological; the decline of religion. This opened the gate of hell, and with red fiery blazing eyes, men became cabals perpetuating murderous mayhem occasioned by radical agitation in the interest of various underdogs and irrational or thoughtless men. All the values of religion were sidetracked and God was declared dead by Nietzsche, and some out of sympathy declared him old, unconcerned with the world or on leave or in IBB's

term stepped "aside".

A litany of other features in our day which might have risen due to this characterless self include: total extinction by nuclear war, holocaust, genocide, heightened level of brutality in politics, as the modern man believed Machiavelli that the "end justifies the means". Crime rate has increased at home; organized crime is a billion-dollar business, despotism thrives abroad.

There is no doubt that large moral change has taken place in the modern times; the contents of morality has changed, and the form too. The conception of the moral agent is no longer the same.

Deeper Insight of Philosophy

Classical philosophers gave virtue a central position, for them virtue was the primary moral notion. For them, the central question was "how should I live" or in more direct way "what kind of person should I be? Plato was concerned with the types of human character to produce, little wonder he talked of virtues and vices. He did not busy himself with prescriptive job of positing moral principles or laws which is the essential character of Kantian and neo-kantian ethics.

Plato has virtue as a key word in his moral philosophy likewise Aristotle. Plato went to the extent of equating virtue with knowledge. Before Plato, in the Homeric era, the word "Arete" was translated as virtue. "Arete" was used for excellence of any kind. In this kind of understanding and background there is a place really prominent given to strength. By implication, courage stood out. Alasdair Macintyre in Sommers C. H (1985: p. 165) writes:

> What is alien to our conception of virtue is the intimate connection in heroic society between the concept of courage and its allied virtues on the one hand and the concepts of friendship, fate and death on the other.

To be courageous is to become a person; reliance can be placed on. Courage becomes necessary for the cultivation of friendship. Courage is a quality necessary to sustain a community.

Modern ethics is epistemological. Instead of stressing on "being" stress is laid on "doing" kant made duty the central topic in his moral philosophy. For him the vital question was "what shall I do?" Christiana Hoff Sommers (1985: p. 171) writes:

> The morality of "doing" is logically simple: we determine what we ought to do by seeing whether it maximizes happiness (utilitarianism) or is universalizable (Kantiansim).

It is not surprising then why modern ethics is a set of footnotes to Kant. For these modern ethicists, qualities associated to character are of secondary concern. There is radical one sidedness of moral philosophers on principles and not on qualities which make one what he is. Plato's and Aristotle's theories are instructive. Justice then for Plato is not acting according to law though connected with it.

Telling the truth is not an obligation for Aristotle as it is for Kant. It is quality of character and can only be designed in principles with great artificiality and complexity (that is in a metaphorical sense). Aristotle though might have subscribed to a set of principles, has boaster etc. John Stuart Mill in Sommers C. H (1985: p. 173) noted the difference between the negative

and positive rendering of principles thus:

Christian morality (so called) has all the characters of a reaction' it is, in great part, a protest against Paganism. Its idea is negative rather than positive, passive rather than active, innocence rather than nobleness; Abstinence from Evil, rather than energetic pursuit of the Good; in its precepts ( ) "thou shalt not" predominates unduly over "Thou shall".

Of course, if Mill has said the Biblical morality, he would have been more correct; for he is talking of the Decalogue. Although Christians go by the Decalogue, it is ancient promulgation though from God. Christ's pronouncements were positive and active, developmental. He said "be thee perfect…" Love one another" etc.

Though a gap exists between being and doing, there are connections between them. One cannot be what he is, save by believing certain things, knowing these things and doing these things, moral quality can be ascribed to him on account of his performance. Ethics of being is wider than that of doing, it involved it but ethics of doing cannot involve that of being. Do you know one can possess moral principles and the will to act and yet not have moral qualities?

When we talk of a just man, we impute motives and intentions, with the character of the agent. Kantians and Utilitarians find it difficult to deal with motives. For Aristotle, just manifests a kind of character.

The primary, moral question remains "what ought I to do" the answer should be "Do this…" hence is positive and imperative. Connection can as well be made with moral code. The fundamental moral question posited above can be answered equally by positing a quality of character i.e. "Be just", "Be brave", etc one moral perplexity can be extensive as to touch his whole way of living instead of just a situation. If it becomes so extensive, his fundamental question take a more basic scope, it becomes "what ought I to be" Mayo in Sommers C. H. (1985: p. 175) holds:

And here the ethics of character gains a practical simplicity which offsets the greater logical simplicity of the ethics of principles. We do not have to give a list of characteristics or virtues, as we might list a set of principles. We can give a unity to our answer.

It will be difficult to think of logical unity, for it will mean deducing some principles from others and ultimately reducing these (some) principles to a few.

The moral quality of agents can be deduced and derived from the moral quality of actions. Kant and Hume determine the quality of an action by its rightness. The cognitive pre-occupation of ethicists led them to ignore virtue, character and will in this modern period. May I ask if you do not have idea of what is morally right, how do you get people to do it?

It does seem imitation and pursuit of parental approval aid in building of character in a normally brought up child. Do you know that self examination can aid in moral development? This is internally induced having established the primacy of being over doing and the fact that there are connections between them, let us dwell on how traditional Igbo family values can aid in the development of a man of character.

The Place of Traditional Igbo Family Values in Bringing about a Man of Character

We have to point out "hic et nunc" that the family values are not the same as Igbo traditional values, but that these family values reflect these general values. The core traditional Igbo values are life, offsprings, wealth, love and peace. It is a quinquagram. Although the concept, the immediate family which is the fundamental unit and instrument of character development equally is the domain of religious worship and awakening, and the head of the family as the star link between the family members and the ancestors, spirits and God controls this family worship and religious activities or rites.

An ideal traditional Igbo home is characterized by a very high degree of intimacy, of love, of devotion. The man is usually a polygamist and yet the wives are satisfied. In the traditional Igbo (family) home age is esteemed. Age is regarded as a blessing from God and everybody prays to have grey hair, "Honour your father and mother" of the Bible is a lived norm in this home. Many a time children grew up in the presence of grandparents Norman Lamm in Sommers (1985: p. 469) writes, this shows some

Kind of living relic of the past, and developed a natural respect and reverence for age not because of any specific function of the elderly, but because age itself was valued.

But in the West, there is no desire for this relic of the past as the elderly are put in old people's home. In the traditional Igbo family, roles were more or less defined. Everyone knew what was expected of him. Self-restraint and renunciation are emphasized in the traditional Igbo home. The contemporary man thinks "thou shall not" is an excessive inhibition which can distort the personality development of a child.

As God is part of a traditional Igbo family, it presupposes a commitment by all members of the family to a source which is transphysical, ontological. This commitment includes some aspects of Igbo culture and/or a combination of these aspects of Igbo "Odinani"—the totalization of Igbo knowledge, belief, arts, values, etc.; "Omenani"—the functional aspect of the "Odinani" which means the doings of the land; Igbo traditional religion, and God. In short, there is axiological cohesiveness in the Igbo traditional home.

Now let us reduce these values into a troika for easier handling and integration but more so to reflect the significance of the number three in Igbo land. So we can now talk of a Trinitarian model value. We reduce these to love, authority and commitment. That does not mean there is no regard for life and offspring, these are presupposed. Again, wealth is not totally excluded but it has not yet much place to play in the family for most families were of the subsistence type. Peace we say is subsumed in love, for love breeds peace. Moreover, life can only be sustained and maintained through commitment. Does it make any meaning why then I have decided to discuss love, authority and commitment? Let's commence.

Love

The Igbo word is "Ihunanya" which can be transliterated as seeing with the eyes. By implication, what one perceives or experiences with his senses. Love is expressed in concrete terms, for the word "Ihunanya" suggests, it need to be seen. When it is seen, it cannot be easily denied hence social ties are built and promoted. The story of the good Samaritan is akin to Igbo concept of love; and not the abstract connotation of the Western world. The Igbo say "Ihunanya na egosi onwe ya na olu"—love expresses itself in work. Ekwunife (1997: p. 82)

writes:

> Hence one manifests love by observing social norms and taboos of the community where one lives.

The family is subsumed in the community, and as "Ala" is the god incharge of morality, any "nso alu, "mmehie"—taboo of the earth-deity and moral fault respectively affects the cohesiveness of the union spiritually and offset every kind of balance in even the family. Any kinds of offence with regard to morality are offences against love.

In a highly structured traditional Igbo family, a practical conformity with its norms is enforced and its ideological commitment stressed. To refuse to conform to any family etiquette is against love. A woman who refuses to perform her duties in the family offends love. Even to prepare late meals is against love. When one refuses to perform his duties in the family he expresses resentment and hatred towards the members of the family; and the survival of the society depends on survival of the family units.

There is not doubt that at times as the ideological pattern is being enforced, it may overuse its discipline and this overwhelms the element of love. In the traditional Igbo family, love, devotion and peace were all present, and so was discipline or else there will be no family unit or cohesion. What Lamm in Sommers C. H (1985: p. 472) said of Traditional Jewish is true of the traditional Igbo family He writes:

> But sometimes it happened that the discipline was too strong, so that it became rigid, thus diminishing the element of love, warmth, spontaneity, and the sense of intimacy.

If we look at love here we see that it is not prescriptive, not couched in a set of moral principles, not solely concerned with rightness of action, but is concerned with a set of character-traits which is geared towards building a solid, civilized and real man. Love aids to help this man of character to emerge through discipline, it shows that there is a nexus between character and will for the Igbo man. He tries to plant self-control in the children of the family. It does not mean that the Igbo don't talk of doing, they do, for they hold that it is through doing, activity, conformity to the family norms, etiquette and social values that this man of character emerges. The concern of the Igbo man with character is seen in the cult of Ikenga, qualified as the cult of the right hand. We end by saying that love and peace are interrelated. Now let us examine the value authority.

Authority

The family is not just an association of persons biologically related who live under the same roof. It is the centre of gravity that makes it a family. Most of the time the father is the source of authority in the traditional Igbo family. Why I did make a categorical statement is because in some families people like Unoka of the Things Fall Apart lived; and there the women will unannouncedly take over this central position to weld the family unit.

The father is an authority and force to reckon with in the traditional Igbo family. He is usually the oldest in the family and the Igbo revere old age; so respect is accorded to him by his wives and children. Rights are not stressed for he does not run the family in a democratic way where everybody has a vote to cast. The Igbo believe that wisdom is the portion of the elders,

so they did not think that children have or possess some kind of "intuitive wisdom to which the parents must make obeisance". Normann Lammin Sommers C. H. (1985: p. 473) tends to support this kind of idea when he wrote; often, as you are well aware, the failure of parents to exercise disciple for their fundamental lack of concern.

That the traditional Igbo father did not treat his children as "pets" or "pals" does not mean that he is a tyrant, one without feeling for his children. He is not the absolute sovereign for above him are the "Ndi iche", the spirits, gods and God. The father unlike the Romans did not have the legal right to put his child to death for disobedience, rather the child may be unfortunate to be sold into slavery if the father felt that he gave him unnecessary high blood pressure. Parents direction was benevolent, loving and this gave the family its reference point and focus as a unit built on love. At times excessive shower of love and over protection of the children gave room for over indulgence of the children, that they grew up arrogant, careless without culture and fear. It was during this period that parents will warn openly in front of their children other adults who had reprimanded them or corrected them just to show their prowess or strength.

How could this value authority aid in raising a man of character? The father must realize that every authority comes from God and use the (power) position entrusted unto him judiciously. He is the centre of gravity, to be weak means that he has destroyed his children, his family and even the society. He must ensure that he sang his mysteries of life as and when due. If he sings his glorious mysteries first then he has buried himself alive. It must take this turn, joyful mysteries when he married newly and has got some children; sorrowful mysteries when he trains them; and glorious mysteries when they have grown and are now resource persons who can take care of him in his old age.

The father must strive to train his children in the service of God, and use his authority to bend his children and enforce discipline in them so as to implant good character in them. His desire for children, his love for them must not fool him so as to allow them develop as they wish. He must be frugal in his administration of punishment. Virtue stands in the middle. If he frightens them unnecessarily then he forces them to harm themselves as they will never develop into full personalities. He must be a man of his words, or else the children will see him as a barking dog, a toothless bulldog.

He must realize that every child is different with his individual differences, and then treat each child as he should. He needs to combine love and authority, for it is this proper combination that breeds intelligent discipline.

Commitment

We have said that God is part of the traditional Igbo family, so the father then is only a representative of God, a symbol. According to Lamm in Sommers C. H. (1985: p. 475):

> The father effectively acts as the psychological focus for the child of an authority greater than the father himself. He is a surrogate, a broker, of a kind of authority that is beyond the family itself.

By implication, he is not incharge in "toto", authenticates and legitimizes his authority. The father is committed to God, the spirits, the ancestors and the "Odinani" of the Igbo world.

The fact that God sanctions this authority of the father cements the relationship in the family, making it cohesive and well structured organ or instrument for change, and development in the society.

The focus of authority is metaphysical beyond the father we see and discuss with. This commitment aids in the reconstitution of the family units. Little wonder, the children were given traditional education with religious commitment for they are the ones to carry on the family lineage in the future. The Igbo understanding of immortality and the necessity to have a child to pour libation and make sacrifices to one when dead might have made this commitment deeper and stronger.

Recapitulation and Prescription

We have shown that to be a man of character is to be a man of culture. Again that character and will; and culture are related.

We saw the relationship between character and culture in history. We emphasized that being is more significant than having; and stressed on the need to have a set of character traits instead of a set of moral principles to pursue; the former leads to development of qualities necessary to become a man of character while the latter leads to what should be done. But one can possess this set of moral principles and the will and still not have moral qualities. In the end we stressed on how the troika of traditional Igbo family values could help in raising a man of character.

We suggest that authority in the family need to be focused, so as to allow organization to be easier, and not give room for confusion which will also arise if the children do not know who to ask, to whom to go and seek guidance. This does not mean that authority cannot be divided, it can, but it must revolve around the centre of gravity—the father.

If there is a fatherless family somebody must become the centre of gravity, it can be the mother, or any of the children for nature does not allow a vacuum to be created. There is need for division of labour and responsibility in every family. It helps in giving room for order in the family.

Love must be the foundation of the family. For if there is no love then the family becomes handicapped for there is nothing which binds people intimately to one another. Hegel holds that the mode and principle of relations in the family is love. He is a member of the family and is equally loved as any other.

The mode of relation is different from any other association anyone enters into. Apart from any real religious commitment, there is need to centralize commitment of the members of the family. On account of a lot of centrifugal forces and pulls in our society the focus of family union or cohesiveness is better "ontological" and transcendent instead of immanent. It need be transphysical so as to create a sense of awe in the members.

Our family will be strong when we live our traditional values and not when we know these values. We need to know these values, believe these values and then practicalize these values. Of course, we know from experience that equating virtue with knowledge is faulty. The most primary question is "what person ought I to be?" this later question is important to the extent it can lead to the first question and help in realizing the answer to the first questions.

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