



## OZUMBA'S INTEGRATIVISM AS A FUNCTIONAL PEACE AND CONFLICT RESOLUTION METHODOLOGY

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<p><b>Received:</b> March 24<sup>th</sup> 2021</p> <p><b>Accepted:</b> April 4<sup>th</sup> 2021</p> <p><b>Published:</b> April 22<sup>th</sup> 2021</p>	<p>The philosophical school of thought christened <i>Integrativism</i> and variously appellated <i>Integrative Humanism</i> and <i>Spiritocentric Humanism</i> is an approach and a propaedeutic for investigating and unraveling the multiplicity of reality in all its dimensions, depth and intricacy. The author and pathfinder of this method is Prof. Godfrey Ozumba. The attempt here is to contour the appropriacy of the method and propaedeutic of <i>integrative humanism</i> as a functional mechanism for resolving conflict and actualizing peace.</p>

**Keywords:** Integrative, Humanism, Peace, Conflict, Resolution

### THE PHILOSOPHY OF INTEGRATIVISM

The philosophy is weaved around profound characterising concepts such as *spiritocentricism*, *humanism*, *integrativism*, *agglutinism* and *eclecticism*. *Spiritocentricism*, for the author is an urge and an imperative for philosophizing which emphasizes the disposition to reach and unearth the spiritual dimension of reality. *Humanism* as a perspective in this philosophy refers to the view of man as the end, the agency, the subject and predicate of which knowledge is teleogised. The dimension of *integrativism* underscores the approach of systematic soldering and sapiential cum critical alloying of the expansive array of perspectives and gneosological horizons on reality. *Agglutinism* exposes the syncretic ambience of galvanizing philosophical perspectives holistically. *Eclecticism* hinges on the approaches of borrowing, networking, sifting and gluing of ideas for the aim of picturing reality coherently.

### PEACE AND CONFLICT RESOLUTION: THE INTEGRATIVE HUMANISM HORIZON

Ozumba (*Philosophy and Method* 158) locates the ontogenesis of violent conflict in the international arena in the primordial anthropological tendency of self-preservation from which arises the belligerency and bellicosity characterizing every violent conflictual relationship. Percolating the primordial tendency of self-preservation further, he opines that it is embroiled in an inherent contradiction since:

It leads to a situation of tension, suspicion, intrigues which results in conflict and war as the antithesis and then, a simmering façade of peace as the synthesis and then the circle of self-preservation, conflict, war and peace continues (*Phil and Method* 158).

In an expository analysis, Ozumba avers that the global political economy highlights the phenomenon of polarization and class bifurcation entrenching the demarcation between the super-power and the peripheral nations, the haves and the have-nots, the strong and the weak, Muslims and Christians, Theists and Atheists etc. with the resultant unhealthy orchestration of fear, uncertainty, "balance of terror" instead of "balance of power" and unsafety.

The praxiological value of the method of integrativism within the context of rife conflict is perceptible from the angle of *integrativism's* tenet of searching for the kernel or substance of every philosophical position to enhance its mergeability or synchronizeability with the substance of other perspectives ("Spirito-Centric Humanism" 63).

This methodic tenet of *integrativism* which encourages searching for the kernel of issues proves thus as a veritable conflict analysis tool akin to the onion/doughnut method of conflict analysis. Integrativism thus supposes that many conflicts, like an onion, have many layers and an embedded core. Thus for a sustainable peace to be attained, all the layers must be unraveled and the core underlying substance must be revealed and demystified so as to enhance meaningful communication between conflicttees.

Despite the murky, starkly and complex nature of some conflicts, the adoption of the integretivist approach of piercing through to the kernel or what I prefer to call – **integrativist analytical kernelisation** will equip people with the critical acumen "To be able to discern, separate and crystallize the different bearing and realities that are inherent in

a given complex situation”( *Phil. and Method* 160). Integrative humanism unravels a new form of healthy transcendence and cognization of conflict. This new cognitive horizon is embedded in her axiom that every situation contains negative and positive components. This offers a new constructive perception of conflict and overhauls the destructive perception imbibed by many who perceive occasions of conflict as an opportunity to denigrate the humanity in the other party instead of to exalt, elevate and promote, to accentuate the differences, the negatives and to polarize instead of to search for opportunities of mutuality, highlight the positives and create platforms for complementarity.

Integrativism neo-cognization of conflict conceives conflict as a phenomenon with positive and negative valences whose positive valence should be explored for humanistic upliftment. It is here explicit that *integrativism's* horizon of peace and conflict dissociates itself from the utilization of human capital diminutive techniques and conflict provocative approaches of engendering peace in the form of chicken game, brinkmanship, burning bridges etc. He pinpoints persuasion, dialogue, negotiation and compromises as the way out of conflictual imbroglios and conflagrations ( *The Philosophy and Method* 160).

The method of *integrativism* utilized as a philosophy of peace and conflict resolution advocates and promotes the galvanizing and harnessing of the entire potentialities of human ennobling styles, methods and techniques of realizing peace. This is in pari passu with Ozumba's statement of the germ of his method as:

The method of philosophizing which approaches philosophical issues without prejudice, bias, suspicion aspersion or preclusion. It is a philosophical approach that is open-minded without being outlandish, freely speculative without being free-stylist, systematic without being fixed and pigeon-holed, versatile without being vacuous. It is rather open-ended, systematic, coherent, rigorous, eclectic, penetrating, comprehensive and integrative ( *The Philosophy and Methods* 42).

The piece above adumbrates the moral principles of objectivity, neutrality and impartiality requisites for effective and reliable conflict mediation. The above stated ideals of integrativism pass for unvaluable ingredients of the mechanism of conflict resolution and peace. An atmosphere bereft of conflict incendiaries like suspicion, aspersion, preclusion, fear, intimidation etc. is a healthy atmosphere for sustainable peace. In a thorough and expertly exposition of the ideology of the super power, Ozumba adjudges that balance of power, balance of terror, political engineering, brinkmanship along ally lines and dialogue through international bodies have been playing stabilizing roles in international politics ( *Philosophy and Method*, 162).

Realistically, the concept of balance of power is very delicate and utopian. Aggressive nationalism, economism and militarism by super powers in the midst of incompatible means and resources, relativity and uncertainty of the human condition under guided by the perennial need for self-preservation have constituted an impediment in attaining the ideal of symmetry of power in global politics. These ambivalences have constantly made the sail of power to tilt to either side of the divide. Every genuflation of the scale of power, as observable in all historical epochs, have been utilized by the advantaged to demand a pound of flesh from the other party. Established that symmetry of power is constantly undermined and made untenable by some ambivalences consequently, what we have is constant asymmetrical condition of power imbalance.

Historically, the war of 1914-1918 (first world war) was orchestrated by national, economic and military interest and upon cessation of the war, the peace that the Versailles treaty engendered was viewed by many as a peace of vengeance than that of justice (Anatole G. and John M. 602). The treaty unveiled the wish of the victorious powers to manipulate the condition of asymmetry to the decimation of the defeated powers. Germany, under the said treaty, signed a blank check for her liability to reparation. The said "peace" treaty constituted the rationale for world war II (1939-1945). Investigating the cause of this war, Roy T. Matthews avers that "The origin of world war II lay in the treaty of Versailles (which many Germans denounced as a "dictated peace"....) After less than a year in office, Hitler launched a campaign to revise the Versailles treaty" (546).

### CONCLUSION

Ad rem with the philosophy of integrative humanism, nations of the world need to harness all the humanistic means for the achievement and sustenance of peace at all times rather than engage in anti humanistic acts of aggression and belligerency. To this end, integrativism advocates for the exhaustive utilization of the entire band of peaceful means of conflict resolution in global skirmishes as necessary conditions for sustainable peace.

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