THEORIZING *AFROSENSITIVITY* IN EUROCENTRIC AND AFROCENTRIC NARRATIVES FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN AFRICA

Modestus Nnamdi. Onyeaghalaji

Department of Philosophy, Faculty of Arts, University of Lagos

ABSTRACT

The paper theorizes *Afrosensitivity* for sustainable development in Africa. The earliest European scholars, anthropologists, who visited African societies, provided narratives that undermined and subordinated African culture and mindset, and disrupted her process of development. The works of Edward Taylor, James Frazer, Lucan Levy-Bruhl, etc, are examples of such narratives. However, their conceptions stimulated three philosophical narratives among African scholars and scholars in Africa, which include (a) reactionary narratives, (b) analytic narratives, and (c) reconstructive accounts. The paper focuses on the third narratives and employs its relevant moral values to argue for *Afrosensitivity*. The idea of *Afrosensitivity* is a reconstructive moral account which arises from the combined values teased out from intellectual mobility between Eurocentric and Afrocentric narratives. It maintains that the notions of critical inquiry, tolerance and respect of human dignity, which are basic Afrosensitive values, are fundamental to sustainable development in Africa.

Keywords: Afrosensitivity, Sustainable Development, Eurocentrity, Afrocentricity, Culture, Domination, Tolerance, Morality

INTRODUCTION

Cultural exchanges between Africa and the rest of Europe have ever been dominated by the European intelligentsia and their narratives of dominance and subjugation. The narratives had two broad effects. (1) The first is that they systematically denigrated African culture, undermined African mindset, and distorted African history. The heralds of the Eurocentric narratives conceived and promulgated the myth of Africa as "savages, inferior, uncivilized, backward, devoid of knowledge and culture and possessing evil traits and desire" (Hoskins, 1992). The conceptual framework of the narratives was oppressive and it maintained the relation of domination and subjugation. The cultural space and epistemic sphere of this oppressive framework was extended across Africa. In effect, it thwarted the course of development of African mindset, moral life and culture, and undermined her dignity. Unfortunately, it made Africans to think less of themselves and their position in the scheme of things and thereby look towards the external world for self-actualization and sustainable development. (2) The second is that the narratives further influenced Western cognitive space, coloured their anthropological and philosophical analysis of Africans and prevented their posterity from true perception of African existential and cultural reality. In a way, it limited their scope of understanding and distorted their conception of subjective other.

The oppressive conceptual framework of the Eurocentric narratives provoked a debate among scholars. The debate stimulated three philosophical accounts in African scholarship. These are *reactionary* account, *analytic* account, and *reconstructive* analysis. Generally, the accounts conceived African philosophical scholarship as clarification of African worldviews. The values of these accounts or orientations crystallized into the epistemology of Afrocentricism and its later fashion, Afrocentricity.

Afrocentricity provides a conception of reality from African perspective – epistemological, metaphysical, aesthetic and rational. Afrocentric thinking provides a theoretical framework for understanding African person, idea, and values. The Afrocentric preoccupation and attempts to define African identity, metaphysics and knowledge is rewarding. However, this preoccupation seems to prevent the realization of the Afrocentricist's fundamental normative function, which is the practical mission of a philosopher in Africa. It is on this note that the paper discusses the idea of *Afrosensitivity*. The aim is to find a theoretical ground and conceptual framework that would provide moral conditions for inter-human respectful interactions, social cooperation and cooperative thinking that are necessary for sustainable development. To achieve this objective, the paper examines the presuppositions of Eurocentric and Afrocentric narratives and underscores their strength and weakness. It integrates the idea of *sensitivity* that is deficient in these accounts and makes a case for Afrosensitivity as a more propitious theoretical ground for repositioning African mindset towards sustainable development. To be sure, the idea of *Afrosensitivity* is to put forward the claim that African scholarship should go beyond meta-theoretical narratives of the African person to practical response to existential problems within the context of social morality.

EUROCENTRIC NARRATIVES AND THE CULTURE OF UNDERSTANDING

Cultural encounter between Europe and Africa resulted in a relationship of domination and subordination - Eurocentric domination and subjugation of Africa. The domination is ossified by Eurocentric narratives. Eurocentric narrative is a

description of the universe of meaning through the European spectacle and rationality. In the narrative, the description of Africa and her culture is derogatory, distortive and divisive. The works of the anthropologists, such as James Frazer, Edward Taylor, Max Muller, Lucy Levy-Bruhl, and the philosopher, Hegel, had one thing in common in this regard. The scholars employed Logico-scientific criteria of rationality, developed within the western cultural paradigm, in their narratives, to evaluate traditional African beliefs as arrant nonsense, illusory and lacking objective elements.

For instance, Levy-Buhl, an anthropologist with training in philosophy, in his work, *How Natives Think*, (1910), made a distinction between "Western Mind" and "Primitive Mind". The primitive mind does not differentiate the supernatural from reality but the Western mind does. Primitive mind does not address contradictions. The Western mind does by using speculation and logic. Evolution is teleological, leading from primitive mind to Western mind. In his thought, African mind is primitive.

A more philosophically devastating narrative was that of George Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, a German philosopher. Eurocentric narrative posits a universal and liner development of consciousness or spirit - from less conscious to conscious or absolute state. Thus, he identifies three stages: (a) subjective spirit, (b) objective spirit, and (c) absolute spirit. In the first state, the spirit is still part and parcel of the physical world. It is undifferentiated from nature. In the second state, the spirit manifests itself in objective social phenomenon, such as morality, legal system, political philosophy "(Morris, 1991, p.199, Mazama, 2000, p.20)). The third stage is the final and most developed. It is where the spirit is self-conscious and expresses itself through art, religion, philosophy, etc., as found in Europe. For Hegel, the spirit has failed to develop in Africa. It has rather remained in the subjective state. He thinks that African man has not progressed beyond his immediate existence. With this idea, he erroneously divided Africa into (a) Egypt, the territory that is connected to Asia, (b) European Africa, which lies north of Sahara, and (c) Egypt, the territory that is connected to Asia (Hegel, 1956). He then argues that the real Africa is Africa proper, the Negro which he refers to as "the land of childhood", lying behind the day of self-conscious history. It has not attained 'substantial objective existence" and he is "natural in his completely wild and untamed state" (Hegel, 1956:93). In order words, Africa is unhistorical, undeveloped spirit devoid of religion, morality and political constitution (See Mazama, 2000:21).

Logic of Domination in Eurocentric Conceptual Framework

A critical examination of Eurocentric narrative reveals two interrelated things: (1) an inherent oppressive conceptual framework and (2) lack of certain kind of sensitivity.

Oppressive conceptual framework describes ideas or express issues with the intent to undermine the value or capacities of the other. Karen Warren sees it as a conceptual category that explains, justifies, and maintains relationships of domination and subordination (Warren, 1998:174). Warren identifies three features of oppressive conceptual framework: *value hierarchical thinking, Value dualism* and *Logic of domination.* (1) *Value hierarchical thinking* is an up-down thinking that places higher value, status and prestige to what is up rather than what is down. It decides reality into two and places one over and above the other. (2) *Value dualism* is a disjunctive pair in which the disjuncts are seen as oppositional (rather than as complementary)

and exclusive (rather than as inclusive). It places higher value on one of the disjuncts rather than the other. (3) Logic of domination is a structure of argumentation which leads to a justification of subordination. Logic of domination is "not just a logical structure; it involves substantive value system since ethical premise is needed to permit and justify or sanction the 'just' subordination of that which is subordinated" (Warren, 1998:174). The justification is usually on grounds of alleged characteristics which the dominant has, such as rationality, and which the subordinate lacks or assumed to lack. It glorifies a value characteristic of the dominant and makes it the reason for domination. It does not mean that value hierarchy and value dualism is totally bad. Obviously, things are classified in terms of these descriptions. For instance, when it is said that humans are well equipped to radically reshape their environments than dogs or plants, it is a value hierarchical way of speaking. The problems arise when this manner of speaking is used in the context of an oppressive conceptual framework. Thus, Logic of domination coupled with value-hierarchy and value dualism justify subordination. In this case, the conceptual framework of Eurocentric narratives is oppressive. It has logic of domination which employs value hierarchy and value dualism to subordinate African cultural believes and values. It justifies Western culture as superior, prestigious, and higher, rational, and objective and sees African culture as deficient in those characteristics. Simply put, it justifies western domination of African cultural space, expressed in various forms of colonization, slavery or inhuman treatment.

Moral sensitivity is deficient in the oppressive conceptual framework of Eurocentric narrative. Moral sensitivity, in this sense, is sympathetic consideration of other's interests, beliefs, values and culture. The narrative undermines the moral status of human agents in other cultures. It lacks felt sensitivity or relational sensitivity. Attitudes and behaviours should be within the context of social morality. Even the Eurocentric claim to objectivity and universality is contrary to the idea of insensitivity in the narratives. The notion of liberty, equality and human dignity projected by narratives is contrary to their conception of Africans and their claims lack moral tenor. To dismiss African rationality based on the logic of domination of oppressive framework is cultural insensitivity. I think that one fundamental problem with Eurocentric conception of Africa is not the unawareness or ignorant of African cultural realities, but their insensitivity to African, culture, belief, religion and so on. You can be aware of the existence of the other and his or her existential problems without being sensitive to the problems. The narratives demonstrated awareness and sensitivity to european cultural and human space but insensitivity to African cultural realties and values. Europeans were aware and sensitive to their human, cultural existence and insensitive to the Africans. So in relation to Africa they were Eurocentric than Eurosensitive.

AFROCENTRIC NARRATIVES AND THE RE-AFFIRMATION OF AFRICANNESS

Eurocentric description of Africa, despite its negative presuppositions, could be credited the status of, first, provoking a debate among intellectuals and stimulating responses among scholars of African descriptions. Through this debate myriads of literature or works have been recorded from both sides; and these have expanded the frontiers of knowledge of African descent, worldviews, beliefs and values.

Second, it also has the credit of motivating more African intelligentsia to embark on re-examination of their identity and reaffirm their place in the scheme of existence. This view does not pretend that Africans did not have idea of who they were before the Eurocentric description; it only implies that criticism and such narratives provide an avenue for deeper self-

refection. And third, it sets in motion the possibility and legitimacy of cross-cultural evaluation of beliefs and a possibility of interaction between different cultures. Cross cultural evaluation could be premised on the fact of the existence of common world, with which human beings, whatever their cultural differences, interact in a non-arbitrary manner. Thus, there are certain cultural (cognitive and ethical) universals that provide cross-cultural understanding and evaluation of beliefs (Oladipo 200, p.49). However, it may not be enough to justify a belief simply because it somehow fits into a system of belief. Justification of ta belief should be considered in relation to the extent it responds to problems of social existence, especially within the context of morality. Again, worldviews and values do not have equal merit; some are more supportive and responsive, not superior, to the realization of certain human goals than others (Oladipo, 2000, p.49, Rorty 2009)

Beyond these credits, Eurocentricism narratives distorted African mind-set and incarcerated African mental and cultural space. One major consequence is, according to Walter Rodney (1972), underdevelopment of Africa. However, African scholars endeavour, through various ways, to repudiate the European denigration of African rationality, identity, values and worldviews. They reject any form of European subjugation or negative presuppositions about African sensibilities. The efforts of Africans to repudiate European domination crystallized into the metaphor of Afrocentricity. Afrocentricity (or Afrocentricism as an ideology), according to Molefi Asante, is a frame of reference wherein phenomena are viewed from the perspective of the African person"(1991, p.172). It places African beliefs, ideas and values in African experience. Linus Hoskins conceives it as a "state of mind, a particular subconscious mind-set that is rooted in the African ancestral heritage and communal value system" (1992, p.253), which for him represents the Africanness of people. In essence, Afrocentricity sees human being as the centrality/totalness of all existence, but, it attributes crucial role to the African social and cultural experience as our ultimate reference. According to Ame Mazama, "it espouses the cosmology, aesthetics, axiology and epistemology that characterize African people" (Mazama, 2000, p.9).

Afrocentric narrative received its elaborate and systematic analyses in Molefe Asante's *Afrocentricity* (1980), as an intellectual approach based on the centrality of African experience. He fashioned the idea by integrating the principles of several philosophical systems. However, th thoughts and trends of ideas that inform Afrocentric paradigm can be traced to earliest reactions to Eurocentric narratives, which are attempts to affirm African identity, revamp our collective consciousness, and emancipate African mindset from colonial incarceration.There are three forms of these accounts – reactionary, analytic and reconstructive.

The *reactionary* accounts are those descriptions that attempted to disassociate Africans from Eurocentric denigration, by postulating "a picture of the world and a form of rationality that is peculiarly African" (Oladipo, 2000, p.36). In this attempt, they identified what they regard as distinctively African in contradistinction to what is European, so as to repudiate the Eurocentric image of Africa. Examples of these accounts includes; Senghor's Negritude and Socialism (1961), John Mbiti's *African Religion and Philosophy* (1969), Bolaji Idowu's *Oludumare: God in Yoruba Belief* (1962), and Tempel's *Bantu Philosophy*, (1959) and Marcus Garvey's "Black Nationalism" (1982, 1992). These works are united in their description of the "collective world view of Africans" and in their "generalization of these beliefs" (Oladipo, 2000, p.59). While they provide descriptive material for understanding African culture, they surreptitiously acquiesced to the denigration and heightened the cleavage between European and African epistemic rationality.

The second is *analytic* narrative. This account conceives African philosophical scholarship as a critical analysis and clarification of African worldviews, beliefs and ideas, so as to underscore its socio-political purpose. The narratives of this description refuse to grant special status to African tradition for being uncritical and mere reportage of traditional myth and folklores. But, they insist that philosophical study of African tradition must be critical, conceptual and perhaps reconstructive. Paul Hountondji (1983), Odera Oruka (1991), P. O. Bodunrin (1981) are among the narrators. The narratives seek to employ rigour in thinking, in the pursuit of systematic coherence of African culture, and use experimental approach in evaluating African beliefs and values. It emphasizes scientific culture, in reasoning and understanding. The value of analytic narrative lies majorly in raising the consciousness of Afrocentric scholars on the importance of critical attitude in appraising one's culture, beliefs and values for social change and sustainable development. However, they seem to be more concerned with the discourse of philosophy and its scientific methodology than the mission of the subject to human (African) social existence. Accordingly, their contribution to self-knowledge in Africa is still minimal and it is yet to do justice to the "creative human potential" (Asante, 2003, p.43).

The reconstructive account of Afrocentric narrative is a creative social thinking that reviews the reactionary account and analytic account to postulate African cultural consciousness and social control. The argument of this amount is that the mission of philosophy in Africa is not just to project African image or analyze these images but to reconstruct them for human need. It integrates the values of the reactionary and analytic account. By this, it promotes the idea of African consciousness, and sees this as the basic epistemological platform for interacting and interrogating the cosmos of meaning. In this, African experience is the basis and determinants of all inquiry and a foundation of Africological investigation, metaphysical concerns and aesthetic appreciation. There are two basic aspects of reconstructive accounts. The first focuses on developing Afrocentric consciousness so that Africans would assume fully their cultural space and also fulfill the need to fashion a new paradigm of self-appraisals in the contemporary world. Many Afrocentrists are doing great in this aspect at theoretical level. They are working assiduously to articulate the idea of African cultural matrix. Molefi Asante, Ama Mazama, Danjuma Modupe, Maulana Karanga, and so on, are among the scholars. Hey have attempted to relocate African consciousness within African experience against the western denigration. They have attempted to develop Afrocentric ideas and paradigm within the African American studies.

In this sense, Afrocentricity is a perspective. As a perspective, it is a way of looking at and interacting with the world, which is grounded on the African historical and cultural experience with an orientation of having and developing interest on Africa and African people (Modupe, 2003). Accordingly, Modupe defines Afrocentricty as "essentially, a quality of perspective or approach rooted in the cultural image and human interest of the people" (1988, p.404) and insists on practical realization. The second is reconstructive social control for social liberation, human development and well-being. It entails practical application of African ideas to make a difference in our way of living, behaving and acting to achieve socio-political sustainability. Therefore, Afrocentricity is a paradigm that provides a conceptual category, a network, that seeks to "activate our consciousness", for human "liberation" (Mazama, 200, p.9). It provides a structure, a building block in the conceptual edifice of the black studies paradigm. It is not just an epistemic paradigm, but a normative one through which it performs a normative function.

In this sense, it has a normative function, which is fundamental without which Afrocentric project remains purely an intellectual excise. The normative function is captured by Olusegun Oladipo (2000), in the epilogue, "On the Practical Mission of African Philosophy in the Contemporary World", in his book, *The Idea of African philosophy*. The idea was fully developed in *Philosophy and Social Reconstruction, in Africa (2009)*. In the former, he maintains that the normative function of an African scholar is the "development and maintenance of viable social orders within which individuals can exercise their rights, perform their obligations and realize their genuine potentials" (2000, p.114). He maintains that this is the practical mission for African philosopher in the contemporary world without which commitment to knowledge becomes "nothing other than intellectual insensitivity"(2000:114). In the later he argues that we need reconstructive social thinking that its task

will be to develop a framework of ideas, beliefs, and values, which will constitute a framework for feeling, perceiving and interpreting reality and serve as a basis for defining the essential elements of Africa's place and interest in the contemporary world (2008:130).

So far, reconstruction in Africa has been imitative, the criteria of right and wrong, good and bad, beautiful and ugly, have depended on external categories. The framework for interpreting events and determining what is significant in our collective existence, have been externally derived. Africa needs a coherent worldview to achieve clear sightedness and cooperation required to ensure that our encounter with other people and cultures in the global arena are mutually enriching rather than culturally destabilizing. This should be done, not through reafricanization or de-Africanization but through cultural syntheses. Cultural synthesis requires us to go beyond being Afrocentric to being Afrosensitive, because it is a normative instrument for cultural, social and political sustainability in Africa.

AFROSENSITIVITY AS A NORMATIVE FUNCTION

From the foregoing discussion, it is time to re-examine the idea of Afrocentricity as regards its normative function or praxis. There is a need to reconsider the idea of centricity in cultural studies with the view to create more relational ambiance to peoples and culture. The suggestion is that we should start considering the idea of cultural '*sensitivity*' than cultural '*centricity*' in practical applications and relations. There are pragmatic reasons for this intended paradigmatic shift. Let us begin with the idea of what Affrosensitivity means.

Afrosensitivity is insightful awareness of African cultural orientations and empathic consideration of its basic values, beliefs and ideas in achieving social reconstruction in Africa. It suggests rational understanding of African cultural categories and employing such in dealing with issues of human existence. It also means rational and empathic consideration of our cultural differences and possibilities. It is having the capacity to function in African culture and respecting cultural differences. Elsewhere, I have discussed the idea of cultural sensitivity and made a case for Afrosensitivity as pragmatic category (Onyeaghalaji, 2015) responding to problems in African existential life. Suffice it to state here that it sees African culture as social tools for social cooperation and human commitment in achieving progress and development.

In the Afrosensitive sense, culture is a tool for living life in the society. Understandably, culture could be broadly conceived as the total way of life of a people. As far as there are people, according to Linda James Myers, "they will have a way of life" (Myers, 2000, p.124). Culture is a product of human interaction with the immediate environment (environment includes human and non-human), which embodies values, norms and regulations that have endured over the years. Yet, culture "determines quality of life in large measure" (Myers, 2000, p.124). Culture, as Ali Mazuri observed, is the standards of evaluation, criteria of right and wrong, good and evil, beautiful and ugly (Mazuri, 1980, p.53). It provides frameworks for interpreting events and determining what is significant in a people's life. It provides conceptual framework for perceiving and interacting with the world. Every culture has conceptual framework, definitional system. Thus, we speak in terms of "European conceptual system as well as African conceptual system, each being distinctly different from the other in terms of basic survival thrust and fundamental character" (Baldwin, 1980, Myers 2000:124). Yet, the existence of one does not mean non-existence of the other. In the contemporary world where cultures are increasingly thrown into the public space, sympathetic consideration of one's cultural precepts and other cultures is required, for systemic cohabitation and respect of interest of others.

According to Mazama, what will allow Afrocentric goal to be reached is what Modupe calls a 'consciousness matrix", informed by Afrocentric consciousness. (Mazama, 2000:6). While this is an important remark, it fails to realize that one can be conscious of a thing without being sensitive to it. One can be conscious of a problem without being sensitive to it. Sensitive is a motivating energy to action. It is a conscious stimulation to act. This is the point at which the feminist critique converges with the Afrosensitive line of reasoning. To be Afrosensitive is to realize our African consciousness and to view European voice as just one among many and not necessarily the wisest.

An Afrosensitivity disregards African culture as a kind of inheritance that has exhausted human creative potentials. It would rather sees African culture as being dynamic and capable of accommodating certain changes as human beings. It indicates that there are certain traits of culture that may not be conducive for human flourishing.

Afrosensitivity is informed with critical consciousness that can serve as a means of discriminating between useful and backwardness thereby securing vital condition for cultural vitality. It is imbued with the culture of synthetic investigation, culture of inquires, which is based on the capacity for self-examination of our cherished beliefs and notions. It is critical of culture of belief that is a predominant intellectual orientation in Africa. Afrosensitivity is the humanistic essence of African consciousness and a foundation for social order. It is the stimulus for social reconstruction.

AFROSENSITIVITY AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN AFRICA

The foregoing analyses indicate that there is an intricate but nevertheless dynamic relationship between Afrosensitive disposition and sustainable development in Africa. The idea of Afrosensitivity has important implications for development that is sustainable and rests on African integrated future. What development and its sustainability entails are very much disputed. However, in its basic understanding, development is majorly conceived as bringing forth what is latent

(Shrivastava, 2011, p.242) or extension of potentialities, capacities or abilities. The potentialities can be cultural, economic, technological, mental, social, moral and political. In the process of development, the latent abilities become diversified and extend towards fuller realization. It becomes sustainable when it continues in enduring fashion to fulfill present and future needs of people and the society.

Sustainability is the ability to keep moving on indefinitely or at least for an extensive period of time (Shrivastava, 2011). Sustainable development, then, is development that endures or lasts (Omotola, 2006, p.28). It is the "development that meets the need of the present", in different facets of life, "without compromising the ability of the future generations to meet their own needs" (cf. Shrivastava, 2011). It implies extension of our capacities or potentialities in much enduring manner. In this case, the potentialities are embodied in the African way of life – culture – which embraces the 'modes and forms of communication, construction of reality, identity, morality, values and attitudes" (Kinyanjui, 1993). African way of life is divers and pluralistic, but harbours potentialities that are in need of realization. Sustainable development requires building on the useful past to achieve high level of life to meet societal needs. It demands harnessing cultural abilities and complementary responsibilities to respond to problems confronting our social existence.

Sustainable development operates in the social and cultural context. This explains insightfully the negative effect of Eurocentricism. Western logic of domination undermined African cultural, social, religious and political realities and disrupted its process of development. By introducing cultural outlook that undermined African cultural realities, Eurocentricism (and its colonization process) made it impossible for Africans to distil their cultural complementary abilities, so as to creatively respond to their internal concerns. The phenomenon maimed African consciousness, stymied its expressions and alienated Africans from their heritage, thereby leading to impaired thinking, fear, inferiority complex, self-hatred, cultural dependence, pathetic copying from the West rather than critical and reflective learning. The overall result is impaired development.

One of the fundamental means to exonerate African mind from this cultural and developmental predicament that implicates her developmental process is cultural freedom. Cultural freedom is important for creativity and innovation. Afrosensitivity offers the opportunity for cultural freedom and confidence by grounding African perspectives on African experiences. It recognizes her cultural diversities and appreciates its values. It promotes creative values, attitudes and discipline that enhance quality, creativity and initiative that are fundamental for full-orbed development. Afrosensitivity emphasizes cultural capital that instills credible value system that can inspire self-confidence and cultural identity, which are crucial in achieving sustainability. It provides a condition for utilizing relevant knowledge to galvanize cultural strengths and wills, to learn from our experience and even from the Western experience; for instance, to learn the valuable principles of creativity and insight from the West and not just copy the acquisitive appetite and consumption pattern (Mazuri, 19990, p.5). Afrosensitvity teaches the principle of cooperation, respect of human dignity, regional integration, which demonstrates that Africans can actually "advance communally in the context of freedom, personal liberty, and collective liberation" (Asante, 2003, p.43) in the quest for sustainable development.

CONCLUSION

Cultural interaction between Europe and Africa generated theoretical narratives and consequent practical denigration of African rationalities and sensibilities. However, it initiated a debate through which Africans, in response indulged in critical assessment of their ideas and values. African scholars have gone far into instituting a paradigm of action in Afrocentric metaphor. In this piece, I argued that the concepts, eurocentricism and afrocentricism, create more space for struggle for dominance. To overcome this and strive towards more cultural interaction that promotes mutual cultural benefits, there is the need to adopt the attitude of rational sensitivity either in terms of Afrosensitivity or Eurosensitivity and by extension, cultural sensitivity understood here as rational and sympathetic consideration of ours and other's cultural interests.

The crux of the argument therefore is that Africans need to adopt the attitude of Afrosensitivity in order to achieve sustainability and sustainable development. We need to ground our rational inquiry on African experience. But we also need to be sensitive to how these experiences make differences to our lives and those of others. It is up to us to begin to distinguish the experiences that have the potential to make positive difference in our time and those that do not. It is on this platform that we can achieve development that meets our needs and desires without compromising our ability to achieve same in the future.

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ABOUT THE AUTHORS:

Modestus Nnamdi. Onyeaghalaji: Department of Philosophy, Faculty of Arts, University of Lagos