

REPUBLICAN NATURE OF IGBO MAN

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Abstract

A critical attention to the sociopolitical life of the Igbo man would discover that the Igbo man is less welcoming to a lording leadership than to a consensual leadership. It is his belief that nobody is a compendium of ideas through the ideas Igwebuiké and Ibuanýidanda. Equally he is very conscious of the fact that each man not only deserves a hearing but ought to relate well with others via the idea of *izukammananneji* and belongingness. With the fear of abuse of power and the quest for political stability, the traditional Igbo man hesitates to any monarchical administration that confers political authority on a single individual. Not minding the paradigmatic disruption that came with slave trade, colonialism, neocolonialism and western imperialism and consequent intrude of monarchical leadership, the Igbo man is socially and politically of a republican nature. He yields more to consensus and negotiation than lordship and imposition. While changes might always come, however, any that is antagonistic to the cultural principle will indubitably pave the way to instability. Subsequently, it is only an understanding of this core nature of the Igbo man that would aid to establish an appropriate and perennial socio-political system for the Igbo man, otherwise the difficulty of a successful and fruitful administration would always be far-resolved. Approximately, the success or failure of any socio-political governance of the Igbo people depends on its ability to recognize and play along the intrinsic, republican Igbo man's orientation. With the aid of comparative and critical analyses, this treatise establish that republicanism is the livewire of any Igbo socio-political administration; effort to institutionalize a system not ad rem to his republican orientation is a sure lead-way to political revolution and instability.

Keywords: *Igbo, Culture, Politics, Republicanism, Colonialism.*

1. Introduction

The area of political philosophy has consistently exposed one pertinent fact about man: man is a political being (*homo politicus*). Beyond the fact that man is a relational being, the facticity of his limitedness and consequent mutual complementarities and interaction, vehemently explicate his need of the state that is the need of belongingness, the need of one another. The state as a collection or assemblage of separate individual equivocally juxtaposes that without man, there is no state, and that the state perseveres on the distinctiveness of each individual member. Each of her members is unanimously free. That man is a being adorned with freedom is an indisputable fact. The Fundamental Human Right, among other things, highlights the respect and dignity due

to each human person as a free and autonomous being. That the human person demands respect of his right and freedom, even after agreeing to the state, is not a case exclusive to the Igbo man.

To ensure order, peace and co-existence in the state, the individual freedom of the members must be defined and checkmated. The concern on how to ensure order and that the rights of each person are respected ignites the choice of socio-political administration. On this platform, there has never been a monopolized claim. While some state make resort to a monarchical administration, some other resort to administration of selected few, or representative administration for the people. All these are in the quest for a better life and organization in the society. Observing this problem, Dons Eze (2015, p.10) highlights that “the way and means people can live together in peace to pursue a better life for themselves has remained a problem since man found himself in society.” With the Igbo people, respect and equality of every man is a pertinent socio-cultural factor. Each person cherishes and strives to preserve his freedom notwithstanding his alliance to his community. Thus, the Igbo man against all odds retains freedom from domination. To be relegated and lorded over remains a threatening phenomenon to the Igbo man. The idea of individual freedom builds into and becomes a vital determining factor of the socio-political life of the Igbo people while not negating the life-in-community. Against arbitrary claims and choice of republican governance, the Igbo people have as a result of their social and political lifestyle remained and pursues republicanism in orientation and administration. A contradiction to republicanism would not only be against their political system, but against their culture and values.

Nonetheless, a foreseen objection would be: there is no case to reiterate what can be universally attributed to man. Hence, why the special case of republicanism of the Igbo people? However, the work would show that the outstanding case and treatment of the republican nature of the Igbo man is not just a mere demand of human freedom and respect, but of further cherished cultural values. Further concerns would be: in what practical ways does this republican nature of the Igbo man plays out? How feasible is the republican system to the Igbo people than a monarchical system? Once we have captured what republicanism is and the tenets that constitute and maintain a republican system, we can then evaluate the republican nature of the Igbo man. It is the intent of this work then to demonstrate in concrete ways how the Igbo man is republican-oriented and how institutionalization of alien systems has and will prove catastrophic and unwelcomed to the Igbo people. In like path then, this work cannot but vehemently propose and recommend republicanism for any political institutionalization for the Igbo people.

2. Republicanism

Culture is product of man and man as well is a product of culture. Culture gives man a distinctive and individualizing identity such that to experience a man is to experience a culture. To understand better who a republican man can be, it is pertinent to consider what republicanism or republican culture constitutes and implicates. By its formation from the republic, republicanism etymologically implicates the Latin phrase *res publica* which denotes “thing of the people” or the public property. According to John Patrick (2021), “republicanism is a theory of government that emphasizes the participation of the citizens for the common good of the community”. In its historical reckoning, republicanism brims with the Roman Republic against Monarchism, with the intake for rule of law, freedom and participation of citizen with great check against absolutism. Principally, republicanism as a political system built on freedom and participation of the people, refuses any all forms of absolute rule or dictatorship that denigrates the rights and freedom of the people. As Dagger (2011, p.701) explains, “republicanism rests on the conviction that government is not the domain of some ruler or small set of rulers but is instead a public matter to be directed by self- governing citizens.”

According to R. Okoye & V. Okoye (2016, p.357), it “emphasizes a situation where people deliberate and take decisions that are of common interests.” Differing from monarchism, a republican system or state advances the freedom and right to participation of the people in political concerns. Though synonymous with representative democracy, a republican government makes a brisk shift from liberal democracy. Here J. Patrick highlights, “In contrast to liberalism, which is concerned primarily with the personal and private rights of the individuals, republicanism stresses the public rights and obligation of citizens to cooperate in support of their community.” While liberal democracy, in the quest to maintain freedom of the people, might run into liberalism whereby the whims and caprices of the people could be legalized, a republican government, while maintaining the rights and freedom of the people, balances and sustains itself with the idea of common good and rule of accepted law. By the least way, republicanism advocates a middle ground between monarchy and liberal democracy. Advancing classical republicanism, “civic republicanism constitutes a tradition of political thought that stresses the interconnection of individual freedom and civic participation with the promotion of the common good” (Maynor, p.2013). Fundamentally, republicanism portrays a system of agreement of free individual rather than an imposition of a will on others. It socially and politically gives the people a sense of belonging, importance and value.

3. Igbo Worldview and Socio-political System

To understand a people is to understand their culture and life vision greatly articulated and expressed in their worldview. Culture presents to us an overall vision a people have

about the world, reality and humanity. Often culture is deep rooted in people's worldview. It encapsulates a people's worldview. As Ekei (2016, p.21) ascribes, a people's culture “provides the answers as to 'why' they think and behave as they do.... [It] is a conglomeration of all the vision that helps to inspire a people to behave or not to act in a particular manner.” For the Igbo people, Ndu-bu-isi (Life is the prime). Henceforth, all that supports promotes and enhances life and human existence is of great importance and value to the Igbo man. Little wonder the emphasis and admiration the Igbo culture places on order, harmony, and peaceful existence. As Ekei (2001, p.10) further observes on Igbo ethics, “the primary concern is the community with the aim of establishing harmony, wellbeing, and effective co-existence of the members”. Affirmatively, some of the Igbo maxims goes: 'onye anwula ma ibe ya efula' (let nobody die nor his neighbor get lost); 'Ibiri kam biri' (live let me live) as well as EBUB (Egbe Bere Ugo Bere-Let the Kite Perch, let the Eagle Perch). Maintaining and propagating the value and importance of the life of each individual member of the Igbo community, the Igbo culture promotes the integration and peaceful co- existence of her members. Our commonality on personhood and humanity also assures us of social and political integration. A possible eyebrow would be from the argument of Igbo personhood. Being not our issue of contention, it would suffice to reminisce the culture-based Igbo personhood.

The Igbo society was, generally, stabilized and circumscribed by a coterie of institutions and values all of which constituted the bases for the allocation of political positions. As a result, the political systems and values were, everywhere, structurally opposed to the emergence of a real monarchy (Nwaubani, 2006, p.22). The traditional Igbo institutions portray the nature and pattern of Igbo socio- political administration. Accruing from the immediate (nuclear/extended) family, the patrilineal family (kindred unit), the village unit, to the town or major lineage unit, the Igbo socio-political system (Kinship) presents a high profiled integration of cultural units and people. In Igbo kinship system, we capture the four socio- political units.

These include the family (under the headship of the father and comprises of nuclear members of the family which is usually large depending on the number of wives a man married); the Kindred (a smaller social unit made up of the head of the nuclear family – the Father or the Okpara); the Village (comprises of kindreds and cluster of kindreds and headed by the Okpara of the most senior kindred by order of birth): and, the Town (the highest political unit the Igbo and is made up of villages which are collections of kindreds with attachment to the land [Ala or Ani] as a common bond) (Ibenekwu, 2015, p.5).

Being a decentralized organization, no head of the minor or major segments could take any action in connection with the common weal without the full support and consent

of the adult males in the respective lineages. Issues affecting a minor or major segment were discussed and decided at meetings of all adult (invariably) males (or married women in the descent group, if it was issue in which the women had an interest) (Nwaubani, 2006, p.9). In the village political assembly, any freeborn adult male was free to attend or even absent himself-so the village assembly was not a select body. Nor did sovereignty reside exclusively with the village assembly. At the town unit (the highest political unit), decision by consensus strives even more. As Nwaubani (2006, p.22) also remarked, “consensus was an important element in Igbo politics. While political initiative may have resided with the titled elders and others of influence, the collective will of the people, their consensus, was paramount.” Rather than a king, the council, constituting the people, digest, negotiates and arrive on a consensus for any issue or decision. The council, however, constitutes an assemblage of the representatives of the different Umunna (at the community level). As far as Igbo leadership is concerned, there was no centralized system of leadership, Isidienu (2016, p.2) observed. Politics was, therefore, diffused in nature, drawing into its network the masses of the people through formal and informal structures which allowed sufficient scope for the determination and expression of political opinion by the individual rather than a council of any sort. The resulting political system lacked rulers, relying instead on a variety of leaders (Nwaubani, 2006, p.11). They thus maintained a decentralized and a cephalous society. The political system was of a decentralized and republican nature; decisions were reached by consensus, different institutions played different important roles in the administration, and powers were shared by them. As Nwaubani (2006, p.12) remarked, “there were no specialized political roles and institutions, and that political power was not concentrated in the hands of any individual or group of individuals.”

It becomes then indisputable to assert the republican spirit and character of the Igbo people. Authors like Ibenekwu, Nwaubani, Isidienu among others, synonymously argued and maintained the republicanism of the Igbo man. As can be basically accredited, Igbo society not only imprints on each Igbo man a sense of belongingness, a sagacity of Igwebuike and an attitude of Ibuanyidanda but also a republican spirit leading to the traditional ohazurume or ohacracry form of governance in Igbo society years before the western democracy. Their value of republicanism and peaceful co-existence are pertinent concerns that cannot be neglected as factors to the sustainability of the decentralized Igbo system. These would constitute an antidote to any form of autocracy or authoritarianism.

4. Igbo Republicanism

The value of the family is an inevitable factor in the consideration of African republicanism, such that the family is to the African what identity is to a being.

Principal is their prestigious extended family known as Umunna. The Umunna expresses a family of common patrilineal origin. It is the foundation of Igbo socialization and fraternity. Umunna for Pantaloen Iroegbu is not only a socio-political assemblage but a religious group in his Umunna Ecclesiology. As a family, it welcomes, integrates, and validates. To belong to no Umunna, or be ostracized from one's Umunna constitutes the highest punitive act to an Igbo man. Being the highest family of the Igbo man, the Umunna is the seat of common gathering, discussion and decision. His pledge to family could better be understood from his communalistic worldview. For the African-Igbo man, man is a being-with-others. His inclination to communion is an essential aspect of his being. In effect, the consciousness of the other is intrinsic. Hence, no communion, no community and the reverse is true: no community, no communion. In the communal 'we', he validates his being. Integration into the community or communion is so pertinent that neglect or rejection is a great harm to any member. His life becomes life in and with the community. Ostracism and alienation in this regard become the worst form of relationship to happen to an Igbo man within the community. It is in this sole pledge to communion and the community that the light of Igbo republicanism blossoms. Situated in the Igbo (Umunna) family, Igbo republicanism gathers, integrates, and prospers. In this light, Igbo man's republicanism would be only but a living out of his value. It involves an appreciation and mutual integration of his freedom alongside others. As R. Okoye & V. Okoye (2016, p.357) rightly observed, in Igbo republicanism, "individual existence and freedom are appreciated, but they are delicately balanced with the underlying philosophy of life-in-community."

Through consensus, the goal of republicanism is not just promoted but enhanced. Consensus enables and enhances the integration of divergent positions for the purpose of peaceful coexistence. In a typical Igbo republican system, as R. Okoye & V. Okoye still observes, "before taking any decision, the Igbos have the tradition of gathering together to discuss matters of interest in order to arrive at a consensus and agreement. This is called Igba izu (consultation)." To the Igbo people, dialogue, compromise and consensus are inevitable ingredients of coexistence (akpaa akpaa a rahu n'ute). On this Wiredu (1995, p.54) generally remarked, "because issues do not always polarize opinion on the lines of contradictoriness, dialogue can function, by means, for example, of the smoothing of edges, to produce compromises that are agreeable to all or, at least, not obnoxious to any.... This is important because certain situations do, indeed, precipitate exhaustive disjunctions which no dialogic accommodations can mediate." In the exercise of consensus, there is both recognition of individual freedom and perspective on one hand, and the deliberate or conscious quest for community and peaceful coexistence on the other hand. It portrays both a system of agreement of free individual, and, an interconnection of individual freedom and civic participation for the

promotion of a common good. Such crystallizes the experience of the Igbo man's consensual republicanism. In furtherance, Wiredu elucidates, consensual republicanism “does not necessarily involve a complete identity of moral or cognitive opinions. It suffices that all parties are able to feel that adequate account has been taken of their points of view in any proposed scheme of future action or coexistence....does not in general entail total agreement” (1995, p.54). There is no total abandonment or adoption of one view for the others but a compromise of the views. A central point of agreement or neutral point of disagreement is sorted for. To understand the interest of consensus, the pertinent problem of how a group without unanimity may settle on one option rather than the other without alienating another must always be bore in mind. The system was set up for participation in power, not its appropriation, and the underlying philosophy was one of cooperation, not confrontation (Wiredu, 1995, p.59). The Igbo pursuit of consensual republicanism was a deliberate quest against decision by majority opinion or the tyranny of majority. It was an offshoot of Igboworldview and socio-political system. No one group, ethnic or ideological will be afflicted with the sense of being permanent outsiders to state power (Wiredu, 1995, p.62). Each member's voice demands attention and consideration. Here, we must note the place and importance of the elders in the Igbo socio-political organization. The elders retain notable maximum respect and dignity. Seniority and respect accorded to old age is one of the fundamental beliefs among the Igbo [grey hair is a symbol of wisdom] (Ibenekwu, 2015, p.6). Occupying the position of heads to the Igbo social structures, the elders are the chief constituents of the council. This makes consensus and Igbo republicanism all the more feasible since they are expected to live above primordial sentiments by putting the interests of the community over and above that of any individual member. Through these elders, every free member of the Igbo community possesses an accredited representation in the council discussions. Furthermore, the feasibility of this of consensual republicanism depends not only on the patience and persuasiveness of the right people but also on the fact that traditional African consensual systems did not consistently place any one group of persons in the minority position (Wiredu, 1995, p.54). It is built on the principle of peaceful coexistence. Subsequently, it is arguable that even modern democracy is not foreign to the Igbo because it has its root in Igbo origin and thought.

Depicting the environment and credibility of Igbo republicanism Ibenekwu (2015, p.10) writes, “in the Igbo traditional society, the level of political awareness of the populace is high, the mechanism of checks and balances which has enshrined probity and accountability as well as general administrative efficiency is in place and development in both human and material conditions through self-help efforts has become a norm.” There is indeed a culture of active participation from all, on both the

individual level and the different associations that fine-tuned the Igbo society (like the Age-grade), to contribute and enhance her republican end.

5. Challenges to Igbo Republicanism

Not minding the profundity of Igbo republicanism, African modern experience has never left it without wax. The African-Igbo man has become a victim of the evolutionary movement from slavery or slave trade to colonialism, to neocolonialism, to capital flight, to western imperialism, modern mercantilism, and corporatocracy. These not only interjected the life of the Igbo man, but also became indubitable predicaments that seek to defuse, devour and cut up African orientation and Igbo culture. Their lots to the African people were extortion, exploitation and expropriation. Vehemently, they adulterated the African way of life with alien institutions and orientations in the glory of western dominance. Recounting the African pre-colonial experience Ibenekwu (2015, p.1) narrates, “pre-colonial Nigeria was characterized by fragmented ethnic nationalities each with its own unique system of government or institutions of governance. Such systems were traditional in nature and structured to suit the peculiarities of the ethnic group involved.” That colonial experience left these governmental systems intact is an unfounded judgment. These whole domineering missions orchestrated an annihilating and denigrating course for the whole of African socio-political orientation. Igbo republicanism is not without blows.

One of the demoralizing influences of these cankerworms on the general African people was the arid greed for gain and material wealth. For Onwubiko (1967, p.170), “[this] greed weakened all loyalty to truth and honesty, family, race and state”. Not only that there is an infringement on their communalistic worldview but a facilitation of individualism and scorched egoism. There then comes the subtle but vehement draw to individualism than communalism. Even the materialistic inclination that accompanied western imperialism enhanced more the quest for the self than the community. This vigorously de-enchanted and downplayed the republican character of the Igbo man, bleeding rather in him different forms of egoistic inclination. By making him more materialistic than socialistic, he is losing himself to the glory of wealth than the course of humanity. Socially, it dampens the spirit of consensus and instigates socio-political domination.

The political adulteration of the Igbo political system is another decrying incident. The colonial import of Warrant chiefs and later diffusion of kingship in the like of powerful monarch is a heavy blow to Igbo republicanism. Not just that it is alien to Igbo republican nature, but also inimical to her culture and vision. Fortunately, Ibenekwu (2015, p.2) asserts, “alteration of the traditional system of government by the colonial masters marked the prelude to the introduction of alien systems of government into

Nigeria.” Culturally, it tones down the Igbo quest for socio- political participation and integration for the gains of absolutism. This unholy import not only disrupted the traditional Igbo life but engineered an era of political instability. With this upsurge crisis of governance, the alienation of the people from the government, different kinds of agitations, politicizing of Igbo leadership/political administration, corruption, abuse of power, unaccountability, perennial marginalization, et cetera. These make nation building and development far-fetched.

The denigrating approach to Igbo identity and values is another misfortune to Igbo republicanism. The derogatory mission of western imperialism showed no mercy to African values. Not only that they are viewed as subordinate to the western system, but inordinate and naïve. This has given rise to denigrating African/Igbo values as inferior and their abandonment for the western style. However, such judgments prove more irrational than their consideration since they lack reasonable understanding and appreciation of the cultural backdrop. The unquestioned quest for western standards becomes unfortunate. With the import and infusion of the various forms of western globalization into the veins of African/Igbo society, there prevails the confusion with and rejection of the traditional African/Igbo system for an alien culture. Apart being robbed of their core republican character, the Igbo man finds himself cut up in the confusion of identity and vision. The shabby comprehension of the truth of Igbo-enwe-eze has misled some people to believe that the Igbo society is a disordered and lawless society with many okwuoto ekeneeze. While the unenlightened pictures it as a deposit of Igbo disordered society, the enlightened appreciate in it the Igbo republican ideology. These can only be restored in the revitalization of his cultural consciousness.

6. Igbo Republicanism and Igbo-enwe-eze

The relationship between the fact of Igbo republicanism and the aphorism of 'Igbo-enwe-eze' is another clarion call. Both statements not only have claims to Igbo lifestyle but to their values. The idea of Igbo-enwe-eze demands more exposition. Literally, Igbo-enwe-eze communicates that the Igbo people lack leaders in the like of kings. Lacking political leaders would seemingly posit the Igbo society as a lawless and orderless society. However, Igbo-enwe-eze is both ideologically and practically far away from such. Reiterating on this idea Nwalutu (2019, p.87), “the title does not therefore suggest or imply the non-existence of leadership positions such as chiefs (by whatever title they are known) in Igbo societies, it only unequivocally points to the non-existence of dynasty of rulers or a ruler (monarch) who wields absolute power as obtained in many other societies of pre-colonial Africa....No single member of the society imposes her/himself on the rest as the custodian of absolute power. The Igbo man believes that absolute power resides with only one Being, Chukwu (Almighty God) or Chineke (God the Creator). Igbo-enwe-eze does not negate the possibility of a

leader (as opposed to a ruler) in most Igbo societies. It simply affirms the reality that no leader chosen by his people is allowed by the Igbo peoples' socio-political principles to wield absolute authority over the rest of the citizenry. The leader wins the love of her or his subjects if he or she is a champion of consultation, guru in data collection and critical analysis; adept in case and opinion review and resourceful with logistics (Nwalutu, 2019, p.92). Igbo-enwe-eze hence denotes the absence of an Igbo central authority that is formalized, permanent and hereditary and authority whose dispensation span across communities and clans as in the case of the Hausa or Yoruba. It suggests the absence of pan-Igbo authority or all-embracing king, as Nwala (1985, p.171) exposed.

The interconnectedness of Igbo republicanism and Igbo-enwe-eze is necessitated by their foundation in Igbo worldview and values. Igbo-enwe-eze presents a connotative aphorism that implicates the republican nature of the Igbo man. It is as much a political concept as it is social platitude. If there is Igbo-enwe-eze, it is because of the Igbo's spirit of republicanism. To understand Igbo-enwe-eze is to have acknowledged and understood Igbo republicanism. Eze (2015, 13) agreed also that it was Igbo republicanism, or “the fact that in Igboland, power did not reside in one single person, but in a collectivity of elders, that led to the common aphorism of Igbo Enwe Eze, (that the Igbo have no king)”. The republican nature of the Igbo man is the bedrock of Igbo-enwe-eze. To the Igbo's total rejection of dictatorial rule, Igbo republicanism and Igbo-enwe-eze are but the two faces of the same coin. The hypothesis 'Igbo-enwe eze' is a paradigm that informs of the political value of republicanism to the Igbo people.

7. Appraising Igbo Republicanism

Not minding traces of monarchism in the traditional Igbo society, the primordial and dominant political organization of the Igbo people is republicanism. Above all standards, the Igbo man pursues and practices consensual republicanism. The remarkable merit of his republican spirit is its bent on consensus. It is consensual because, as a rule, that consent was negotiated on the principle of consensus (Wiredu, 1995, p.59). Igbo republican socio-political approach demonstrates the vivid and conscious quest of the Igbo man for peaceful cohabitation and effective integration of members. It is more a follow-up to his communalistic or communitarian philosophy. As Wiredu still stated, it is a manifestation of an immanent approach to social interaction. As basic to a republican system, Igbo republicanism provides a situation where the Igbo people deliberate and take decisions that are of common interests. In contradiction to monarchism, republicanism as always is built on freedom, equality and co-existence of members. However, in Igbo republicanism we must recognize the presence of some pertinent castes. In this regards, we must note that the Osu caste does not share equality with the Ozo caste, for example. That notwithstanding, all free-born

members participate in Igbo egalitarianism. Prestigious group like the Ozo titled men would be accrued more respect and dignity.

Fundamentally, Igbo republicanism is built on the bedrock of Igbo hospitality factored by communion, accommodation, dialogue, compromise, belongingness, igwebuiké, ibuanydanda and justice for all. No party is left perennially outsider. There is rather an emphasis of communion rather subjugation. It canvasses a philosophy of 'we' rather than 'I'. The strong emphasis on community presupposes a prior acceptance of a degree of individual compromise whenever the need arises: so that others may live, so that others may eat, so that others may have joy, and so on. The Igbo proverb 'oke pee mpe, ma mmadu baa uba' (let the share be small but let human beings be many) is instructive here (Kanu, 2014, p.5). Remarkably, individuality, instead of being frustrated, is helped and defined by the community. The republicanism of the Igbo man accrues from the fact that every Igbo man has the freedom and right to his opinion and expression. It is both a respect of individuality and a quest for community. Towards this, R. Okoye & V. Okoye (2016, p.357) asserts, "Igbo republicanism is hinged on people's rights and founded on forthrightness, hard work, truth, and character." This is a conscious and painstaking quest for commonality, community preservation and sustenance, and possible perfection. Moreover, the Igbo man believes that 'two heads are better than one' because 'ka ima nkea, ima nke ozo' (nobody knows it all). Hence, Igbo republicanism is the foremost acknowledgement of the fact of perceptivity and the possibility of synthetic integration. Thus, even before German idealists especially Hegel theorized, the Igbo had known and recognized the tripartite developmental stages of thought: thesis, antithesis, and synthesis seen in their consensus-dialogics. That is, an opportunity to dialogue and negotiate while considering every opinion and looking for the superior idea. For him, 'onye anwula ma ibe ya efula' (let nobody die or his neighbor get lost). The feasibility of this is enhanced by his strong assimilation philosophy what might be better called Igbo Ecumenism (Egbe bere). Besides, Igbo man loathes every form of authoritarianism. In relation to this Ogbalu (2006, p.23) highlights, "monarchy as a form of government was not acceptable to them for they loath subjugation to a single individual however benevolent, powerful or wealthy." Igbo republicanism is prevalently a vehement check against any form of absolutism. Dialogue and consensus were rather the order of the day. On the other hand, it is not erosion to liberalism. By vision, Igbo republicanism cannot be equated or erode to liberalism because it is strongly built on and guided by traditional Igbo values and customs. Not only that it is negated by his communalistic vision, it is also repulsed by Igbo ethics, tradition and law.

However, one major challenge to this decentralized and unautocratic orientation of the Igbo people is the challenge of decision-making whereby it gives room, to a maximally

extent, for communal participation. This makes decision taking slower than in an autocratic state. Another would be the possibility of always arriving at a consensus – a convergent or synthetic point of thoughts. As destabilizing as this point might seem, it is surmounted by the enabling effect of the Igbo communitarian philosophy. The Igbo man is highly oriented towards the community. For the 'we', he can submit his 'I'. Instances of current arid individualism are menacing effects of western interaction and misplacement of values. The success or failure of any socio-political governance of the Igbo people depends on its ability to recognize and play along the intrinsic, republican Igbo man's orientation.

Conclusion

So far, we have tried to extrapolate the republicanism that is acquainted with the Igbo man and his weltanschauung. Our investigation into his worldview and socio-political organization displayed that the republicanism of the Igbo man is not by chance but a product of his culture and vision, nature and nurture. He is by culture, vision and organization republican. His republican charisma is exhibited better in the light of his advocate for consensus. He remains culturally and socially an advocate of socio-political integration and peaceful coexistence. His interest is for the common good of all. Not minding the bewitchment of his predicaments, the Igbo man remains, against all socio-political systems, republican. Being repulsive to all forms of autocracy as well as being no party to liberalism, Igbo republicanism is a synchronized effort to champion the cause of political participation and Igbo traditional values. While he does not canvass for a domineering environment, he is not on the other hand appealed to any liberal movement. His republican nature, though associable to a democratic character, does not orient to liberal democracy. It is anchored on his (Igbo) traditional values, maintained by Igbo traditional beliefs, and guided by Igbo customs and law. Above all, republicanism is the livewire of any Igbo socio-political administration. The Igbo man's republicanism is not just a practice but an identity. It is a culture, a value and a vision. Any effort to institutionalize a system not ad rem to his republican orientation is a sure lead-way to political revolution and instability. His republican character is the path to his socio-political development, nation building, and political stability.

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