

Yoruba Traditional Education Philosophy in the Evolution of a 'Total Man'

Ademakinwa Adebisi
University of Lagos, Nigeria

Abstract

Nigeria as a country is blessed with a large number of literate people: scientists, engineers and so on, yet the manpower needed to harness its enormous resources should be the natural outcome of its education system. The paper reassesses the notion which hinges African economic development on the achievements of its formal education system. The paper, due to this raises some questions among which are: is development best measured with the yardstick of high percentage of literate youths? Can we read economic achievements into the quantity of engineers, scientists and etc. that a nation is able to produce? What ethics predominates in the conglomeration of African elite to influence African development?

Materials are drawn from the rich stock of traditional Yoruba proverbs while two novels by Chinua Achebe's: No Longer at Ease and T. A. Awoniyi's Aiye koto analyse the ingredients necessary for the creation of a 'total man'. They also provide veritable socio-political backgrounds for an adequate comparison of the various concept of education churned up in the process.

It was established in this paper that traditional Yoruba concept of economic development is at variance with the modern concepts since traditionally, Yoruba society placed high premium on human development as opposed to those we term 'naira and kobo' inherent in the modern concept of economic development. The paper symbolises the failure of the current education system by its products exemplified by the ill-trained and corrupt elite at the helms of affairs in the country. The paper reiterates how Nigerians can maintain a symbiotic African traditional education system and the modern formal one as one of the ways capable of guaranteeing the formation of a 'total man'. The paper sees the 'total man' as the alternative to currently evolved individuals that are ill-trained ethically and mentally to fast-track the development of African continent on the social, political and economic fronts.

The importance of this paper rests on its interdisciplinary assessment and use of African cultural perspective, literature and myths to analyse the role of culture in African development.

Keywords: Total man, economic development, omoluwabi, education, training

‘Omo ti a ko ko’ in Contrast to ‘Omoluabi’

Formless as it might seem, the content and objective of traditional African education system are designed to help the individual to understand his world, fit him into the society and inspire his sense of duties to himself and the society at large. In spite of the fact that there are no formal structure created within which individual can read and write, traditional African societies believed that education hold the fabrics of the society together and they see it as the culture that is systematically, but consciously passed from one generation to the other in order to improve the level attained by previous generations.

The seriousness which Yoruba people, if one may zero down to one society in Nigeria and Africa in general, attach to education is seen in the philosophy expressed in “omo ti a ko ko” (the child that was not taught/trained). To the Yoruba people, this is a negative action or inaction and the result of this portends negative result, not only for the child, but for the society itself in general. Thus, the Yoruba people believe that “omo ti a ko ko ni yoo gbe’le ti a ko ta” (the child that we failed to ‘build up’. Yoruba word ‘ko’ or to train or to teach has the same connotation with ‘to build’ as in building a house) The onomatopoeic symbol is also important as it underline the fact that if we keep on building houses instead of training the child, the child will in future sell off the houses as a profligate.

The beauty of this philosophical statement not only lies in its epigrammatic strength, but on its strong emphasis on the issue of education. The root of Yoruba education is in the word ‘kó’, that is to teach or to learn. This is the reason why formal school system is referred to as ‘ile-eko’ (the house of teaching or the house of learning). The word ‘ko ko’ (did not teach) connotes negative action or inaction and this reverses ‘ti a ko ta’ (sell off what we built), positive action of mansion that is sold.

However, to sell off the mansions is not the main issue, the problem being emphasized is that an untrained child is an irresponsible child or a prodigal, thus, only a prodigal can sell off his/her parents’ mansions. Selling off the mansions is also symbolic of the negative tendencies of an untrained child because an untrained child is an epitome of corruption, laziness, brigandage and all that is negative in an individual which could ultimately affect the entire society. It is in this wise that African societies of which Yoruba is one took education very seriously as only a well-educated child can become, in the word of Timothy Awoniyi (1975:364) an ‘omoluwabi’.

‘Omoluwabi’ in contrast to ‘omo ti a ko ko’ is well-educated and thus is a ‘total man’ and to be educated in the word of Awoniyi means the individual has been educated to respect old age, to be loyal to one’s parents and local traditions, to be honest in all public and private dealings, to be devoted to duty and be ready to assist the needy and the infirm, to be an epitome of sympathy, sociability, courage and itching desire for work and many other desirable qualities.

The Basis of Education in African Traditional Societies

In the view of African colonial masters, African societies have no concept of education and this is due to the fact that there were no visible formal structures set up as schools to train individuals. Africans' education concept saw education of individuals as paramount starting from the womb and terminating at a man's death. From what one could garner from Afolabi Olabimtan's *Kekere Ekun* (1967) and Awoniyi's *Aye kooto* (1973), once a woman becomes pregnant, the society believes it has a responsibility to encourage the woman to give birth to a total individual. The naming ceremony is both spiritual and educative, the name is symbolic and the child is expected to honour and protect the sanctity of that name and ultimately that of the society at large.

The 'oriki' (praise chant) is one of the safeguards put in place by the society to spur the child to emulate his ancestors who were 'omoluwabis' (individual of unquestionable characters). The mother constantly recites the oriki (the panegyric praise-names of the child's progenitors) to remind him of his noble ancestry and to motivate him to further surpass the ideal of his ancestors. On health education, the child is taught early, the necessity of obeying the societal codes on hygiene. Bed-wetting, for instance, is curbed through simple teaching and other preventive measures.

On linguistic education, the child is assisted through precepts, examples and reinforcement to imbibe difficult phonemes. Tongue-twisters, such as: 'opolopo olopolo ko mo pe opolo lopolo lopolopo' (many intelligent people do not know that frogs have a lot of intelligence), are part of linguistics education meant to induce the child to be precise and clear in his speech from youth.

The linguistic education is complemented by the development of the child's intelligence, thus, he is taught the knowledge of numbering through what Awoniyi calls "play-way analogies" such as "eni bi eni, eji bi eji, eta n ta gba". The child is also taught how to observe his environment to know the names of plants, trees, birds and animals as well as the description of the appropriate seasons.

The Yoruba people place high premium on character-building to prevent their children from being referred to as 'abiiko' (a child that is born but not trained/ or properly brought up). However, a child that is trained, but refuses to take to the training is referred to as 'akoogba' (the one taught but refuses to heed the training) and to traditional Yoruba parents, this is more tolerable than the former simply because the parents have been vindicated as they have fulfilled their own part of educating the child and the child is the one that shied away from fulfilling his own part of the responsibility.

The Curriculum in African Traditional Education

Truly, there were no formal structures or infrastructures where a child could go to learn all that is stated above as is the case with Western formal school system. The Yoruba people, however, devised many methods to implement the curriculum designed to mould the child to become an 'omoluwabi'. In place of formal structures, the whole life is the school and the

teachers are primarily the father, the mother, members of the immediate household and members of the society in general. The child is encouraged to live what is taught. He is further encouraged to exhibit courage and endurance. The children are taught by examples.

Parts of the curriculum include moonlight tales, proverbs, folktales, myths and songs. All this have great functions in the education of children in African traditional society. As Herskovits (1948:143) affirms, myth, for instance,

Explains the universe and...provide a base for ritual and belief. Tales are often regarded as an unwritten recording of tribal history. They act not only as a valuable educational device, but are equally valuable in maintaining a sense of group unity and group worth. Proverbs which with riddles have essentially old world distributions, garnish conversation with pointed allusion, help clarify an obscure reference to one deficient in worldliness, and moral...Riddles divert by serving as a test of wits; they give prestige to the one who can 'pull' with sureness and ease.

Truthfulness is a must teach in Yoruba education, but this is not merely taught, but practiced, both in private and public life. Stories underlining the results of lying are told during moonlight tales sessions in the evening and proverbs are drummed into the children's ears to buttress the importance of truthfulness. Hard work is equally emphasized. The child is made to realize early that "atelewo eni kii tan ni je" (it is only your hand that will not deceive you), and "ise kii pani, aise re gan an labuku" (hard work does not kill. It is its opposite that does).

The child is taught the value of dressing. He is taught the essence of belonging to a social group, thus, in some African societies; the child belongs to age grade group. Here, the child learns how to appreciate the society's culture, music, dance, traditional songs and so on. The essential aim of traditional education is to impart knowledge and culture, develop skills and abilities necessary for the individual to operate effectively in the society. Through education the individual learns to pursue his own objectives as a means to further societal interests.

The Tragedies Inherent in Western Education System

The very first tragedy of Western School System is to set up a gap between the pupils and the African society that would benefit from it, thus, the purposes that education should achieved become obfuscated. The second tragedy is similar to the first one as the young African children brought through Western school system were taught to hate African educational values. Underlining both tragedies is the fact that the school was presented to African children as a separate institution that has no connection to the society. He was thus made to believe that to be educated was to be Europeanised. Those who did not attend the formal school system were regarded as illiterate, ignorant, primitive, pagans or heathens. This second tragedy is emphasized when the educated individual decked in suit and shoes from Paris and London arrived back in his village and discovered that he was totally alien to his society, especially when the result of education of traditional society that should contribute to the formation of 'omoluwabi' is seen to be deficient in him. The society then becomes disillusioned with him.

The final tragedy of Western school system is the emphasis that it shifted from concern with character and conduct of the individual to the acquisition of certificates and wealth. Education is now merely seen as the means to social and economic advancement. No school is concerned with the production of omoluwabi as they rather produce marks, awards, grades and positions. This is what Ivan D. Illich (1971:1) condemns when he writes that many students are schooled:

To confuse process and substance...to confuse teaching with learning, grade advancement with education, a diploma with competence and fluency with ability to say something new...medical treatment is mistaken for health care, social work for the improvement of community life, police protection for safety, military poise for national security, the rat race for productive work.

To complicate matters, theoretical knowledge without the foundation in the culture of the people has been the nexus of African economic imbalance. Abrogating the culture which develops an omoluwabi underlines the fundamental tragedy of modern day African political and economic development.

The economic woes of the continent are traceable to the production of ‘omo ti a ko ko’ - the ill-trained or uneducated individuals who are, therefore, not qualified to be regarded as ‘omoluwabis’. Many African political elite are thus drawn from this pool and the result of the acts and behaviours of these individuals constantly have had resounding implications on African economic development. The question could be how has this been achieved?

‘Omo ti a ko ko’ and African nations’ Developmental Crises

As stated earlier, the ruling elite in African countries are at best regarded as omo ti a ko ko simply because the ethical aptitudes, the acquisition of those moral qualities felt to be an integral part of manhood, and the acquisition of knowledge and techniques needed in order to be able to play a positive role in life are totally lacking in them. Many of them have laudable qualities but are deficient in some necessary ones. Only very few possess the qualities that an individual, educated in African traditional education system could aspire to. In other words, very few can be regarded as ‘omoluwabis’ or ‘total men’.

The repercussion of this on political and economic development of African countries has been largely negative simply because as Sekou Toure in Cowan Gray (1965:125) asserts “man’s social behaviour and economic activities are directly conditioned by the quality of his intellectual, moral, political and physical education”. Most African countries have been saddled, from independence, with irresponsible Western educated elites that are lacking in qualities that can effect positive development in their respective countries. In this wise, we shall look at the actions and inactions of the elites that portray them as omo ti a ko ko and the result of this on their communities.

The unscrupulous nature of African political elite becomes clearer with the way they have deified the cult of nepotism. Nepotism ensured that qualified few are denied appropriate

positions in socio-economic engagement. Most of the times, therefore, square pegs are fit in into round holes. The problem of the main hero in *Aye kooto* is unconnected with this:

Some Palm Oil consortium advertised that they needed a Clerk! So what! What is strange in this? Many of such advertisement had been published in newspapers. At least, he had written up to sixty application letters on such. But many of such letters got no response. Some of the advertisers would actually reply, but they would post the letter on the very day of the interview. That was a trick. Because they would have conducted interview for those they had in mind before one got the letter. And it would be too late. This was how life went on in the town of Opeyemi. That was how they practice truth and honesty.

Sometimes, of course, some of them would invite Opeyemi to the interview. Before Opeyemi would go to such, he would ensure he was dressed very appropriately. He would answer all the questions put to him intelligently. But that would be the last of what was heard of it. At the end of the day, he would hear that some people who were not even invited to the interview got the job. (50) (Translation mine).

The moral bankruptcy of the elite is equally vivified with the prevalence of corruption in the African countries. In Achebe's *No Longer at Ease*, the predominance of corruption from the leaders down to the grassroots is greatly emphasized in the encounter of the main character, Obi Okonkwo and the policemen on the road to his home town. After the policemen checked the driver's document and found everything in order, the driver knew he would still need to give bribe:

Meanwhile the driver's mate was approaching the other policeman. But just as he was about to hand something over to him, Obi looked in their direction. The policeman was not prepared to take a risk; for all he knew Obi might be a C.I.D man. So he drove the driver's mate away with great moral indignation 'What you want here? Go way!' The driver drove a little distance and stopped

'Why you look the man for face when we want give um two shillings?' he asked Obi.

'Because he has no right to take two shillings from you,' Obi answered.

Na him make I no de want carry you book people,' he complained. 'Too too know na him de worry una. Why you put your nose for matter way no concern you? No that policeman go charge me like ten shillings'.

True to the driver's words, when the driver's mate returned from the policemen, it was confirmed that ten shillings was taken from him. What irritated Obi was the response of fellow passengers who saw nothing wrong in the policemen's behaviour and actually heaped all the blame on him. Obi's contemplation is still relevant on the Nigerian society of today. In fact, it underlines the enormous problem of corruption in Nigeria, especially in its match to economic development.

'What an Augean stable he muttered to himself. Where does one begin? With the masses? Educate the masses? He shook his head. 'Not a chance there. It would take centuries. A handful of men at the top. Or even one man with vision-an enlightened dictator. People are scared of the word nowadays. But what kind of democracy can exist side by side with so much corruption and ignorance? Perhaps a half-way house-a sort of compromise'. When Obi's reasoning reached this point he reminded himself that England had been as corrupt not so very long ago (40).

The evil of corruption on African economic development can only be adequately dealt with in volumes of books, suffice it to say, however, that corruption affects all facets of African development.

What all this points to is the fact that colonialism and its education system failed to provide adequate platform for African development especially in the area of human resources on whom the mantle of leadership fell to after the exit of the colonial masters. Many of the new elite were ill-equipped to jump-start or deal with the urgency of development required for the newly independent nations.

These elite found it expedient to look for solution to governance from outside. Equally problematic were, according to J.F. Ade-Ajayi (1995: 42) the “external advisers and experts” and their “...lack of experience in stimulating development in the new African economies.” When they were genuinely interested in developing African economics, they feel their way and they try “to learn from their past mistakes,” but “they were not willing to acknowledge their limitation...”

The failure of training is evident by the application of wrong methods to stimulate African development by the elite. Thus, it is not very rare for the elite to apply prevailing western development strategies to African economies without taking cognizance of the social, political and cultural backgrounds that could affect their workability in African environment. These include: five-year planning, import substitution for industries, export drive, population control, foreign exchange control, structural adjustment programme, devaluation of currency as inducement for foreign investment, poverty eradication, privatization, MAMSER, deregulation of up stream and down stream oil sector in order to stimulate market forces, NEEDS, NEPADS, LPA and so on. The sad aspect of all these policies is that they have neither been beneficial to the masses nor brought African economies out of the woods, if anything at all; they have rather served to shift African economic position from the 3rd to the 4th in the mainstream of the world economy.

Sometimes the elite also borrow from the Western nations unworkable economic ideas. They erroneously believe that a nation’s development is often determined in the light of its economic standing or on the growth of its GNP or GDP, investment rates, higher savings or rate of its shares in international trade and so on. This is what one could term the ‘naira and kobo’ or ‘dollar and cents’ econometrics as it symbolises the concept often used by economists to determine economic development of nations.

As desirable as economic growth is, this growth cannot all by itself spread the good life to the majority of the population because increased output of goods and services over the decades had failed to affect the greater part of African population. In fact, in the words of Asante (1995:5), GDP is one of the most pervasive “development illusion” and “these illusions and confusions, more than any factors, are primarily responsible for the slow progress that has been made so far in the developing countries”. The concept of Omo ti a ko ko explains better the whole scenario of African economic development and puts it in proper perspective.

The foundational structure, according to this paradigm is ‘training’ having in its wide orbit the issue of self development, self enhancement and self esteem which as underlined in the selected novels, are lacking in the psyche of African elite that is saddled with the responsibility of developing African nations after independence. The Yoruba philosophy on education subscribes to the holistic view of development emphasizing that economic development can never be achieved without African peoples’ self-development. This underlines the stance of Walter Rodney [1972:12] that:

...development cannot be seen purely as an economic affair, but rather as an overall social process which is dependent upon the outcome of man’s efforts to deal with his natural environment.

Development is thus a cultural process involving education, production, consumption and well-being. It coincides with the theory of scholar like Adedeji who stressed that economic and material growth should not be viewed as sufficient measurement of development. In the words of Asante (1995:6), Adedeji believes that the ultimate purpose of development “must be the development of people”.

The Sanctity of Omoluabi Concept in Traditional Education

In order to find solution to Africa’s development problems we would need to look at the two main novels; Achebe’s *No longer at Ease* and Awoniyi’s *Aye kooto. No Longer at Ease* tells the story of a young man, Obi Okonkwo, who is able to get Western education up to a first degree and he even gets this degree in England. He comes back to Nigeria only to discover that he cannot meet up with the expectations of his people because, due to his position in the civil service, they expect him to behave like other elites who live extravagant life and imbibe new behavior while imitating white men who are about to leave the various posts in Nigerian establishments prior to Independence.

In order to meet up with the people’s expectation, he succumbs to the pressure of taking bribe which has become endemic in the society and, in fact, has become the oil that greases the smooth running of the bureaucratic machinery. At a point, however, he is caught in a set-up while taking bribe and is eventually jailed.

The second novel is similar. The character in this Yoruba novel is Opeyemi. Quite unlike Obi Okonkwo, he is trained by his parent to be honest, to always stick to the truth, live a frugal life and avoid everything that will tarnish the image of his village and that of himself. After his education, he goes to live with his elder brother in Lagos, but he finds it difficult to get employment despite his impeccable certificates and good character attestations. He discovers to his chagrin that to secure employment; he has to give bribe which he is not ready to do. He is in this condition for many years and his problems become aggravated when his brother’s wife, Titi, who gets her certificates through fraudulent means and is employed, begins to torment him.

She eventually makes life so miserable for him to the point he tries to commit suicide. He is prevented from doing so when a policeman arrests him. He eventually goes back to his

village where he takes over his father's cocoa farm and due to his honesty and level of education he is able to apply modernity to his agricultural method and he soon becomes very rich.

The main focus of the two stories is the issue of training. A point is made that Nigerian economy has remained in limbo due to lack of training of those handling it. The heroes of the two novels are two opposite examples. Obi Okonkwo does not receive the kind of deep moral training given by Opeyemi's parent, thus, apart from the education which has become ephemeral in Nigeria of today, honesty, integrity, home training and high moral standard which are very important ingredients in traditional education are deficient in the character build-up of many Nigerian youths.

The novel *Aye kooto* devotes many chapters to the systematic home training and moral lessons given to Opeyemi right from the time he is three years old up to the time he leaves his village of Irekari to live with his brother, Arowosola, in Lagos. The moral training given Obi, despite the fact that his father is a catechist is not as endemic, thus, it does not stand the test of time as it could not withstand the barrage of temptation against his principle of honesty at the critical juncture of his life. In *Aye Kooto* (2003:23), the narration goes:

When Opeyemi becomes three years old, his mothers began to teach him how to respect both old and young.

'Ope, prostrate for 'Dale's father. Opeyemi's mother thus instructed his son. By this, Opeyemi learnt how to greet the elders, either men or women.

Agbeke's moral upbringing almost became excessive because it got to the etiquette on eating. Whenever Opeyemi and his mothers or another elderly person were eating, Opeyemi must not touch meat first. Also, he must not cut portion of food at another side of the plate. (Translation mine)

One day, Opeyemi's mother did not give him a breathing space while they were eating and the father became exasperated, but Opeyemi's mother's response is instructive of the philosophy behind the emphasis we have placed on home and moral education as a prerequisite for Nigerian economic development. She says:

"...a slap here and a slap there bring the sound out of bata drum. This is not what you should say and you were even blaming me! I cannot consciously allow Opeyemi to be cutting bolus of food in forms of boulders that even his mouth would not be able to contain, and also allow him to hurry to cut another while one bolus is still in his mouth. That is greed. And gradually he becomes used to it...If in the future he is unable to find heavy meal to eat what would he do? That is when he will become amenable to corruption...If today is good and sweet, can anybody guarantee tomorrow? (Translation mine)

In their argument, Opeyemi's mother speaks like a prophetess in her comments on the future of youths who will definitely leave the roof of their parents in future to fend for themselves as Opeyemi eventually does. In the case of Opeyemi, he is saved from succumbing to the moral malaise of the society he finds himself because of the earlier training and the relationship between Opeyemi and his parents. The mother further states:

...You seem to forget that the world is changing... I do not wish evil for our son. But we should be able to train him from now onwards to be frugal and moderate in everything he does. If the world

changes in the future, to the extent that it is the hare that begins to chase the hunting dog, who will be there with him except what we have taught him? Some rich people's children only experience small problem and they melt away with it, is it not because they did not allow them to experience some suffering while growing up? (24-25). (Translation mine)

This is just the exact opposite of the relationship that exists between Obi and his parent. In Achebe's novel (1977:122):

"Obi felt strangely happy and excited. He had not been through anything like this before. He was used to speaking to his mother like an equal, even from his childhood, but his father had always been different. He was not exactly remote from his family, but there was something about him that made one think of the patriarchs, those giants hewn from granite. Obi's strange happiness sprang not only from the little ground he had won in the argument, but from the direct human contact he had made with his father for the first time in his twenty-six years."

What becomes clear in the examination of the two main characters is that Opeyemi's relationship with his parent has been very cordial but underlined with firm parental discipline in the field of moral. The same cannot be said of Obi Okonkwo. One sees that right from childhood, Opeyemi combines Western education with traditional system of education and he is thus sufficiently armed against all the vagaries of the modern society that is highly effete, corrupt and lacking in moral.

Although the two characters are worthy of emulation, that of Opeyemi is a shining example of an enhanced human personality who in the word of Adedeji is "not alienated" from his society and culture but rather develops his self-confidence in himself and identifies his interest with those of his society and thereby develops his ability and willingness for self-reliance. It therefore comes as no surprise that he eventually finds his focus in life when he comes back to the village to build a business empire founded on honesty and transparency contributing in no small measure to the economic development of his village.

He is the developed human resources that can contribute to resuscitate and ginger the desired economic growth in the country and most important of all sustain this growth. The character of Obi is comparable to those of Nigerian past leaders and present day politicians who were trained in western education and are lacking in moral upbringing. It comes as little surprise then that the lack of training of this crop of people is responsible for the way they have frittered away Nigeria wealth and natural resources willfully and unconsciously.

Recommendation

The only solution for Africa economic development is to find a way to replicate the character of Opeyemi in Nigerian youths and possibly in the new breed of politicians in African political terrain. This is obviously an uphill task as the youths of today are already filled with the 'get -rich -quick' spirit which they copy from the past and present looters in positions of power in their respective countries.

Many parents in Nigeria society of today do not have time to afford their children moral education as they are busy chasing shadow in the mega cities leaving their children to be trained by peer groups. It is due to this that the get-rich-quick syndrome has taken new dimension: pool betting, cultism, lottery racket, 419, trade in hard drug, internal and international prostitution, 'Yahoo-yahoo' (internet fraud) and so on which are about the only cannon of moral standard known to Nigerian youths of today. Due to all this, what wonderful economic theories, or what solutions can anybody proffer to African economic development? And how high can the GNP or GDP rise to be of benefit to the entire African masses under the management of these leaders of tomorrow?

Consideration has never been given to manpower requirement of industries in the curricula of institutions of learning; thus, graduates churned out year after year are generally regarded as unemployable. On a concrete basis, Industrial and agricultural development in Nigeria has been stultified by Nigerian elite. Constant electric power generation that is essential to industrial development has been mishandled by the elites.

An overhaul of Nigerian education policy therefore becomes imperative. It is not as if one is recommending a roll back into primitivism, but educational philosophy of the traditional African communities, especially the one that underlined the sanctity of omoluabi should be incorporated into the modern education system's curriculum from nursery/ primary school to the universities.

Eradication of illiteracy should be one of the areas that experts could focus their searchlight on. It is unfortunate that many decades after Independence in many African countries, a remarkable percentage of the population in these countries are still illiterate. With governance concentrated in the hand of the few literate but 'untrained' few (the omo ti a ko ko), and the majority of the people still unable to read or write, African economic growth will continue to be a mirage. Many scenarios depicted in Aluko's *One Man, One Matchet* (1964:42-43), set before Independence is still relevant today as it is played out in one varied form or the other even in the modern Nigeria set-up. On many instances, literate few like Benjamin-Benjamin finds a way to mislead the illiterate majority.

Premium should be placed on honesty by setting up individuals and past leaders who are known as epitome of morality and who have served the nation in honesty as role models. Nigerian government is especially known to extenuate moral decadence and corruption by giving national honours to crooks, bandits and dishonest figures.

Economists should also endeavour to shift their focus from 'naira and kobo', cedis and pesewa, dollar and cent, pound and shilling inherent in GNP or GDP, budget deficits and all macro-economic plumblines used in Western economics to accommodate that which is very imperative for the development of African economy, that is, genuine self transformation of human personae, the rejuvenation of the traditional ethical culture, attitudes to work, savings and investment habits, concepts on skills, moral and general social system, in short, the creation of total men,

The Yoruba philosophy becomes a verity because even after experts have propounded theories and the magic wand to stimulate the economy to record high percentage of GNP, or GDP, or even record 20 percent growth annually; and even when the country has managed to accumulate trillions of dollars in reserve and is able to construct infrastructures; the likes of the World Trade Centres all over the country; if the human resources to manage all this still possess the psychological orientation of the present elites, the Yoruba educational philosophy will remain valid because all the efforts will be exercises in futility. The elite will definitely behave like the biblical prodigal son as all the resources will be stolen and stashed away in foreign banks while they undersell the infrastructures the same way the present day elite has done and is still doing under the bogus privatization programmes.

Social scientists, economists and education experts should endeavour to critically examine the social background vital for the fruition of their old and new concepts and also find a way of fusing Western and Yoruba education concept on a symbiotic manner. In their researches, they should constantly have it at the back of their mind that the social atmosphere prevalent in many African countries today makes the attainment of any economic utopia, if attainable at all, in the hands of 'untrained' and unscrupulous 'akotiletas' (nonentities born to sell off their inheritance), a valueless victory. Many of such untrained elite are at the helms of affairs in most African countries today and if there is no radical shift in the traditional concept of 'naira and kobo', they will continue to be at the helm of affairs even in the next millennium and African countries will maintain their present position in the lowest nadir of world economy.

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