

## A PREFACE TO PHILOSOPHY, LOGIC & HUMAN EXISTENCE

This thought-provoking new text, with the latest scholarship and research, will challenge and inspire students to grapple with all aspects of contemporary African philosophy and ethics for students of all Nigerian Universities.

This new book is both fresh and exciting but yet comprehensive study which is also most aware of the need with the time to giving the study of philosophy and logic a human face and that ultimately makes the text as a text without compromising its values in any way.

The third reference about this text is the special section on African Philosophy that has been introduced. An extensive work has also been done in the section on Existentialism and Phenomenology which is geared towards showing that the study of philosophy and logic is indeed, a prelude to the & Human Existence. Past standard examination questions and their answers, alongside other text questions have also been included in the text to aid the student's private practice. A understanding of the study, epistemology & logic.

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EDITED BY: WOGU, IKEDINACHI A.

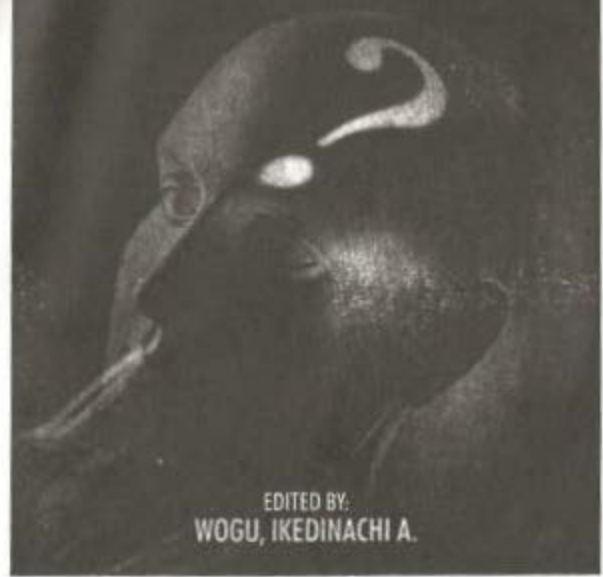
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*Philosophy, Logic  
&  
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Covenant University, Ota Nigeria.

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## DEDICATION

To the glory of God the Father, the Creator of Heaven and Earth and to His dear Son Jesus Christ who died that we might have life in abundance. May His Name continually be praised forever and ever...Amen.

To my father, Prince Wogu, Obi Metu, a great thinker and a man of God who paid my way through school and desired to see me get to the pinnacle of learning but for his early departure to be with the Lord.

To all who make a conscious effort to think and reason critically and to all who see the need to learn, relearn and unlearn when the need arises...

## FOREWORD

Introduction to Philosophy, Logic and Human Existence is one of the general studies courses for students in higher educational institutions in Nigeria. The aim of the general studies programme is to encourage a broader knowledge as opposed to narrowness of knowledge that is often found in intellectual specialization. Consequently, The NUC has recommended it as one of the few courses that every Nigerian University must administer to their students before graduation.

This book consists of a wide range of investigations into basic issues in the highly esteemed discipline of Philosophy. Since the need to acquire wisdom and knowledge in all fields of human endeavor has been on the increase, the need therefore arise for the methods and mode of study in the field of philosophy to continue to be simplified and developed to meet the rising yearning of both students and the ordinary researcher who is seeking the principles and answers to fundamental questions of life and reality in these contemporary times.

Without watering the standards and quality of what every standard academic text should contain, this text has made great effort at capturing and clearly stating the fundamental building blocks for intellectualism and the perennial quest for truth. I have no doubt in my mind whatsoever that the wealth of information contained in this introductory volume will be of immense help to the ordinary student who is seeking a concise text that will simplify and aid his or her inquiry into this field of knowledge. To the student of Philosophy and related disciplines, the book will readily serve as a companion handbook that will hopefully clarify and elucidate whatever topics they need to study.

I find the language and the style of the book also quite encouraging as anyone making any form of enquiry into this field of study will not find it difficult to understand and apply them to real life issues and situations. I need also make mention of the structure of the book that has been divided into seven separate sections and some parts devoted to some exercise and test questions to aid the students understanding of the study. These seven sections are further subdivided into three parts: Philosophy, Logic and Human Existence to enable the student have easy reference to whatever section or part of study they may wish to embark upon.

The writers have ensured sustained interest of the reader by their treatment of the subject matter. The book can therefore be read for pleasure and as well as for examination purposes. I therefore find much pleasure in writing this foreword to the book because I believe that the hope and aspirations

of students in tertiary institutions in Nigeria are being satisfied locally. It is on this note that I wish to recommend this book to all those who need to be introduced to aspects of logic, existential philosophy and philosophy in general.

**Prof. Princewill Alozie**  
Department of Philosophy  
Lagos State University,  
Lagos.

## PREFACE

Over the years, there has been a misconception that most people like Philosophy if they understand it and that most people understand it if it is not presented to them in an exhaustive prose. Well, in this text, we strive above all to show how wrong this notion is. Our wealth of experience in the teaching of the subject indicates that the study and teaching of philosophy can be made so easy and simple to understand while not over simplifying it.

There is also a misconception that some people aren't just moved by the subject. Worse still, we learnt that among those who aren't are a few who are sane, intelligent, well informed and reasonable and who generally have sound ideas about the world, vote for the right people, and are even worth having as friends. Well, the truth is that such may be the case where the subject is presented without the interest of the ordinary man on the street at heart. This text therefore- in view of this error in the methods of presenting the subject of philosophy- received contributions from experienced lecturers who by their wealth of experience in the teaching of the subject of philosophy, figured out path-ways through which the subject can be presented to all kinds and classes of people, a kind of presentation that often leaves a positive and lasting impression on both the professional and the ordinary inquirer. Against this misconception therefore, this text strives to show that philosophy can indeed be for everyone.

From our presentations in this text, we do hope that every student who has had an introductory course in philosophy will learn that philosophy is more than an inconsequential mental flexing exercise. Philosophy contains powerful ideas, and it affects the lives of real people. Consequently, it must be handled with due care. This text makes this point clear.

Since the Nigerian University Commission, (NUC) has made it mandatory for all students intending to acquire any degree from any Nigerian University to offer "Philosophy, Logic and Human Existence" as a requisite course for the award of Bachelor's Degrees, there has been an increasing need from students for a comprehensive text on the course. This book is therefore put together to meet the rising need of fresh University students who seeks a concise introduction to the course in Philosophy. No doubt, the book will serve as an introductory text to philosophy major students as well.

The need to successfully accomplish the task of compiling a comprehensive text that meets the NUC' specifications and standards necessitated that we received various entries from talented and experienced scholars from five different institutions of higher learning. These contributors have

presented their materials in such a simple, lucid and systematic way that caters for every new comer in the field of philosophy.

The book is split into seven sections. The first four sections explore both the metaphysical and epistemological ideas of thinkers from ancient times and even beyond the post modern era. In the fifth section, we explored some major movements and schools of thought in Philosophy. Among the schools and movements considered; Existentialism and Phenomenology was closely discussed since the study constitutes a major part of the text. This section basically focused on *the nature of man and the essence of his existence*. One of the critical questions posed in this section is, "Does existence precede essence"? In the sixth section, we added a study on African Philosophy where we explored the basic themes and methods of African philosophy with the view to discussing the methods and ideas that distinguished the African man from his Western, Eastern or Asian counterpart, the very thing that make him African, the very activity that has become his *philosophy*.

The seventh section basically discussed the third arm of the course "Logic". Here we explored the various principles and laws of 'Critical Thinking' and Argumentative discuss with the view to empowering students with all the principles and laws they need to order their thinking and reasoning towards forming sound and valid ideas and opinions in their every day activity. This book no doubt will go a long way in helping students and the ordinary researcher order their thinking and reasoning for the purpose of-productive work. We have no doubt that this book will also come in handy and very useful to all those who reads it. We at this point, will welcome criticisms and imputes that will help improve on the subsequent editions of this Book.

Thank you.

**Wogu, Ikedinachi A. (Editor)**  
Covenant University, Ota.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

There is one Name that must precede other list of names, persons and personalities to be acknowledged for their immense contributions towards the successful compilation and publication of this Book. I am talking about the great 'I AM', the creator of Heaven and Earth, my everlasting Father and the Almighty God. It is by His special grace that we were able to successfully compile this Book. We shall continue to praise and exalt His Name forever and ever... Amen.

Next, mention must be made of my mentor and father in the lord, Bishop David Oyedepo, whose fatherly presence and spiritual guidance has taught me to ever press on towards the mark for the prize of the High calling in Jesus Christ. May the Lord continue to sustain and empower him for the great work that he is doing for the salvation of souls all over the world.

Special mention must also be made of the great thinkers who over the years have guided my thoughts in the art of thinking, reasoning and creative writing. This work wouldn't have been possible were it not for the part they played in my life. First on the list of these thinkers is a great academic and an erudite scholar, Prof. Nkeonye Otakpor, of the great University of Benin. He was the first to open my mind to the study of Philosophy and Logic. His method of teaching was what ignited the love for the acquisition of true wisdom and knowledge in my life. His book 'A Preface to Logic' was of immense contribution to the production of the section on logic. Mention must also be made of Dr. Uzoma Ukagba, a senior lecturer in the Department of Philosophy, University of Benin. The keen interest I have today in the field of Existentialism and Phenomenology is as a result of the excellent style of lecture delivered. These and more quickened my understanding of the true essence of the study of philosophy: 'Understanding the concrete and authentic human existence'

My lecturers at the University of Ibadan, the dearly departed Prof. Olusegun Oladipo, Prof. Owolabi, Prof. Irele, A. Dr. Ukpokolo, I.E. Dr. Aguilana, Dr. Oyeshile, Dr. Ekonla, Dr. Udefi, and Prof. Bello, A.G. Their series of lectures and Books read during my postgraduate studies at the University was indeed, very instrumental in shaping my mind and thinking. May I add that Prof. A.G Bello's book on Logic was also very instrumental to the publication of this Book. I am grateful to you all. My friends and lecturers at the University of Calabar, Prof. A.F. Uduigwomen and Prof. G.O. Ozumba, I must say, were also very great influence in my mode of thinking. Their book on Introduction to Philosophy and Logic were also very instrumental to the compilation of this book.

I must also make mention of some other influences I had from other authors and academics outside the shores of Nigeria. I found very useful the works of Prof. Brooke Noel Moore and Prof. Kenneth Bruder, both of the California State University, Chico., very helpful. (Philosophy The Power of Ideas). The part played by Prof. Marrie Bergmann of Smith College, Prof. James Moore of Dartmouth College and Prof. Jack Nelson of Temple University in their book (The Logic Book) further broadened my mind and understanding of the principles of logic. Great reference was made to their work during the course of the compilation of this Book. Mention must also be made about all the assistance we got from the good people at Wikipedia Free Encyclopedia, we are indeed grateful for all your contributions and the privileges we got while compiling this text.

Here at Covenant University, the contributions of my Vice Chancellor and mentor, Prof. Aize Obayan cannot be over emphasized. Her preference and drive for excellence in all ramifications has kept me on my toes since I came in contact with her. Prof. K. Okonjor of the college of science and technology (CST) thought me about the virtues of patience in writing for publications. In the area of mechanical accuracy in writing for publications, the advice of my DVC, Prof. Charles Ogbulogo, of the Linguistic Department came in very handy. To these people here at Covenant University, I owe a debt of gratitude. Mention must also be made of my past and present students of (GST 211 & GST 311) and Philosophy at Covenant University; whose stimulating discourse and contributions during and outside class sessions have always ignited new ideas and ways of teaching and making the study of 'Philosophy, logic and Human Existence' more fun and enjoyable than ever before. I appreciate you all. My systems analysis, Eng. Olopade, Demola of Adeksworld Ventures and Mr. Daniel O. Jacobs for all their technical support to the compilation of this Book. We are grateful.

Finally, I want to acknowledge some very close family members and friends who had always offered a word of advice and encouragement especially in those moments when they were in scarcity. First on this list is my wife Mrs. Wogu Kelechi for her patience and longsuffering. She had to get used to not having all of my attention whenever she needed them as a result of the long hours spent in the office. I greatly appreciate your understanding. My four months old daughter, Princess Wogu Kathryn Eziihunayachim; I look at her and I seem to get more strength to forge ahead in my quest for excellence. I shall ever remain grateful to God Almighty for giving her to me. Her coming is indeed very timely. Dr. Ovia, E. for her support and patience, Dr. Chinoye Love for her kind advice during the process of the compilation of this book. Mr. Henry Okodua, for his regular visits. Pastor Kingsley and his family for their prayers and support. The part that my

publisher, Elder Jacob Adeleke Taiwo (Pumark) and Mrs Rashidat Olasoji, the system analyst, have played so far towards the publication of this book cannot be quantified. I am indeed grateful for his fatherly advice, understanding and professionalism.

In closing, I want to note that we are particularly humbled at the comments made by Prof. Princewill Alozie of Lagos State University as the foreward of this book. We appreciate the patience you took to go through the work and the remarks you've made. On behalf of all the contributors of this book we want to say "thank You".

**Wogu, Ikedinachi A. (Editor)**

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## ABOUT THE CONTRIBUTORS

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3. OSIMIRI, PETER
4. BENEDICT, MICHEAL
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## A GENERAL INTRODUCTION

(WOGU, A. I.)

*...From the moment when man began to ask questions about the basic fundamental Questions of life and reality, the quest for knowledge and wisdom has known no bounds...*

WOGU, 2002.

### PHILOSOPHY:

The Greeks were identified to have been the first to engage in the systematic enterprise of the pursuit of wisdom and knowledge. They considered anyone who engaged in this activity as a *Philosopher*. By this thought, "Philosophy" to them became the concern; among other things, of fundamental questions such as: what is the ultimate constituent of reality? How should we live, is there a God. If God, why evil?

Here at Covenant University, the study of the course "Philosophy, Logic & Human Existence" consist of a wide range of rigorous investigations into basic and fundamental issues in the highly esteemed discipline of Philosophy, Logic and the Science of Human Existence. Since the study of philosophy continues to develop in these contemporary times, we in this study, shall be devoted, not just to the Ancient philosophers, but also to those of the contemporary thinkers and philosophers with the view to further offer solutions to the issues and problems they have raised which have been known to influence human existence here on earth.

### LOGIC:

The science and ability to evaluate and distinguish good from bad arguments correctly, is a useful tool in the discipline of science and in life situations. The ability to distinguish between arguments that achieve their ends and those that do not, is therefore of crucial importance. If our students are going to be the much desired world changers that we want them to be, then they must thrive excellently in the business of persuading others through reasoned arguments as their most valuable and important tool. No doubt, we all are entitled to our opinions but that does not mean that opinions are equally reasonable. Therefore, if there must be a total and successful departure from *Form to Skill, Legalism to Realism, Points to Facts, From Mathematics to Life-mathics*, a rigorous course in logic becomes very essential for any Covenant University students and indeed every student seeking for the principles for acquiring thorough knowledge. This I believe explains why the NUC has made the teaching of Logic and Philosophy in all Nigerian Universities compulsory for every student.

our kind of stuff, so why not computers? Is it because computers don't have a soul? Or is it because they aren't alive? What does it mean to be alive anyway? All of these reflections are philosophical questions, the task of analyzing and trying to answer these questions have become the exclusive task and responsibility of the philosopher.

### ix. The Questions of Philosophy

Many philosophers questions concern norms. **Normative questions** ask about the value of something. When we decide that something is good or bad, right or wrong, beautiful or ugly, we are applying the norms or standards. Often, too, philosophers ask questions about what seem so obvious that we might not wonder about them - for example the nature of change, what is change? It is obvious what change is. If something changes it becomes different. If we have a different thing, then aren't we considering two things? The original thing and the new and different thing? Shouldn't we therefore, strictly speaking, not say that something changed but, rather, that it was *replaced*?

Perhaps these questions seem to be questions of nomenclature or semantics and of no practical interest. But over the course of a life time we discover that every individual will at some point have cause to offer some sort of response to these questions that life throw at them. Your previous exposure to this issues will determine how well you will perform when the occasion arise.

The list below will currently give you an idea of some of the things philosophers are currently investigating

- Ethical issues in various professions (medicine, Business, Law, etc.)
- Computer related issues: Artificial intelligence, information processing, whether or not machines can think or have Consciousness.
- Rationality and its ramifications.
- Social implications of Medical technology (Abortion, Euthanasia, Right to life, Medical research issues, informed consent).
- Feminist issues.
- Social and economic justice, policies that determine distribution of resources, Equality of opportunities, Human Rights.
- Truth and meaning in mathematics and formalized language.
- Skepticism and Relativism in knowledge and morals.
- What is to be a person; the rights and obligations of persons
- Issues in history and philosophy of Science e.t.c.

### x. What Philosophers Study

Many people have no idea what philosophy is all about. The term for some people often conjures up the image of a vague, fuzzy realm of irreducibly subjective opinion. A common question is "what do philosophers study? No one

seems to have this problem with other disciplines. For example (to put it more glibly) Biologist study Frogs, Geologist study Rocks, Historians study wars and Astronomers study stars, but what part of the Universe or Human experience do the philosophers examine? The short answer as a philosopher puts it, is that "philosophy's center is everywhere and its circumference is nowhere".<sup>10</sup> But someone may raise an objection that this definition makes it seem as though philosophy covers the same territory that the other disciplines do. The answer to this objection is that philosophy is unique in comparison with other areas of study not because it thinks about different things but because **it thinks about things differently**. This feature of philosophy can be made clear by comparing the sort of questions asked by different disciplines with the sort of questions asked by the philosopher in an different areas: Logic, Epistemology, Metaphysics, Philosophy of Nature, Ethics and Political philosophy these are known as the traditional branches of philosophy.

#### 1. LOGIC

While the psychologist study how people think and the causes of people's behaviour and beliefs, whether their thinking is rational or irrational, the philosopher is more interested in studying how he ought to think if we are to be rational. They also seek to justify the good reasons for holding a belief. All this kind of study is situated in the branch of philosophy called logic which basically is the study of the principles for distinguishing correct from incorrect reasoning or arguments.

#### 2. EPISTEMOLOGY

While the historian seeks to increase knowledge of past events and their specific dates, the philosopher on the other hand asks the question, what is knowledge? What is fact? What is truth? How can we know that something is true or not true? Is there objective truth? Or are all opinions relative? Fundamental questions about the nature and source of knowledge, the concept of truth, and the objectivity and relativity of our beliefs, are chiefly the concerns of the theory of knowledge or what in the branch of philosophy we call, Epistemology.

#### 3. METAPHYSICS

The physicist studies the ultimate constituents of reality such as atoms and protons, but on the other hand the philosopher will ask the question, "Is physical reality all there is"? Also while the neurobiologist studies the activity of the brain, the philosophy will ask, "Are all mental events really brain events"? Or is the mind separate from the body? Metaphysics is that area of philosophy that is concerned with the fundamental question about the nature of reality.

#### 4. PHILOSOPHY OF RELIGION,

While the astronomer studies the heavenly bodies and the starry skies and the laws that govern all these heavenly bodies, the philosopher is more concerned with the following kind of questions: Is the existence and nature of the universe self explanatory or does it need an explanation? or does it need a divine creator

that lies outside it? Also the philosopher often ask, Is there any rational way of believing in a good, an all powerful God who permits the undeserved destructions of hurricanes and the suffering of innocent children? Or is the evidence of an undeserved suffering God, an argument against such a God? These sort of questions about God's existence, the problem of evil and the relationship between faith and reason constitute the area of philosophy known as philosophy of religion.

#### 5. ETHICS

The anthropologist we are told studies the moral code of various societies while describing both their similarities and differences, but does not decide which one is the best. But on the other hand, the philosopher will ask the question, are there really any objectively correct ethical values? or are they all relative? Which ethical principle if any, bares the correct one? How do we decide what is right or wrong?. These questions and such more that falls in this class are located within the confines of ethics.

#### 6. POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY,

While political scientists study various forms of Government, the philosopher will ask, "What makes a government legitimate"? What is justice? What are the limits of governmental authority? Is disobeying the laws of a state ever morally justified? All such questions in philosophy are the major concern of the branch of philosophy called Political Philosophy.

Let me also note that there are also other specific disciplines of philosophy that raise and tackle some other fundamental issues in philosophy, they include: philosophy of art (Aesthetics), philosophy of education, philosophy of history, philosophy of language, philosophy of law, philosophy of mathematics, philosophy of psychology, philosophy of science and so on.

#### xI. The Relevance of the Study of Philosophy

Philosophers and philosophy students are frequently asked the question, "what is the practical value of philosophy"? This question seems to be easier to answer in respect to other discipline. The study of computer science for instance certainly leads to an endless practical application, not to mention career possibilities. Biological research can produce new cures for the diseases that plagues us, engineers learn how to build better bridges and produce marvelous inventions. Psychologist help us deal with test anxiety and other maladies. But what does philosophy do?

A contemporary of Socrates, the satirical playwright Aristophanes wrote a play titled "The Clouds" in which the actor, presenting Socrates delivered his speech while suspended from the clouds in a basket. For many people, this image typified the philosopher- someone who does not have his or her feet on the ground. Philosophy is often thought based an optional enterprise, a detached erudite hobby for the intellectually elite or the socially disabled. Someone once defined the philosopher as "someone who describes the impossible and proves the obvious."

Now in order to answer the question "what is the practical value of philosophy", we need to first clarify the concepts and question the assumption contained in the question. **What does it mean for something to be practical?** A good answer might be that something might be practical if it is an efficient and effective means for achieving a goal. If your goal is to learn your french vocabulary words for a test a practical (efficient and effective) way to do this is to write the words on note cards that you can review throughout the day. But when we ask, "is philosophy practical"? What goal, do we have in mind. To answer this question we need to know what goals, ends or values are really important in life in order to measure whether philosophy is or is not a practical means of achieving them. By now we may have realized that to think about these issues is to think philosophically. Ironically, to ask whether or not philosophy is a useful activity you must have made some previous philosophical assumptions about what is important in life, in other words, on like any other discipline, a person cannot criticize philosophy without having first engaged in philosophy.

In addition to the above argument that philosophy is inescapable, there are even more concrete points that can be made concerning the value of studying philosophy. The American Philosophical Association has identified four skills that one acquires when he studies philosophy. (1) Problem Solving, (2) Communication Skills, (3) Persuasive Powers and (4) Writing Skills. Obviously these are skills that are important in any discipline as well as any high level career. In fact studies have repeatedly shown that philosophy major students tend to do better than average in admission test for law schools, medical school, and graduate programs in business administration just to mention but a few. Further more in an economy that is based on the communication and analysis of information, the skill of analytical reasoning, critical reading and effective writing and conceptual analysis are very essential. Consequently, *The New York Time Career Planner* reports: "Philosophy is one fundamental area of study that has found a new role in the high-tech world" <sup>12</sup>

While the logical and analytical parts are important, philosophy should not be thought of as a dull, impersonal, logic chopping enterprise. This is because the history of philosophy is the story of men and women with soaring imaginations who were able to think creatively and free our minds from the well worn ruts left by our mundane taken-for-granted assumptions. No doubt philosophers have given us a new lenses for looking at the world, asked questions that no one else thought to ask, discovered creative answers to age old questions and woven new patterns out of the treads of human experience. While philosophy can give you practical skills that can be applied to a wide range of tasks in schools and in your career, the most important benefit of studying philosophy is the change it can make in your growth as a person. Hence the question about the practical value of philosophy should now be framed as "What can philosophy do with me"?