

The Logic of Ifa Literary Corpus in African Philosophy

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Abstract

The aim of this paper is to unearth the logic of Ifa literary corpus within the scope of African philosophy. It claims that African thought-system sets the stage for inclusive rationality based on binary fusion and an orientation of complementarity that could be useful for intercultural understanding in contemporary time. This is because contemporary time is a period that is characterized by the temperament that has the potential to go astray. As a result, this circumstance calls for urgent action to ensure social order. Coincidentally, Ifa is enshrined in the principle of duality, complementarity and symbiosis which are the ingredients of reconciling the opposites. Consequently, this paper focuses on the analysis of the logic and hermeneutics in African tradition in a bid to discern the underlying philosophical orientation deep-rooted in the Ifa/Afa divination act and process.

Keywords: African philosophy, binary system, hermeneutics, Ifa divination, logic of Ifa

Introduction

Conventionally, the concept of logic creates formal structures for making thinking rational and organized through a set of rules or principles that provide strict guidance for thought. Granted this explanation, it means that logic is the tool for making reasoning rigorous and critical (cf. Okoro, 2017; Anele, 2005; Adeniyi, 2004; Momoh, 2000 & Otakpor, 2000). In this direction, it goes to show that logic is the tool for making reasoning rigorous and critical. It implies then that any system of thought that must follow an organized pattern should of necessity be anchored on one form of logic or another.

Taking a cue from Okoro's article entitled, "The Logic and Epistemology of Life-Force in African Philosophy," we maintain that the life-force principle in African philosophy is embedded in the divination process (*igba afa*) of the *Afa* (i.e. Yoruba *Ifa*) system. As part of his bid to expatiate further on *Ifa* or *Afa* divination system, Okoro quoting Augulu explains that divination system is not a language but it is a specialized communication sign system which generates symbolically, knowledge related to past, present, employed in predicting the future actions. In essence, *Ifa* is a form of symbolic logic. *Ifa* is used as a divination process by the *babalawo* (Igbo *dibia*) as a sign system to transmit meaning from the finite province to the world of everyday life.

These signs are decoded into everyday common language to generate symbolic experiences and knowledge which determine social action in the world of everyday life (cf. Okoro, 2017: 343).

Consequent upon the foregoing analysis, it is clear that the logical system of symbolism as embedded in *Ifa*, beneath is the spiritual and transcendental kinds of metaphysics and epistemology of African philosophy. In reality, these spiritual transcendental metaphysics and epistemology are in turn fused into the logic of symbolism. This is accomplished through the process of *Ifa* or *Afa* divinations. At this juncture, the researcher notices a vivid and magnetic imagination at work to achieve balance or a mean between the two extremes. Again, a researcher notices at once that imaginative representation of the world in terms of symbolism is purely mental or ideological but never physical. Supporting this view further, Okoro quoting Bonachristus refers to the logic of life-force as the “African symbolismic logic that substantiates African symbolismic philosophy”. He avers that:

Since the universe of African understanding and meaning of reality is invisible, ideological or nonmaterial, the adjective “symbolic”; because, even though if the terms “symbol” (symbolic) and symbolism (symbolismic) overlap in being ideological or nonmaterial in relation of the qualities of existence, “symbol”, unlike (symbolism) does not exactly and always represent ideological or nonmaterial relation. Symbol can be material or nonmaterial, but “symbolism” is always ideological or nonmaterial (2003a:7).

It is imperative at this point to underscore that the use of the terms “symbolic”, “symbolism”, and “symbolismic” in this study means transcendental imaginative visualization or representation of the world in the mind’s eye and the purpose of such manner of representation is to achieve harmony and cohesion amidst the duality and diversity in the world. To capture this expression vividly, let us listen to the statement of Bonachristus:

African symbolismic logic is the science and method of the symbolismic deposition of the quality and relation of existence by the symbolismic order and categories of the symbol of reality, knowledge and consciousness, the symbolism of word, truth and thought, and the symbolismic expression of language, meaning and understanding. So, African symbolismic logic is the science of the quality of existence and the method of the relation of existence. It is the science and method of the quality and relation of existence (2003b:5).

The pertinent question here is: how exactly does this logic of life-force or logic of symbolism proceed? It proceeds by the actual process of *Ifa* divination

or Igbo *Afa* divination which involves the throwing of the Ifa chaplets (i.e. *opele* usually in pairs) that represents a pure process of investigation or inquiry. The pair nature of the Ifa chaplets is meant to capture the duality and diversity of things in the world. One part of the *opele* is concave side up, convex side down is referred to as *jinkoto* (i.e. open) the other part of the *opele* is convex side up and concave side down and is referred to as *malu* (i.e. closed) (for information, see Abimbola, 1976:20–21; Onwuejeogwu, 1997:45; & Bonachristus, 2003c). The continuous throw of these *opele* results into what is called scale of modulations (*Odu*) or what Bonachristus prefers to call “scala modulationis” which include; the scale of symbol, the scale of symbolism, the scale of symbolismic expression and the scale of symbolismic deposition (cf. Abimbola, 1976: Bonachristus, 2003a:6 & 2003b:2). Bonachristus believes that in these four scales or stairways, can be found the categories of African logic as follows: the scale or category of symbol is about order (i.e. structural organization) of reality, knowledge and consciousness such that through the ascribing of form into things, reality and consciousness are made to harmonize in the universe of knowledge. The scale or category of symbolism is about the order (i.e. structural organization) of word, truth and thought so that through contemplation ideas (as products of thought) are ascribed to things.

In other words, thought fashions the idea that determine the attribute of word and truth. It follows that every symbolism involves mediation, a mediation of truth by word and thought. The scale of category of symbolismic expression describes the structure or order by which language and meaning are harmonized to instruct depth (*ijinle*) or understanding through symbolic representation. Here symbolism becomes a tool for creating a balanced or integrated view of reality, of appealing to experience and the meaning that underlies experience so that vivid and lucid images (i.e. mass significations) of things are created in such a way that they arouse speech before thought. Finally, the scale or category of symbolismic deposition provides the model or order by which reason becomes productive (either immediately or mediately and imaginatively) of inferential process by which premises are posited and conclusion drawn from the premises (Bonachristus, 2003b: 2–6 cited in Okoro, 2017: 323).

Apparently, it is clear in the above analysis and exposition that within the African thought-system, the universe of life-force abhors the rules of abstraction, according to Okoro, the rules that presents *logos* simply as *ratio*, which visions the world as mutating on the linear scale with a *teleos* or *end* in view. In the universe of life-force, force does not obey the dialectical triad of linear progression, rather forces move on a circuitous progression, in the fashion of concentric circles of dialectics. This explains why imaginative

visioning becomes the way for attaining harmony, unity, balance, homogeneity and cohesion in such a universe. In this direction, by balancing existence on the four pillars of symbolic representations viz: symbols, symbolism, symbolistic expression and symbolistic deposition, holism becomes the watchword that qualifies and governs the universe of forces such that reality, knowledge, consciousness, word, truth, thought, language, meaning and understanding are all imaginatively and symbolically modeled and deposited in complete and comprehensive unity.

The foregoing argument is akin to the statement of Anyanwu (1981:87) on the African universe when he submits that, "It cannot condone regimentations because there is a continuous interplay, intermingling and interdependence between spirit (forces) and the material world." The relevant point to note here is that isolated cases do not exist in the universe of forces, that is to say, a foundation is propped up by another and another by another and so forth. Put differently, in African conception of the universe nothing is absolute, which is, everything, everybody, however, apparently interdependence, exhibited now as duality or reciprocity, now as ambivalence or complementarities, has always been the fundamental principle of the philosophy of life. Consequently, in the universe of forces things interfuse and in such a universe we do not talk of disunity or dissociation, but of association, co-existence and co-operation. We do not talk of isolated activities, but of symbiosis. In the universe of holism, things are not compartmentalized, departmentalized and fragmented. Based on this, Okoro quoting Anyanwu extensively drew the following conclusion:

- i. since there are no isolated life forces in the universe, there can be no isolated individual person;
- ii. society is the manifestation of the order of the universe;
- iii. all relationships between all the life forces ought to be strengthened and not weakened;
- iv. there is no dissociation of sensibility from rationality in African culture. The duality of experience should not harden into dualism. Politics therefore, should not be discussed as if it were separated from religion or religion as if it were separated from all practical activities (1983:53–54).

Granted the circuitous or cyclical nature of the universe of forces we cannot conceive the world as having a beginning or an end in time since as an organic entity it has the capacity for self-regeneration and self-sustenance. It is imperative to note that *Ifa* divination system as a pure process of investigation operates on three principal principles, namely; the rules of deduction, induction and hermeneutics. Before we delve into the delineation of deductive and

inductive principles, let us see how the hermeneutic principles of thought function within the universe of life-force.

The Hermeneutic Procedure in Ifa Literary Corpus

The term hermeneutics comes from the Greek *hermeneus* which literally translates as an interpreter and has been generally used to mean the art, skill, or theory of interpretation, of understanding the significance of human actions, utterances, products and institutions (Bullock, 1988:380). The term was used in philosophy from theology by Dilthey in the late nineteenth century; it refers to the fundamental discipline that is concerned with the special methods of human studies, which do not merely order the raw deliverance of sensation but must seek an understanding of their essential meaningful subject-matter. The term has since been broadly employed by Martin Heidegger (1982:28–30) to mean the phenomenological study of human existence through the process of destructuring. As a process of destructuring, hermeneutic operates the trilogy of analysis, synthesis and revelation. It is this Heidegger's usage of hermeneutics that appeals to us most in this essay and this is because it bears striking similarities with the process of enquiry by divination in *Ifa*.

The hermeneutic procedure of *Ifa* divination operates upon a trilogy of analysis, synthesis and signification. Signification here defines the end of *Ifa* divination that expectedly should reveal or unveil a particular message or prescription which then would be applied to a given situation, making revelation and application to be by processes of signification. What we notice at this level is that the rules of deduction (depicting holism) and the rules of induction (depicting particularism and probabilism) now role into one to produce the binary system that progresses by way of interfusion or integration. In essence, holism and probabilism play interconnectivity roles in the investigative/divination process of *Ifa*. It is this interconnective functioning that brings about interpretation in the form of revelation or revelation (cf. Okoro, 2017:326–327). Indisputably, this revelation process is a continuous one that juxtaposes opposing views that are in turn resolved at a higher level. The assumption is that the universe of forces is one of a continuum and in such a universe; things are transient, the same way as solutions to problems.

The *Ifa* divination and investigative process (meaning the throw of a pair of *opele*) entails a clockwise operation from down to up so that the *jinkoto* (i.e. open) end of the *opele* and the *malu* (i.e. closed) end of the *opele* as well enter themselves at the point of *Ifa* divination (cf. Abimbola, 1976:15–16 & Okoro, 2017:326). Each of the *opele* inside (i.e. *jinkoto* or rough) or the outside (*malu* or *smooth*) surfaces consist of four half nut are attached to each half of the chain. In this direction, both of them represent lines of light. The closed

end of the *opele* represents closed line of light, while the open end of the *opele* represents the open line of light. Since the two sides belong to light and are two sides of light, they then meet at *circle of light* otherwise known as the *Ifa mystical zero*. According to Okoro (2017:327), the *Ifa mystical zero* or *circle of light* depicts the harmonic mean of the differential integration of the two sides of *opele*, that is to say, it is the mean or the hob on which hermeneutic interpretation rotates, revolves and proceeds. With this pattern, zero would depict the void, boundlessness, a limitless expanse or simply nothingness.

It is observed from the foregoing analysis in *Ifa mystical zero*, depicting nothingness as source from which the two sides of the *opele* (i.e. *jinkoto* and *malu*) accordingly; as paths to illumination and coming together as one entity also depict the pathway to actual *Being*. It is from this process that these aforementioned entities derive their essences and substance. This implies that *non-Being* and *Being* are equi-primordially predisposed. Similarly, Okoro writes:

Du or *Di* (meaning that which is, thing that is there or simply to be) as *Being* becomes the ground on which hermeneutic discourse and investigation progress, meaning that interpretative discourse is an endless process that evolves a concentric circle of dialectics. As it applies to the arena of discourse intended for the settlement of a dispute, it is readily assumed that conflict (disagreement) and resolution (agreement) are equi-primordially pre-disposed (2017:328).

Consequent upon the above quotation, the ultimate pathway to *Being*, *jinkoto* representing the closed line of light indicates darkness, permanence, passivity, inactivity, motionlessness, rest and by extension feminine in principle and negative in polarity, while *malu* representing the open line of light indicates light, activity, change, mobility, motion and by extension masculine in principle and positive in polarity. To paraphrase Okoro's statement, the binary structure of *Ifa* is determined by a frequency of binary relationship as follows: "binary dissimilarity; binary similarity; binary opposition; binary inversion; and binary inversion – opposition". Needless to say, it is this structural frequency of binary relationship that plays up transformational relationships in the *Ifa* process of divination. Through this transformational processes of relationships, general situations are harmonized with particular individual traits, in the same way as general human traits are harmonized with existential circumstances. To support this system of thought further, Okoro quoting Bonachristus extensively states that:

The *Ifa mystical zero* is the circle of integro-differential reality that determines the nature and nurture of existence on earth. It is the circle of

all things that are what they are and all things that are not what they are not. It is the ancestor of space and time, of every thought, every word and every deed. It is the cross of life and death, of light and darkness, of spirit and flesh, of being and nonbeing. It is the basket of wisdom, of knowledge and intelligence, the pot of power, the soul of conscience and character, the parameter of change and permanence, and the provider of nurture and nature (2003c:6).

To take a cue from symbolic logic, therefore, the hermeneutic procedure of *Ifa* otherwise coded as the logic of life-force yields an endless process of interpretations. It is indeed a continuous process that involves the concentric circles of dialectics thereby giving rise to myriad interpretations. In its traditional setting it yield 256 verses of interpretations, but this is as it then applied to situation in traditional times. In contemporary times when human reality has enormously expounded its frontiers of activities, the *Ifa* symbolic system is being expounded to accommodate and correspond to the sum total reality confronting humankind (cf. Okoro, 2017:329–330). Thus, the logic of *Ifa* literary corpus is a system of representative inquiry. In the words of Bonachristus (2003a) and Okoro (2017:330) it is a symbolismic science and method of revelation, interpretation, analysis of existence, it is a representative system of theories and practices, governing thought and conduct in relation to the meaningful investigation of the principle and laws that regulate culture and existence. Having shown the hermeneutic interpretation process in *Ifa*, the logical question that follows now is: what is the deductive process in *Ifa* literary corpus?

The Deductive Procedure in *Ifa* Literary Corpus

Perhaps, the shortest and quickest way to answer the question of deductive processes in *Ifa* literary corpus is to say that it is all about holism. According to Azenabor (2010:79) holism is simply a theory with many dimensions. “It is based on the idea that the fundamental principle of the universe is the criterion of wholes, that of complete and self-contained system. He adds that, in holism, whole is greater than the single part. Holism seeks to grasp the single wholeness of the varied pattern of culture” (Ibid). Thus, the holistic value is built around an ontology that accepted diversity or otherness without hierarchical judgments of human worth (Ibid). By implication, it is noteworthy to say that it is with this mode of thought that we are able to establish a synthesis of human knowledge.

Furthermore, the prism of holism captures the deductive procedure in *Ifa* thought-system. For example, Okoro sums up this holism in instance that involves the harmonization of forces along vertical and horizontal lines. The

integration of forces along vertical and horizontal lines is based on the assumption that things in the universe are equi-primordially inter-disposed; one exercises primacy over the other. In an instance of vertical integration, Ifa is anticipated to reveals the order by which forces in the universe are hierarchicized. By this process of vertical integration, the cosmos is considered one organic whole in which higher forces affects the lower forces in the hierarchical order. It is from this that the system of vertical integration is taken to mean the components of forces that make up the entire cosmos (God as the most supreme force, divinities, ancestors, man, animals, vegetation and minerals in that respective order) hierarchically exert influence on one another. On a horizontal scale, integration involves the effective coordination of the various systems that make up the cosmos and the human society into a circuitous whole thereby reflecting a common purpose, teleos or cohesion in the universe and in the society. Okoro writes:

The entire universe is a perfectly coordinated system of stars (suns), planets, moons (satellites), comets, meteors and meteorites, while the human society, reflecting the order in the universe, should replicate a perfect homogenization of the various institutions that make up the society (2017:331).

Consequently, this researcher noticed that holistic and deductive nature of the universe is premised on the fact that forces interfused. This is made possible by the cyclical progression of reality in a cyclical order that further ensures the forces are schematically arranged in a binary pattern. Granted this pattern of binary fusion, by which forces mutate in a cyclical progression, the first reality that occurs is the *number four* (4) or *base four*. This is represented in the table below:

S/N	Four principles in Ifa literary corpus	Translation
1	<i>ogbe</i>	permanence
2	<i>irosun</i>	space and time
3	<i>ogunda</i>	mechanism
4	<i>otura</i>	flow

Fig. 2: Adapted from Wande Abimbola's Sixteen Great Poems of Ifa and in my conversation with an Ifa adept during the course of this study.

The four mystical realities actually represent four energies and it is through their interfusion that reality become manifest. In essence, *Du* or *Di* (i.e. Being) permutates itself through four elements and it is through this permutation

that *emi* (life), *eniyan* (human being) and *phenomena* (*ifarahan*) becomes manifest. For instance, it is by its mutation on *base four* (4) that the earth rotates and revolves in a cyclical order such that we notice seasonal alteration on a quarterly basis. Now the quarterly arrangement of things brings in the *number three* (3), another important factor in the cyclical progression of things. Perhaps, it is against this background that Okoro (2017:332) argues:

...if on the base 4 (as depicting the four pillars, four elements or four sources) things mutate, the number 3 automatically becomes the order of progression. Needless to say, the teaming factors of base 4 and number 3 produce the prime number 7 as another important factor in the holistic and deductive order of things and these numbers do really play significant factors in the codification of the order of forces into social reality.

Taking a cue from the above quotation, the researcher also observes that the symbolic importance of numbers in traditional African philosophy is also presented by the Dogon philosophy of creation (cf. Momoh, 2000). In Dogon world view, it is argued that the intimate relationship of identity between human person and the universe is initiated by the vibrations of *kize uzi* (i.e. *Being*). The seven movements or vibrations caused by *kize uzi* created both man and the universe. In order to expatiate further on this reality, Anyanwu writes:

The first and the sixth vibrations ($1 + 6 = 7$) produced the legs. The second and fifth vibrations ($2 + 5 = 7$) produced the head. The seventh (7) produced the sex organs of man. Even though the seed produced the image of man, man also presents the image of the seed. Man, is therefore, a microcosm, a universe in miniature (2000:353).

It is clear from the above analysis and exposition that the logic of life-force in African philosophy is meant to show the ontological structure of things responsible for the holistic and tripological nature of the universe, which in turn determines the holistic and tripological nature of African conceptions of society, time, history, politics, family, economy and justice. The tripological conception of things in itself rests on the metaphysical principle of "interpenetrability of life-forces". Elements behave magically, miraculously as they symbolically interact. And since spirit interlinks, interconnects and interpenetrates all things, it goes to show that everything is in everything (cf. Anyanwu, 1981; Momoh, 2000; Azenabor, 2010; Unah, 1999 & Okoro, 2011; 2012; 2013 & 2017).

In his book entitled, *Bantu Philosophy*, Placide Tempels (1959:3-38) reasoned that among the Bantu, "Being and Force are inextricably juxtaposed,

one can neither decrease nor increase *Being* or *Force*, because, *Being* or *Force* is indestructible". The pertinent point here is that the indestructibility of spirit enhances its interpenetrating, self-sustaining, animating and permeating nature. It is crystal clear from the foregoing that the African universe is dynamic and that this dynamism operates the logic of concentric circles. Put differently, the cyclical nature of the African cosmos rotates and revolves on a triangular dimension otherwise known as tripod. The cosmos, society and man are said to live a symbiotic unity. Therefore, holism is the appropriate word for describing the African understanding of the interrelationship between the cosmos, society and man. Each is an individual whole energized and interconnected to the other by spirit. Spirit as the motivating element ensures that the cosmos, society and man are one intricate web, harmoniously integrated. To this reality, Okoro adds that this interfusion is such that the "world order is replicated in the social order" and the "social order" is replicated in the "self-order" and vice-versa. In explicating this further, Anyanwu writes:

...by way of interfusion, the three orders are said to be identical and hierarchical. Whereas the hierarchicization of the forces and their identical nature requires that all forces be strengthened and not weakened, that an individual should be seen in the light of the whole and that meaning, significance and value depend on the art of integration (1981: 371).

The implication of the foregoing analysis is that world reorientation, social reconstruction, should begin from the enlightenment and reformation of the self, for the re-attunement of the self-order to the social and the cosmic order. This is because the African sees man and society to be the embodiments of spirituality and physicality, which in turn rotates upon the cyclic triad or the tripod. Ancestors, living humans and unborn children represent the past, the present and the future respectively. This cyclic triad is most visible in the age-grade system. Okoro quoting Onwuejeogwu submits that:

Age-grade is seen as a movement of the future through the present into the past. The future is transformed into the present by various ceremonies; the present is transformed into the past by retirement and mortuary.... Every normal individual has three levels of existence: as an individual, as a member of a group and as a member of a community (1997:115).

The above submission is applicable to the leader in traditional Africa. According to Anyanwu, a leader is seen as: "a symbol of authority representing the land as an embodiment of the spirit world, physical man and unborn

children". In essence, all these are made possible by the coordinating act of spirit. Anyanwu argues:

Spirit embraces the power of beliefs, ideas and thoughts. It constitutes the source of authority, vitality, possibilities, law and integration. Spirit adds depth and cohesion to life. As a unifying principle, it eliminates all individual and group boundaries and creates a wider and deeper social consciousness or community of people (1981:372).

Hence, it is by this holistic and deductive nature of things that human exercises the hope and expectation that the future will continue to be like the past, thereby making induction to be a by-process of deduction. This takes us to the inductive process in Ifa literary corpus.

The Inductive Procedure in *Ifa* Literary Corpus

The basic features and fundamental principle of induction is that it is based on the law of reciprocity; it tries to link the future with the past and in doing this it hyperbolizes issues, thereby creating room for a high case of probability. These principles are very much evident in the Ifa thought system. Ifa is an integrated system of symbols, social reality, communication and control and social action mainly directed towards the construction or transformation of social reality conceived in terms of the past, present and future action (cf. Abimbola, 1976; Komolafe, 2003; Okoro, 2017). Okoro adds that the field of social actions and actors consist of both mystical and mundane social relationships collectively linking the people in genealogical and age-grade structure.

Relying on what John Stuart Mills describes as "sociological imagination," the *babalawo* is able to bring his client closer to social reality through a series of interpretations framed in terms of a given locality or society which includes essential components of the society in question, the relationship between the components and the biography of the individual are all harmonized to be in tandem with the history of the society (cf. Okoro, 2017; Onwuejeogwu, 1997 & Abimbola, 1976). In a situation where the individual in question is a stranger, the assumption is that problems like their bearers are not isolated. So, no problem is so strange such that it has not been experienced in the past by someone else. Put differently, there is nothing new to present as the future will continue to reproduce the past experience in a cyclical order. Owing to this reality, the *babalawo* commits an inductive leap. He readily assumes that since we live in the same world controlled by the same elements what is true of the past will be true of the future, meaning that what worked for someone in the past will certainly work for some other person

with a similar condition in the present. In making allusion to Okoro's expression where he argues that: "as long as the interpretations and explanations of the *babalawo* are within this given scope the validity and rationality of the *babalawo* are assured and taken for granted".

The foregoing analysis shows that by using the rule of induction the *babalawo* puts the efficacy of his divination procedure to test. In the words of Okoro, this test is no other than the high risk of probability. However, the *babalawo* knows better about the client problem which is the reason why the *babalawo* often prescribes his clients to appease *Esu* (i.e. Igbo *Ekwensu*). This act signifies the balance of forces as well as the God of mischief and the Minister of Justice, through a prescribed sacrifice. However, if the sacrifice and the entire divinations process fails, the *babalawo* attributes the failure to the lack of faith or *Will power* on the part of the individual to affirm and since the individual did not summon enough faith and *Will power* to affirm, his/her personal god (i.e. Yoruba *ori-inu* or Igbo *chi*) did not as well affirm. Following the shortcoming of the inductive procedure as a method of analysis used in atomizing things, traditional Africans insist that induction as a process of investigation can only gather greater significance if it is made by-process of deduction. Hence, the insinuation is based on the fact that all particularistic knowledge should be synthesized to become holistic or what Okoro will ordinarily describe as universalistic. In contemporary world, the problem of induction is tackled and confronted scientifically. This suggests that sacrifices are not made to any God or Goddess in the way of appeasement. Rather theories, rules and laws are subjected to series of tests repetitively in order to affirm the validity and veracity of these theories, rules and laws etc.

Conclusion

What the researcher has done in this paper is pure architectonics. The concept of architectonics is simply used to depict the general structure of *Ifa* literary corpus through scholars for a systematic analysis. Besides the analytical exploration of *Ifa* as a compendium of knowledge, attempt has been made to examine the logic while bringing out the deductive and inductive procedure of *Ifa* metaphysical system. In this direction, we explore the principle of hermeneutics and its components of duality, cyclicity, symbiosis and complementarity of *Ifa* thought-system. Findings have shown that in African philosophy, the mind is an extension of the cosmic forces whose dynamism is held on course by mutual interaction of units. This understanding of man and the world interaction made it possible to live beyond the demand of their immediacy. They drew inferences based on empirical evidence but also saw deep-rooted connections between events in the world and saw the

need to attend to the human quest for higher values. This experience is what birthed the fundamental of transcendental nature of *Ifa* literary corpus as we have shown in this paper. The cardinal message of this essay is to tease-out the philosophical essences in the logic of *Ifa* literary corpus in a bid to make the methodology known and ready for problem solving. This has been aptly demonstrated systematically to avoid ambiguity against a clear understanding of its philosophical system.

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