

April 1990

**AFRICAN PHILOSOPHY : PAULIN J. HOUNTONDJI —
HIS DILEMMA AND CONTRIBUTIONS**

The debate over the existence or non-existence of a philosophy that can be qualified as African has been on for over four decades. The professional philosopher in Africa today operates in a situation of cultural, political, social and economic tension. Moulded by and in the fineries and principles of Western philosophic tradition, he is constrained by the vast body of opinion (doxa) and beliefs entertained by the majority of Africans of whom he is essentially a part. Torn between the philosophic traditions of the West and the abject socio-political and economic conditions of Africa, his dilemma is understandable.

One such philosopher is Paulin J. Hountondji, a scholar whose influence in the Francophone African countries is remarkable but who remains largely unread, or not well read, or understood in Anglophone Africa mainly because of the language barrier. In the following passages I briefly summarise his endearing contributions; I then present another view of philosophy different from Hountondji's and finally situate his philosophic programme.

II

Hountondji's contributions presented with much vigour, earnestness and disarming logic can be found in his articles publi-

Received : 6-6-89

shed in the following journals, among the many others.

1. "An Alienated Literature", *Diogenes*, No. 71, 1970.
2. "History as a Myth", *Presence Africaine*, No. 91, 1971.
3. "African Philosophy; Myth and Reality", *Thought and Practice*, Vol. 1, No. 2, 1974.
4. "Philosophy and Its Revolution", *Cahiers Philosophiques Africaines*, Nos. 3-4, 1974.
5. "The Idea of Philosophy in Nkrumah's Consciencism", *Daho-Express*, No. 1235 (15, September 1973).
6. "True and False Pluralism", *Diogenes*, No. 84, 1973.
7. "The Pitfalls of Being Different", *Diogenes*, No. 131, Fall 1985.

The articles from number one to six have been collected, retouched and published in a volume titled *African Philosophy: Myth and Reality*¹ in 1983, though the French version was published as far back as 1976. Some of the references are to this book and where appropriate, to the articles themselves. Hountondji's contributions in general and specifically to the debate can be summarised briefly as follows :

1. There are no philosophers in Africa because what is generally referred to as African Philosophy is not essentially different from ethnophilosophy.²
2. African ethnophilosophy has its roots in the works of the Flemish Missionary, Placid Tempels³, who without "terminological scruples" mistook ethnophilosophy for philosophy. The work of Alexis Kagame⁴ while exhibiting another feature(s) in terms of nomenclature, strictly speaking, is in line with Tempelsian tradition with only this difference : that Kagame sought to extract "a complete philosophy from the

grammatical analysis of Bantu languages.”⁵ These works are, for Hountondji, “ethnographic works with philosophical pretensions.”

3. Nkrumah in his *Consciencism* believed in the existence of a “traditional African philosophy and by integrating Islamic and Euro-Christian contributions, sought to create on this base a new philosophical and ideological synthesis which could be unanimously espoused by all sons and daughters of revolutionary Africa.”⁶ Nkrumah ended up disastrously by enthroning “unanimity as a value to be promoted in the political and scientific life of contemporary Africa.” Against this “pretentious” unanimity, Hountondji calls attention to the virtue of pluralism and essential contradiction as the motive force in the history of African peoples.⁷

4. In the light of the foregoing, Hountondji calls for an adequate, proper, incisive and painstaking evaluation of all that is so far taken as African philosophy which has its roots in ethnography. The understanding and appreciation of African past does not have “to become a simple rumination, a pleased satisfaction with or a resignation to the present, but that it be guided by an actual project, a clear vision of the present and the future.” Without this, Africans of today may simply forget about rational procedures on the pretext and understanding that their ancestors have already done so. It is only when African thinkers abandon reliance on ethnographic and cultural anthropological works, and embrace rational procedures that Africans can “discover the adventure of a single and same humanity.”⁸

The works under reference cannot be treated or understood in isolation from much earlier works by Hountondji, especially his *African Philosophy: Myth and Reality*. In the various essays

in the book, Hountondji vigorously maintains that African philosophers in various tones and modes "struck up the Tempelsian theme whereas they should have been mindful of the massive and blinding fact that Tempels, by his own admission, was addressing not them but the European public."⁹ In his opinion, African thinkers and philosophers need to redefine their mission, reorient and re-relate themselves. They should cease to write for an European audience interested in and craving for exoticism. "They must write first and foremost for an African public."¹⁰

Hountondji further argues that the term African philosophy is a misnomer mainly because what is usually taken as such (collectively) in the literature that is so far massively available is "African Pseudo-Philosophy",¹¹ which has no explicit formulation because of its total reliance on the ethnographic works of Tempels, Kagame and others. He then wonders whether the word philosophy, when qualified by the word African, still retains its usual meaning, that is the universality of the word in terms of "its possible geographical applications."¹²

His position is that this universality has to be preserved not because philosophy must necessarily ask the same questions or has the same themes from one geographical area to the other but essentially because "the differences of content are meaningful precisely and only as differences of content, which as such refer back to the essential unity of a single discipline, of a single style of inquiry."¹³ The phrase, African Philosophy, has been subjected to mythological exploitation retrievable though, but not for the purposes or services of "a fiction of a collective system of thought but to a set of philosophical discourse and texts."¹⁴

In the process of retrieval, Hountondji proposes a new concept of African philosophy which remains behind and beyond

the ethnographic pretexts.¹⁵ But this retrieval effort cannot be grounded in ethnophilosophy "which claims to be the description of an implicit, unexpressed world-view, which never existed any where but in the anthropologists imagination.. a philosophy which has no rational justification but shelters lazily behind the authority of a tradition."¹⁶ Against this, Hountondji believes that philosophy has its locus in the "world-view described" and in "the description itself", that African philosophy does exist not in ethnophilosophy as its *locus classicus* but in a new sense "as a literature produced by Africans and dealing with philosophical problems."¹⁷

To this extent the much acclaimed work of Tempels is not African philosophy because the author is not an African. "African philosophy is African philosophical literature."¹⁸ The difference is not because one is qualitatively better than the other, it is not as a result of racial, religious or cultural factors but because the "geographical variable" must be accounted for-geographical variable understood "as empirical, contingent, extrinsic to the content or significance or the discourse and as quite apart from any questions of theoretical connections."¹⁹

Consequently, Hountondji rephrases his definition of African philosophy to include moral tales, didactic legends, aphorisms and proverbs; all constitute an intrinsic part of this philosophy. Conceding the inadequacy and inappropriateness of his earlier positions, he declares: "the absence of transcription certainly does not devalue a philosophical discourse, but it prevents it from taking itself into a collective theoretical tradition and from taking its place in a history as a reference point capable of orienting future discussion. There may therefore have been African philosophers without an African philosophy."²⁰ Until this precise moment of transcription African memory cannot

liberate "itself for the critical activity which is the beginning of philosophy, in the only acceptable sense of the word."²¹

This, then, is what Hountondji's philosophic programme and problematic in relation to the debate over African philosophy amounts to. In spite of his formidable intellectual output, rigorous and arresting arguments couched in an enchanting language, is his position, generally speaking, sustainable?

III

Philosophy is a very old science. It is as old as man himself. What I mean is that as man became able to think, to question, to reason, to reflect, argue and debate, he began to philosophise. To philosophise or to refuse to do so is also to philosophise because one needs to show why one should not. This is because the human intellect is naturally and perpetually thirsty for knowledge of all kinds. Durant was referring to this fundamental yearning for knowledge when he suggested "that there is a pleasure in philosophy and a lure even in the mirages of metaphysics, which every student feels until the coarse necessities of physical existence drag him from the heights of thought into the mart of economic strife and gain."²²

By philosophy is meant the intelligent and reflective search for the first causes which justify the rise of the phenomena of the world and life. During the earlier part of human history and development, the search for causes was made more of imagination than of reason. Thus, two stages may be distinguished:

- (a) The age of universal animism, when the world was conceived of as a living being performing the different phenomena of nature;

- (b) The age of anthropomorphism, when the world was conceived of as being full of gods and geni. These gods and geni were conceived as men but having a superior nature, and all things were explained by the intervention of some of the gods and geni. The universe itself was conceived of as a production of the various gods (theogony).

Beliefs in gods, spirits and occult forces have often been suggested as constituting the parameters of African philosophy. Such beliefs are not specific to Africa. Similar beliefs are held by the masses in all cultures and societies all over the world and in all ages. Even the vast majority of people in the developed countries still cling to some vestiges of such beliefs. These beliefs have been subjected to intensive philosophical examination, particularly within the areas of philosophy of religion and logical fallacies. The result of such examination is that under "primitive" conditions where natural processes involved in good and bad fortune remain largely unknown and uncontrollable by practical means and in the absence of a coherent body of scientific theory and naturalistic explanation, men have at all times rationalised their fate by postulating mysterious agencies in nature and among their fellow men. Thus, gods, spirits and magical forces beyond the community, together with witches and sorcerers within it are postulated in explanation of the working of the universe, of the incidence of benefits and misfortunes, and of the strains of life itself. However, there is always a moment of rupture between the forces constituted by these mysterious agencies and the attempt to rationalise them. Perhaps this is what Hountondji has called the moment of transcription. The more the rationalisation taken on a scientific valence, he believes, the more the rupture is accentuated.

Incidentally for the West, the poem of Hesiod, *Work and Days*²³, may be taken as the last work of mythology in the long

history of the development of Western thought. After Hesiod, came the Ionian thinkers to dwell once more on the problem of the rise on the world, but in a completely new fashion. Their coming perhaps indicated the departure from the period of mythology and magic to that of philosophy.

Hountondji has shown conclusively that until this moment of departure is identified, much of what is now regarded and taken as African philosophy is not much different from the age old attempts of men everywhere to rationalise their fate in the complete absence of a scientific culture. For him proponents of African philosophy tend to forget or in fact consciously neglect the obvious difference between science, myth and magic. According to Guiculescu, all three are components of knowledge, are three types of human activity in man's interaction with his surrounding environment in an obvious attempt to accommodate himself to the constraints imposed by the environment. But the three kinds of activity do not amount to the same thing or point to the same direction. In his words, "scientific thinking has in common with myths the fact that it presumes to explain the nature of things; in common with magic is the fact that it aims to predict events in such a way as to act effectively on them. But unlike both of these earlier practices, science attempts to go beyond the world of appearances."²⁴ But does it follow that the non-identification of this moment of rupture, of departure ultimately renders all philosophic systems of the non-Western type implausible? Certainly not.

Hountondji, like Wiredu, thinks that the absence of transcription, the lack of rupture between myth, magic and science in African traditional thought renders all such thought systems unphilosophical. There cannot be advancement of knowledge without a progressive puncturing of illusions, myth, magic etc. In other words this advancement is not possible without the

evolution of critical consciousness. African thought systems are still eminently located at the pre-scientific and pre-philosophical periods. Hence, for Hountondji, so much needless attention has been devoted to the works of ethnologists and cultural anthropologists. While these works may be of philosophical interests, they are, in the main, not philosophical works, in his sense of the word. Wiredu, like Hountondji, has argued that "if you want to know the philosophy of a given people you do not go to the aged peasant or fetish priests or court personalities, but to the individual thinkers in person or in print."²⁵ Both Wiredu and Hountondji seem to believe that there is something inherently unphilosophical in relying on the memory of aged peasants and court personalities in order to reconstruct and record African traditional philosophy. It would thus appear that their problem is not the essence of African traditional philosophy but the method. The issues associated with methodology have been allowed to becloud the essence and distinctiveness of this philosophy. In the main, Wiredu and Hountondji are misled by their own philosophical orientations: Philosophy as a critical, theoretical and analytic enterprise. Omoregbe has suggested that contrary to Wiredu and Hountondji African traditional folk thought systems "are not gratuitous assertions for the original authors of these ideas and views obviously had their reasons for holding and advancing them. They are not bald assertions but the fruit of reflection, the conclusions of a reasoning process. They did not put their reasoning in the form of Aristotle's syllogism or Russell's logical form but they evidently had their reasons."⁶

Hountondji's pre-occupation with critical philosophy has become stifling and dogmatic. These traits are, to say the least, not the hallmarks of a robust philosophic temper. Critical and analytic philosophy is but one sense of philosophy, it is just one other way of doing philosophy but all other ways cannot be

reduced to it without cultural harm. There is first order level of folk thought system which is of no less importance. According to Bewaji this first order level "consists in the general body of beliefs and sentiments which the individual in a culture holds in common with other members of his society. In this sense the general intellectual temper of a culture—its characteristic mode of thought, its pervasive world outlook, its unquestioned assumptions constitute its philosophy."²⁷ These assumptions, beliefs, and sentiments may not be systematically formulated or expressed but they do have considerable influence because for Sodipo "they make it possible for members of the society to communicate and exchange ideas and live in some agreement and common expectation of what is good and right or bad and wrong."²⁸ If members of a given culture are unable to transcend this first order level their folk thought system is no less philosophical. Hountondji thinks otherwise. His basic discontent with those who espouse this traditional "folkish" approach is that it cannot aid the material, economic, social and technological development of Africa. But he seems to forget and consciously neglect the fact that the lack of transcription does not mean that the folk thought system is grossly impaired. Life based on this system, as evidenced in most parts of Africa, is still highly regarded. The lack of transcription does not mean that knowledge and ideas about all aspects of human life and predicament—from morality to law, from science to technology, from history to psychology, from superstition to organized or unorganized religion are unimportant in terms of their relevance to the problems of individual and social living.

It is important to note that myth as a peculiar form of knowledge is at the same time a source of mandatory rules and standards of behaviour which are to be strictly observed. It constitutes the basis of a totalitarian ideology unopposed by any

rival notions, conceptions or doctrines. The doubts that may arise later as a result of long historical development which may find their expression in the rationalization of myth, testified for Hountondji, the beginning of its disintegration and collapse. It is not entirely correct, however, to suppose that myths are devoid of logos. The syncretic method of myth does not exclude logos and the view that folk thought systems are essentially illogical appears to be erratic. The essence of folk thought system should not be confused with the inadequacy of its method. In the words of Malinowski "Myth (folk thought systems in general) played an important social function. It justified the existing system, laws and moral values, expressed and codified, as it were, current beliefs, sanctified tradition, guided men in their practical activity and taught them the rules of behaviour."²⁰ Men do not live by bread and by science alone but also by myths. Francois Jacob is very correct when he argues that in certain aspects, myths, magic and science fulfil the same function. They all furnish the human spirit with a certain representation of the world and the forces that animate it.

IV

How does one situate Hountondji's entire philosophic programme and problematic? How plausible are his positions, and how sound are his arguments?

Hountondji's work is profound but not easily accessible. His various essays and articles demonstrate to a high degree that the salient issues, the dominant questions of, and the ultimate identity for African philosophy is ineluctably tied up with the social, political, economic, ideological and intellectual orientation of Africans themselves. The essence of his arguments is to deny the existence of African Philosophy in its present form. His position, generally speaking, has received much attention

in these arguments. It is, therefore, hard not to share his perspective that a good deal of the debate over the existence or non-existence of African philosophy have run their course. In his approach he shares many things in common with E. A. Ruch who in various articles culminating in his co-authored volume *African Philosophy*,³⁰ sought to debunk the idea of an African philosophy.

However, contemporary exponents of African Philosophy, for example, do not claim that popular beliefs, traditional practices and a collective and an unconscious behaviour simply qualify as philosophy, though a philosophical system can be derived from them. As Ruch has emphasised, "tradition becomes a value in itself, not only because it safeguards the cultural, social and emotional unity of the group, but also because it expresses the ontological and eternal sameness of the real world which underlies the world of daily experience."³¹

To make the past relevant to the present and the future Hountondji, like Wiredu, has called for the acceptance and dissemination of rational procedures. There is nothing inherently wrong with this demand to the extent that there is the awareness that it is not, cannot be, the only pathway to truth. The danger is perhaps the fact that Hountondji may have accepted rational procedures not as the only pathway to philosophy but to truth. But truth of this kind as Breton contends "free tradition from its socio-cultural roots; it sterilizes it, empties it of all metaphysics and then puts it on the market of symbolic benefits as a collection of formulas."³² Truth is not based only on science. Breton again proposes that it is also based on the "ancestral heritage of a cultural background. For an agreed-upon knowledge, resting on traditions and potentially shared by all the community cannot be meaningfully substituted by the knowledge of specialists who alone claim to establish the criteria of truth,

beginning with a set of impersonal rules that claim a validity that is independent of culture and history." ³⁰

If the persistent call for the acceptance and dissemination of rational procedures by Hountondji, Wiredu, Bodunrin and others is intended to produce "a cast of mind and attitude culminating in the scientification of the African, the manipulation of things", the destruction of community life and shared values which are rooted in "pluralism and vital contradiction", then it has to be rejected. The intolerance of the quest for rational procedures and critical inquiry has widened the gulf between two views of the world, since the essence of the debate is the conflict between two systems of intelligibility. The humanity of the African, his destiny and his experience is sufficient basis for philosophical opinion.

There is another much more insidious deduction from Hountondji's arguments: for X to qualify as philosophy, X must conform to the valid paradigm and measure, the reference point provided by Western European philosophic tradition. African philosophy is X; X does not conform to this (Western) paradigm; therefore African Philosophy is not philosophy but mythology or something other. The logic underlying this is spurious. It is not much different from the assertion of Levy-Bruhl, the French Anthropologist, that Africans are mythical while Europeans are rational. It is also not very different from Leopold Sedar Senghor's metaphysical call for a "Universal Humanity", a kind of "Universal Civilization" where the different races co-exist. These are nothing but a betrayal of ignorance. As Anyanwu contends "by subordinating African cultural facts to the assumptions, concepts, theories and world-view suggested by Western culture and developed by Western thinkers, confusion ensues. The idea of a Universal, scientific or theoretical philosophy does not make sense." ³¹

About the concepts of African Philosophy and Religion, one cannot help asking what is particularly and intellectually obscene about ancestor worship, about being in harmony with the cosmic forces. What did the ancient Greeks and Romans worship at the time their gods and goddesses were anthropomorphic and begetters of man? The Greeks and Romans did not debunk this aspect of their early history and development; they did not have to look elsewhere to validate their philosophy. As civilization bulldozes its way not only through African forests and jungles but also through the hearts of Africans, change is imperative but this can only be qualitative to be meaningful. There is need for caution on the part of African philosophers when calling for the use of Western European Philosophy as a reference point for African philosophy. But even this minimal demand is not justifiable. After all, the Chinese, the Indian, the Middle Eastern (Arabs mainly) philosophers do not in any way consider the Western paradigm as the measure or the reference point for their own philosophic traditions.

There is also the need to distinguish the essence of African philosophy Religion from the external expression of that essence. The sound of the African drum at a Catholic mass, for example, does not confer upon the ceremonies a traditional African character. Where angels and saints sit in the places reserved for demi-gods and departed ancestors, and Christian baptism replaces traditional initiation rites, then obviously something is wrong. Would Western European Philosophers consider their culture healthy if a white congregation were to invoke their ancestors and pour libation on a "pagan" shrine with the *tantum Ergo* in the background?³⁵ Obviously not.

Doubtless, there is indeed a universal craze for European type of culture and civilization. In the face of this rapid technological and cultural invasion from "abroad", the African is,

now, in a dilemma in the sense of alienation of "a man who lives in a world not made for him, whose own is slipping away, dying, being destroyed, beyond any recall."³⁶ However, while other peoples (Indians, Chinese, Arabs etc.) are extremely cautious about this invasion, African peoples, interestingly her intellectuals but embarrassingly her philosophers, are in the forefront chanting the virtues of this invasion and arguing for it. But who has ever heard of Nigerian "Peace Corps" or Tanzanian "Volunteer Service Overseas" or Ivorian "Cooperants" charged with teaching African languages and traditional medicine, African melody and dance, or even the much vaunted mysticism and cosmology in European and North American primary and secondary schools? ³⁷ Who has ever thought of including wrestling, Okonkwo-Amalinze ³⁸ style in the Olympic games? Essentially the main weakness of Hountondji's position is perhaps the unwitting fulfilment of Jean-Paul Satre's prediction that "it may be demanded of the coloured (black) man and of him alone to give up pride in his colour."³⁹ Otakpor has suggested that "loss of pride in one's colour, culture, tradition, etc., is loss of pride in one's self. And for any man, this is moral death,"⁴⁰

By denying vehemently the basis of African Philosophy, Hountondji relieves this philosophy of its relative and cultural dimension, whereas this dimensions forms and provides the reference point he is in quest of. Accounting for this relative and cultural dimension in no way obliterates the essence of that philosophy, because the fundamental issues and questions remain universal irrespective of this dimension and the "geographical variable." Hountondji's rational universe is inhabitable only when this cultural and relative dimension is missing. Rural knowledge, observed Breton "has never lost its socio-cultural anchorage. To this day it has continued its underground course, legitimated by the word of mouth. Shut up for centuries in

the rural (traditional) classes, its influence has not ceased to grow." 41

Hegel had much earlier upheld this cultural and relative dimension. As he put it, "men do not at certain epochs merely philosophize in general. For there is a definite character which permeates all the other historical sides of the spirit of the people. The particular form of philosophy is thus contemporaneous with a particular constitution of the people among whom it makes its appearance, with their institutions and forms of government, their morality, their social life and their capabilities." 42 Therefore, from "every philosophy has a universal appeal", it does not follow that there is a neutral world philosophy applicable to all cultures in the world.

Finally, Hountondji's contradictory definitions of African philosophy ("a set of texts, specifically the set of texts written by Africans and described as philosophical by their authors themselves; as a literature produced by Africans and dealing with philosophical problems; African philosophy is African philosophical literature", etc.) clearly indicate a lack of systematic approach. Conceptual definitions, for example, involve the purpose for which the concept is to be applied (C. Power). His mystified and often mystifying language constitutes a problem. This beclouds rather than illuminates. Perhaps this style of writing best fits his own epistemological and linguistic views, but I find his notions of "world-view described" and "the description itself", "African Pseudo-Philosophy", etc., problematically vague and his contradictory definitions unsatisfactorily resolved.

v

In assessing a contribution of this sort and of major works full of polemics as these, oversimplification on one hand and

exaggeration on the other hand are perhaps unavoidable but doubtlessly indefensible. I have tried to maintain a balance between both. The interesting arguments, though obviously contestable, no doubt raise issues that are profound and significant, issues that are fundamental and of lasting importance. Hountondji's contributions to the debate are immense and powerful and remain so even when stripped of most of the frivolous claims. They are all provocative essays that in essence seek to reorient our conceptions of African philosophic enterprise, as well as reshape its practice. For Hountondji, African philosophy is at a crisis point because of its lack of specification, its unattainable goals, while its projects are irrelevant to the significant and basic human concerns of Africans. He, therefore, vigorously challenges the basic premises of several issues and problems that are current in the debate over African philosophy. If he is right then many of the assumptions and presuppositions are not worth the intellectual effort put into them.

Department of Philosophy
Faculty of Arts
University of Benin
P. M. B. 1154
Benin City (NIGERIA)

NKEONYE OTAKPOR

NOTES

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3. Placid Tempels ; *Bantu Philosophy*, (Paris : Presence Africaine. 1959).

4. Alexis Kagame; *La Philosophie Bantu-Rwandaise de L'etre.* (Bruxelles Academic Royale, 1956).
5. Hountondji ; " The Pitfalls of Being Different ", pp. 51-54.
6. Kwame Nkrumah ; *Consciencism.* (London : Heinemann, 1964).
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8. *Ibid.* 52-54 and 56.
9. Hountondji ; *Africau Philosophy*, p. 49.
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11. *Ibid.* p. 55.
12. *Ibid.* p. 56.
13. *Ibid.* p. 56.
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15. *Ibid.* p. 62.
16. *Ibid.* p. 63.
17. *Ibid.* p. 63.
18. *Ibid.* p. 64.
19. *Ibid.* p. 101.
20. *Ibid.* p. 106.
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29. Bronislaw Malinowaki ; *Myth in Primitive Psychology*, (London : 1929), p. 45.
30. E. A. Ruch and K. C. Anyanwu, *African Philosophy*, (Rome : Catholic Book Agency, 1981).
31. *Ibid.*, p. 117.
32. David Breton ; " *The Body and Individualism*, " *Diogenes*, No. 131, Fall 1985, p. 44.
33. *Ibid.*, p. 41.
34. E. A. Ruch and K. C. Anyanwu ; *African Philosophy*, p. 78,
35. Nkeonye Otapkor ; " Nigritude : A Philosophy of Withdrawal of Protest ? ", *Africa*, Revista do Centro de Estudos Africanos, Vol. 8, 1985, p. 57.
36. Alan Paton ; *Cry The Beloved Country*, (London : Longmans, 1978), pp. 10-11.
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38. Chinua Achebe ; *Things Fall Apart*, (London : Heinemann, 1980), p. 3.
39. Quoted by W. L. Butler ; " A Philo-Historical Analysis of Negritude ", in *Presence Africaine*, Hommage A Leopold Sedar Senghor, 1976. pp. 342-343.
40. Nkeonye Otapkor ; " Negritude.. ", p. 58.
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PROF. G. R. MALKANI ESSAY COMPETITION

Essays are invited for the Prof. G. R. Malkani Essay Competition either in English or Hindi from undergraduate or post-graduate students below the age of 25 years studying in any Indian educational institution on the theme "The Sāṅkhya Concept of Mūlaprakṛti" for the First and Second prizes to be awarded respectively of Rs. 200/- and Rs. 100/- to the essays adjudicated to be so by a panel of referees appointed for the purpose. The prize-winning essays would be published in course of time either in Students' Supplement of the **Indian Philosophical Quarterly** or **Paramasa (Hindi)**, quarterly journals published by the Department. The conditions governing submission of essays for the competition are as follows :

1. The essay typed in double space on one side of the paper must be submitted in duplicate.
2. The essay must not be longer than 2500 words.
3. The essay must be accompanied by a certificate signed by the Head of the Institution/Department where the student is studying to the effect that
 - (a) the student is studying in that institution and is below the age of 25 years, and
 - (b) the essay is written by him/her.
4. The essays should reach Dr. Mangala R. Chinchore, Philosophy Department, Poona University, Ganeshkhind, Pune 411 007 not later than 31-5-1990.
5. The decision of the panel of referees shall be binding on all the competitors and that no correspondence of any kind would be entertained on that count.

The Head,
Philosophy Department
University of Poona, Ganeshkhind,
Pune 411 007