

Review of: "Intellectualism without Humanism is more Dangerous than Illiteracy"

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1. Introduction

It is Epictetus' position that only the educated are safe. The implication of this is that scholarship is the only way out from 'bad' to 'good'. With scholarship, a mental revolution is possible; a re-orientation of conceptual scheme is assured and hopes for a better future are raised. But this expectation is still in question as it appears that those factors responsible for making life worst and worthless are perpetuated more by the so-called scholars. This is not only ironic and so unfortunate; but also the very motivation behind this paper.

Thus, the paper asks questions regarding the possible causative factors of this attitude. Could the factors be in what scholars have conceived as the nature of scholarship, or principles of intellectual ideologies instilled in scholarly exercise and affectively acquired by people undergoing scholarship exercise, or even environmental-based factors which scholars acquire? What is then the nature of the concept of 'scholarship'? What process would be the best to participate in that concept? What could be the utmost aim of scholarship, and what is the relationship between scholarship and the humanity of those scholars participating in scholarship?

Nonetheless, it is the finding of the paper that criticality and logicity of intellectualism are major factors behind the anti-humanist tendencies seen in the attitudinal disposition of many scholars/intellectuals.

In contemporary research, any opinion that relies on empirical findings is legitimate, but I don't agree with that. Philosophical and intellectual history has encompassed many fields, especially morality that humanism is a particular angle of ethics. Almost all scholars were humanists, even Hobbes and Machiavelli, who are considered advocates of absolute rule due to the terrible reality that trampled on the basic rights of the individual, the thinker strove to provide the minimum of personal and property security. It is clear that there are also cases that correspond to the approach of the present study, but it is unlikely to establish a generalization in relation to this phenomenon.

2. Scholarly and Classical Positions on the Concept, 'Scholarship'

As mentioned above, to a scholar like Epictetus, education is the only way to be safe, where 'safety' is to 'grab the good life'. But the question now is: 'what is the good life?' Many scholars have given their dissent voices to the idea of a good life, some taking a hedonistic stand maintaining a "moderately but pleasurably" lifestyle by

upholding that “pleasure must be in some way an ingredient of happiness” hence “pleasure is the sole good” (Popkin and Stroll 1975, 10-11), others taking an intellectual stand, and many taking to attitudinal/behavioural dispositions. However, it must be recalled that the Epictetan emphasis is on the fact that being educated is the main gate to being safe in life, and being safe in life implies grasping the concept of the ‘good’. That is to say that without education, human beings remain unsafe, hence, blind to that which is good; consequently, there will be no discovery of the good, hence the thrive of unsafety and the bad. This position could be likened to that of Sridhar when she writes: “Education is not just for mere living but for life, a fuller life, a more meaningful and a more worthwhile life” (Sridhar 2014, 18).

To the Greek ethicist and humanist, Socrates, the product of education– knowledge– could be equated to virtue, while the very opposite– ignorance– to vices. This ethical principle was very much influential that his student, Plato imbibed it as a guide to his ethical theory. Plato (Popkin and Stroll 1975, 2-3) holds that “it is generally assumed in such theories that if we know what the good life is, we will naturally act in such a way as to try to achieve it” hence “finding the nature of the good life is an intellectual task very similar to the discovery of mathematical truths.” Then to put it straight, “evil is due to lack of knowledge” and this knowledge could be attained through (1) direct undergoing an educational process, (2) emulating or imitating from the display of those who underwent an educational process, by this, “virtuous habits of behaviour” is attained, or (3) allowing those who underwent an educational process, by this, there will be ‘development of mental powers’ to attain virtues (Popkin and Stroll 1975, 3). However, as an idealist, he later maintains an ideal conception of education vis-à-vis finding the good life, as he opines that “goodness exists independently of men and remains to be discovered if men can be properly trained,” and this training here implicates the idea of the three listed processes above. However, emphasizing this point, Plato remarks that education

makes a man eagerly pursue the ideal perfection of citizenship and teaches him how rightly to rule and how to obey. This is the only education which in our view deserves the name; that other sort of training which aims at the acquisition of wealth or bodily strength or mere cleverness, apart from intelligence and justice is mean and illiberal and is not worthy to be called education at all (Rusk 1969, 30)

There are many other scholars who believe in the power of education as not just the major source of livelihood and making life worth living and appreciatively, but the only way to imbibe a worthy ethical lifestyle. Empiricist scholars like Berkeley, Locke, Rousseau, a rationalist like Kant, and many educationists like Sridhar, etc., have all believed the cognitive power of man to understand and behave ethically is commendable. These scholars believe that the mind/intellect can grab what is taught or displayed to it, and that can influence the thinking and actions proceeding from the mind and as displayed through the body. In other words, what the mind comes in contact with, it assimilates and then from an internally generated principle influences certain reactions in men which would be displayed in words, actions and thought, and the gap between the appeared phenomenon and the intellect/mind is scholarship, that is, a process of education, learning and assimilation of that which is educated about and learnt, and subsequently its display through human behaviours and actions. It is the questioning of the

effects of this scholarly end product, that is, the effects of that which is grabbed, studied/learned and displayed through human thinking and actions, that this paper focuses on. Have they furnished humanity hopes for posterity by projecting more positivity, or have they encouraged the otherwise?

Standing on this, as we could see, many like Plato, and others would answer in the affirmative, on one hand. But many like Rousseau, and other African scholars and sages like Ki-Zerbo, and others would answer in negation, on the other hand.

The Jewish-German scholar, Rousseau would first appreciate the product of scholarship/education which is expressed in many ways for human livelihood like civilization; but this would not go without a huge damage to humanity. In fact, he opines that the corruption of nature, that is, the existential state of man that knows true peace, co-habitation without boundary, the genuine practice of communalism, etc. was because of civilization which proceeded as an end product of scholarship. The Rousseauic state of nature is significantly different from those of Hobbes and Locke, as that of the former does not tolerate personal rather communal ownership of properties, those of the latter tolerates even though with limits as seen in that of Locke. While that of Hobbes opposes that of Rousseau on the ground that it is negative to humanity as it encourages brutishness and inhumanities, that of Rousseau would disagree with that of Hobbes on the ground that even if there would be elements of occurrence of what Hobbes says, it is still better off than the evil and the level of negativity that would emerge in the Hobbesian proposed civility. In other words, this scholarly argumentative scenario could be compared to the saying that the worst democracy is better off than the best military regime. Rousseau puts his argument straight in the following lines: "The first person who, having enclosed a piece of land decided to say, 'this is mine', and found people who were simple enough to believe him was the real founder of civil society" (1963, 292). For Rousseau, men begin to grow to selfishness, which is expressed in personal ownership, when they receive civility as inherited in scholarship, and that is a damage to humanity.

Hobbes was in favor of absolute rule not only because the starting point of his political thought was egoism in the natural state, but he meant a centralized force that would restrain predatory aggressive elements of the late feudal period rather than as an ideal regime for the world. For Rousseau, the starting point of "goodwill" in the natural state is emotional and idealistic, yet ultimately the "general will" that swallows up the "good will" (which I see in today's language as "national interest") is predatory and makes his method completely inconsistent, so much so that he cannot explain the real state of the individual who is swallowed up by the interest of the "general will" that is often found to be contrary to the interest of the individual with the "good will."

[...]

3. The Concept of Scholarship/Education

Scholarship here implicates the idea of education; that is, the learning process. It could be likened to the concept of erudition, or those learning exercises structured for people to go through them and get mastery of the applied

and theoretical knowledge of that discipline. By this, scholarship could be referred to as encyclopaedic process. Ngwoke and Ugwu have also their own conception of education:

The primary purpose of education is to instil in learners, the capacity for transformation of the society. This is because education is needed to resolve the difficulties of a particular moment in history and the interpretation of its attendant aspirations, values and concerns. Hence education should capacitate learners and human persons to reflect on themselves, their roles and responsibilities in the culture and society they find themselves. Education institutes the courage in the student to discuss problems that characterize their immediate environment and to critically intervene in issues that arise in such environment rather than subjecting their senses of selfhood at the mercy of the decisions of others. Education is also meant to create in learners, the disposition to constantly re-evaluate and project analysis to findings, to appropriate processes and methods that are scientifically oriented, and to see themselves as existing in a dialectical relationship with their social reality (Ngwoke and Ugwu 2022, 40-4)

One who has gone through the process and exercise and got the expertise or mastery of the knowledge in the discipline could now be referred to as a learned one, an erudite or encyclopaedia, a scholar or one who is educated. A significant feature of scholarship is that it is a process through which one's intellect gets purified and sharpened. The intellect, that is, the mind, or the cognitive faculty of human beings to grasp, perceive and interrogate the perceived or grasped and then have a reasonable understanding, and comprehension of the perceived/grasped. A scholar has had his intellect brushed to not only see far and see beyond the immediate, but also to proffer solutions to the future. A scholar mostly sees with his/her intellect, not ordinarily the eye, for the eye can give inaccuracy most times.

A scholar, an erudite or encyclopaedia or a learned or educated person becomes an expert in knowledge, at least, in that particular area of academic specialization or discipline. Suffice it therefore to say that an educated or a scholar is an expert who is expected to show the way to the good having attained, as expected, the end product of scholarship/education which is knowledge. But this level is at the mastery level with licentiate; when scholarship goes beyond mastery certification to Doctorate certification, it is expected of the scholar to become an intellectual doctor to cure ignorance, at least from the area of specialization or discipline. When it goes from doctorate certification to professorial certification, it therefore implies that the professor has become a genius who not only holds a mastery intellectual capability to a great average in every aspect of intellectual discipline, but also to cure ignorance with exceptional remarks, or expertise more than an academic doctor could do. A scholar professionally is one with the intellectual capacity to not only cure intellectual sickness– ignorance, but also direct people to the right way to the good.

It is on this point that it calls for the necessity to bring in philosophy as not just an academic science, but also a mother science, on board. As a mother, any discourse on intellectualism has to revolve around philosophy for two reasons: (1) It is the mother science from where every other science as an independent discipline is created. (2) It is in philosophy that the two accused tools of intellectualism (logicality and criticality) which have brought about the irony, and inhumanism that the paper laments about, are found fundamental. Considering the first reason, that is

why the Doctoral certification of any discipline is a respect to philosophy as its mother science. Doctoral certification is referred to as Doctor of Philosophy (PhD). Considering the second reason, already, logic is a branch of philosophy, critical thinking is a philosophical course or exercise, and in fact a central feature of philosophical exercise. In other words, the onus of this paper revolves around philosophy and the act of philosophizing pictured in terms of scholarship/education hence the title could be structured, on second thought, thus: philosophy without humanism is as dangerous as illiteracy, or a philosopher without (consciousness of the practicality of) humanism is as dangerous as an illiterate with his/her illiteracy effects. This is because an illiterate is already limited to certain evil and devilish knowledge, s/he only carries out the ones s/he knows, but a literate, scholar who has been exposed to much knowledge from many human endeavours and disciplines and has grasped the knowledge of them can by his/her one expertise act, clear up the whole community of human beings.

It is certainly possible to speak directly about reflection as an advanced educational method.

[...]

4. Expectations from Scholarship and Scholars

Scholarship is the programmed academic exercise through which one goes and becomes intellectually sound. It is all about the educational process and procedures structured for learners to under through for professional acclamation of certain knowledge in and of certain disciplines and areas in life. It entails all those exercises, engagements and interactions one passes through so as to have one's intellect watched off ignorance. It is all about the process of curing intellectual sickness, rejection of intellectual blindness, rejection of wastage of life and life facilitators. On extension, education/scholarship, through dialogical participation, inculcates in the educated the following qualities: curiosity, critical thinking, ability to communicate well and understandably, radicalism, freedom, and self-affirmation, among other qualities (Ngwoke and Ugwu 2022, 41-3)

A scholar is one who undergoes the scholarly processes and structured academic exercise and has, by expectation, acquired all the necessary knowledge that would guarantee him/her bearing or sharing in that status 'scholar' or 'educated' or 'learned'. Anyone who has been scholarly or educationally drilled under an academic exercise and structuralized procedures is expected to have acquired certain knowledge that would qualify him/her to proudly and with defence-capacity, answer a scholar or learned colleague.

*All these highlighted qualities and by formality, are the characteristics of a scholar. By professional expectations, s/he should see beyond immediacy by thinking beyond his/her nose. S/he should be an icon to be looked upon and emulated, s/he should be an epitome of the way to the good, s/he leads others to the environment of right judgment. S/he should be an epitome of social value as provable by his/her behaviours. S/he should be a custodian of what right symbolizes. S/he should picture what light stands for. His/her opinions are, by expectation, appealing to even ordinary senses. S/he should symbolize what humanism, both as an intellectual exercise and human-feeling (being humane), stands for. Just as women are eulogized as *odozi akụ* (wealth-organizers/lovers),*

scholars/intellectuals should not only show in their attitudinal disposition the odozi akụ (wealth organizers/gatherers) status, but also odozi obodo (community-organizers/lovers) status. How it is levied upon women to put their family in good and well-ordered shape, so is it upon the duty-elbow of scholars to fashion the relevant reasonable manner and a way to organize the society to be human-friendly first of all, and to encourage positive activities from other aspects of life. His/her lifestyle expressed through words, thought and actions ought to stand for anti-inhumanism. His/her actions and intellectual prowess is expected to gear towards sustaining human welfarism, not inhumanity through anti-humanistic thinking strategy and postulations as seen in certain theories, policies, or philosophies of life. These and many more are the fundamental expectations of a scholar/educated. But the question is: are these expectations the outcomes?

Because of the practical aspect of the amendment proposed by the article, I propose to include in general reference Anna Sfard's method, which is most common in early childhood education systems, education for sharing through metaphors in children's stories.

On Two Metaphors for Learning and the Dangers of Choosing Just One

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