

**A REVIEW OF BELONGINGNESS: A DEFINITIVE METAPHYSICAL
PRINCIPLE IN AFRICAN COMMUNALISM BY DR JUDE IFEANYI
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The question, 'what is being?' is one of the fundamental enquiries within the parameters of metaphysics. This becomes very important since metaphysics as a branch of philosophy is concerned with the totality of being in its nature and structure. Since the emergence of African philosophy as a discipline, African thinkers have questioned the nature of being. Iroegbu tried to understand being within the context of belongingness. He defines belongingness as 'the synthesis of the reality and experience of belongingness'. In this case, the recipient-subject of belonging is involved: something belongs and it belongs to something. Belongingness is a special noun from the verb 'to belong'. It means to be part of, or to be a member of a group. There is also a possessive nuance of the verb 'to belong'. I can say that the soap belongs to me. In the first nuance, to belong creates a situation of participation and in the second, it creates a situation of possession. There is an ontological nuance of belongingness, which specifies that a thing is because it belongs. The present work published in 2019 is one of five chapters, with 76 pages, is a contribution of the author to the ongoing discourse on the philosophy of belongingness.

The author began by clarifying fundamental concepts so as to create the background for a fruitful discourse on belongingness. Then he delved into the historical excursus of African communalism and the defining principles of African communalism by focusing on the perspectives of scholars on the basic elements of African communalism. He then proceeded to analyse Pantaleon Iroegbu's philosophy of belongingness and the definitive principles of belongingness in African communalism. He concludes with the understanding of the human person as a being who is in belongingness.

The author strongly relies on panthaleon, the Father of Beling as Belongignness. He strongly agrees with him that the principle of *Egbe bere Ugo bere* (let the kite perch, let the eagle perch) re-enacts the contents and significance of belongingness as the essence and hermeneatic core of reality. What a being is, is its activity of perching (belonging). To perch is to be. To be is to perch. To be is to belong and to belong is to be. When *Egbe*

perches and *Ugo* perches, they come face to face with each other. They are with each other. They are present to each other. They relate to each other deeply and directly as well as have relationships with other inhabitants of *Uwa* (world). To relate is to share something: to give and take. They have common projects, needs and desires. Together they struggle to overcome their difficulties and share their joy. 'To be', therefore, is 'to belong' and 'to belong' is 'to be'. While this might sound tautological, Iroegbu discovered that it is the definitional circle involved in any description of being as being. Once one is tuned in being; there is no going back from its beingness. One continually goes on in being and not even death can stop one's ongoingness of being.

In this work: *Belongingness: A definitive Metaphysical Principle in African Communalism* by Rev. Fr. Dr. Jude Ifeanyi Onebunne a presentation of the philosophy of Belongingness is made with such clarity as can hardly be found in any other philosophy literature. In this book, one comes 'face to face' with a true academic bee, Dr. Jude Onebunne, who has gathered the spoils of the flowers of the philosophy of belongingness, and is ready to engender in the souls of his readers a deathless element of knowledge. You can only applaud at the end of each chapter and wait to applaud again at the end of the next chapter. In the ranks of the thinkers who, in recent times, have attempted an interpretation of the Pantaleonine philosophy of belongingness, this piece would remain the best in generations to come.