



What Should Globalisation Mean for African Humanities and Why?

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Abstract

This work sets out to engage the ideology of globalisation by interrogating the notion of humanities that has been applied to study the concept. To do this, it addresses the following question: if the idea of globalisation was interrogated from the idea of man (being human)¹ and studies of human nature informed by the values, principles and norms that define the idea of humankind from the African worldview, what would it amount to? What ideals would drive such a project and what difference would it make for the human community? To address these questions, the article will locate African humanities through what it calls the dominant humanities orientation in Africa, defined as the study of man (being human) available through the intellectual industry of modern Africa and inscribed through various subjects studied in the humanities in African institutions. Thereafter, it will proceed to locate what man (being human) would mean, assuming that effort is made to locate the meaning through the African endogenous worldview. The article will next proceed to articulate the gains of applying the African endogenous idea of man (being human) in articulating and directing globalisation. The method applied is an inductive analysis of views and positions in the humanities, African thought and globalisation.

Résumé

Ce travail se propose d'aborder l'idéologie de la mondialisation en interrogeant la notion de sciences humaines qui a été appliquée pour étudier le concept. Pour ce faire, il pose la question suivante : si l'idée de mondialisation était posée à partir de l'idée de l'homme (en tant qu'être humain) et d'études de la nature humaine informées par les valeurs, principes et normes qui définissent l'idée d'humanité de la vision africaine du monde, à quoi correspondrait la réponse ? Quels idéaux pourraient sous-tendre un tel projet et quelle différence aurait-il pour la communauté humaine ? Pour répondre à ces questions, l'article situera les humanités africaines à travers ce qu'il appelle l'orientation dominante des humanités en Afrique, définies comme l'étude de l'homme (être humain) dispo-

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nible à travers l'industrie intellectuelle de l'Afrique moderne, et inscrites à travers divers sujets étudiés en Sciences humaines dans les institutions africaines. Ensuite, il procédera à la localisation de ce que signifierait l'homme (être humain), supposant que des efforts sont faits pour localiser le sens à travers la vision endogène africaine du monde. L'article procédera ensuite à l'articulation des avantages de l'application de l'idée endogène africaine de l'homme (être humain) dans l'articulation et la direction de la mondialisation. La méthode appliquée est l'analyse inductive des points de vue et des positions dans les sciences humaines, de la pensée africaine et de la mondialisation.

Introduction

Much of the literature that discuss globalisation in relation to the humanities discuss the role of the humanities in shaping the discourse on globalisation. The literature dwells on how the humanities can widen thoughts on such issues as global migration, race, citizenship, labour, etc. and addresses such impediments as stereotypes and prejudices that affect global interactions. Writers discuss issues such as inter-culturalism, trans-culturalism and whether globalisation should lead to trans-humanism or post-humanism (defined as a world where the notion of humankind is essentially directed by science and technology). In brief, they discuss how the humanities can lead to 'responsible decisions' (Annotte Schevan 2011) in relation to globalisation. Although these approaches are worthy, they harbour several deficiencies. First, they assume that the current idea of humanities is sufficient to direct the idea of globalisation. They apply the current theories available in the humanities to shape thoughts on globalisation. Secondly, they ignore the fact that the current global world order is the product of concepts and notions in the humanities. Thirdly, they underplay the fact that the current tradition of humanities' scholarship is a product of the evolution of a given thought-scheme and is constructed to respond to a given notion of being human. If this is the case, this notion of humanities is limited and the current trend of globalisation that arises from it could also suffer this limitation. This article sets out to interrogate this state of affairs by questioning the humanities now in vogue in the study of globalisation and, by extension, the notion of man (being human) that directs globalisation. The focus of the article is to provide a fresh option for engaging with globalisation through the African thought scheme.

The article poses the question: assuming that the idea of globalisation could be advanced from the idea of man (being human) and the study of man (being human) as might be seen through the values, principles

and norms of another worldview (for instance the African worldview), what would it amount to? What ideals would drive such a project and what difference would it make for the human community? The effort to interrogate globalisation in this way is considered cogent because it is anchored in the assumption that whereas the 'globe' from where the idea of globalisation achieves its meaning is a concept that connects the entire human community, the notion of man (being human) that should direct this concept has different meanings in different civilisations and cultures. The idea of globalisation cannot be free from the forces and influences of these civilisations and cultures. It is necessary to interrogate the notion of humankind that is at work and most influential in the idea of globalisation now and the extent to which it can address human needs across cultures.

In relation to Africa, it is necessary to locate the extent to which the idea of humankind, as rooted in the worldview and thought of African people, is involved in the notion of globalisation in vogue now. By locating the extent to which this is the case, the paper will then proceed to articulate whether there is a need to rethink globalisation through the African worldview, through the idea of humanity available in the African worldview. It will then interrogate what it would mean if the idea of humanity as rooted in the African worldview was used to define and direct the project of globalisation, as well as suggest the expected outcome of this effort.

To achieve these aims, the article questions the idea of man (being human) in African humanities through what it calls the dominant orientation of humanities in Africa. By this is meant the idea of humankind available in the intellectual industry of modern Africa and threaded through various subjects studied in the humanities in African institutions. This by extension implies the various forms of socio-cultural encounter through which the idea of humanity has been registered in the social and political spheres and structures of modern Africa. Thereafter, the article will discuss this tradition of humanities in relation to the idea of globalisation and articulate the imperial character of this form of humanities – how it amounts to 'imperial humanities'. It will then proceed to locate the limitations of these humanities and how they function as the imperial humanities by articulating this idea of (being human) in African thought and suggesting what it would mean if the idea of man (being human) in African thought is applied to define and direct globalisation and how this could (re)direct the project of globalisation to a worthier outcome. The method applied is textual analysis and critical deduction.

Questioning the Idea of Man (being human) in African Humanities

The concepts and theories applied to direct the humanities in Africa are mainly those invented through another linguistic and conceptual framework, disregarding the alienating power and force of these in influencing and shaping thoughts and ideas. For instance, concepts such as society, slavery, war, power, leadership, culture, etc., which are the driving forces of the humanities, are primarily driven by the Western notion of the concepts and not by their endogenous meaning and import in the large bulk of literature in the humanities that are taught in Africa. If the effort is made to decolonise concepts and ideas (Wiredu 1995) or rediscover concepts and ideas through 'conceptual Africanisation' (Ugwuanyi 2016), it will be discovered that some concepts have been forcefully inserted into humanities' scholarship in Africa and applied to drive and direct the humanities, even though they may be in conflict with or negate the meaning of these concepts if they are explored through the African worldview.

In the same vein, the study of man (being human) in Africa is primarily evaluated through an alien (foreign) notion of humankind and human experience and not through the notion of humankind or the human experience as they have evolved through the African experience or through the African thought-scheme. As a result of this, the cultures and experiences of people in the African world have not served to direct the bulk of critical reflections in the humanities, notwithstanding the fact that humankind has different civilisations 'differentiated from each other by history, language, custom, tradition, and most important, religion' (Huntington 1993:25). Also, these 'different civilisations have different views on the relations between God and man, the individual and the group, the citizens and the state, parents and children, husband and wife, as well as differing ways on the relative importance of rights and responsibilities, liberty and authority, equality and hierarchy' (Huntington 1993:25) which should direct the humanities. The implication of this is that the humanities apply concepts that may be different from those offered by a particular civilisation when the subject is studied to produce and circulate knowledge, thereby marginalising one civilisation in favour of the other and leading to what can be called alienating humanities, on the one hand, and marginal and/or alienated humanities, on the other.

Several reasons can be adduced to explain this state of affairs. The first is the long-running notion of a human being as a rational animal and 'the science and arts of reason' (Ugwuanyi 2010) that have been applied in favour of this notion. Although the view that human beings are rational animals is attractive to all cultures, rationality is a complex concept because reason

can be both constructive and destructive. 'Reason is like fire, an immensely useful tool that can very easily destroy if not used correctly' (Goldberg 2018:6). The definition of human beings as rational animals also has wider demands on the ethics of reason. These demands interrogate the nature of reason and the modes and forms of rationality. Without addressing these, rationality can serve negative ends that affect the ethics of reason. A history of the evolution of reason in different cultures of the world suggests that reason has often evolved in different contexts and is influenced by different values. Notwithstanding the universal definition of a human being as a rational animal, who applies this definition and to whom it is applied, may determine how it is validated. It is therefore proper to suggest that because of the ethnocentric assumptions that have influenced the definition of a human being as an animal, its application in relation to Africa since the beginning of Western modernity is questionable and the extent to which the assumption that a human being is a rational animal can be held to include Africans and Amerindians is also debatable (Ramose 1999:1).

To present a compelling narrative in this regard, it should be noted that the first formal universities in Europe came into existence as early as the eleventh century and that these universities, which dealt with classics and the works of the earliest thinkers of the Western world, had the privilege of upholding the definition of man as a rational animal. Yet, nearly five hundred years after this early breath of learning, an industrial slave trade, with its unimaginable horrors, was embarked upon by merchants of the Western world, whose education was founded on this position but who believed that only those who participated in the Western canon of reason should be held to be rational and human. Africans were denied the status of humanity and rationality and Africa became a major centre for this trade. This was to go on for about four hundred years, carried out by educated people of the Western world and products of Western universities and cultures of learning, where man was defined as a rational animal. This severe damage to the ethics of reason and humanity is a severe indictment of the idea of reason that recognises a human being as a rational animal.

At the academies, where man was held to be a rational animal, different positions were held by even the best of European minds, illustrating that the idea of man (being human) was categorised and applied to human beings differently. The expression 'man is a rational animal' as applied to the African was different, and any study of people in Africa was not meant to defend the view that 'man' in its universal meaning and import was a rational animal. For instance, David Hume, a prominent Scottish philosopher, held 'the Negroes to be naturally inferior to the whites' and that nature had 'made an original distinction betwixt these breeds of men'

(Biakolo in P.H. Coetzee, ed., 1998:2). Similarly, the French philosopher Montesquieu said: 'It is hardly to be believed that God who is a wise being should place a soul, especially a good soul, in such a Black and ugly body' (Ogude 1983:109). The racist philosopher Fredrick Hegel was even more blunt. Of the African, he said: 'There is nothing harmonious with humanity to be found in this type of character' (Ochieng'-Odhiambo 1997:5). These are positions that defined man as a rational animal but denied rationality to human beings in Africa.

The summary of my claims here is that the current idea of humankind driving the humanities has not favoured humankind as a whole, and that the humanities as they are taught in Africa and as they have inherited this tradition amount to imperial humanities – the idea of humanities that takes or adopts a single notion of humankind from a single culture and imposes it on other cultures and civilisations. This characterisation of human science as imperialism is in line with Ake (1982), who described 'social science as imperialism'.

Imperial Humanities, Human Othering and Imperial Globalisation

In this part of the work, I explain the notion of imperial humanities further. I then proceed to discuss how this has produced a deficient notion of globalisation.

The term imperial humanities implies a form of humanities or humanistic studies that applies one culture to interpret humankind, disregarding other cultural nationalities or 'cultural rationalities' of the world. By cultural nationalities is meant aspects of the world that function through different cultural paradigms, and by cultural rationalities, I mean different ways reason could function legitimately and be found to be cogent and meaningful. When humanities function with an imperial character, they essentially function for conquest, domination, competition, and alienation. They lead to a reductionist ethics of knowledge, where knowledge can only interact with other forms of knowledge through contrast and conquest and not through collaboration and consensus.

There are at least two ways by which the study of man (being human) through the humanities or human science can lead to what amounts to imperial humanities. Apart from the conceptual and definitional error that can lead to an erroneous tradition of humanities as outlined above, there are at least two other paradigms of humanities that can be considered imperial. The first is when an aspect of reasoning dominates other aspects of reasoning. The second is when the humanities emphasise one aspect of human nature at the expense of others.

To begin with the first paradigm, it should be noted that human reasoning can be technical, collaborative, emotional, empathetic, creative, conceptual, analytical, generative, constructive, critical, etc. These aspects of reason deserve equal emphasis in the project of reason. Any attempt to privilege one form of reasoning above others in a manner that compels the others to lose their potential would lead to an improper conception of human nature and a deficient application of reason on human nature. For instance, when we look at the human mode of being in terms of how a given analytic framework enables us to understand human nature without making provisions for other aspects of human nature that influence this framework, we might end up with an idea of human nature that is imperial – a view of human nature undermines other views.

In the second paradigm, human nature has diverse needs and demands – economic, moral, political, social, etc. – that demand equal cooperative attention. These demands emanate from different aspects of human nature. Any effort or attempt to study and address one aspect of human nature without regard for others will equally be counterproductive. It would amount to trying to subdue one aspect of human nature in favour of others and lead to what can be called psychic misbalancing. These ways of misapplication of reason are what can lead to imperial humanities. An illustration of this is that when emphasis is placed on the spiritual aspect of human nature at the expense of the material or vice versa, gains in understanding one domain of human nature may affect the need for similar gains in the other.

The current imperial character of the humanities also manifests in the nature of the discourse on globalisation. Globalisation emphasises the linkages among world communities to reflect the ethics of the globe from where the world finds its origin, but instead, it has become the redesigning of the world for the benefit of certain parts of the world at the expense of others. Whereas globalisation presumes to intensify the linkages of the world in such a manner that differences are narrowed in favour of mutual forms of social and cultural relations, in fact globalisation has largely come to mean the upliftment of the needs and values of certain parts of the world to the detriment of others, such that some parts of the world remain fringe players in the process. Consequently, there is an uneven interaction among the world community in areas of politics, economy and social relations, and the equality of gains of this interaction is questionable. While people from one part of the world migrate to the other as cleaners, mortuary attendants, drivers and candidates for other menial jobs, the other portion migrates to the other part of the world as experts. While arms are manufactured in one part of the world, they are

heavily applied in another for social destruction. While food is in excess in a certain parts of the world, hunger is in excess in other parts of the world. This nature of globalisation gives it an imperial character.

The imperial character of globalisation makes the ideology of globalisation a narrative of humanity seeking to reach new heights not as a group but as some citizens of the world forcefully leading others, who are compelled to follow them to an assumed goal to which they should all aspire. This has made globalisation an alienating and alienated phenomenon, an issue of class where some people are global leaders and are necessarily more global than others while others are global followers with unequal links and (inter)dependence. In the current culture of globalisation, market forces define and direct the future of mankind such that the financially powerful are the globally powerful and there is an unholy marriage between people, power and market. You are human to the extent that you are worth a huge price. Tastes, desires, wants, needs, preferences, cultures, attitudes, beliefs, etc. are reconstructed to serve the interest of a narrow population of economically powerful members of humanity whose power and influence are considerably technology-driven. In this culture of globalisation, what an animal eats in one part of the world may be more nutritious than what a family eats in another part of the world, yet the industrial globe on which the former operates needs the latter to function. The minimum on which the larger percentage of the human race functions is below what can be called the human minimum or 'capability minimum' in the words of Amartya Sen (1993). Thus, it might be just and proper to call the current culture of globalisation an inhuman globalisation, or globalisation against the globe.

To locate the imperial and deficient character of globalisation at the moment as well as the discourse that promotes it, I raise three questions to determine the strength and quality of globalisation:

- (i) What is the goal of the current trend of globalisation?
- (ii) In whose favour is a person considered to be global?
- (iii) Does the culture of globalisation harbour any potential for a just world order?

In response to (i), I submit that the end to which globalisation functions is clear of ethical consideration outside the of long-running order and ethics of dominance. The goals and desirable outcomes of globalisation are nowhere clear as an articulated pan-world ideology whose measurable end can be determined. Indeed, from what can be glimpsed from the literature on the subject, including David Held, Anthony McGrew, David Goldblatt

and Jonathan Peratton (1999), Justin Rosenberg (2000), and Paul Hirst and Grahame Thompson (1999), it is safe to suggest that globalisation has not been assigned specific ends or goals.

As a concept that suggests a shift in the spatial form and extent of human organization and interaction to a transcontinental or inter regional level, globalization is neither a singular nor a linear process neither is it final and point of social change rather is best thought of as a multidimensional phenomenon applicable to a variety of forms of social action economic, cultural or sites of social activity like the environment. (Goldblatt et al. 1999: 271)

Whereas the project places emphasis on the intensification of linkage, the end which this linkage should serve is yet to be properly spelt out. For instance, if the aim of globalisation is to make the world better and healthier, it is not clear that the world has become significantly healthier as a result of the ideology. Indeed, the question can be raised: do we have a more peaceful world at the moment as a result of globalisation, and what percentage of the world is living in peace? In the era of globalisation, especially in its modern version, there are grounds to hold that the world has moved further from attaining peace, especially if we consider the view that the world has recorded a higher number of wars than before, even among human communities like those in Africa who hitherto could be said to have had a strong culture of peace (Ugwuanyi 2020).

From these positions, it can be seen that globalisation, as it is conceived at the moment, does not have the potential for a desirable world order. In essence, globalisation amounts to internationalisation or multinationalisation of human values and aspirations: universal networking of the human community through politics, economy and technology to what can be called a supra-territorial village of humanity. However, these cannot amount to any specific human good until the ends and goals of such human interactions are defined and articulated.

This position leads us to the second question: In whose favour is one considered to be global – what is the idea of the global person? It would seem from the foregoing that the person who is global is one who is in a position to participate in the networking of the human community through science and technology. Thus, to be global means to be a techno-citizen, that is, one who is involved in the global village and can connect and reconnect with the human community. However, this connection involves many demands, some of which could undermine one's taste, identity, culture and capacity. For instance, to be global demands that one has a sizeable amount of income to access information daily and to prioritise this over other basic needs, such as food or shelter, or to place all these at the same level of need.

The economic and socio-cultural demands of being global mean that not everybody has the capacity to be global or is well-placed to be global and that some populations of the world need to be economically upgraded and empowered to be global citizens.

The third question that I have outlined to highlight the weaknesses of globalisation at the moment is as follows: Does the culture of globalisation harbour any potential for a just world? If justice means fairness or allowing the best of something to be or, in the classical Socratic sense, means giving persons their dues in the right manner, globalisation does not have the potential to lead to a just world order since it does not respond to any of these notions of justice. Globalisation, as it functions at the moment, suggests an ethics of power and domination that makes the poor and weak vulnerable to the rich and strong. Whether as financial globalisation, cultural globalisation, globalisation of sports or religion, there is an unholy alliance between power, wealth and dominance through the ideology of globalisation, which cannot lead to a just world order. Globalisation promotes undue marginalisation of members of the human community through wealth and power. A clear example of this is the fact that McDonald's stores are found in some African cities, reconstructing people's consumption patterns and tastes. But few or nothing of what comes from African villages counter-penetrates the originating communities of McDonald's stores. Another illustration is when valuable cultural products of African communities, such as music, suffer extinction by other musical cultures, thereby creating cultures of consumption that do not promote the cultural capital of Africans.

In response to the weakness of globalisation as conceived now, several alternatives have been offered. These include glocalisation and glo-fricanisation (Ugwuanyi, 2011). Glocalisation, a concept which has a considerable Asian origin, recommends localisation of globalisation, that is, allowing human communities to adopt and adapt globalisation in the best manner that suits them, while glo-fricanisation suggests applying the instruments of globalisation to an African advantage by ensuring that Africa achieves a coalition that addresses its needs through the instruments of globalisation. These options are attractive and need to be considered. However, a more fundamental option can be explored in an effort to redesign globalisation. This can be achieved by exploring the idea of being human that foregrounds the theory of globalisation and by seeking to redesign globalisation through interrogating the concept and modifying it through this effort. I suggest that this can lead to a worthier notion of globalisation and a fresh notion of humanities scholarship on globalisation. I seek to explore this in the next section of this work.

Relocating Humanities through the African Idea of Humankind and Applying the same to Address Globalisation

In this part of the work, I interrogate the notion of humankind that foregrounds thought in African tradition. I then apply this to propose a fresh tradition of humanities in relation to globalisation.

There are reasons to hold that there is an idea of man (being human) harboured in African thought that has the potential to reconfigure the humanities in general and that when this is applied to the theory or ideology of globalisation, it will assume fresh and different meanings with a richer and worthier outcome. To articulate this, I note that the Africa implied in this claim is sub-Saharan Africa or what can also be called Bantu Africa – the portion of Africa that harbours people who live between the Sahara Desert and the Cape. I argue that, in the thought pattern of people in this area, the concept of man (being human) is both an ontological affirmation and a categorical moral imperative and has implicit norms that can drive globalisation differently. In this scheme of thought, being human is a moral demand that necessarily follows from the fact that one is a human entity and in a human community. The claim I make is that there is measured value attached to the meaning of man (being human), which is not exhausted by rationality but could be located in how rationality serves to reinforce the ethics and beauty of being human among a significant number of ethnocultural groups in Africa and that this is inscribed in the idea of humanity available in the thought-scheme of the people. I further submit that this has strong potential to redefine and redirect the idea of globalisation. One is not held to be human because of the property of rationality alone but because of the application of reason in relation to others. One is human by, for and through others. This intricate web of meaning implicated in the idea of being human has the potential to configure and humanise globalisation. The idea of man (being human) implied here emphasises morality as a categorical imperative in such a manner that it has the capacity to lead to an informed conscience. One is considered human on the basis of the quality of the response to the notion of being human. For this reason, this notion of being human has what it takes to lead to a worthier outcome by re-interpreting globalisation and infusing it with some values that can lead to a just world order.

To illustrate this claim, I shall make some abstractions from some ethnocultural nationalities of sub-Saharan Africa. I shall refer to the meaning and import of man (being human) among the Igbo ethnocultural group of Nigeria and among the Akan ethnocultural group of Ghana and support

this with concepts available in the thoughts of other ethnocultural groups, such as the Yoruba and Wolof of west Africa and the Shona and Zulu of southern Africa.

In Igbo thought, the concept of man (being human) translates to *madu*. *Madu* can be traced to the formation of two elements – the prefix *ma* and the suffix *du*. *Ma* or *mma* translates to ‘beauty’ while *du* is the verb ‘to be’. So *madu* can be interpreted to mean ‘there is beauty’ (Edeh 1985:100). A variant of this interpretation suggests that *madu* translates to *mma ndu*, which can be interpreted to mean ‘the beauty of life’ (Williamson, ed., 1972:285). *Madu* is an ontological affirmation with categorical moral implications. Consequently, to be seen as *madu* implies that there is a measured meaning attached to the entity that is held to be human, which existed prior to the exercise of reason. This measured meaning demands exercising the beingness of the entity in favour of the good, the true and beautiful. Hence *madu* is expected to be an entity that should embody these values. It is for this reason that the Igbo would describe someone with strong humane and moral convictions as *Obu mmadu* – this is a human being. Because of the moral ontology that foregrounds the idea of *madu*, any deviation from this ethic could lead to such a question as *ibu madu ka ibu anioha?* – are you a human being or an animal?

This categorical moral imperative that foregrounds the idea of *madu* can be glimpsed in other ethnocultural thought patterns of African people. It is implicated in such concepts as *Taranga* (Wolof), *Pulaku* (Fulani), *Omoluwabi* (Yoruba), *Ubuntu* (Zulu), *Uhnu* (Shona), etc. These concepts affirm a notion of humankind that incorporates humanness and suggests that only the humane deserves to be held as human.

Among the Akan ethno-cultural group of Ghana, this ethic is an eloquent belief and is illustrated in a number of axioms and proverbs. Among the Akan, ‘the values of the African people are not measured in terms of economic production’ (Gyekye 2003:26). Rather, as the Akan maxims put it, ‘it is the human being that is needed’ and ‘the human being is more beautiful than gold’ (Gyekye 2003:25). Another maxim states:

*It is the human being that counts; I call upon gold; it answers not,
I call upon cloth; it answers not; it is the human being that counts* (Gyekye 2003:25).

These ideas of being human suggest a notion of human science that could motivate a fresh idea of globalisation. What are the implications of this idea of man (being human), assuming that human sciences were seeking to rethink globalisation through them? If this notion is applied to theorise and to direct globalisation, it would mean that the idea of globalisation

would assume the form of an ideology that ethically leads mankind to a humane world order. Globalisation under this paradigm would assume the feature of a town hall meeting of the human race, where they are bound and sheltered by nature, under one globe, a form of modern village square *where all human beings interact for the human ends of the entire human community*. Globalisation would amount to the idea that whatever is held to be a human achievement should promote the goodness of all mankind. Here, cultural products of globalisation could be (a) approved based on who needs them and (b) made available by who has them, with less of an eye for gain and interest. Globalisation would then not amount to a simple domination by science and technology but a loyalty to other factors and forces that define and direct the human community positively. *Globalisation through this formula would amount to a global humanisation of the world* with clearly defined goals and standards, such as how the beauty of being human comes out best among the human community. It would be more of a moral globalisation than political globalisation – globalisation that is driven by values that tend to locate mankind with the flowering of a collective ethics of the beauty of the human race and not one that is driven by power, dominance and marginalisation.

Globalisation driven by African humanities would lead to a form of globalisation that privileges the core values that define and direct the thoughts and cultures of African people. It will be one in which knowledge is driven more by consequence and not by cause only; driven and directed by *consensus and cooperation and not competition and conquest*, contrary to the current trend of globalisation, which amounts to the ‘globalisation of European norms’ (Hotep 2011) that advertises inequality and dominance. Globalisation, if and when driven by the African notion of humankind, would lead to ‘man fare’ or human welfare, which would reject marginality and exclusionism in favour of inclusion and egalitarianism and an incorporated humanity. When this obtains, the study of globalisation will not just be about any form of human interaction but about the quality of human interaction. The humanities would then be guided by a form of moral epistemology that places human essence as a core value and evaluates its gain by its ability to generate alternative knowledge that leads to this.

Conclusion

It is not surprising that despite a long history of investigating the human condition through a wide range of disciplines – philosophy, sociology, psychology, literature, history, cultural studies, etc. – a deficient understanding of human nature persists, leading to the persistent problems of humankind

that threaten the existence of the human species: racism, wars, genocide, xenophobia, discrimination, etc. This deficient notion of the humankind, or what I shall prefer to call a 'disunderstanding' of humankind, is one that produces knowledge that obstructs members of the human community from engaging with each other profitably. This work has attempted to address the theoretical foundations of this problem in relation to globalisation with the view that there is the need for a fresh paradigm in the notion of man (being human) that should drive the humanities. The work has applied this effort in relation to articulating how globalisation can be redesigned through a fresh notion of humankind that could be applied to drive the humanities. It is hoped that this effort will stimulate the search for an alternative approach to the humanities and stimulate more quality growth in the advancement of the humanities and the discourse on globalisation.

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Note

1. The author is aware that the term "man" is no longer an acceptable way to refer to humanity as whole because of its sexist and patriarchal implications, among other reasons. The term has been used in this article, where it became inevitable and in the sense of capturing the idea of being human, with no specific reference to a particular gender .

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