

## **TACKLING THE CHALLENGE OF NATION-BUILDING IN NIGERIA: THE PHILOSOPHERS' ROLE**

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### **ABSTRACT**

Perhaps, nothing sums up the myriads of problems confronting Nigeria as the challenge of nation-building. Decades after independence, Nigeria remains no more than a mere geographical territory with citizens bound together only by a common history and currency. Building a sense of nationhood where national integration and development are key features, has been a difficult challenge for the country currently hewed into smithereens by bitter ethno-religious rivalries, politics of ethnic domination, protests and agitations against political and economic exclusion and separatists' agitations for self-determination. Given their significance to national development, this paper examines the various ways philosophers can contribute to the process of nation-building in Nigeria through their profession. The paper adopts the analytic and critical methods of research. It concludes with the view that philosophers, trained in critical and reflective thinking to address social and political issues, have a vital role to play in nation-building through effective mental and moral formations of the citizens.

**Keywords:** Nigeria, Nation-Building, National consciousness, Philosophy, Morality.

### **Introduction**

Philosophy is a living discipline, which "has had much to do with influencing men's attitude to life and bringing about changes in the society" (Omogbe, 192). It would be an unthinkable error to talk about nation-building without reference to the significant role philosophers play in the process. Some smart alecks in wanting to ridicule philosophy, often deprecate it as one discipline that "does not bake bread". By this, they imply that philosophy as an academic discipline has no practical relevance to the society as nothing: it is only an innocent but useless trifling, hair-

splitting enterprise! For them, philosophers are nothing but a horde of armed-chair theorists and star-gazers, who have their head buried in the clouds, where they contemplate the platonic forms, while their feet are not on the *terra firma* of existential realities. Though such a misconception, arising from clear ignorance of what philosophy truly is and what philosophers do, is not entirely new about philosophy, yet, somehow, it reflects an important concern for the practical relevance of philosophy to human affairs in the society. By it, philosophers are, therefore, challenged to demonstrate the relevance of philosophy to practical living as well as their practical relevance to the building of the human society.

Our major task in this paper, is to show the relevance of philosophy to the society, by demonstrating the roles philosophers play in the process of nation-building. Our thought here shall evolve through four moments: First, shall be our initial inquiry into the nature of philosophy. Secondly, shall be our consideration of the concept of nation-building. Third, shall be our examination of the challenges to nation-building in Nigeria. Fourth and lastly, we shall demonstrate the different manifestations of the philosophers' irreplaceable role in the process nation-building.

### **CONCEPTUALIZING PHILOSOPHY**

Philosophy may be characterized as “the pursuit of truths about human nature and the universe” (Flynn, 2). These basic truths are wisdom. Hence, from its Greek etymology, “philo-sophia”, philosophy is rendered as “love of wisdom”. By implication, wisdom is the goal of philosophy and the spirit of the philosopher is characterized by the “love of wisdom”. Wisdom here, in the words of Udo Etuk, connotes the ability to solve difficult and puzzling problems pertaining to life by searching for rational answers to the fundamental questions about reality (14). Philosophy represents a method of reflective, rational and constructive thinking, as well as a reasoned reflective activity on human experience. Philosophy is distinguished from other ways of addressing the fundamental questions about reality (such as religion, science, mysticism, etc.) through its critical approach and in-depth intellectual inquiry. Through such application of the powers of reason in investigating reality, philosophy, and, of course, philosophers attempt to institute an inquiry, which is “not only comprehensive in scope and systematic in form, but also critical in orientation and rational in procedure” (Ali, 3).

Invariably, a philosopher is one who is intellectually equipped with the tools of rational analysis and synthesis to critically examine issues and problems of life in the society. Olusegun Oladipo underscores this fact that, “the expertise of the philosopher lies in the conscious and sustained application of critical and reflective thinking to various aspects of human life and experiences” (19). Philosophers, are therefore, trained to develop skills of critical thinking, argumentation, information management, research, communication, abstract reasoning, and analytic and

synthetic reasoning (Akintona and Odozor, 324). These attitudes and that of seeking for clarification of ideas and justification of claims and not taking anything for granted, are basic requirements that define the spirit of the philosopher. However, it is this critical nature of philosophy, and of course, the philosopher that makes some misconstrue the discipline as an abstract, obtuse and obscure enterprise with little or no practical relevance to the society. Nevertheless, from its very essence signified in the above conceptual understanding, the practical relevance of philosophy to the society cannot be countervailed. For, if philosophy by its definition is love of wisdom, then philosophy must be relevant to life in the society; because, after all, what is wisdom for, if not for living, and living well with others in the society. Thus, by its definition, philosophy shows itself to be relevant to the society by arming us with the requisite critical rationality for objective interrogation of our social experiences – to avoid blind assumptions and falsehoods that give precipitate anti-social activities, inauthentic existence and dogmatism that enslave man, breed social disharmony and under-development in the society. Philosophy provides us with a synoptic platform which enlarges our awareness of reality and eliminate all forms of baseness of thought and narrow-mindedness that constitute obstacles to social harmony. It provides us with framework for individual and collective self-appraisal to avoid leading unexamined lives, not worth living.

### **THE CONCEPT OF NATION-BUILDING**

A nation may be defined as an association of people within a well-defined territory, who share a common historical experience and identity, identify their shared core values, and on the bases of these shared core values, are prepared to work together in social solidarity and patriotism for their own good and the good of their country. A country is not necessarily a nation, for a nation is more than a mere territory or a collection of people within the same geographical boundary, sharing the same currency. Martin Buber rightly observes that existing under the same rule or within the same borders is not sufficient for nationhood; for, “two people can be in the same place but they are not meeting (without relating)” (p.6). Tamir also confirms that, “individuals may share a territory, identity and even historical experiences, without seeing themselves as members of the same nation” (419).

Thus, beyond the fact of common historical experience and territory, nationhood requires the development of national consciousness among citizens in the country, social solidarity, commonality of values and interests, collective attitudes and behaviours, and commitment to individual and collective responsibilities by the citizens for the socio-political and economic prosperity of their society. Nation-building, is therefore, “a search for nationhood, leading to the development of national consciousness among individuals and groups for a given nation” (Unya and Onyemauwa, 11). It is the process leading to the progression of a country into a nation, characterized by national integration and development. It signifies that process whereby a society

of people with diverse origins, histories, languages, cultures and religions are brought to together through complex activities that promote a sense of national consciousness among them and socio-political and economic progress for their individual well-being and that of their nation at large.

However, the process of nation-building does not come so easy, though it is not an impossible task. According to Ibrahim Gambari, “nation-building does not come by historical accident; rather, they are built by men and women with vision and resolve” (8). Nation-building requires a holistic approach where all facets of positive human activities in the society are efficiently activated and harnessed. The intellectual contributions from academic disciplines are important in the process. Philosophy, is of course, no exception in this regard (Ikuli andOjimba, 30). Nation-building requires a structural process intertwined with effective democratization and governance through efficient state-planned strategies of responsible leadership and responsible citizenship (Stephenson, n.p.).

History demonstrates the difficult effort needed to ensure nation-building. The process has been especially strenuous, where the people to be united include diverse and large groups, distinguished by their customs, languages, or separate identities(Davis and Nwaiwu, 2). In sub-Saharan Africa, for example, most of the nations that achieved independence during the decolonization process of the 1950s and1960s have continued to face the challenge of nation-building and national development. Nigeria is an example in this regard; for, what currently answers Nigeria is a collection of people bound together by a common history, geographical ties and currency. Perhaps, Nigeria may be better described as a “notion” rather than a “nation”.

### **CHALLENGES TO NATION-BUILDING IN NIGERIA**

Although some attempts targeted at nation-building has been made in Nigeria since independence, yet the country is nettled with multiple social challenges that serially render the evolution of the country into a true nation a hard sale. For instance, Nigeria has been shredded into smithereens by the forces of bitter ethnic rivalries, politics of ethnic domination, ethno-religious conflicts, and socio-political upheavals. And every part of the country echoes with anger, protests and lamentations against injustices of oppression, political and economic exclusion and marginalization, and separatists’ agitations.

These in turn, trigger other social vices causing the country to further hemorrhage from high poverty and unemployment rates, corruption, political violence, terrorism, banditry, bloodshed and all other sundry criminal activities, that threaten the nation’s, stability, unity and development. These socio-political and economic challenges have turned Nigeria into a huge paradox, which according to Sylvanus Udoidem “has become a perpetual ethnic memory

syndrome, infected with insidious orgy of betrayal and revenge” (25). Reflection on the sad situation, Matthew Kukah concludes that, “there has been a total loss of sense of belonging to the Nigerian state by Nigerians” (41).

Some thinkers consider colonialism that forcefully conflated the over 250 ethnic nationalities that hitherto existed independently and distinctively in culture and tradition without their involvement and consent, to form the country in the 1914 amalgamation process, as a major factor to blame for the difficult challenge of nation-building in Nigeria (Nnoli, 35; Fayemi, 180). Fayemi argues that “the post-colonial expressions of marginalization and domination of minority ethnic, religious and cultural groups are often a continuation of the ethnic, class and caste hierarchies established under colonial rule” (180). However, colonialism may have been responsible for the historical accident of Nigeria as a nation, yet it cannot be blamed for our problem of nation-building. Our problem is not necessarily the challenge from our history; rather, it can be summarized as a clear failure of statecraft or political leadership and irresponsible followership.

Yes, there are challenges of socio-economic inequalities; the challenges of an appropriate constitutional settlement; and the challenges of building institutions for democracy and development. However, all these arise from the failures of leadership and followership in the country, and not necessarily a product of the identity onslaught of colonialism. History has confirmed that countries like India, China, Pakistan, Turkey, South Africa, Ghana, etc., which were equally fragmented by colonialism, have made significant progress in nation-building – with high levels of national integration, social cohesion and socio-political developments (Nwabughuogu, 23). Gambari is, therefore, on point when he says that, “nation-building does not come by historical accident; rather, they are built by men and women with vision and resolve” (8).

The fact remains that there has never been a golden age of great leadership in the history of Nigeria. The lack of competent, responsible leaders with integrity, vision, high moral values has been the bane of the country. The Nigerian political leaders – military and civilian – once in power, quickly split the country along ethnic, religious and regional lines as they scramble for the country’s resources for the sole benefits of themselves and their ethnic group.

The result has been the lethal forces of nepotism, graft and corruption and ethnocentrism that have ripped apart the fabric of the Nigerian society (Etuk, *The Challenge of Ethnocentrism...*, 32). Thus, the Nigerian political leadership failure and ineffective managements of the nation’s ethno-religious diversity and natural resources since independence, have been the major factor militating against the success of nation-building in the country. To heal a nation of corruption

and bad leadership that destroy the nation, the mind-set of the people needs to be re-oriented in the right direction. Philosophy is most relevant in this regard in the service to the nation.

Besides, irresponsible followership in Nigeria constitutes another serious challenge to nation-building in the country. Majority of Nigerians have been multi-dimensional impoverished by the political elites, constitute merely a weak and fearful horde docile over the activities of the leaders. In his book, *Because I am Involved*, Emeka Ojukwu fittingly captures this ugly face of followership in Nigeria thus: "Followership has become such that our leaders are seduced and tyrants are made of them. We are sycophants. We even applaud executive imbecility. We genuflect to mediocrity and defend the indefensible executive indiscretions" (178). Another angle to the problem is that, most Nigerians citizens, tend to owe their primary and major loyalty to their tribes and religion before the nation. With such strong ethnocentric tendencies and culturally biased mind-set, they often absolutize their own culture and religion, develop a strong sense of superiority over others and a corresponding dislike or misunderstanding of other ethnic groups and religions in the country (Buhlman, 59).

This exaggerated sense of self-importance, is often responsible for near absence of national consciousness and lack patriotism among the citizens. It is also what is largely responsible for inter-ethnic and ethno-religious conflicts in Nigeria and what promotes struggles over the nation's resources through social exclusion and ethnic violence (Fayemi, 177). Such ethnocentrism is often displayed by most followers or citizens in their readiness to protect corrupt leaders from their tribes and religion and to shield them from criticism and prosecution. The ethno-religious sentiments are also activated in their pattern of voting during election, as it rightly taken for granted that once they are voted into power, defending the agenda and interests of their tribes and religion would be the primary business of the leaders in power, using government resources. The is why Nigeria, unfortunately, continues to burn out in poverty and insecurity.

### **THE PHILOSOPHERS' ROLE IN NATION-BUILDING**

Philosophy has a vital role to play in the process of nation-building. Leopoldo Zea says that, "a reflective and critical philosophy can engage the world productively, and forge a new, more relevant social order" (qtd. in Idahosa, n.p.). In this regard, Udo Etuk remarks that, "Philosophers have contributed immensely to human and social development, and much more is expected in the contemporary world" (19). However, philosophy should not be expected to play the role like the physical or empirical sciences in the society. These other sciences only consider the material or physical development of a nation without necessarily considering the state of the mind of the citizens: both the leaders and the followers. The good of philosophy, on the other hand, is in dealing with the mind of the human being; after all, social relation is nothing but an external

expression of the internal state of man. That is, our thought pattern basically determines the nature of our social relations. A negative thought pattern certainly precipitates negative behaviours that harm the society and injure nation building; but a proper thought pattern unifies the society and promotes nation building. Innocent Asouzu captures this point more succinctly when he says: “the way we relate to the world and the people around us depends on the way we conceptualize reality. The way we conceptualize the human person, for example, determines the way we relate to other human beings” (333).

For this reason, the philosophers’ focus is the proper mental formation and orientation of the human person, because, if one is able to capture and put the minds of the citizens in the nation into its proper perspective, every other thing will fall into its rightful place concerning nation-building. On the other hand, even if the best policies, infrastructures or material goods are put in place in the nation, if the people lack proper mental orientation and social consciousness and proper understanding of the fundamentals of their essence, all efforts in building the nation will amount to nothing. This is why, to talk about nation-building is to talk primarily about the development of the human person through proper mental formation. Philosophy has a vital role to play in this regard. Russell clearly points this out saying: “if all men were well off, if poverty and disease had been reduced to their lowest possible points, there would still remain much to be done to produce a viable society; and even in the existing world, the goods of the mind are at least as important as the goods of the body. It is exclusively among the goods of the mind that the value of philosophy is to be found; and only those who are not indifferent to these goods can be persuaded that the study of philosophy is not a waste of time” (89-90).

No society can make pretension to the life of social harmony, progress and development, and ultimately, nation-building, where its citizens operate on the basis of negative and uncritical mind-set that is typically absolutist and exclusivist; or on the basis of unexamined beliefs and unreflective actions. Any social relation or political structure driven by people with such mindset, is bound to be domineering and oppressive of others, seeking their parochial interest at the expense of others, and consequently, provoking hatred, chaos and hostilities in the society (Etuk, *The Challenge of Ethnocentrism...*, 38). With its emphasis on critical analysis of issues, philosophy helps in nation-building through relevant philosophical theories that can impart proper mental orientation and social consciousness on the citizens, to enable them rise above narrow-mindedness, ethnocentrism, parochialism, dogmatism and uncritical mode of existence in social relations, that mire the process of nation-building.

For instance, philosophical theories such as the Heraclitan conflicts of opposites, the Taoist *Yin-Yang* Principle of Complementarity, Innocent Asouzu’s Complementary Reflections, Godfrey Ozumba’s Integrative Human and Udo Etuk’s New Humanism, and many others, present rich tapestry of philosophical principles on the formation of complementary consciousness in man,

necessary for effective management of identity and cultural diversities, for mutual co-existence in the society and eventual success in nation-building. Thus, in the task of nation-building, it is the role of philosophers, to seek and provide the society with such ontological grounds for the unity of our beings and complementary mode of existence, and formulate rules of social interactions that can enhance social harmony, while at the same time, lift the citizens away from the negative and polarizing mind-set that ultimately destroy the society.

Again, nation-building requires constant critical self-examination on the part of the citizens, as well as critical evaluation of the policies of the government in the nation; for, as Socrates observes: “an unexamined life is not worth living.” Philosophy is a very potent tool for ensuring such critical rationality, evaluative mind-set and self-assessment among the citizens in the nation and for the nation itself. It provides the individual and the state a critical framework for self-evaluation and comprehensive understanding of the quality and implications of their actions and policies of government in the society.

And through its critical analysis of political concepts and systems of governance, philosophy determines the ideals of socio-political life, and gives direction about the means and social values necessary to bring about social welfare, social solidarity and socio-political prosperity in the nation. Nigeria for example, is a multi-ethnic and pluralistic society, organized on the principles as federalism, separation of powers, check and balances, popular sovereignty, limited government, and majority rule in the democratic experiment; yet, from its inception, the nation has been confronted with the difficult challenge of nation-building. Given this unfortunate background, Nigeria needs the guidance of philosophers through their positive philosophical reflections on the socio-political order, to transcend her present state of socio-political instability and under-development. Such philosophical reflections and theories should challenge the practice of distributive justice in Nigeria, bring clarifications into the concepts of equity principles of distributive justice, rights, responsibilities and freedom and democracy.

Such interventionist philosophies must be critically endogenous, by making the people to be in-charge of their lives through better distribution of economic resources, protection of life and property; and indigenous or at least, adapted to suit the people’s culture, so that the process of nation-building may be owned by the people who are not disadvantaged by the implementation of a system of governance alien to their cultural systems. In this regard, philosophy has two main roles, namely: the critical and constructive roles. It is critical because it criticizes the actual social-political life in the light of common Good. It points out the shortfalls in the government policies and programmes in the society. In its constructive role, philosophy seeks to find out the conditions which make the society a harmonious whole, and develop theories on how best to organize our social and collective life to attain progress in the process of nation-building. This is



why Plato believes that the only remedy for social ills is either philosophers become kings or to educate kings to become philosophers.

In this way, philosophy represents the tool or weapon that instils in the citizens the critical rationality and evaluative mind-set that enable them to avoid inauthentic existence as followers. A nation where human rights are violated indiscriminately, cannot experience development and stability. Philosophy furnishes people with the requisite knowledge of the essence of social contract, which gives them the autonomy and confidence to raise questions about their fundamental human rights in the society. Hence, “a philosophical attitude gives one the confidence to rise up and question such violations” (Akpan, 5). In other words, philosophy empowers the citizens to rise above vassalage and mediocrity, sycophancy and ethnocentrism and other attitudinal forms of inauthentic followership in the society.

Within the context of the knowledge of the society and essence of political life that philosophy offers, political leaders are also put in a position to critically evaluate their policies and actions in order to be in line with national interest and expectations. This helps them to build a culture of honesty and establish a tradition of selflessness and patriotism in public service. This helps to instill in them a sense of responsiveness to their official duties. Thus, a nation without philosophy – is doom to fail, and will attain only little in the nation-building process, since her citizens will lack the needed critical and evaluative mind-set for responsible followership, and the leaders lacking such would fail in their role in governance.

Again, moral development on the part of the citizens is a *conditio-sine-qua-non* for nation building. Besides, a political arrangement that is not imbued with moral principles and values would be inhumane and incapable of yielding effective nation-building. Anichebe says that immorality breeds corruption and irresponsibility in the polity, which militates against nation-building by stampeding economic, political and social development in any nation (133). However, neither science nor technology can develop a country where citizens are morally depraved. Philosophy is a critical tool in the development of good moral consciousness in the citizens in the society. Through the perspectives of metaphysics, epistemology and ethics it is the place of philosophers to show the path of objective moral standards and direction in the society, and to stand in the gap as gadflies to re-awakening the moral consciousness of all citizens in the society so that they keep alive their sense of morality responsibility, without which virtue, nation-building remains a mere dream.

In a country like Nigeria, where tribalism, religious fanaticism, bribery and corruption, terrorism and sundry criminalities have become the order of the day, thwarting all efforts at nation-building, the philosopher should be at hand with his metaphysical, ethical cum epistemological theoretical weapons to show the way, detect and correct such moral aberrations in our national

“body politik”, through their critical analysis and reflections. Nnamdi clarifies this more stating that, “The role of philosophy in the society is in the moulding of the character of individuals” (qtd in Anichebe, 13).

Furthermore, the role of philosophy in the re-evaluation of culture, which is an essential feature of nation-building, cannot be overemphasized. The speed of globalization and the advancement of technology have made a constant re-examination and re-evaluation of our culture in relation to contemporary realities a philosophical imperative. Bearing in mind the dynamism and flexibility of culture, this re-examination is significant in creating a synthesis of the past and present for a more humane, progressive and civilized culture. This presents the philosopher as a physician of the culture in the society; for, using his analytic, constructive and logical tools, the philosopher purifies the aspects of cultures that have become anachronistic, obsolete and out of touch with contemporary realities. With this, philosophy fine-tunes the culture for positive development and this positive cultural development is an aspect of nation-building and national development. This is obvious in Nnamdi’s remark that philosophy is a method of distinguishing fact from fallacies, sifting truth as sacrosanct... it is a method of securitizing our otherwise unexamined beliefs and practices in order to purge them of falsehood and error(qtd. in Anichebe, 13)

Furthermore, every nation has her overall objectives, which she seeks to realize by means of education. Philosophy plays an important role in bringing this about by giving direction to what constitutes every nation’s educational goals, in view of realizing the national objectives. It is for this reason that every nation’s educational system is built on some identified philosophic ideas upon which the running of her educational enterprise revolves. Nigeria, for instance, has her overall objectives which she pursues, in view of nation-building, namely, to realize: a free and democratic society; a just and egalitarian society; a united, strong and self-reliant nation; a great and dynamic economy; and a land of bright and full opportunities for all citizens (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 7). As indicated in the *National Policy on Education*, Nigeria considers education as an instrument per excellence for achieving these goals (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 10).

But, education without a sound philosophical base is a blind atavistic and misdirected enterprise, which produces more bane than benefits to the nation. Hence, Samuel Amaele observes that, “a misdirected educational programme produces misdirected citizens” (Amaele, 109). Hence, for there to be proper coordination between the nation’s educational goals and the national objectives, philosophy is needed to offer the foundation and direction to the nation’s educational enterprise. For this reason, many nations of the world adopt some philosophical ideals that serve as the philosophical foundation for their educational goals. In the case of Nigeria, the following pragmatic philosophical ideals are established as the philosophical foundation from which her identified educational goals are derived: “The development of the individual into a sound and

effective citizen. The full integration of the individual into the community; and the provision of equal access to educational opportunities for all citizens of the country at the primary, secondary and tertiary levels, both inside and outside the formal school system” (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 11).

This further demonstrates the significant role of philosophers in nation-building; for by this philosophy serves as a framework for national policy formulation through the educational services. Philosophy is thus, “essential to discovery of principles and practice of education in the society” (Etim, 17); and philosophers are highly relevant in providing the needed foundation, direction and focus to the educational goals and activities in the society, in view of realizing the nation’s objectives through educational services. It is little wonder, therefore, that the educational system of a society and the values and skills taught by it, depends to a large extent, on the society's philosophic ideas and orientation, which is often a reflection the philosophical leaning of the society to any of the theory of the philosophical foundations of education such as Idealism, Realism, Pragmatism, Existentialism, Reconstructionism, Behaviourism, etc. Edwards’ observation is significant in capturing this important role of in nation-building: “philosophy is an ethics that justifies the goals that the educational theory adopts, a metaphysics that explains the psychological and sociological parts of the theory of education, and an epistemology that explains why certain methods of teaching and learning are effective and demonstrates our ability to know the truths of any thoughts whatsoever” (22).

Given this fact, it is the duty of philosophers, to determine the kind of philosophy of education that should guide their nation’s educational goals and activities in order to be in a position to realize the nation’s ultimate goals and objectives. For instance, our philosophers have the task to determine what kind of educational philosophy and goals that will be good for a multi-cultural, multi-ethnic society like Nigeria. It is also the duty of philosophers to contribute to educational policies and programmes and to subject their implementations to constant critically review in view of realizing the national objectives through the instrumentality of education.

Finally, it is often said that the philosopher makes everybody’s business his own business. This is true, though not in the superficial sense of seeing the philosopher as a “busy-body” or meddling interloper; but in the sense that it is a very necessary role of philosophers in nation-building. For, “very often other peoples’ businesses, professions and activities, may create problems for man and constitute an obstacle to the task of nation-building, which the philosopher cannot but wade into and point out for a change of direction. Hence, as the mother of all sciences, philosophy contributes to nation-building through its critical assessments of the activities of other disciplines in the academia, which are expected to contribute to the development of the society. Philosophers, therefore, often enter into many fields or disciplines of study, to critically examine their basic assumptions, and to demand rational justification for their

claims and activities. This is exemplified in case of such second-order disciplines as: philosophy science, philosophy of economic, philosophy of law, philosophy of mathematics, philosophy of history, etc.

Through such foundational studies of other disciplines, specialists in such disciplines are often credited with useful philosophical insights about their profession that help to keep their professional activities within the bounds of reason for the good of man and the benefit the society. The scientist, for instance, in his lab alone, cannot decide on the rightness or wrongness of his research activities. Wider insights, broader perspectives, and more careful and critical evaluation of the human situation are required to make the decisions to safeguard the sanctity and dignity of the human life and protect the society from harm. These insights and perspectives are what philosophers are trained and are expected to deploy in resolving the human problems confronting the society, especially that of nation-building.

## **CONCLUSION**

It was the renowned philosopher, Karl Marx, who said that the purpose of philosophy is not just to interpret the world but to change it. Indeed, philosophy can and does change the world, because when philosophers engage with ideas, when they propose ideas, examine and analyze them; when they debate public issues and policy statements, their aim is to challenge their audiences to re-examine their beliefs, convictions and values with a view to bringing about changes for the betterment of both individual and societal lives. In these significant ways they contribute to nation-building, by ensuring the stability, growth and development in the nation.

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