

# AN EXISTENTIAL APPROACH TO 'NOTHINGNESS': TOWARDS A GLOBAL HARMONY

Charles O. Anebuokhae; Cyrille Ngamen Kouassi

Department of Philosophy and Religious Studies, Samuel Adegboyega University,  
Ogwa, Edo State, Nigeria.

## **ABSTRACT**

*The peaceful co-existence of several societies today is fast becoming uncertain. It so appears that there is a falling apart with the possibility of the centre never to hold. This paper posits, that the global peace which is presently under threat is premised on one fundamental and salient factor. This factor as identified in this paper is known as 'nothingness'. Ontologically, 'nothingness' defines the primordial beginning and end of existence. It therefore becomes pathetic that the challenges bedeviling social institutions, religious bodies and the government of various societies, appear to be bi-products of a negative approach and use of the concept. Thus, the paper identifies the concept of 'nothingness' as a sting, if not properly handled could wrought more havoc to mankind. Undoubtedly, there are questions begging for answers from various parts of the continents on the teleos of global uprisings. Questions such as; has peace gone on exile? Why is centre not holding? Why are human induced horrors and disasters now the news of the day? Is man not supposed to plow and not to plunder the earth? and what is the future of humanity? Obviously, one can no longer deny that there seems to be a practical demonstration of "Matthew 24:6-8"(see the Holy Bible). Off course, those of the Christian faith had started tagging the current global trend in conflict as 'signs of the end time'. The obvious however is the scare that man would not through his actions and inactions make faster his end. The position of this paper is that an existential approach to 'nothingness' would help in bringing about social cohesion. The paper unveils that when 'nothingness' is viewed from an existential spectacle, man's inhumanity to man could be eradicated. Starting from the self to the group and institutions, the human person would be given the deserved regard. And man would no longer be seen by another as a means to an end, but rather as an end in itself. The methodology of this paper is analytical, reconstructive and critical. It is our submission from an existential point of view, that if 'NOTHINGNESS' is given its genuine interpretation as we shall see throughout the paper, it would turn out to be that unifying force which would bring peace and harmony to every society.*

## **KEYWORDS**

*Existence, Nothingness, Ontology and Harmony.*

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

Man is enveloped in nothingness. It is a phenomenon that he cannot just help himself out. Emphatically speaking, it is a fate. Man seems to be condemned to nothingness. But how much is he able to realize or aware of this tragedy? His actions and inactions, tell greatly of the fact that perhaps, he is ignorant of what he is thrown into the world to face, to fate, to submit, and not to combat. Desires, aspirations, ambitions etc, seem to have drifted man away from the solemnity of his inevitable nothingness. Is not man majoring on the minor? Off course, a food for thought.

The term nothingness has been highly misconstrued. This misconception of the term, the paper posits, has resulted in several vices, such as: hatred among individuals, cracks on institutional walls, the seemingly unbridgeable gaps between the religious sets, man inhumanity to man, and worst of it all are, the various raging conflicts and drumbeat of wars at different corners of the globe. The misconceptions more often than not, have always been to debase, abdicate, relegate, and reduce the others. In the midst of this, one claims superiority over the other or others. And it is in reaction to this, that vices occur. Nothingness, man does not bear in mind plays parallel on everyone. Ignorance and shortsightedness seem to have robbed man of the right attitude to nothingness.

The paper shows from the reality of nothingness that no man actually has a self or an identity more than the others in the society, or in the world - seeing that the self one closes his teeth to defend in war, duel, and rancor, would someday helplessly yield to the course or reality of nothingness. It therefore seems a futile effort for him to have constantly be inventing a self. Also, that even the most solid and powerful social institutions are fundamentally mythical structures designed to hold chaos and formlessness at bay: they are more like dreams than like realities. The experience of nothingness, with or without psychoanalytic, social and theological criticism, dissolves the pragmatic solidity of the society's way of life.

The wrong application of the concept of 'nothingness', has made many out there to become victims of circumstance. And being at the receiving end of the aftermath of this phenomenon, hopes of many have been laid bare and flattened - hopes seem doomed to bitter and painful frustration - the belt of retaliation is tightened and the drum for revolution is beating at every corner. The negative experience of nothingness might arm them against the event. We hope to write of that experience in a way that leads not to passivity or to a sense of defeat, but to calm ardor and revolutionary expectations.

The paper posits that the misconception of nothingness is largely responsible for the derail in global peace and harmony. And that there need to be a well rooted orientation that would make people, nations, groups and institutions to come out of the woods, and to the realization that the reality of nothingness is enough a reason to lay their swords. From this stem shoot up some pivotal questions, such as: What is nothingness? Does it really mean anything to reality? In what ways can it be manipulated on the life of man? Is it only destined to destruction? All these take turn to seek answers.

## **2. EXPLORING APPROACHES TO PEACE AND HARMONY**

The issue of peace seems to be a very high concern to man. This been the case because peace is cardinal to human development in all sphere. Thus, governments, religious sets, groups and even individuals have in one way or the other spell out what they think should be done to bring about peace and order in the world. According to Mr. Guterres, UN Secretary General (2017) , there are seven threats and tests that stand in the way of global security: nuclear peril, terrorism, unresolved conflicts and systematic violations of international humanitarian law, climate change, rising inequality, unintended consequences of innovation, and people on the move (cited in Chandra, 2018). Different theories that have emerged on how to actualise peace are off-course inexhaustible, yet, the obvious is that the entire world one cannot deny is still gravely battling with plagues and insurgencies which are largely man - made. Seeing that the actions and the inactions of man are to a great extent responsible for conflicts and unrests one may be tempted to ask if truly the concern for peace is central or mean anything to man. However, that the global

unrest is attended with panics from seemingly every quarter suggests that perhaps man has lost control. What then has gone wrong?

Sounding somewhat harsh, Karl Marx had said that the division faced by humanity is as a result of a factor - the gap between the proletariats and the bourgeoisie. This he sees as the centre factor standing against peace. Thus for him with its abolition through the process of revolution tranquility would be restored. Contrary to the view of Karl Marx, the capitalist peace theorists had seen capitalism as the solution to peace. Ayn Rand held that the major wars of history were started by the more controlled economies of the time against the freer ones and that capitalism gave mankind the longest period of peace in history (cited in Wikipedia the free Encyclopaedia).

Democracy as a system of government embellish with hopeful features and embraced globally as an answer to world peace challenges is also undoubtedly failing. "Proponents of the democratic peace theory claim that strong empirical evidence exists that democracies never or rarely wage war against each other". The realities today have made this claim to be short-lived. Globalization is another dimension in which the world sought for peace. The trend in national politics by which city-states and nation-states have unified and suggests that the international arena will eventually follow suit tends towards peace attainment. Many countries such as China, Italy, the United States, Australia, Germany, India and Britain have unified into single nation-states with others like the European Union following suit, suggesting that further globalization will bring about a world state and then, world peace .

The religious bodies have not taking the issue of peace and violence with a pitch of salt. There have been expressions in no mean terms for an end to violence. One of the foremost of them all is Christianity. Though not all Christians believe that the lasting world peace is on this earth. But then, the basic Christian ideal specifies that peace can only come by the Word and love of God, which is perfectly demonstrated in the life of Christ: Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid. *John 14:27*. Christianity has occupied a good percentage among the religions in the world and even in the areas whereby one can boldly say the religion is dominating, violence is still very much at its peak. Stemming from here is that Christianity has not successfully usher the world into peace.

For the Dharmic religions (Buddhism, Hinduism, Jainism etc) avoidance of violence is a central concept. Buddhism specifically has successfully identify the causes of violence in the world. Buddhists believe people can live in peace and harmony only if we abandon negative emotions such as anger in our minds and cultivate positive emotions such as love and compassion.

As this paper will certainly not contain all the theories and approaches towards the attainment of peace, it has only succeeded in pinching on a few. Following the discussion in this section, it becomes praise worthy that the issue of how to come about peaceful society has not in any way neglected. Efforts have been made by theorists, religious sets and groups. However, the fact still remains that the problem at issue has not been fully resolved as there are still threats of violence across the globe. The paper therefore is to fill a vacuum in the fight against violence. Identified in the paper is that there seems to be something humans are holding unto that is counteracting all the orientations and doctrines hitherto thought in the quest for peace and orderliness. This is ego. Yes! Human ego. The biggest source of violence says Jhingran , is man's ego, the sense of selfhood pitted against all other selves. One's self or ego depends upon its level of identification, first with one's family, and later on with one's community, howsoever that community may be

defined. The remedy lies in perceiving and emphasizing our commonalities, affinity to each other, as well as our interdependence (2017). The paper therefore draws man's attention to that which he has in common with other human beings - a common end. That common end renders powers useless; that common end becomes a leverage of both the feared and the fearful; that common end tumbles down both the scepter and the crown. That common end as identified in this paper is nothingness.

### **3. ON THE CONCEPT OF 'NOTHINGNESS'**

The concept 'nothingness' has seriously received attention and as such has been studied all through history by philosophers and theologians alike, and the understanding varies especially between Western and Eastern cultures and philosophical traditions.

Parmenides (5<sup>th</sup> century B. C.), a Greek philosopher of the monist school, was one of the earliest Western philosopher to consider 'nothing' as a concept. According to him, to speak of a thing one has to speak of a thing that exists. Since we can speak of a thing in the past, this thing must exist now, and from this he concludes that there is no such thing as change. As a corollary, there can be no such thing as coming - into - being, and passing out of being, or non-being (cited in Seidel 55). From the following, and contrary to his fifth century counterpart Heraclitus, Parmenides concluded that "nothing" cannot exist. But St. Augustine argues that God could not have created the universe from the pre-existent substance of himself, or else there would have to be a change in the unchangeable. In fact, nothing becomes that which 'existed' before all things were created. For him, though everything that is, is from God, it is not of God, but of 'nothing' (Seidel). In the modern era, the concept is made popular by the philosophy of Jean Paul Sartre. For Sartre the term 'nothingness' is likened to the destiny of man. For '...man is always separated from what he is by all the breadth of the being that he is not (Seidel). Man is his own nothingness, and hence, it is through man that nothingness came into the world.

In the light of Jim Unah, "... nothingness is the root and the foundation of everything that has been. Nothingness is the ground phenomenon of our being. Physical vacuum is nothing but yet envelops the world" (129). In extension, Nishida, seeing nothingness in beings, says that "...being must be comprehended progressively as being determined by the 'universal of judgment', and as being enveloped by the 'universal of consciousness' and by the 'intelligible self' and by nothingness" (38-39). The intelligible self sees itself in the dept consciousness and is supported and enveloped by 'nothingness'. Splendor and fullness of being are infinitely intensified by the overwhelming realization that everything comes from 'nothingness' and goes into 'nothingness' (Unah 15). Unah's position further intersects that of Nishida, when he says, that: Nothingness is the domain from which things emerge and into which they vanish (15). It is a virgin forest rich of formless ideas which the mind could assemble and bring to reality. Nothingness is not enwrap in space per se, hence, it has immeasurable magnitude. However, when a pinch of it is apprehended, it could be given a direction – and this manifest in reality. Unah sees nothingness as occupying the inner recesses of human thought and it enables us to order and reorder the world (15).

### **4. NOTHINGNESS AND HUMAN EXISTENCE**

The totality of human existence is surrounded by nothingness. And in its entirety, human life has simply been referred to as a vapour. All the cravings and yearnings that preoccupied the activities of man all melt in the pot of vanity. However, the way man goes about his activities empirically

makes it doubtful whether he is aware of it. Man's behavior to his fellow man and even to the ecosystem has not in any way shows that he has come to the realization that he is been circled by 'Iceland' of 'nothingness'. Whether we claim that the world is given to us to possess and to subdue, and we have been so empowered, one thing every sane human being should at every point in time makes effort to be conscious of, is the reality that it will and certainly be enclosed in vanity (nothingness).

Nothingness seems to have been handled with the 'left hand' in the face of pluralism. Today pluralism – rendering every narrow sense of reality less than compelling – provides the objective reference that makes the experience of nothingness frequent and powerful (Novak 114). Why pluralism? Whereas humanity evolved as one, originally meant to be bonded, pluralism set-in, in the bid to identify one's self with one order or the other. These diverse orders poisoned their own subjects with orientations that they only can see through what has been referred to as "the mask of parochialism" (Novak). The poisonous orientations which disintegrates reality the paper claims, has made the conception of nothingness negative and therefore yielding negative results. At the fur of this plurality battle, is the religious order. This is what Soyinka regards as the most primitive of all human instincts (32).

In Rene Descartes *cogito ergo sum* (I think, therefore, I am), (qtd. in Sartre 11), the reflective ability of man seems to have gained relevance. Humans at every level see themselves as worthy. It therefore calls for rancor if likened or even regarded as nothing. Any action that is interpreted to mean that the other has been derided invites a dwell. The misconception of 'nothingness' has created a wide and seemingly unbridgeable gap among the religious set. Among the religious people there is this disparity - some claim to have queued along the narrow way that leads to the most high and others therefore are nothing. Some want to prove that they are not as worthless as they are taken to be, and so seek answer in physical combat. In the face of the arrows and spears, and rejoicing in killing, one wonders whether the one and only Supreme being - though approached differently, takes pleasures in this. Accepted that both the 'Jews' and the 'Gentiles' are his, one can rightly argue that he does not take pleasure in acts of this nature. If the saying that 'varieties is the spice of life' is a food to actually inform our thinking then, why the factional battles. Why can't we see the flavour life would have in the face of unity in the diversities or pluralities. If an order does not reduce the other to an infinitesimal position, then the Newtonian law would not result. The reaction or the defense to prove the other wrong – trying to show that the label 'nothing' which the one places on the other is not matching, spill hell, it causes chaos, and this is attended by social tension. In the supremacy tussle, sets have created discords which have become shades under which some individuals capitalizing on the ignorance on some dogmatic loyalists now use them to perpetrate mayhem. If indeed we are seeking the truth, then the approaches seem to be erroneous because we cannot arrive at it when parties involve have agreed to end it all with spears and bows – all to prove 'something'. In his views, Soyinka posited, that

“my interest is really to call attention to what is perhaps the most insidious of all such exclusivist dicta, a religious one what stridency both historical and in contemporary times, has taken on aggressive and territory rapacious proportions. For me, this dictum is the most persistent credo that militates against the evolution of a harmonious, all-embracing human community" (30).

In world politics, the misconception of 'nothingness', the paper reveals as also affecting the government of several societies. This wrong notion is fast-creating a gap between the leaders and the led. In so many societies too numerous to mention, the led no longer feel safe in the hands of

the leaders simply because it has become obvious to them that they have been played down on, reduced, cheated and jilted. There are various pointers to the fact that the purpose for the crave for power to so many persons, is no longer for the well-being of the populace. The few persons at the corridor of power have taken the teeming masses for a ride. There is virtually nothing happening round them to show that they count. The pathetic situation seems the same in several nations of the globe. A probe into the *why* of this undeniable reality, simply reveals that whereas the oppressors see themselves as 'something', they see others as 'nothing'. The people are therefore left only to ask questions like those asked by Niyi Osundare in his "*They Too are the Earth*", when he says; Are they of this earth, who fritter the forest and harry the hills / Are they of this earth who live that the earth may die...? (45)

Under this circumstances of bitterness and painful frustration, seeing riches but cannot behold of it, many have been pushed to recourse to several social vices. Though not the right answer, the social vices, of which several societies are embattled with today, are fashioned out mediums of survival by some who felt that the doors of honest ways of survival have been shut against them. One of such social vices, is ritual killing. This in itself, is an extension of 'nothingness'.

Ritual killing is all over and those who are involve do it for different purposes. When deeply reflected upon, one would agree that someone who kills another person for rituals play-down on the humanity of the victims. He/she does not see them as worthwhile, but as a means to an end. That end, to them, is what matters because they attach value to it. The means in this case is only taken as a tool. The argument here now is, if the oppressor value the victims same way as he value himself, the golden rule would be applied. But in his thinking, the victims are nothing compare to how he thinks of himself. Here is an irony. The irony in this horrible and nefarious act is that the oppressor feels that the oppressed are nothing, reduce the victims. But the oppressor wants to use his victims for 'something' – (ritual, perhaps to get money). The hypocrisy of man is well revealed here. It is ironical especially from the scholastic principle of causality, which says, "*ex nihil, nihil fit*", meaning that from nothing, nothing comes (qtd. in Miller 576). If there be a consideration that 'nothing' is something at all time, then, rendering myself something and superior over the other whom I have considered as 'nothing' would not occur.

The recognition that whatever I assume to be – my status and influence, or the power I have wielded, if I know that I have a common end with the others, is enough reason for everyone, the various sets, tribes, and nations, to come to a round table and define their settlement and each would rise to be a crusader of peace. It will be wise if various sets learn to embrace reality, the reality of the universal nothingness, putting aside the hegemonic mentality that has not done the world any good. On this note, Thompson has this to say that, "... the final nothingness is the return to the original state of the universe ..." (Thompson 299). The origin of the universe lies in nothingness, its present material state is but a variation of the original nothingness, and its final *end* is a reconstitution of the original nothingness.

## 5. 'NOTHINGNESS' AND GLOBAL THREAT

The contemporary world is now beset with a multiplicity of moral ineptitude and it is the opinion of the paper that this ugly situation is occasioned by the struggle between 'nothingness' and the claim to 'somethingness'. And is so appears that the circumstance seems to be dragging us to a state of nature, (*status quo ante* of the non civilized person or community of persons)(Chand 101-103). We seem to be facing a similar situation that gave birth to the portrayed *social*

*contract* to seek ways to maintaining internal order. But today, we are far beyond the search for internal security or order to searching for world order. At such an international and universal level, the claim to “somethingness” and the denial of same to the other, thereby rendering or regarding the other as nothing, is moving the world towards a self-destruction. The possibility of this is affirmed with the presence of nuclear warfare, and the use of biological and chemical weapons, reinforced by missile attacks. The misconceptions of nothingness is making nation to rise against nation. This is what Soyinka refers to as the “Marxist tool”. For him, “the battle to eliminate that distinction will continue to occupy societies as long as social inequality is manifested or enthroned as a principle of social ordering” (Soyinka). Why the distinction and inequality? The answer is not far-fetched. It is simply because there is the one downsizing or seeing the other as an outright 'nothing'. Terror which the abnegation of “nothingness” results in, would beget nothing else but terror, and the violence which is its upspring would certainly begets violence. According to Jim Unah, “it is only by affirming the other that I can affirm my own being” (20). If nuclear testing continues like we witnessed in 1999 between Pakistan and Indian and the ugly situation in the gulf region continues to rear its head, we risk having a third world war and its magnitude can only be imagined compared to Nagasaki and Hiroshima (Echekwube 300).

This article posits that, the social vices, conflicts and drum beats of wars, threats of annihilation or destruction which we see or hear around the globe, are not unconnected with the credo or believe that one is something while the other is nothing. And that in trying to prove that the one is actually more than as taking by the other, (“nothing”), is the root cause of it all. The ‘big brother’ nations has wealth of destructive missile and they are used as tools of intimidation on smaller nations, who now feel belittled, oppressed – regarded as nothing, are now bent on acquiring same. Well, one may say it is for retaliation or for defense, yet the question that keeps from the heart, is, what would be the resultant effects of all these to mother earth? Is the earth not for us to plough and not to plunder? Is man actually making faster his end? The side one takes in answering these questions would tell how ethical it is for us to build our coffins. It is therefore the position of the paper that; remove relegation, remove the cankerworm of nothingness, the long seeking global peace and security, which is now under a serious threat would be guaranteed. Following Unah, “when we reduce the other to nothing, we eventually annihilate ourselves and dissolve into what we scheme for the other. It's itself destructive not to give thought to the other, nor to consider the other. When therefore I scheme to eliminate the other, I ultimately, in final analysis, dig my own grave...” (21).

## **6. 'NOTHINGNESS' AS FOUNDATION FOR HARMONY**

While explaining the common end of man. Thomas Gray puts it thus:

Sceptre and crown  
Must tumble down  
And in the dust be equal made  
With the poor crooked scythe and spade (Shirley, 5-8).

The excerpt above is pointing to a leverage. There is that which at certain point in time brings both the high and low to equal state. This is mortality, which is no respecter of anyone. Mortality brings the final nothingness on man. In the disclaiming of and claiming of 'nothingness' and 'somethingness' respectively, human beings fail to give a thought to a concept that connotes finite, (mortal) which is attached to his being - mortal man. When mortality passes its judgment on anyone, he is simply debased to nothingness. Affirming this fact, Unah says; “what is, is partly nothing, and nothing is partly something.” (16). And the position of the paper is that man

should always recognize and realize that he is enveloped in nothingness. This consciousness would help in curbing actions that are geared towards debasing the others. And when we are able to recognize that we are like the other - passing into nothingness, then we will not attempt to annihilate, subdue, and oppress on the claim that we are and others are not. An appeal is therefore made to the various sets, to get themselves enlightened up, and be free from parochialism and the blindness of prejudice of affiliation and share in the emission of joy and communal well-being. In the words of Soyinka, "... selectiveness is the key" (Soyinka 24 &32). If and only if religious bodies, hegemonic and domineering nations, political heads, would come to this understanding, calmness we assure the earth planet.

From the foregoing, we expose nothingness in a sense that sees it as not paralyzing, rather seeing nothingness which man has come to encounter in the world, as something which in the real sense, is supposed to bring about liberation. If claimed identities give way, that is, if I lay aside what I call my identity which I always fight to protect and you likewise, what we will now begin to see is our common ends. It doesn't matter whether I have the immediate capacity to bring the other to his base, but a mentality that accords the other a recognition as 'something' and, at the end, I would see the other as myself. At this equilibrium we would now have and maintain the "live and let live", (Novak 1) which is a slogan of harmony.

The reality of nothingness if not misconstrued we think, should arm every individual against his own puritanism. Unfortunately, that nothingness has often not been approached with the right attitude is generating conflicts. If asked what is the bone of contention between Israel and Palestine one right answer would be a tussle to show or prove that, the one is 'something', and the other is 'nothing'. The Muslims – Christian religious crisis is a struggle to prove the superiority of being something over the other - which is seen as nothing. A show of being 'something'. 'Something' which is really nothing on a final note. But we think a retreat into introspection – examining the durability of our 'somethingness', would help to bring about reform in the contemporary world of today. To recognize that I am a limited 'something' and so are you, then we will retreat and observe 'Ecclesiastes' (applying our mind to wisdom), then tranquility would certainly sweep the floor.

## 7. CONCLUSION

Recently, and more than ever before, at the central of discussion in the affairs of groups, sets, and nations and even among individuals, is how to realize peace. Governmental policies, institutional or organizational codes of conduct and the more than numerous sermons of religious bodies, geared towards the restoration of peace, all seem to be moribund. The reason for the failure of the multifarious measures that societies struggle to put in place to curb social ills, the paper posits, is the misconception of 'NOTHINGNESS'. We are not unaware of the fact that there are those who benefit from the sparks of 'nothingness'. These crisis beneficiaries remote-control crises activities for egoistic reasons. However, this orientation would arm one against them. And on their part would call them into their shells to reflect on the universal nothingness that equates everything both big and small and whose course they cannot escape. That man is wrapped in nothingness, the paper has exposed, and that inappropriate application of the concept is tearing the world into pieces and allaying fears on the *teleos* of the globe, the paper has elaborately analysed. However, the paper argues that the solution is not far-fetched. It is the position of the paper that 'NOTHINGNESS' is what defines the beginning cum end of existence, if approached and applied with the right attitude, could be the foundation for the long-seeking global harmony. We therefore in this paper make call to individuals, groups or sets, institutions, and various

governments, to stop looking too far away in search for the solution on how to bring about peace and harmony.

## REFERENCES

- [1] Chand, S. Political Theory (New Delhi: S.Chand & Company Ltd.)
- [2] Chandra, S. Gandhian Nonviolence Philosophy for Peace and Social Harmony NONVIOLENCE, 24 Dec 2018
- [3] Echekwube, A. O. Contemporary Ethics: History, Theories and Issues (Lagos: Spero Books Ltd., 1999).
- [4] Jhingran S. Violence, Peace, Self and Others: A Philosophical Perspective in 'Gandhi Marg', Volume 38, Number 3 & 4, Combined issue Oct.-Dec. 2016 & Jan.-March 2017.
- [5] Khakhlyar, M. An approach for the possibility of global peace and harmony: a Buddhist perspective. Conference: Indian Philosophical Congress At: Nava Nalanda Mahavihar (Nalanda), April 2019
- [6] Miller, Ed. L. Questions That Matter: An Invitation to Philosophy, (USA: Mc Graw-Hill Companies, 1996)
- [7] Nishida, K. Intelligibility and the Philosophy of Nothing, (Japan: Maruzen Co., Ltd, 1966)
- [8] Novak, M. The Experience of Nothingness, (New York: Harper and Row, 1970)
- [9] Osundare, N. "They Too Are The Earth" in Niyi Osundare, The Eye of the Earth. (Indiana University: Heinemann Educational Books, 1986)
- [10] Sartre, J. P. Being and Nothingness: An essay on Phenomenological Ontology, (New York: Philosophical Library Inc. 1956)
- [11] Seidel, G. J. Being, Nothing and God: A Philosophy of Appearance (Assen: Van Gorcum & Co., 1970)
- [12] Shirley, J. "The Glories of Our Blood and State", accessed from <https://www.poetryfoundatio.org/poems/56372>, 04th August, 2019.
- [13] Soyinka, W. The Credo of Being and Nothingness, (Ibadan: Spectrum Books Limited, 1991)
- [14] Unah, J. I. On Being: Discourse On The Ontology of Man, (Lagos: Fadec Publishers, 2002)
- [15] --- , Even Nothing Is Something, (Lagos: University of Lagos Press, 2006)