

Annang Philosophy: Foundations and Outline

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Abstract

This essay develops outlines, articulates and establishes the basic foundations of Annang Philosophy. Philosophy is an ensophism. As I ensophise, this essay is a part of my pioneering ensophisation on Annang world and reality: Annang *weltanschaaung*.

KeyWords: Annang Philosophy, Psychosomapneumatism, Ensophisation, “Abot”, “Agwo”

Introduction

Annang people occupy the North-Western territory of Akwa Ibom State of Nigeria, West Africa. The Annang society is located within the Cross River Basin between latitudes 4^o.25' and 7^o North and longitudes 7^o.15' and 9^o.30' East (Messenger,1959:279). The North of Annang is bounded by Ini and Ikono Local Government Areas in Akwa Ibom State of Nigeria, and Ikot Abasi Local Government Area of Akwa Ibom State of Nigeria is her Southern neighbour. The West is bounded by Abia and Rivers States of Nigeria, while the East is bounded by Uyo and Mkpattenin Local Government Areas of Akwa Ibom State of Nigeria.

Annangland has a level landscape covered by relatively low vegetation and myriads of palms. There is a mean annual rainfall of 2030- 2540mm. Annang country has a tropical climate with wet and dry seasons. The wet season spans between March and October when the monsoon winds blow from the South-West. The dry season spans between November and February when the harmattan (ekarika) blows from the North-East

Annang land is made up of 750 villages, with a population of about two million (2,000,000) people, distributed in eight (8) local government areas: Abak, Essien Udim, Etim Ekpo, Ika, Ikot Ekpene, Obot Akara, Oruk Anam and Ukanafun. These communities are brought together by a common cultural bond and they all look up to Afaha Obong as their cradle and origin and as their traditional headquarters, where the Annang supreme deity is situated.

In this essay, I shall outline the basics of Annang philosophy and thought system. Annang ontology and metaphysical outlook, Annang notion of personal identity or human nature, Annang epistemology and logic, Annang legal repertoire, philosophy of law, and moral philosophy shall be the highlights of this propaedeutic cultural analytic. In other words, I shall treat the following questions in this work: 1. The notion of being in Annang Philosophy; 2. The notion of reality in Annang Philosophy; 3. The notions of causality and causation in Annang Philosophy; 4. The notions of freedom, determinism and moral responsibility in Annang Philosophy; 5. The Annang conceptions of knowledge and truth; 6. Annang system of logic; 7. Annang conception of personal identity or the nature of the human being; and 8. Annang legal system and notions of justice and punishment. This essay shall bring the active past of the Annang to cause the present action: teasing out the Annang Philosophy.

Annang Metaphysics as The “Itak” (Base) Of Annang Philosophy

Annang Philosophy and thought system may be preliminarily regarded as a reversal of the Aristotelian-Thomistic and medieval conception of “*agere sequitur esse*” (action follows being). It may rather be regarded as “*esse sequitur agere*” (being follows action), which connotes the existentialist theme of “existence precedes essence”. However, this conception would be dashed to the ground as the Annang believe also in antecedent causes of events priorly given. The Annang conceptions of *uwa* (fate) and *abot* (nature) return the reversal to Aristotelianism. Determinism, innatism, fatalism are strong beliefs in Annang thought system and philosophy. However, there is room for freewill and its expression in Annang thought and philosophy. It is then and in similar situations that *esse sequitur agere* (being follows action) comes into play.

Annang metaphysics is an Annang phenomenology. This phenomenology is not a Husserlian ‘to the things themselves’ (*zu den Sachen Selbst*), yet it alludes to a Life-world (*Lebens-welt*): the Annang Life-World. It is the Annang *weltanschauung*. ‘Tis Annang world; a wondrous world: sweet homes of courageous people; sweet homes of daring people; sweet homes of darling people; sweet homes and land of hospitable, united people. ‘Tis Annang World: *Annangus Mundus*! This Annang phenomenology departs from metaphysics to ‘physis’. And even so, when metaphysics condescends from the level of *ens qua ens* (being

as being) to that of *ens mobile* (mobile being) it becomes the metaphysics of the existing thing. Something is. Man exists. Here is an Annang metaphysics of life and reality.

In this metaphysics the notions of the Supreme Being and causality assume primacy in discourse. Annang Metaphysics shall refer to the meaning and understanding of being and reality in Annang worldview. It shall refer to God and to causality. But, most importantly, we shall address the notion of reality by answering the question: What is Reality in Annang?

The Notion of Being in Annang Metaphysics

‘Being’ in Annang thought is not an empty concept but one with content. The notion of ‘being’ refers to ‘existence’ and ‘God’ as the ground of existence. In Annang Philosophy, being both refers to God as well as existence. The logic behind this Annang two-dimensional notion of being is, that ‘being’ as God is the cause of ‘being’ as existence. This explains why the notion of God is best understood as a causal principle in Annang Metaphysics. Any analysis of being often points to categories of being. In the case of Annang, the categories of being are fused with the hierarchy of being.

Category and Hierarchy of Being

1. “*Awasi*”: God
2. “*Nnem*” or “*mme awasi*”: Deities or gods
3. “*Mme Ete-Ete*”: Ancestors
4. “*Ekpo*”: Spirits
5. “*Agwo*”: Man
6. “*Nkpo*”: Things, Infra-human beings (plants, animals, inorganic matter).

Among the problems of metaphysics and philosophy in general, Annang Metaphysics connects, in the most part, with the problems of being, man and causality. God is being and is responsible for being (existence). This wraps up the problem of being in Annang Metaphysics.

In Annang thought, there is no clear-cut distinction between God and nature. Though there is a distinctive name for God in Annang, *Awasi*, yet when it comes to causation, God shares the same name with nature, *Abot*. This gives a clue to God as the causal agent of the Annang Universe. In terms of this rapprochement in the Annang conception of causation, the Annang are not far from pantheism. This is quite understandable due to their deep sense of religion, where they see God every where, yet without a temple, which they believe would confine him. Hence the name “*Awasi-Ibom*”, the Unlimited/Infinite God. Annang metaphysics is a pantheistic ontology.

Annang Notion of Reality

Reality in Annang conception is a synthesis of idealism and materialism. The Annang have a firm belief that there are two worlds: the physical world and the spiritual world. The physical world is the world of human beings, plants, animals and inorganic beings. The spiritual world is the realm of the Supreme Being (*Awasi-Ibom*), the gods (*Nnem*), Ancestors (*Mme Ete-Ete*), Spirits (*Ekpo*).

It is believed that there is a very close link between these two worlds. While *Awasi-Ibom* is believed to be high up beyond the sky, his influence is only felt through the gods, who act on his behalf and who are closer to the people. Because of his unlimitedness, *Awasi-Ibom* has no shrine or temple, since this would confine him and so, contradict his nature: unlimitedness. There are, however, shrines for the gods, where sacrifices are offered to *Awasi-Ibom* through them. The ancestors are believed to act as angels, protecting and interceding for their communities they left behind in the physical world. The spirits (*ekpo*) are believed to

dwell in their abode, the spirit –world (*awio ekpo*). The spirits of those who died by violence and prematurely are believed to be roaming the physical world as ghosts and they are known as “*ukpaka ekpo*”. “*Ukpaka Ekpo*” are believed to roam the physical world due to their dissatisfaction and premature or violent deaths. Prayers are often offered for their satisfaction and appeasement. The spirits are generally believed to live in the land of the dead (*awio ekpo*), while the soul (*ukpong*) does not die after the death of the body (*ikpohidem*), but survives in reincarnated bodies. This idea of threefold composition of the human person as Annang notion of personal identity will be given full expression under Annang philosophical anthropology and philosophy of mind.

The Annang believe that there are two worlds: Physical and Spiritual. There is no antagonism between materialism and idealism in Annang reality. Annang notion of reality is a fusion of idealism and materialism. This fusion of idealism and materialism, the spiritual and physical could be found in the Annang formation of planes of existence.

Planes of Existence

1. “*Ukpobot*”, “*Unarod*”, “*Arorobot*”, “*Ekondo*” (Cosmos, where humans live)
2. “*Awio Ekpo*” (Land of the spirits)
 - “*Awio Eti-Ekpo*” (Land of good spirits)
 - “*Awio Idiok-Ekpo*” (Land of bad spirits: “*ukpaka ekpo*”)
 - “*Awio Ekpo Mme Ete-Ete*” (Land of the ancestors)
 - “*Awio Ekpo Nnem*” (World of the gods)
3. “*Awio Awasi*” (God’s Realm)

Annang Cosmology

The word, cosmology, was coined by Christian Wolff in 1730. It is derived from the Greek “*cosmologia*”, “*cosmos*” meaning “order” and “*logos*” meaning “word”, “reason”, “plan”, and “study”. Cosmology then is the study of the universe. Though the use of the word “cosmology” is recent, the study of the universe has a long history involving science, philosophy, esotericism, and religion. We may, therefore, have physical (scientific) cosmology (Essien: 2007), metaphysical (philosophical) cosmology, religious cosmology, and esoteric cosmology. In general cosmology is the study of (the origin of) the universe (Pasachoff 599).

Philosophical cosmology, as distinguished from other cosmologies, deals with the world as the totality of space, time and all phenomena. Philosophical cosmology seeks to draw intuitive conclusions about the nature of the universe, man, god and their relationships based on the extension of some set of presumed facts borrowed from spiritual experience and/or observation. Philosophical cosmology addresses questions about the universe which are beyond the scope of science. Philosophical (metaphysical) cosmology addresses questions such as: what is the origin of the universe? What is its first cause? Is its existence necessary? What are the ultimate material components of the universe? Does the universe have a purpose? What is the ultimate reason for the existence of the universe? Besides, philosophical cosmology differs from religious, esoteric cosmologies in that it approaches these philosophical posits using philosophical methods (e.g. dialectics) and logical reasoning.

Here, we are confronted with the problem of teasing out an Annang Cosmology as a subset of Annang Metaphysics: the “*Itak*” (base) of Annang Philosophy. And the central concept to be determined for preliminary analysis is the concept of “*Abot*”.

“*Abot*” is the Annang term for “nature”. “*Abot*” also refers to God as the ground and cause of being. Before we proceed, let us see other conceptions of “*abot*” below.

“Abotic” Conceptions:

“Abot” has many conceptions, nuances and variant meanings as follows:

1. “Abot” as Nature or Creation;
2. “Abot” as Life (Existence);
3. “Abot” as Destiny;
4. “Abot” as “Uwa” (Fate);
5. “Abot” as Condition;
6. “Abot” as Land;
7. “Abot” as Tragedy;
8. “Abot” as Time (and Space);
9. “Abot” as Nation;
10. “Abot” as Cosmos, World, Universe (*Arorobot, Unarod, Ukpobot, Ekondo*);
11. “Abot” as Creator (God);

We shall take advantage of the last “abotic” conception as creator and deal with the metaphysical theme of causality, named in this as work “Abot” ontology or “abotology”.

“Abot” Ontology or “Abotology” as Causality

Causality is the disciplined discussion of the problem of the relation between cause and effect. Causality presupposes that every event has a cause. When one mentions the term ‘cause’ the correlative term ‘effect’ is generally involved. Cause is that which determines, provokes, influences an outcome which we call effect. A cause is that by which something (an effect) is produced.

Aristotle developed the complete doctrine of causality. He distinguished four causes: material cause (the stuff with which a thing is composed), the formal cause (the form of shape that a thing takes), efficient cause (the agent responsible for bringing a thing into existence) the final cause (the end or purpose for which thing is made). In current times, the word ‘cause’ is restricted to the efficient cause. Discussions on the concept of causality after Aristotle are footnotes of his analysis.

Causation is believed to be universal, uniform, and necessary. The statement, ‘every event has a cause’ is taken to be of universal application since there is no event that has no cause.

The universality of causation itself presupposes the uniformity of nature. This means that the same kinds of causes produce the same kinds of effects always and everywhere under the same conditions.

A third concept associated with the concept of causation is the concept of ‘necessary connection’. It was believed that there was a necessary connection between an event and its cause or, in other words between a cause and its effect, such that once the cause is present its effect, such that once the cause is present its effect must necessarily follow.

Hume rejects the concept of necessary connection between cause and its effect.

Hume pointed out that we do not perceive any such necessary connection, that it is not part of our empirical experience. If we do not perceive causality in our empirical experience, how then do we come to form the idea in our minds? Hume says it is derived from our habit of associating things that usually go together in sequence (Omoregbe, 1999:23-24).

For Hume, necessary connection arises from a psychological compulsion.

By and large, causality presupposes that every event has a cause. The question now is the question of how and of what relevance is the principle of causality to the Annang

worldview. For the Annang, experience has shown that nothing happens without a cause. And this is attested to in the following Annang proverbs:

1. *Amaakud nte akaan-anwaan afehe itok, ama ideghe ajejen abokko akpa, anye ade nkpo ike abokko asop* (Whenever you see an old woman run, it is either she has lost her grand-child or that she has lost her snuff bottle);
2. *Ikwood isitammake ugweme* (The toad does not jump during the day-if nothing disturbs its abode);
3. *Isideghe nkpo ideghe nkpo ade* (It is never the case that nothing happens, yet something happens);
4. *Akpekud nte akaan-adeen aben itok ubaghaasen, ama ideghe nkpo awine anye, anye de anye awine nkpo* (If you see an old man run in the morning, it is either he is pursuing something, or he is being pursued by something);
5. *Ukeed nkpo anyene ntoongo* (Every thing has a beginning);
6. *Ukeed nkpo anyone ntak* (Everything has a cause).

Whatever exists, in the Annang scheme of things, exists by the impulse of something external to it, except the uncaused cause which is '*causa sui generis*'. In this manner of causality, the active determining by the cause and the passive receptiveness in the effect are not temporary and transient. It is a question of permanent causal efficacy and permanent dependence in the effect. In the relation the effect has a dependence which is substantial and *secundum esse* (according or following being). In the causal series where the dependence of the effect is substantial and *secundum esse*, the being, the becoming and the intelligibility here and now depend upon the here and now present causal efficacy.

The Annang are naturally inclined to the principle of causality. The Annang go out to find out the *ntakness* (why) or the *nseeness* (whatness) of events, especially when confronted by tragedies. '*Abot*' (nature) is mostly used to refer to '*Awasi-Ibom*' (the supreme being). For the Annangs, '*Abot*' as '*Awasi-Ibom*' is regarded as the originator of every "there is". The causal action is inaugurated by *Abot*. However, there is also the causality of secondary casues. Hence, the Annang notion of '*Awasi-Ibom*' as '*causa efficiens*' and the divinities and principalities, which also form part of '*abot*' cosmology.

Ancient Annang wisdom and tradition (*Eched Annang*) held it that every thing has a cause (*ukeed nkpo anyene ntak*) and everything has a beginning; that the world or universe had a begining (*arorobod anyene ntongo*). The universe is believed to be the creative act of God in Annang, as we presented above under Annang cosmogony. The Annang notion of *Awasi-Ibom* coincides with the notion of the apeiron, the Indeterminate Boundless by Anaximander, the Greek philosopher. This is due to the concept of *Ibom* associated with this being. *Ibom* translates *infinity*, *boundlessness*.

It is the Annang belief that the universe had its orgin from a divine supreme being who was self-begotten, *Awasi-Ibom*. He created *Anyong* (the sky) and *Isong* (the earth) and *Inyang-Ibom* (ocean). The details of this first creative act are not exactly known. Both *Anyong* (sky) and *Isong* (earth) existed in the heavens while water was below. Tradition has it that *Anyong* (sky) and *Isong* (earth) were joined together.

Awasi-Ibom sent one of his creatures whose name is not mentioned to separate *Anyong* from *Isong*. This creature had a human form but as a giant: about seven times the size of a normal human being that we know of today. The giant came with a tool and separated *Anyong* from *Isong*. And since that time, *Anyong* (sky) and *Isong* (earth) have been at constant enmity. Whenever *Anyong* (sky) covers *Isong* (earth) we have day and whenever *Isong* (earth) covers *Anyong* (sky) we have night. *Awasi-Ibom* ordered *Anyong* and its children (the heavenly bodies: sun, moon, stars, etc) to move upward while earth was ordered to more downward. While moving downward, earth (*Isong*) fell into massive water, the ocean (*Akpa*

Ibom, the Annang name for the Atlantic Ocean). A section of it was submerged in the water and the portion that floated became the dry land. The giant went to bathe in the water after he had completed his work. He got drowned and died in the water. The particles of the decayed body of the giant, tradition holds, gave birth to the living animals and plants in both land and water. His teeth which were washed ashore germinated into many plants, shrubs and grasses. His bones became the rocks; his breath became the air and the wind. The insects which stuck to the decaying head (after having been washed ashore) grew up to become the land animals. A certain animal “*Ukpong-ajen*” (wall gecko), which literally means “soul of the child”, was seen licking the dust of the remains (head) of the dead giant. *Awasi-Ibom* instructed *Awasi-Isong* to make a pot from a mixture of sand and water and put *Ukpon-ajen* (wall gecko) in there for eight days. *Awasi-Ibom* then sent “*akuwe*” (chameleon) to spy and monitor if *Awasi-Isong* had carried out the orders, without allowing anyone to see him. *Akuwe* (chameleon), unseen by *Awasi-Isong*, inspected the work of *Awasi-Isong* and reported to *Awasi-Ibom* that the job had been done. On the eight day, *Awasi-Ibom* came and spat into the pot, and in the company of *Awasi-Isong*, broke the pot open. Suddenly, two hitherto unknown beings (male and female) emerged from the pot. *Awasi-Isong* asked the male being with a thunderous voice “*ade anyie?*” (who are you?), to which he answered with a small voice “*nde agwo*” (I am a human being). *Awasi-Ibom* thundered “*Agwo, du uwem*” (human being keep on living!).

The above is the creative act of the universe by the Supreme Being in Annang cosmogony. While cosmogony refers to the creative act or creation story of the universe, cosmology refers to the study of the origin, nature and destiny of the universe. Annang cosmogony forms a central part of the Annang cosmology. For the Annang, therefore, the universe has its efficient cause in the supreme creative act of the Supreme Being, *Awasi-Ibom*. “*Awasi Ibom*” is so named to underscore his unlimitedness. Enang (1979:5) says:

‘Ibom’ means the whole limitless universe. Here accordingly, he is the Lord of the whole boundless universe and everything within it.

Awasi-Ibom is ubiquitous, and, and because of this, no particular temple, place or shrine can accommodate him. He, therefore, needs no temple nor shrine since he can neither be localized nor spatialized. He transcends space and time continuum. The temple is, therefore, non-existent in the Annang religion. As the *Awasi-Ibom* is unlimited, so are his powers. Our own observation and experience in the Annang religion seem to disprove the view in the phenomenology of religion that the Supreme Being, *Awasi-Ibom*, is a withdrawn God, the so-called *deus-otiosus*.

Awasi Ibom or *Abot* is the creator, the creator of the divinities, humans, animals, plants and other existents in the world. *Awasi Ibom* comes first in the hierarchy of existence.

A multitude of spirits or gods is believed to assist *Awasi Ibom* in governing the universe. They do not co-create, but they co-govern. They are co-workers with *Awasi Ibom*, and are believed to take charge of specific aspects of life. These deities are, thus, named after the areas in which they are in charge. They carry out their functions according to their capacity.

According to their order of importance, ‘*Awasi Anyong*’ (god of the sky) and ‘*Awasi Isong*’ (god of the earth) are nearer to *Awasi Ibom* than other deities. When libations are poured at public functions in Annang land, invocations are made to ‘*Awasi Anyong*’ and ‘*Awasi Isong*’. *Awasi Anyong* takes charge of the affairs of the ethereal region while *Awasi Isong* is concerned with the happenings on earth.

At the head of all the deities are “*Eka Awasi* (mother goddess) and “*Eka nnem*” (mother of the deities). These two are believed to exert control over lesser deities. For sake

of brevity, I shall, at this point, devise a tabular arrangement to show the names of the deities, their abodes and functions.

Name	Approximate English equivalent	Abode	Function
Awasi Anyong	Sky god	The sky	In charge of the ethereal region
Awasi Isong	Earth god	The earth	In charge of the earth
Eka Awasi	Earth goddess	The earth	Responsible for female fertility
Eka nnem	Head of divinity	The earth	Protection of other deities
Nnem usung	god of the road	Road corners	Protection of the roads
Ekpenyong	god of the wood	The wood	Protecting the woods
Ikpa isong	god of the village	Village squares	Protection of the villages
Nnem utin	god of the sun	The sun	Responsible for sun light
Nnem idung	god of the home	Compound entrance	Protection of the home
Mmiam	deities of truth	Compound entrance	Responsible for truth and justice
Idio inwang	goddess of farm	The farm	Responsible for good harvest
Nnem iman	god of the clan	Clan headquarters	Protection of the clan
Nnem akai	god of the forest	The forest	Protection of the forest
Abot	god of fertility	Road corners	Responsible for reproduction
Nnem mmong	goddess of water	Seas,rivers,streams,spring	In charge of water bodies
Mbama	god of first harvest	Village square	Responsible for first harvest
Esien emana	reincarnation deity	The forest	In charge of reincarnation
Nnem erim	god of the rain	The atmosphere	In charge of rain

(cf. Enang, *Salvation in a Nigerian Background*, 1979).

The gods have different function put at their charge. Those with religious obligations are in charge of the religious activities of the clan, village, or home. Their ministers are the religious practitioners who make offerings on behalf of the people. They transmit the prayers and intentions of the people to the gods. Some of the gods fulfil social roles by fostering reproduction, health, long life and protection of the families. In the economic sphere, it is believed that the various ‘nnem’ help in successful growth of crops on the field and good harvest. Those with political portfolio help in the proper functioning of the village, clan or town. They aid the villages at war and support the chiefs in their political roles.

Although, people, for convenience in sacrifice, locate the divinities at special abodes, their homes are porous through and through, so that the divinities could be said to be everywhere. They are personal as well as non-personal. Therefore, despite their invisibility, they are most frequently approached in personal and social needs.

Annang Philosophical Anthropology and Philosophy of Mind

Here, I shall be concerned with the Annang philosophy of man, which I named elsewhere (Essien 2010) as “Agwo Ontology”. “Agwo Ontology” contains the Annang notion of the human person. It is the Annang conception of personal identity. “Agwo Ontology” is rooted in the problems of human nature, the human identity as well as the big-time problem of mind-body dualism. “Agwo ontology” is a crucial attempt to identify these philosophical

problems in the Annang intellectual thought and tradition. This section addresses the notion of man within a grand metaphysical matrix. A 'psychosomaticism' describes the hitherto problematic of mind-body composition of the human person. This psychosomaticism is vitiated by a 'psychosomapneumatism'. I coined this term 'psychosomapneumatism' to describe a tripartite composition of the human personality (mind, body, spirit) as conceived in Annang philosophy. Psychosomapneumatism is Annang notion of human nature. By this term, I mean that the human being is composed of *ukpong* (soul), *ikpohidem* (body) and *ekpo* (spirit).

Agwo Ontology: Annang notion of Personal Identity

Agwo is the Annang name for man, just like the Greek *anthropos*, the Latin *homo*, the Akan *nippa*, the Igbo *mmadu*. *Agwo onotology* refers to the Annang onotology of man or the human person. *Agwo ontology* is metaphysics of man in Annang worldview. *Agwo ontology* is a clue to the nature of man as understood by the Annang people in general, and on the nature of the Annang man in particular.

Nside agwo? (What is man?)

In order for anything to pass as man, such must, *prima facie*, possess the five senses, and rationality. Man, for the Annang, is a living animal of the primate kingdom, which possesses the body, five senses, effective brain for reasoning, who walks on two legs, and also capable of communicating through a language. The body and the senses alone do not make a man, but body and senses and reason do. Animals possess body and senses just as man does. The inalienable preamble in the description of man, then, is rationality. This corresponds with the definition of man by Boethius, who said that 'man is an individual substance with a rational nature'. The Annang man believes that the seat of rationality is in the brain. Hence, the man who behaves reasonably is often described as *anyene mfuro agwo*, that is, one who has brain.

The question, *Nside agwo?* (what is man?), is a question of metaphysics (ontology), though not in the same degree as the question of being (*seinsfrage*). Issues in philosophical anthropology and philosophy of mind are found in metaphysics. When metaphysics, from its glorified position of *ens qua ens* (being as being) condescends to the level of *ens mobile*, (mobile being), it becomes the metaphysics of the existing thing, *aliquid est* (something is).

Parmenides posited the question, *what is there?* and Aristotle responded that *aliquid est* (something is). Aristotle, thus, made *first philosophy* the metaphysics of the existing thing. Perplexed by the *seinsvergessenheit* (forgetfulness of being), Heidegger repositied the question which had earlier been posited by the doctor of monadology, Leibnitz. Hence, *why are there essents rather than nothing?* (Heidegger, 1985). In attempting to concretize his metaphysics, Heidegger made man the subject of his inquiry. In the triangular relationship of being (Sein, Dasein, des Seiendes), man's ontological role is to ask the question, 'what is being?' Hence, the question, *Nside agwo?*- what is man?

Although an answer to the question of the meaning of man in Annang worldview has been attempted above, there is an urgency to proceed deeper into the ontological structures, nay, ontic-ontological structures of man as understood by the Annangs.

Based on his traditional worldview, the Annang conception of the nature of man is three-dimensional. Western orthodoxy submits that man is psychosomatic, that is, two-dimensional. This is because, according to this psychosomaticism, man is composed of body (soma) and soul (psyche). The Annang man (*agwo Annang*) believes that he poseses a spirit (pneuma), as a third composition of the self. Thus, man, in Annang conception, possesses body, soul and spirit. I referred elsewhere to this credo as *psychosomapneumatism* (Essien:2010). The Annang conception of the ontological structure of the human person, psychosomapneumatism, vitiates, or rather overcomes this dualism of psychosomaticism

(Essien:2010). In the traditional Annang milieu, man is composed of body, soul (mind) and spirit. The soul and spirit are suprasensible, while the body is sensible. The Annang believe that, while the body is the palpable substance in the human person, the soul, after death, does not die, but keeps living in reincarnated bodies; that the spirit survives in the land of the dead, the abode of the ancestors. The abode of the ancestors is the land of the spirits, designated *awio-ekpo* in Annang language.

Annang conception of personal identity, *agwo ontology*, is, a *fortiori*, founded on this psychosomatenism. Man is a composite of body, soul and spirit. Psychosomatenism vitiates a mere dualism in psychosomatenism and proceeds further to entrench the doctrine of immortality of the soul. The soul is immortal. It does not die. It is the belief in Annang that the soul survives in reincarnated bodies.

Categories of Agwo (Man/Human Person) in Annang

I had already mentioned above that *agwo* means man in Annang. This is man in the generic sense of the world. Below is how *agwo* is categorized in Annang:

Agwodeen = male person (man);

Agwo nwaan= female person (woman);

Ideen= men;

Ibaan= women;

Ajen= child;

Nsek Ajen= baby or infant;

Ntok Ajen= children;

Ikpo Agwo= Elders;

Imo Agwo= Rich, wealthy person;

Ugwuene= Poor person;

Utu= wretched person;

Afoon agwo= ordinary person;

Eti agwo= good person;

Idiok agwo= bad person;

Agwo Ilien= Real person;

Agwodeen Itiaba=Complete/perfect man

Agwoodeen itiaba refers to the man who has attained the plenitude of his manhood. *Itiaba* is the Annang name for seven. And the number *seven* is a symbol of completeness or perfection in Annang thought and tradition.

Nevertheless, Annang culture has no place for the celibate or eunuch. Even the Annang traditional priest or priestess must get married. He or she is considered a failure if he or she has no stable family and home and would be seen as someone who attempts to escape life's reality and social responsibilities. The successful Annangman must maintain a stable family.

The just man is one who has concern for his fellow human beings. He has concern for his neighbours and his neighbours' property. He welcomes and accommodates a stranger, even to a fault. The just one venerates his ancestors and the supreme being, designated *Awasi Ibom*. Moreover, the just man gets involved in communal work and attends public meetings and gatherings aimed at sustaining communal peace. For the Annangman, 'to exist is co-exist', since the Annang believe strongly in togetherness (*eriwuana* or *mboho*). Hence they say "*mboho ade aruru*" (togetherness is strength).

The Annang Concept of Free Will

The Annang uphold the belief that the human person is free. And this freedom is often expressed in his daily life. The notion of freedom in Annang conception implies that the

human person can acquire and accomplish his desired goals in life without external pressures on his will. It is believed, too, that the human person is responsible for his failures or misfortunes in life. For whatever actions a person chooses, he bears responsibility for them. This is especially made evident in the proverb, “*aduok ntong ke ntong akene*”, meaning “The ashes follow the one who throws them”. However, the notion of freedom in Annang thought is highly derogated by the notion of fate and destiny.

Annang Concept of “Uwa” as Fate and “Abot” Destiny

Every human person is believed to be born with a destiny, carried by his or her soul at birth. This destiny determines a person’s life style in the world. In other words, human actions in the society are believed to have been preconditioned by nature. The joys and sorrows, happiness and sufferings, successes and triumphs, misfortunes and failures, are all believed to have been determined and programmed before one’s birth.

While destiny may be understood as referring to both the pleasant and the unpleasant aspects of one’s life, fate, in particular, is believed to refer to the bitter part of one’s life. While Fate is denoted “*Uwa*”, destiny is denoted “*Abot*”. However, we must bear in mind that “*Abot*” means more than destiny, as we enunciated above under “*Abotic* Conceptions”.

The Annang Notion of Moral Responsibility

As a matter of fact, destiny (*abot*) and fate (*uwa*), and the belief in them impinge on the notion of freedom. Any belief in absolute determinism or absolute freedom would make it difficult to assign moral responsibility. Total freewill would make every person to take all the responsibilities for his actions. On the otherhand, total determinism would exonerate every person from any moral responsibility. The Annang believe in the interpenetration of these two factors in human affairs. For example, when one is befallen with sickness, one assumes the duty of care for himself or herself, mostly, by going into the bush to fetch some herbs as medicine.

Annang Epistemology and Logical Reasoning

4.1 Annang Epistemology

Epistemology is that branch of philosophy concerned with human knowledge (*Ifiok*): whether it is possible, how it is acquired, how it is justified, its limits, and how it is distinct from mere belief, etc. This branch of philosophy is sometimes referred to as theory of knowledge.

Knowledge (*Ifiok*), for the Annang, entails belief (*Erinim ke akpaniko*) and information (*Mmuk*). This belief might not necessarily undergo justification, for who may be able to justify acclaimed messages from the gods? Knowledge is true belief in Annang conception.

Given their conception of knowledge, Truth (*Akpaniko*) refers to correlation with the state of affairs. The concept “*Akpaniko*” is a composite term; composing “*akpan*”, which, in this context, translates “most significant”, or “real”, or “principal”, or “paramount”, and the term “*iko*”, which means “word”. Truth (*Akpaniko*) in Annang Epistemology is thus associated with “Word”. Truth in Annang Epistemology involves saying what there is; sayings about the real thing. “*Akpaniko*” as truth means the “*real word*” in Annang Epistemology. Thus, truth-telling entails saying the real thing. It involves saying about the reality in context and shunning falsehood. Even when the speaker is not telling the truth, he or she already knows the truth. Hence, the liar knows the truth.

Words can be spoken or unspoken. Sometimes, words can assume the mode of action and signs. Most often than not, justification of truth in Annang Epistemology takes the forms

of testimonies and witnessing, which can be in spoken words. At other times, the words are unspoken, but determinable in actions. Sometimes, truth has to be determined through the practices of ordeal (*ukang*) and divination (*nkukud*); and these are firmly adhered to in Annang. Annang conceptions of knowledge (*ifiok*) and truth (*akpaniko*) are inextricably linked with the belief system and tradition in vogue in the society.

While the senses are believed to serve as a channel of information, the Annang have strong belief, too, that knowledge comes through revelation and intuition. Revealed truth is believed to come from the spiritual realm to the physical realm. The Annang believe also in intuition. Beside the senses, revelation and intuition, the Annang also have belief that knowledge or traits of knowledge can be naturally passed from parents to children. This is a belief in innatism, which is associated with rationalism. The Annang tradition, therefore, has no peculiar place for a single source of human knowledge. There is interplay of empiricism, revelation, intuition and rationalism in Annang epistemology.

The Annang crave for knowledge, for ‘all men, by nature, desire to know’ (Aristotle, *Metaphysics*). The wise man is basically the man who surmounts his problems and those of others by the application of his knowledge, knowledge gained from experience and reason. The wise one of the Annang nation utters words of wisdom and admonishes his/her fellows. It is through his/her mouth that oral history, folklore and myths are transmitted to others. At public gathering, he/she makes recourse to the wisdom of the ancients. In his/her awakening speech, he/she begins with “our fathers used to say” (*Mme Ete ajid ekese ewo*); and when rendering a folklore, his/her point of departure is “once upon a time” (*Ete/Mma/Agwo keed aketie* or *Ekong Nke –e!*).

In story-telling, the story-teller would entone: “Ekong Nke-e!” (War story!); and the listeners would respond: “*Nke Ekong Awasi!*” (War story of God!). The story-teller could also entone: “*Ete/Mma/Agwo keed aketie!*” (Once upon a man/woman/person!); and the listeners would respond: “*Aketie rie?*” (How was he/she?). Sometimes the stories involved some animals, mostly the lion, the tortoise and the monkey (see Udodata: 2011), where the story-teller could entone: “*Ikud mme Ekpe/Ebok eketie!*” (There were once the tortoise and the lion/monkey); to which the listeners would respond with loud acclamation: “*Eketie rie?*” (How were they?). Hence, Michael Ekpenyong (2002) narrates:

I recalled with nostalgic feelings the story-telling sessions in the evenings when we returned from school and our parents returned from the farms. After dinner our grandfather and other elders of the family told the stories while we the children got glued to the bamboo benches listening to intoxicating stories sometimes of epic world.... intoned to begin the stories. We would respond with deafening shouts “Nke Ekong Abasi” (story war of God).

Hence, “the effectiveness of folklore as didactic method rests in the power of the word which is the vehicle of the great deeds of the ancestors” (Abanuka, 1994:45). The community invests the word with sacred authority such that in so far as it is true the word has not only the power and stamp of the ancestors but also that of divinity (Anyanwu, 1984:92). The wise one, while rendering oral history, folklore and myths makes the “once upon a time”, “in those days” or “our father used to say” to become “now”.

4.2 Logical Reasoning in Annang Thought

Causality in Annang society gives no room for any belief in chance. A greater significance of causality for the Annang man is that it paves way for scientific knowledge, that is, knowledge of things through their causes (*scientia rerum per ultima causa*). The Annang have the ability to solve some of their existential problems, since they have

knowledge of the causes of things, events and situations. For example, they have knowledge of causes of certain kinds of diseases. They build up causal arguments using their knowledge of the causes and causal arguments using their knowledge of possible cures for the diseases.

A causal argument attempts to support a causal claim or hypothesis. A *causal claim* says or implies that one thing caused or causes another. A *causal hypothesis* is a causal claim put forth to explain the cause or effect of something, when the cause or effect has not yet been conclusively established. Frequently the Annang reason that one specific event caused another specific event. At other times, they believe that whenever a certain event occurs, that another always follows.

We remember that the premises of an inductive argument are not offered as definitive evidence for the truth of their conclusion, but rather as evidence for the likelihood of the conclusion's truth. Inductive arguments can fall anywhere on the scale from very strong to very weak. An inductive arguments premise can give powerful support for its conclusion, no support at all or anything in between. In an *inductive generalization*, we generalize from a sample to an entire class. We reason that, because many (or most or all or some percentage) of a sample of the members of a class or "population" have a certain property or characteristic, many (or most or all or some percentage) of the members of the class or population also have that property or characteristic. We also remember that deductive arguments begin with general claims and end with specific claims. Both the deductive reasoning and inductive reasoning are involved in the day to day lives of the Annang. We remember that Logic is not anything cultural to the extent of its being associated with a certain culture to the exclusion of others. It works according to the structure of the human mind. Thus, there is no culturalization of Logic in the strict sense of the word, save there is a fragmented culturalization of the mind.

Annang Jurisprudence, Philosophy of Law and Legal System

Every human society is ordered by law. In otherwords, law is the foundation upon which every society is guided and brought to its purposed end. Although there are no documented instruments of law in traditional Annang society, the Annang person is aware that his or her society is sustained by laws transmitted by the elders and, say, the ancestors. With this in mind, the Annang person is self-conscious of the rewards or punishments accruing from his disposition towards the law. This law is the community norms which regulate the lives of members of the community. For instance, in the Annang society, respect for elders is a supreme virtue.

Annang legal system and jurisprudence were discerned from the native customs and traditions of the society. The laws which emanated from these customs and traditions could not but bear the cultural code, stamp, seal and imprint of the society. The Annang native laws and customs spelt out duties and obligations, prohibitions and sanctions.

As it were, Annang legal system, jurisprudence and philosophy of law could be categorized into the following:

1. Customs referred to as *Eru-unam-mkpo*;
2. Laws referred to as *Mbed*;
3. Duties and Obligations collectively referred to as *Utom*;
4. Taboos referred to as *Ibed*;
5. Etiquette and Manner collectively referred to as *Iro*.

This categorization is typical of Udondata and Ekanem (2011).

Eru-unam-mkpo (Customs) involved the ways of doing things in the society. These were the customs and traditions obtainable in the land. They were believed to have originated from distant past and transmitted to the present through the ancestors. Due to their origin from the ancestors, they were observed with some sense of sacredness and were mostly followed with rituals. *Eru-unam-mkpo* guided performance of events in the society, such as birth and naming, death and burial, marriages, festivals, etc.

Mbed (Laws) were specific rules and regulations in the Annang society. They also entailed prohibitions, alongside rules and regulations. Some of these specific rules were: Land tenure, whereby lands were expected to be kept fallow for seven years before they were ripe for farming; Village pathways had to be swept weekly, etc. Moreover, the village council would place intermittent injunctions restraining villagers from harvesting the palm fruits. This rule (*ugwuok ajop*) was so made to permit the village council to harvest the palm fruits, sell them and use the money for village projects. After the village council would have completed its duty, the villagers were permitted again to harvest their fruits. The day this injunction was lifted, called *ugwuoko ajop*, villagers were permitted to harvest from any palm oil tree, be it their own or not. After this day, title of ownership of the palm oil trees went back to their original owners.

Utom (Duties and Obligations) referred to duties and obligations. There were duties to the community, duty to one's family, children, grandchildren, parents, grandparents, wives, husband, father, mother, elders, strangers, friends and in-laws. Communal work, such as, sweeping of the village pathways, building of the village hall, etc, also fell within the purview of *utom*.

Iro (Manners and Etiquette) entailed manners and etiquette which went beyond the self to how one comported himself or herself becomingly in public. A youth was always not expected to be first greeted by an elderly person, but rather, he or she was expected to greet the elder first. A youth was expected to extend two hands while having handshake with an elderly person. A youth was not expected to request handshake from an elderly person by being the first to extend his or her arms. A youth was not expected to give response to any advice given by an elderly person, for the Annang say "*ese ekokop item, agwo isi iboroke*" (meaning, "Advice is listened to, but not responded to"). Moreover, a youth was not expected to drink the drakes of palm wine in the presence of his elders. Litigants in disputes were expected to avoid unguarded remarks, as contraventions could incur special fines. Even though some unusual behaviours which contravened standards of good manners did not attract penalties, they were duly condemnable and frowned at. Examples are, whenever a recipient did not thank the donor; when a girl climbed the tree; when a child insolently responded to the parents' rebuke, etc.

Ibed (Taboos) were associated with rituals and were thus held in absolute sacredness and sanctity. Contraventions brought undesirable material consequences to the offender and the community. Rituals were often performed to expiate and propitiate the evil committed. Some days were set aside and held to be sacred. For example, No woman was expected to fetch from the community stream on Ared market day (*Usen Urua Ared*). No one was expected to offend his grandchild or grandchildren (*Ajejen or Nto Ajejen*), his or her grandparents (*Etebom and/or Ekam*), his inlaws (*Ukod*). A woman is prohibited from having sexual intercourse with another man other than her husband. Contravention of this injunction attracts the death of the husband, who is believed to be killed by the wife through the evil minstrels of *eros* called *Ekpo Nka Agwo*. This is not a general rule, as this rule operates contrariwise in some Annang communities. Be it as it may, this law appears to be an unjust law as the punishment for the offence does not devolve on the offender, but on another person. This contradicts the Annang belief in retribution and the belief that "the ashes follow its thrower" (*Aduok ntong ke nton akene*).

Annang Conception of Human Rights

In the Annang society, each person is prohibited from being malicious against some groups of people, namely: one's grandchildren, one's grandparents and one's inlaws. One is also bound to be hospitable to the stranger. Although there are no clear formulations and recognition of rights in traditional African societies, we are left to link the African traditional conception of human rights with contemporary formulation of human rights (Essien: 2008). The Africans have a deep sense of human rights. These are rights such as rights of inheritance and succession, right to work, right to found a domestic society (right to marriage), right to respect and reputation, freedom of thought, speech and beliefs, freedom of association, right to education, right to property, right to life, et cetera. Let us look at each of these rights in the context of the Annang Society.

Within this Annang *weltanschauung*, the Annang people and society believe in the spirituality or sacredness of life and consider it as a primary value. However, some activities which were in vogue in uncivilized Annang society could contradict that life is primary in Annang society. Such activities were the killing of twins, which Mary Slessor fought to put an end to; and human sacrifice. Like in most African traditional societies lives were sacrificed at the burial of village or clans dignitaries. Most of the victims were captives at inter-tribal vendettas. With these in mind, would one be justified to say that life was held sacred in African traditional society and the Annang society in particular? These heinous crimes against life have, however, changed in modern Annang, possibly due to Christianity.

The Right to Life

Apart from the cannibalistic, fetish and barbarous Annang of pre-Christian Africa, the authentic Annang society believes in the primacy of life. This is attested to in the adage: "*uwem adi imo*" (life is wealth); "*itong ama adu uwem akongo nkwa*" (when the neck lives it shall wear beads), "*uwem/ajen akan inyene*" (life/child is greater than riches), and so on. The Annang go extra mile to preserve the sanctity of life. They believe that we live our lives in trust. Thus a suicide is not given any befitting burial in Annang land since he or she is believed to infringe on the sacredness of life (Essien: 2008). Such is thrown into the forest. Even when they lose any member (except a suicide) the Annang exert much time and energy to give befitting burial, since they believe in reincarnation and the spirit-world. Their beliefs in reincarnation and also in the land of the spirit, the spirit-world, manifest a tripartite structure of human personality in Annang world view. The human person is composed of body, soul and spirit. At the death of the body, the soul enters into the cycle of reincarnation while the spirit goes to the land of the spirits, designated "*awio-ekpo*". The spirit lives in the spirit-world depending on whether the person was virtuous. If he or she was not virtuous, his or her spirit is believed to roam the world. Thus, that is why they are believed to appear as ghosts. This tri-partite conception of human nature in Annang society vitiates psychosomaticism and establishes a **psychosomapneumaticism** (the idea that soul, body and spirit make up the human person). The Annang child is taught that it is wrong to kill since life is sacred.

Right of Inheritance and Succession

The right of inheritance of property at the death of a man devolves on his sons. Among others, the eldest son (Akpan) benefits more than other sons. He inherits, by traditional belief, the father's buildings or houses, and he is heir apparent to the throne if his father were a royal head. In terms of his portions of land, these are usually divided among the male children, beginning from the eldest to the youngest. Women or female children do not enjoy this right in the Annang society.

Right to Work

The Annang society believes that success depends upon hardwork. Everyone within this society has right to work and to the fruits of his or her work. This right is correlative of the duty to work. There is a duty to communal work, such as the duty of keeping the village square and path ways clean. The Annang have a saying which underscores their tenacity towards diligence and hardwork. It says: “*Ifu idiagha nnien; una ubok-utom ifippe mfi*”, that is “The lazy cannot eat balanced diet; the jobless cannot eat periwinkle”.

Right to Found a Domestic Society

Without being told the Annang man or woman considers the right to found a domestic community a natural right. Thus he or she presumes his freedom to marry and establish a home. There is no place for celibacy in the Annang society. The successful Annang man or woman is measured in his or her ability to found a stable home. This is also part of his social responsibility and duty.

Freedom of Association

In traditional African societies there is a right to associate freely with one’s own kins within an extended family, a right to associate with people outside the extended family, a right also to inter-tribal association in marriage. This right is limited in certain communities in Igbo land. There is the practice of a caste system, the “*Osu*” caste system. The *Osu* are believed to attend to certain idols and thus were seen and treated as holy sect, and due to their closeness and consequent “sacredness”, they are not related with normally. These groups of people are treated as inferior to other human beings, and as such there is no deliberate intermarriage with them.

In traditional Annang society, only male initiates have the right to belong to the “*Ekpo*” masquerade cult. Those who have not been initiated, some males and all women are not altogether free to move about in the society during the “*Ekpo*” masquerade festival. At the climax of this festival, called “*Ndok Ekpo*”, women are not free at all to be seen outside their homes. This is usually the last week of the tenth month of the year, October. This restricts their freedom of movement.

Right to Respect, Reputation and Freedom of Speech

In view of the right to respect, the Annang give a special place to the elders and elderly. The elders, because of their experience in life, are believed to be wise. Through their mouths oral history, folklore and myths are transmitted to others. In the gathering of the people, the elder makes recourse to the wisdom of the ancients. In his awakening speech he begins with “our fathers used to say,” and when rendering a folkore, his point of departure is “once upon a time”. The wise one while rendering oral history, folklore and myths makes the “once upon a time”, “in those days” or “our fathers used to say” become “now”. Recourse to wise sayings serves didactic purposes. Such ideal elders are cultically venerated after their death because they are believed to belong to the spiritual community of ancestors. Besides these elders, every elderly person has a right to be respected by the younger one. There is duty to respect one’s parents and elders.

The Annang man or woman believes he or she has a right to a good name. This is attested to by the fact that, if he or she is blackmailed, he or she seeks redress by reporting such a case to the council of elders, be it at the family level or village level.

Freedom of speech and expression is conditioned by the principle of respect. One is bound to respect one’s parents and elders in the Annang society, despite your interior conviction that you are free to speak and express your views.

There are, in summary, derogations from human rights. Much emphasis is placed on collective rights than on individual rights, and duty seems to overwhelm rights in most Annang society.

Dispute Settlement, Punishment, Justice and Court System in Annang

Whenever, his or rights were infringed, or whenever he or she had a case, the Annang person most often sought justice by resorting to the lineage or village council depending on the where the other litigant came from. If the parties came from the same lineage, the lineage (lineage) council would be the court of jurisdiction; if the parties to the case came from different lineages, the village council would assume jurisdiction over the case. Furthermore, cases involving litigants from different villages were entertained by the clan court, which was empanelled with the village heads and ordained traditional priests called “*Akuku*” (the plural version of *Akuku*) .

The court hierarchy rose from the lower to the higher. This started from the family council, to the lineage council, to the village, and to the clan council. Cases were always referred to the higher courts if they were not decided at the lower courts, or as appeals by the litigants if he or she was dissatisfied with the decision by the lower courts.

When criminality was hard to determine, resorts were made to the traditional truth determinants, which were:

1. Oath (**Mmiam**);
2. Divination (**Iyong**);
3. Ordeal (**Ukang**).

Mmiam (Oath)

Mmiam was the god of justice. Recourse to *mmiam* decided the case and settled the disputes, since there was strong sense of belief in its efficacy, and there was no appeal available. A period of time was always given for the effect of *mmiam* after it had been sworn to. The oath taker was expected to suffer some affliction, mostly death, during this period. If he or she died or suffered the required affliction, he or she was deemed to have been guilty, and his or her affliction would have to be expiated *per* rituals. If neither affliction nor death visited him or her, he or she would be publicly declared innocent before the entire community.

Iyong (Divination)

Iyong was the process and method of inquiring the will of the gods by the diviner (*awia iyong*). The *awia iyong* possessed expert powers to invoke the spirits or the gods. He would shake the rattle (*ekpuud*), make incantations, and cast some objects (mostly bones, pebbles, nuts, teeth or fangs of some powerful animals like cat, snake, dog, centipede, i.e., *mbamba*) on the ground. Sometimes, he would gaze into some water in a bottle or in a white basin. It was believed that the gods or ancestral spirits communicated the truth through him.

The operative techniques and process of *Iyong* was closely associated and similar to *nkukud* (oracle) and *use-mkpo* (*foretelling*). While *iyong* as a means of justice dealt with the present, it, however, delved into distant past and also looked in to the future.

Ukang (Ordeals)

Ukang was primarily instituted to detect and punish offenders. It, however, operated within the realm of the magical and the mysterious. It was supernatural with physical and

material effects. John Bosco Ekanem and Joseph Udodata (2011) outlined the different types of ukang in their work . These are:

1. *Ukang Ujo Aran* (Ordeal of the boiling oil);
2. *Ukang Ntuen-Ibok* (Ordeal of the Alligator Pepper);
3. *Ukang Akook Ukod* (Ordeal of the Bamboo);
4. *Ukang Ikpa Unam* (Ordeal of the Leather);
5. *Ukang Akpe Ajop* (Ordeal of Oil Palm-Fruit Fibre);
6. *Ukang Ndaam* (Ordeal of the Raffia).

Ukang Ujo Aran (Ordeal of the Boiling Oil)

In this ordeal, the ordeal specialist (*awia ukang*) would boil oil and would ask the suspects to dip their hands into the boiling oil. If the oil burnt the suspect, he or she was declared guilty. If it did not burn the suspect, he or she was declared innocent.

Naturally, hot oil should burn the hand of the suspect. Here was a case where the *awia ukang* could tap into the invisible and supernatural resource of *aruru* and control nature by magic. Thus, the innocent would not be harmed, in this and other ordeals.

Ukang Ntuen-Ibok (Ordeal of the Alligator Pepper)

After the people would have assembled, alligator pepper (*ntuen-ibok*) would be grinded to a powdery state and emptied into a container by the *awia ukang*. He would use his magical powers and order the pepper to get into the eyes of the guilty. Whoever was guilty would be detected by visible signs, which was immediate scratching of the eyes and some shouts of pains.

Ukang Akook Ukod (Ordeal of the Bamboo)

Awia ukang would tie a live cock to the tip of bamboo obtained from *ifiaku ukod* (specie of palm-wine tree); invite seven young men (*mkiparawa itiaba*) to carry the bamboo. After some incantations by *awia ukang*, invisible forces would empossess these young men and they would start running uncontrollably by themselves, but controlled by the unseen powers, until these powers directed them to the house of the culprit.

Some problems with this ordeal are: a) what if the house was inhabited by many people, which was often the case, or if the culprit was no more living there, and the house inhabited by another or other persons? A ready answer to this problem was to arraign the occupants of the house before some other type of ordeal, or detect the culprit through divination, *iyong*. Oath-taking (*Mmiam*) would prolong detection of the culprit, however.

Ukang Ikpa Unam (Ordeal of the Leather)

In *ukang ikpa unam*, *Awia Ukang* directed the suspects to take turns and sit on a leather mat spread on the ground. The leather got stuck to the buttocks of the guilty person. Could the *awia ukang* take bribes from the guilty and capitalized on his magical powers to get the leather stick to the buttocks of the innocent person? Even though this was a possibility, the expert was expected to be a person of high regard and moral integrity. If he could do this, he would not only make mockery of the entire system, but of himself as well, as he would be punished publicly by the minstrels of justice.

Ukang Akpe Ajop (Ordeal of the Oil Pal-Fruit Fibre)

Each of the suspects would be given a pair of small bundles of oil palm-fruit fibre (*akpe ajop*) to hold on both hands; kneel in front of the *awia ukang*, backing him. The *awia ukang* would also hold same fibres with his two hands, make incantations, get into ecstasy and shake the fibres violently. He would hold the fibres across the necks of each suspect, and, suddenly, the fibres would stick to the neck of the guilty person. They would squeeze the culprit's neck until he or she admitted guilt.

Ukang Ndaam (Ordeal of the Raffia)

In this ordeal, the *awia ukang* would place some strings of raffia (*ndaam*) in water contained in a white basin. The suspects would take turns and stir the water with the right hand. In the midst of incantations by *awia ukang*, the raffia strings would rise up from the water and coil around the hand of the culprit.

As earlier noted above, the *awia ukang* could tap into the invisible and supernatural resource of *aruru* and control nature by magic. Thus, the innocent were always spared.

Cases or offences for determination ranged from theft, adultery, battery, murder, blackmail, vandalism, trespass to land and forceful possession of land.

Arbitration and Punishment

Punishment in Annang jurisprudence was retributive, deterrent and reconciliatory. Retributive methods are often employed in major offences such as murder, theft, adultery, while the reconciliatory means were employed in cases such as slander or blackmail. The guilty were made to pay fine, or make atonements in form of presenting items for rituals. In some cases, like theft and, capital punishment was often applied. Those who swore to the oath in guilt were often identified by their swollen bodies. Swelling of the body (*njiook*) was also associated with those who went against the taboos, *ibed*. In this later case, one would be metaphorically said to have "eaten the taboos" (*adia ibed*) or "eaten the gods" (*adia awasi*).

Besides, the methods described above in the ordeals, the family as well as the lineage, village and clan courts made great use of arbitration, wherein the purposes were to reconcile the parties in a given dispute. One key factor in arbitration was that the parties had to agree to settle their dispute by arbitration, agree on the choice of panel of arbitration and to comply to the advice of the panel. This submission and agreement to arbitration by parties to a dispute is called *forum prorogatum* in international law and contemporary ADR (Alternative Dispute Resolution). In litigation as well as arbitration, the elders and chiefs would always form a jury (*aru*) in order to have a consensual decision. Dissenting opinions as *obiter dicta* (sayings by the way) were rare among the jury.

All in all, Annang has a rich and complex legal repertoire. Annang Jurisprudence, Legal System and Philosophy of Law have resemblances in contemporary laws and legal system. However, there are a lot to be modified in Annang customary, native laws and customs to suit the repugnancy doctrine, which repudiates any law that is not consistent with natural justice, equity and good conscience. Be it as it may, it is simply a better option to keep to the good laws of the society, for the ancestral Annang taught that "obedience to the law gives peace of mind", *Eched Annang ekewo "atum mbed iwuo urenge"*.

Summary and Conclusion

As this essay in the foundations of Annang Philosophy is entering its 'fine', I wish to recapitulate the questions I have answered herein: 1. The notion of being in Annang Philosophy; 2. The notion of reality in Annang Philosophy; 3. The notions of causality and causation in Annang Philosophy; 4. The notions of freedom, determinism and moral responsibility in Annang Philosophy; 5. The Annang conceptions of knowledge and truth; 6.

Annang system of logic; 7. Annang conception of personal identity or the nature of the human being; and 8. Annang legal system and notions of justice and punishment. To these questions I answered as follows.

‘Being’ in Annang thought is not an empty concept but one with content. The notion of ‘being’ refers to ‘existence’ and to ‘God’ as the ground of existence. In Annang Philosophy, being refers to God as well as existence. The logic behind this Annang two-dimensional notion of being is, that ‘being’ as God is the cause of ‘being’ as existence. This explains why the notion of God is best understood as a causal principle in Annang Metaphysics. Annang Philosophy has a two-dimensional notion of being: Existence and God.

Concerning the notions of reality and nature, the Annang believe that there are two worlds: physical and spiritual. There is no antagonism between materialism and idealism in Annang reality. Annang notion of reality is a fusion of idealism and materialism. This fusion of idealism and materialism, the spiritual and physical could be especially demonstrated in the Annang formation of planes of existence:

1. “Ukpobot”, “Unarod”, “Arorobot”, “Ekondo” (Cosmos, where humans live)
2. “Awio Ekpo” (Land of the spirits)
 - “Awio Eti-Ekpo” (Land of good spirits)
 - “Awio Idiok-Ekpo” (Land of bad spirits: “ukpaka ekpo”)
 - “Awio Ekpo Mme Ete-Ete” (Land of the ancestors)
 - “Awio Ekpo Nnem” (World of the gods)
3. “Awio Awasi” (God’s Realm)

In respect of causality, ancient Annang wisdom and tradition (*Eched Annang*) held it that every thing has a cause (*ukeed nkpo anyene nta*) and everything has a beginning; that the world or universe had a beginning (*arorobod anyene ntongo*). The universe is believed to be the creative act of God in Annang, as we presented above under Annang cosmogony.

With regard to freedom, determinism and moral responsibility, the Annang uphold the belief that the human person is free. And this freedom is often expressed in his daily life. The notion of freedom in Annang conception implies that the human person can acquire and accomplish his desired goals in life without external pressures on his will. It is believed, too, that the human person is responsible for his failures or misfortunes in life. For whatever actions a person chooses, he bears responsibility for them. This is especially made evident in the proverb, “*aduok ntong ke ntong akene*”, meaning “The ashes follow the one who throws them”. However, the notion of freedom in Annang thought is highly derogated by the notions of determinism, fate and destiny. There are thus beliefs in freedom and determinism in moderate senses in Annang Philosophy. Even so, the institution of punishment for offences seems to undermine hard determinism in Annang reality. Punishment in Annang jurisprudence was retributive, deterrent and reconciliatory.

Annang Epistemology consists in our notions of knowledge (*Ifiok*), truth (*Akpaniko*), belief (*Erinim ke akpaniko*), truth-telling (*Eritang Akpaniko*) and information (*Mmuk*). Knowledge (*Ifiok*), for the Annang, entails belief (*Erinim ke akpaniko*) and information (*Mmuk*). This belief might not necessarily undergo justification, for who may be able to justify acclaimed messages from the gods? Knowledge is true belief in Annang conception.

Given our conception of knowledge, truth (*Akpaniko*) refers to correlation with the state of affairs. The concept “*Akpaniko*” is a composite term; composing “*akpan*”, which, in this context, translates “most significant”, or “real”, or “principal”, or “paramount”, and the term “*iko*”, which means “word”. “*Akpan*” literally means “First son”, who is believed to be the “real son”. Truth (*Akpaniko*) in Annang Epistemology is thus associated with “Word”. Truth in Annang Epistemology involves saying what there is; sayings about the real thing. “*Akpaniko*” as truth means the “*real word*” in Annang Epistemology. Thus, truth-telling

(Eritang Akpaniko) entails saying the real thing. It involves saying about the reality in context and shunning falsehood. Even when the speaker is not telling the truth, he or she already knows the real thing (the truth) in his/her mind. Hence, the Annang saying that “the liar knows the truth.”

Words can be spoken or unspoken. Sometimes, words can assume the mode of action and signs. Most often than not, justification of truth in Annang Epistemology takes the forms of testimonies and witnessing (Ntie-Nse), which can be in spoken words. At other times, the words are unspoken, but determinable in actions. Sometimes, truth has to be determined through the practices of ordeal (*ukang*) and divination (*nkukud*); and these are firmly adhered to in Annang. Annang conceptions of knowledge (*ifiok*) and truth (*akpaniko*) are inextricably linked with the belief system and tradition in vogue in the society.

While the senses are believed to serve as a channel of information, the Annang have strong belief, too, that knowledge comes through revelation and intuition. Revealed truth is believed to come from the spiritual realm to the physical realm. The Annang believe also in intuition. Beside the senses, revelation and intuition, the Annang also have belief that knowledge or traits of knowledge can be naturally passed from parents to children. This is a belief in innatism, which is associated with rationalism. The Annang tradition, therefore, has no peculiar place for a single source of human knowledge. There is interplay of empiricism, revelation, intuition and rationalism in Annang epistemology.

In terms of logic, causal reasoning in Annang society gives no room for any belief in chance. A greater significance of causal reasoning for the Annang man is that it paves way for scientific knowledge, that is, knowledge of things through their causes (*scientia rerum per ultima causa*). The Annang have the ability to solve some of their existential problems, since they have knowledge of the causes of things, events and situations. For example, they have knowledge of causes of certain kinds of diseases. They build up causal arguments using their knowledge of the causes and causal arguments using their knowledge of possible solutions to human problems, for example, cures for diseases.

Concerning the question of personal identity, I make these salient averments: that “Agwo Ontology” contains the Annang notion of personal identity or the nature of the human person. “Agwo Ontology” is rooted in the problems of human nature, the human identity as well as the big-time problem of mind-body dualism. “Agwo ontology” is a crucial attempt to identify these philosophical problems in the Annang intellectual thought and tradition. A ‘psychosomaticism’ described the hitherto problematic of mind-body composition of the human person. This psychosomaticism was vitiated by a ‘psychosomapneumatism’, a term I coined elsewhere (“Agwo Ontology” 2010) to describe a tripartite composition of the human personality (mind, body, spirit) as conceived in Annang philosophy. Psychosomapneumatism is Annang notion of human nature. By this term, I mean that the human being is composed of *ukpong* (soul), *ikpohidem* (body) and *ekpo* (spirit).

What I have presented in this essay is a prolegomenon to Annang Philosophy; a cultural philosophy which, hitherto, never existed in the history of philosophy.

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