

IMMANUEL KANT ON THE METAPHYSICS OF MAN AND THE IRREFUTABILITY OF METAPHYSICS

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Abstract: This essay with carefully worded critique of the critics of metaphysics looks at the metaphysics of man through the lens of Immanuel Kant's philosophical orientation vis-à-vis the inevitability of metaphysics. Metaphysics simply means philosophy concerning the nature of ultimate reality. It is a transcendental science that deals with beyondness of *being*. The notion of transcendence which constitutes the first principles for organizing experience is native to human being. This power of beyondness is ingrained ontological structure or psychological constituent of human being in which it subsequently enhances human creativity. This metaphysical reality of human being makes him/her inseparable from being metaphysical. Even when he angrily posits an anti-metaphysical position, he is invariably confessing metaphysics of some sort. Hence, he may not choose to be one, but he will end up, *mutatis mutandis*-being metaphysical. In this paper, I acknowledge the fact that there are brilliant scholars from ancient period down to contemporary age such as: Aristotle and Martin Heidegger, who have advanced radical metaphysical orientation but in spite of their significant achievement, I hold-on to Kant's caption of metaphysics as the native rational, imaginative and intellectual capacity of human being to project beyond physical experience into the non-physical in all areas of human endeavours, that is, politics, economic, legal and socio-cultural background and so forth, which culminated into progress and development in the society.

Keywords: Intellectual Intuition, Irrefutability of Metaphysics, Kant's Metaphysics, Metaphysics of Man, Sensuous Intuition, Senses of Metaphysics.

Introduction

The concept of metaphysics as a core branch of philosophy has been popularly attributed to Aristotle. He was the first to be reported to have disclosed the organisation of those subjects, which include meta-

physics, but did not really name it. Aristotle called the subjects his first philosophy, that is, the study of *being qua being* and ultimate basis for the system of the sciences. Very importantly, however, when Andronicus of Rhodes (i.e. Aristotle's editor) was collecting these writing of Aristotle, he accidentally placed this first philosophy after the treatises on physics. Physics as a subject simply deals with physical world. In essence, metaphysics acquired the connotation of things beyond palpable reality from the classification of the works of Aristotle¹. Consequently, the subjects of metaphysics were then called *the treatise after the physical treatise*, which is the literal meaning of the concept of metaphysics. In this sense, metaphysics connotes over and beyond the physical².

The Different Conception of Metaphysics

Scholars, pundits and researchers such as Immanuel Kant (1969), Rene Descartes (1986), Campbell Momoh (2000), Jim Unah (2006) and Chiedozie Okoro (2011) to mention but a few, have agreed in their writings that there are different senses of metaphysics. To a large extent, this segment borrowed a cue from these scholars for the examination of this subject-matter. In the first sense, metaphysics is regarded as a theory of reality or the ultimate reality. To search for ultimate reality simply implies a practical way of describing the world as it occurs to us in our moments of curiosity. For instance, the world can be explained as idealistic, materialistic, spiritual, religious, scientific, empirical, rational, and from the dialectical perspective. Owing to the foregoing analysis, Okoro submits that once the world is so described, it becomes a way of life for us³. And it is in this sense that we say that metaphysics deals with the study of the first principles that underlie all cultural outlooks, which is why philosophy (i.e. metaphysics) is often described as a worldview. It is also in this traditional usage that metaphysics is variously addressed as first philosophy, queen of the sciences and the ground of all human knowledge. Apparently, this first sense of metaphysics is Aristotelian.

In the second sense, tradition of the transcendental philosophers such as Kant, the notion of metaphysics is used to capture the native rational, imaginative and the intellectual capacity of human being to project beyond physical experience into the non-physical. This act of going be-

1 Unah, J. Ijemuna, *Metaphysics, Phenomenology and African Philosophy*, (Ibadan: Hope Publications, 2006), 43.

2 Fadahunsi, Ayodele, *Metaphysics: A Historical and Thematic Introduction*, (Ibadan: Hope Publications, 2004), 17.

3 Okoro, Chiedozie, "The Notion of Integrative Metaphysics and Its Relevance to Contemporary World Order," *Integrative Humanism Journal of the Department of Classic and Philosophy*, Ghana: University of Cape Coast, 2011, I(1), 4.

yond the physical to the non-physical is known as human transcendence. According to Unah:

Transcendence is the voyage of the mind, the human mind, into region of nothingness. It is the exploration of the wilderness of thought by human reason. In this voyage of the mind, in this exploration of thought, there is always a movement from hither to thither, a movement from here to there.⁴

In a layman's language human transcendence is the metaphysical power to mentally transit from the given to the non-given, something to nothing. Therefore, to achieve this aim, two forms of activities are involved. First, there is something, which reaches out or passes over to something. Second, there is something, which is passed over to something else⁵. That which reaches out, that which passes over is consciousness. Human consciousness does not recoil to itself; it does not hide itself within itself. It reaches out; it passes over all the time *ad infinitum*. Unah reflecting some scholars work on consciousness for it is "an outward-moving vector"⁶; it is the "centre of itself"⁷. Such transition should naturally lead to the formation of concepts for directing and re-directing human affairs.

The third sense of metaphysics is purely Heideggerian. Here, metaphysics is regarded as the theory of *being as being*. This is where *being* is understood to mean the ground, the foundation, the soil, the fountain, which sustains all things, from which all things derive and in which all things are rooted, metaphysics is then regarded as pure ontology whose duty it is to return us to the path of *being* called *other-than-being*⁸. Once this reconciliation is attained, we come to understand the world better and deeper. Heidegger refers to this third sense of metaphysics, as the overcoming of metaphysics and by this token, what he has in mind is fundamental ontology⁹.

It is noteworthy to mention a fourth sense of metaphysics, which is precisely African, that is to say, regards the concept of metaphysics as an integrative system of thought. Scholars, pundits and researchers such as Placide Tempels (1959), John Mbiti (1969), Olubi Sodipo (1978), and

4 Unah, Op.cit, 83.

5 Ibid, 84.

6 Heidegger, Martin, *Kant and the Problems of Metaphysics*, transl., Churchill, J.S., (London: Indiana University Press, 1970), 8.

7 Hegel Georg W. Frederick, *Reason in History*, transl., Hartman, (New York: The Bobbs-Merrill Company, 1964), 23–24.

8 Unah, J. Ijemuna, "Postmodern Metaphysics: An Outline of Ontology." *A Paper Presented at the Department of Philosophy*, (Lagos: University of Lagos Press, 2005), 41–54.

9 Ibid, 56.

Godwin Azenabor have acknowledged the reality of African metaphysics. They reason that life forces are in hierarchy, through which all realities find their meaning in the universe. In essence, force(s) is that reality in which all beings have something in common. In addition, they show that all forms of beings are force; this force conditions all experiences that metaphysics studies. This notion of African metaphysics is a derivative of African worldview and experience. It is exactly because of the emphasis some of the earlier mentioned African writers have made on the fundament of spirit/force(s) role in each reality irrespective of their knowledge status (compare materialism and idealism). The fundamental question goes thus: what then is integrative metaphysics?

According to Okoro ordinary sense of integrative metaphysics is the African theory of *being*, doctrine of reality, or notion of transcendence (i.e. beyondness) which constitutes the first principles of organizing experience¹⁰. This is the reality of African perspective on metaphysics. In fact, it is the basic axioms of existence. It is the African method of transcendental inquiry¹¹. It is African account of the reciprocity between *being* and *human being*. It is the African description of human transcendence and human are able to produce theory and action for directing their affairs and for the task of societal and universal transformation. African metaphysics is regarded as integrative simply because it is the metaphysics of harmony, which in turn makes African philosophy as a whole. It is a metaphysical system which regards spirit, force, life force, or vital force as the primordial principle that permeates all things and is responsible for unity in diversity. To buttress the foregoing point on integrative metaphysics, Okoro affirms that it is a metaphysical system which sees spirit (i.e. mind, idea, subject and all things mental or spiritual) and matter (i.e. body, object and all things physical) as being equi-primordial and complementary¹². According to Momoh, African metaphysics can best be defined as the “African doctrine on the spiritual.”¹³ He tacitly reveals that for the Africans,

10 Okoro Chiedozie, (2010), “Philosophy and Economic Development: A Metaphysical Appraisal.” *Monograph Series* No. 13, (Faculty of Arts, University of Lagos, 2010), 8.

11 For more information see, Allison, H.E., *Kant's Transcendental Idealism: An Interpretation and Defense*, (London: Yale University Press, 1983), 61; Iroegbu P. (1995), *Metaphysics: The Kpim of Philosophy*, (Owerri: International University Press, 1995), 26 & Asouzu, I. Innocent, *The Method and Principles of Complementary Reflection in and Beyond African Philosophy*, (Calabar: University of Calabar Press, 2004), 6.

12 Okoro Chiedozie, “The Notion of Integrative Metaphysics and Its Relevance to Contemporary World Order,” 2011, *Op.cit.*, 6.

13 Momoh, C. Shittu, *The Substance of African Philosophy*, (Auchi: African Philosophy Project Publication, 2000), 9.

“the concept of reality encompasses the totality of everything that exists visible or invisible, real, actual or potential”¹⁴. Okoro writes:

...And because this metaphysical system does not bifurcate mind from body, subject from object; because it does not separate politics from economy, economy from religion, religion from culture, culture from spirituality, spirituality from education, education from physical existence, physical existence from the totality of life; because it does not create a gap between theory and practice, action and reaction; it is referred to as an inclusive system and therefore, integrative.¹⁵

Contrary to the classical Western metaphysics which is monistic rationality, African metaphysics is dualistic, diverse and pluralistic in orientation. Whereas classical Western metaphysics dissociates entities and is thus absolutist, individualistic, totalitarian, African metaphysics associates entities, and therefore accommodating and tolerant of contrary views and opinion; whereas classical western metaphysical system operates on the law of excluded middle, meanwhile exclusivity is alien to the African metaphysical system, it is rather inclusive rationality. The aim of the African metaphysics is to harmonize all opposites by way of interfusion or integration. This system of metaphysics is also known as metaphysical vitalism, metaphysical symbiosis, spiritual primacy, or the principles of interpenetrability of forces¹⁶. It is imperative to submit that the metaphysical system of the West akin to the African metaphysical system of integration is that of Heidegger’s hermeneutic phenomenology.

Kant’s Notion of Metaphysics

In his work entitled, *Prolegomena*, Kant describes the general nature of metaphysics as follow:

...as it concerns the source of metaphysical cognition, its very concept implies that they cannot be empirical. Its principles (i.e. propositions and concepts) must never be derived from experience. It must not be physical but metaphysical, that is, knowledge lying beyond experience. It can therefore have for its ba-

14 Ibid, 9.

15 Okoro Chiedozi, “The Notion of Integrative Metaphysics and Its Relevance to Contemporary World Order,” 2011, Op.cit, 7–9.

16 For more information, see, Onyewuenyi, I. Chukwudi, “Towards an African Philosophy.” Kalu, O.U. (Ed.). *Readings in African Humanities: African Cultural Development*, (Nsukka: University of Nsukka Press, 1994), 27 & Momoh, C. Shittu, *The Substance of African Philosophy*, (Auchi: African Philosophy Project Publication, 2000), 9–10.

sis neither external experience, which is the source of physics proper, nor internal, which is the basis of empirical psychology. It is therefore a priori cognition, coming from pure understanding and pure reason¹⁷.

In his inaugural lecture entitled, *Even Nothing is Something*, Unah corroborates the above quotation by saying that whichever way we define metaphysics, the important thing is that it is a transcendental science or better-still power of the mind that deals with beyondness of *being*¹⁸.

In the *Critique of Pure Reason*, Kant accomplished an intellectual revolution in philosophy when he tried to determine the range and bounds of metaphysics and as well justify metaphysics as a legitimate object of inquiry. As a philosopher of the Enlightenment, Kant was fascinated by the progress made in the science, but he was concerned that philosophy in contrast seems to be enmeshed in endless controversies and disagreements. The empirical methods of science which led to important discoveries and contributed to the mind of human knowledge meant that the British empiricist David Hume raised a radical scepticism against metaphysics, a scepticism which famously woke Kant from his dogmatic slumber; Kant's self-confessed love for metaphysics meant that he sought to establish the validity of metaphysics, as an answer to the question. How is metaphysics possible? To achieve this task, Kant took the beginning of his task, not in a dogmatic conception of metaphysics as knowledge of the beyond nature or the physical, but in a systematic critique of human thought and reason.

Nevertheless, Kant began an introductory outline of the faculties that constitute the ontological structure of thought. Let us hear this:

By way of introduction and anticipation we need only say that there are two stems of human knowledge, namely sensibility and understanding, which perhaps spring from a common, but to us unknown, root. Through the former, objects are given to us; through the latter, they are thought¹⁹.

Consequent upon the above quotation, it shows that the reasoning nature of thought pattern or consciousness makes human knowledge transcendental. But since the instituting of transcendence is preceded by sense intuition, Kant advised that the execution of the architectonic of human knowledge or the study of the nature of human transcendence should begin with the transcendental doctrine of sensibility. Thus:

17 Kant Immanuel, *Critique of Pure Reason*, transl., Kemp Smith, (New York: St. Martin Press, 1969), 61.

18 Unah, J. Ijemuna, *Metaphysics, Phenomenology and African Philosophy*, 2006, Op.cit., 46.

19 Kant, Op.cit., 61–62.

Now insofar as sensibility may be found to contain a priori representations constituting the condition under which objects are given to us, it will belong to transcendental philosophy. And since the conditions under which alone the objects of human knowledge are given must precede those under which they are thought, the transcendental doctrine of sensibility will continue the first part of the science of the elements²⁰.

The quotation above establishes that human consciousness is holistic, involving the totality of the human mind. It consists of the external conditions. This means that the world as encounter with objects of experience and other physical conditions of human consciousness such as psychological, chemical and neurological structures of the body, as well as general cultural, and social conditions of consciousness and internal condition intrinsic to consciousness which relates reciprocally to consciousness as part to whole, in which elements intrinsic to consciousness are lively structures through which one is aware of things²¹.

An Analysis of the Metaphysics of Man

Indisputably, the whole ideas about progress and development in any society revolve around ontological structure of human life, human being or human existence. It is truism of Kant's transcendental philosophy, which was intended to establish a strong intellectual foundation for the transformation of Europe. This revolution began with the Renaissance and got sediment in the Enlightenment. This was an attempt at laying profound philosophical foundation(s) necessary for rescuing Europe from religious dogmatism or the shadow of the age of darkness. It is worthy to underscore that all these process are not bereft of self-mastery, as in one tapping from what Unah described as metaphysical power, which lies dormant in us (i.e. man) with a view to assisting man to assert himself and join in the universal politics of making meaning, that is, of how to order and re-order the world affairs.

This brings us to the analysis of the structure of the human mind that bestows upon man, the capacity for making meaning and giving meaning to the world. However, the structure of the mind is to speak of the faculties that comprise the mind and their functions. Here, Unah had earlier established that the primary function of concept formation goes thus:

Since they domicile a plurality, is to unify experience. To

20 Ibid, 62.

21 Okoro Chiedozi, "The Notion of Integrative Metaphysics and Its Relevance to Contemporary World Order," 2011, Op.cit, 10.

talk of unifying experience implies that the latter (experience) is somehow not homogeneous. It implies that experience, raw experience, is chaotic, unorganized. It is the function of concepts to synthesize, organize and unify experience. Through the schemata, through the presentation of rules by which concepts perform their synthetic functions, concepts are universalizing functions of the understanding. As the universalizing function of the understanding, concepts offer a unity, a rule, for organizing the disjointed multiplicity of sense information in such a manner that a concept can apply to more than one thing. Once several pieces of experience are brought under a concept, it (the concept) unifies or domesticates them... concepts are capsules of ideas which by nature must accommodate a plurality. Concepts, through schematism, unify diversity or domesticate a plurality. Thus, the unity of plurality made possible by the understanding is the rule, which enables a concept to perform its synthetic function, that is, its function of unification.²²

The question that follows is simply how does this rule created by the understanding (imagination) function? There is the faculty of intuition or sensibility and its function is to intuit objects of the world through the five senses. There is faculty of apperception or understanding and its function is to forge or form concepts for system construction, and there is the faculty of the imagination also called the synthesizer or faculty of production and its function is to form connectedness through the process of schematism. According to Okoro the total functioning of the three faculties combines to produce human thought or reason which functions is to design holistic ideas or principles for planning universe²³.

Let us attempt a brief discussion of the faculties of the human mind, their categories and functions. Here, four different concepts (i.e. intuition, the understanding, the imagination and reason or finite pure reason) are of utmost important. Intuition simply means sensibility as the *a posteriori* or immediate condition of consciousness, which fall under the categories of space and time (i.e. ascending and descending pathway) and ultimately the initiator or centre point of transcendence. For Heidegger, transcendence is non-creativity or receptivity. It activates reason with raw sensory data. The symbiosis between intuition and thought is called presentation or representation²⁴. The faculty of understanding or apperception as a *pri-*

22 Unah, J. Ijemuna, *Metaphysics, Phenomenology and African Philosophy*, 2006, Op.cit. 50–51.

23 Okoro Chiedozie, “The Notion of Integrative Metaphysics and Its Relevance to Contemporary World Order,” 2011, Op.cit, 15.

24 Unah, J. Ijemuna, *Heidegger, Through Kant to Fundamental Ontology*, (Ibadan: Hope Publication, 2007), 40.

ori or mediate condition of consciousness falls within the ambient of the twelve categories of the mind. It is the editor of reality²⁵. The thought is a place where sensibility attains final purification through the process of schematism. It is the light of the soul or sources of mental illumination. The faculty of imagination as the mediator resides around the categories of transcendental deduction and induction of the human mind. It is the power of synthesis, image formation, a function of the soul described as productivity or reproductivity²⁶. As the synthesizer (i.e. symbiosis) “it is the initiator of the transcendence or point of transcendence itself”²⁷. The faculty of finite pure reason relies on the categorical grains of subjectivity or autonomy from external interference. This is the region of transcendental illusion (i.e. if unguided by the functioning of the previous three faculties explained earlier). Its function includes legislation of the ideas (i.e. the hunch or guess knowledge) which primarily ignite our curiosity or awareness about entities around us. Its nature is the continue transcendence of the bounds of experience. On a general note, all faculties of consciousness are transcendental. Together they constitute the foundation of knowledge and point towards the incentive power of the mind. In addition, they institute human transcendence, a capacity that demonstrates the autonomy of the mind from external influence.

Contextualizing Sensuous and Intellectual Intuitions

Sensuous and intellectual intuitions are fundamental products of the mind, as well as, veritable tools in knowledge formation to transcend beyond the given which is the realm of innovations, inventions *et-cetera*. Our knowledge of the world derives from these two aforementioned sources. Through sensuous intuition, information (i.e. raw data) is gathered by the mind about the concrete world. Though the intellectual intuition, (i.e. understanding or apperception) illumination that makes representation (i.e. information gathering) possible, is open to us. The faculty of intuition gives us raw sensory data about the world, while the faculty of intellect unifies these raw data through concepts. Both must relate with each other for knowledge to result. Casting aspersion on this issue, Kant clarifies thus:

...our knowledge springs from two fundamental sources of the mind; the first is the capacity of receiving representations (receptivity of impressions), the second is the power of knowing

25 Hegel Georg W. Frederich, *Reason in History*, transl., Hartman, 1964, Op.cit. 25.

26 Unah, J. Ijemuna, *Heidegger, Through Kant to Fundamental Ontology*, 2007, Op.cit. 45.

27 Heidegger Martin, *An Introduction of Metaphysics*, 6th Edition, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1974), 136–137.

an object through the representations (spontaneity in the production of concepts). Through the first, an object is given to us, through the second, object is thought of in relation to that (given) representation, which is mere determination of the mind.²⁸

This is in tandem with the first statement of Kant about the nature of knowledge. According to Kant, all knowledge begins from experience, or that experience is the first point where knowledge begins, but not all knowledge arises from experience. In this instance, without the illuminating function of the understanding, intuition will not be in position to receive representations and without the intuited, the illuminating function of the understanding will be impossible. Thus, “without sensibility no object would be given to us, without understanding, no object would be thought. Thought without contents are empty, intuition without concepts are blind”²⁹.

Nonetheless, sensuous and intellectual intuitions on their different quarters cannot afford us comprehensive knowledge of things because they require the help of a third faculty of the mind that makes symbiosis or interplay possible. This third faculty of the mind otherwise known as the “transcendental imagination” – *synthetic a priori* knowledge is the actual faculty of unity, synthesis or interplay. However, this kind of knowledge relates to experience, but it is not derived from experience. We can now see that sensuous and intellectual intuitions are coordinate perspectives of knowledge meant to direct human daily transactions and interactions.

Irrefutability of Metaphysics

In the broad spectrum of philosophy, if there is any core branch that has suffered much attack from the logical positivists, analytic and linguistic philosophers is none other than metaphysics. Various definitions of metaphysics underscored the fact that it is majorly about what is real irrespective of whether we know it or not. However, there are two trends in philosophy, which appears to be severally critical of metaphysics, these are: destructive and constructive philosophers. The former is iconoclastic just because it aims at a complete destruction of metaphysics. Whereas the latter is a construction of metaphysics after an initial, demolition exercises³⁰. Therefore, it shows that the first one is an attempt at impoverishing metaphysics, while the other is a purification and nourishment attempt of metaphysics.

28 Kant Immanuel, *Prolegomena to Any Future Metaphysics, Readings in Epistemology*. O’Neil, R.F., (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1963), 92.

29 Ibid, 93.

30 Unah, J. Ijemuna, *African Philosophy: Trends and Projects in Six Essays*, (Lagos: Concept Publications, 2009), 19.

These attacks began with the view that we cannot possibly know any basic facts about reality. Following this impression, the metaphysical enterprise is necessarily a fruitless exercise. There is a view that personal influences, prejudices, religious and scientific beliefs do constitute blocks to the achievement of a clear understanding of reality. Metaphysics also arrogates to itself a unique status. It is bent on the fact that reality is such that it is unknowable. It appears to lay claim to *knowing* something about what is supposed to be unknowable. This, according to the critics, is unacceptable position. It amounts to a contradiction; something that could not be true because it is nonsensical. It also appears that this view treats knowledge as if to know something amounted to imposing certain characteristic on what is not known. Yet there is no reason to think that this is the case with most of our knowledge.

The most distinctive doctrine or cardinal goal of logical positivists is the principle of verifiability, which apparently demonstrated the impossibility of metaphysics. In other words, the positivists maintain that metaphysics is impossible as regards what could be said and not what could be known, and so metaphysics infringes upon the rules which any utterances must satisfy if it is to be literally significant. The aims of logical positivists radically reject all claims to a priori knowledge of synthetic propositions and deny the very possibility experience in Kantian sense. Kant states that certain modes of knowledge leave the field for all possibility experiences and have the appearance of extending the scope of our judgement beyond all limits of experience, and this is by means of concepts to which no corresponding object can ever be given in experience³¹. Just as we have rightly said that Kant was interested in reforming metaphysics and not proposing for its abolishment; his intent was to put metaphysics on *the secure path of reason*.

Based on the attack directed at the enterprise of metaphysics, Hume launched his attack on metaphysics. For Hume, to seek transcendental entities is a waste of time, because it fails to give and yield knowledge for man. He argued, “metaphysics confuses and pollutes the mind with theology, superstitions and prejudices”³². Therefore, submits that all metaphysical notions, such as causation, substance, self or essence, God, space and time as unintelligible. The total understanding of Hume’s caption of metaphysics can be seen in following quotation:

...if we take into our hand any volume of divinity or school of metaphysics, for instance, let us ask: does it contain any

31 Kant Immanuel, *Prolegomena to Any Future Metaphysics, Readings in Epistemology*. O’Neil, R.F., 1963, Op.cit. 95.

32 Hume David, (1975), *An Inquiry Concerning Human Understanding*. Selby-Bigge (Ed.), (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1975), 120.

abstract reasoning concerning quality or number? No, does it contain any experimental reasoning concerning matter of fact and existence? No, commit it then to the flames: for it contains nothing but sophistry and illusion³³.

In the same vein, Alfred Jules Ayer wrote on the impossibility of metaphysics in this embarrassing manner. Let us listen to his submission:

No statement which refers to a reality transcending the limits of all possible sense experience can possibly have literal significance, from which it must follow that, the labours of those who striven to describe such a reality have all been devoted to the production of nonsense³⁴.

Again, Ayer submits that if we go by appearance it can hardly be disputed that metaphysics is nearly in conflict with common sense. Ayer disagreement with metaphysics is based on the fact that he has a state of mind that verifiability as the only true test of a proposition's significance. Similarly, Rudolf Carnap is another thoroughgoing member of the logical positivism. The establishment condemnation attempt of the positivism to separate metaphysics from science and philosophy, invariably propel him to proclaim that: "in the domain of metaphysics including all philosophies of value and normative theory, logical analysis yield the negative result that the alleged statement in this domain are entirely meaningless"³⁵.

Form the above analysis, Carnap believes that a radical elimination of metaphysics is attained. However, in this elimination, he pronounced the verdict of meaningless on alleged knowledge pretend to reach above or behind experience and therefore referred to metaphysical terms as devoid of meaning³⁶. Similarly, Bertrand Russell remark about metaphysics goes thus:

...I think that practically all traditional metaphysics is filled with mistakes due to bad grammar, and that almost all the traditional problems of metaphysics and traditional results of metaphysics are due to failure to make the kind of distinctions in what we may call philosophical grammar.³⁷

Apparently, David Hume, Alfred Ayer, Rudolf Carnap and Russell

33 Ibid, 121.

34 Ayer A. Jules, *Language, Truth and Logic*, (New York: Dover Publication, 1967), 15.

35 Carnap Rudolf, "Psychology in Philosophical Language," (transl., George Schlick). A.J. Ayer, *Logic Positivism*, (New York: The Free Press, 1959), 18.

36 Ibid, 19.

37 Russell Bertrand, *Problems of Philosophy*, (London: Hazel, Watson & Viney Limited, 1965), 34.

to mention but a few, are example of thinkers who criticized metaphysics with a view to destroying it nature. However, we have other philosophers notably Kant and Heidegger who criticized metaphysics with a view to revamp it. This is why in an essay of this calibre, it is imperative for us to make reference to the above mentioned thinkers even though we are not going into the details simply because of words constraint.

According to Unah, Kant was, perhaps, the first to make a distinction between intra-linguistic state of affairs and the extra-linguistic state of affairs³⁸. Owing to this, the language of human informed by the category of understanding, cannot only explain the phenomenal world. An attempt to describe anything outside this linguistic realm would amount to absurdity and confusion. Therefore, Kant submits that man can only know *phenomena* (things as they appear to us). However, he cannot know *noumena* (things in themselves). Metaphysical *being* operates in noumena world. Since human being cannot know noumena, it follows that human being cannot have knowledge of metaphysical *beings*. Metaphysical *beings* (i.e. God, spiritual soul and so forth) are not objects of human knowledge. Man may have belief in metaphysical *beings*, but cannot possess knowledge of them. The submission of Kant is that metaphysical *beings* are outside the categories of human understanding.

Kant's criticism of metaphysics started from the answer he gave to the question "what can we know?" in his view we can know things as they appear, but as they are processed by the human mind. This is because the human mind is dower with intellectual forms which imposes itself on things, just as the lens our spectacles colour our visual field of perception. Thus, the primary role of the intellect is to couple, that is, synthesize what is already presented to the senses.

In his book entitled, *Prolegomena to Any Future Metaphysics*, Kant argues that "thinking is uniting representations in one consciousness."³⁹ And so long the mind can give meaning to what is presented to it by the sense data; it cannot know or explain "judgments which are necessary and universal"⁴⁰. Following this argument, it is crystal clear that for Kant science of metaphysics is not possible without sense data upon which the categories of the understanding may be impressed.

In the opinion of Unah, Heidegger's criticism of metaphysics is often cast on traditional metaphysics. This is simply because traditional metaphysics has no foundation whatsoever. While it setout to speak about

38 Unah, J. Ijemuna, "Postmodern Metaphysics: An Outline of Ontology." *A Paper Presented at the Department of Philosophy*, 2005, Op.cit. 107.

39 Kant Immanuel, *Prolegomena to Any Future Metaphysics, Readings in Epistemology*. O'Neil, R.F., 1963, Op.cit. 97.

40 Ibid, 99.

being, it blurs the ontological differences, confuses the categories and blocks the road to genuine understanding. Instead of speaking of *being* traditional metaphysics leads to forgottenness of *being*. Luckily, according to Heidegger, we all have at least a vague understanding of *being*, most likely because we are fond of using words, which suggest that we live within the context of such understanding. Heidegger was furious about the fact that the true meaning of *being* has been bastardized. Hence, he charges traditional ontology for this and embarks on an overcoming of the western metaphysical tradition.

Heidegger submits that the traditional metaphysics practitioners with the question of “being as such” as cast the true meaning of *being* into metaphysical state of being unaware. For Heidegger, there is a sign of different between *being* itself and some aspects of that-which-is. Nevertheless, this distinction has been overlooked through the history of Western ontology. It is this confusion between the general and particular instances of that-which-is that has led to the so many bewildering interpretations of reality as the will to power, subjectivity, mind–matter *etcetera*.

Given the fact that every discipline presupposes metaphysics, it is time for the ontological practitioners to provide the foundation for metaphysics. This foundation was to proceed with the existential analytic of *Dasein* (i.e. being of man) since it is only *Dasein*, of all entities that can raise the question of essential thought, reality and realize the self-reflective consciousness of the human condition. Consequently, there is a need to clarify the distinction between rejecting a position and refuting a position. This is another way of saying that there is a great different in abandoning or rejecting a position; one is not interested in the logic of the position being rejected but interested in dogmatically rejecting it. However, in refuting and criticizing a position, one seeks to discover, through investigation, faulty aspect of the said logic. Through such faults, now discovered in the logic of the position being criticized, the said position is declared inaccurate and consequently wrong.

Conclusion

From above discussion, we have shown that the logic of the critics of metaphysics was self-contradictory and too weak to be adopted as a solid ground of refuting, for if it were possible will not only damage and destroy what binds and keeps society together, but will also imply the absence of God and the idea of the divine which culminates in the destruction of the foundation of religion and other human endeavours.

Nevertheless, Kant’s initial rejection of metaphysics was also discovered to be faulty, although experts on Kant’s philosophy had claimed that the aim was to found metaphysics on a super structure. However,

his contradictory claim of knowing that noumena world was unknowable which subsequently falsify his position in the further research into metaphysics of man. Hence, the shortcoming of Kant's philosophy is found in his failure to explore the transcendental object X simply because he was theorizing for the modern Europe. This is the evidence in his philosophical anthropology. It is for the partial interest of Kant in metaphysics that Heidegger published a book entitled, *Kant and the Problem of Metaphysics*⁴¹.

In sum, we can validly infer that metaphysics is irrefutable and indisputable phenomena that serves as the foundation for all systematic human inquiries in the areas of epistemology, ethics, law, politics, religion, economics, social relations and so forth. It is the heart, the soul, the nucleus, the nexus, the alpha and omega of all human transactions right from the beginning of mankind and as such rejecting metaphysics is like setting a stage for the end of man or digging the ground on which you stand.

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