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**THE CONCEPT OF BEING IN THE PHILOSOPHY
OF MARTIN HEIDEGGER IN THE POSTMETAPHYSICAL ERA:
*A Discourse on the crisis of Metaphysics in Liquid modernity***

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To the Eternal Memory of my Father

GASAH JULIUS BURINYUY

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ABSTRACT

The idea of postmetaphysics which involves a genealogy in the conception of being by thinkers of various epochs, has led to the criticism and rejection of metaphysics as a way of thinking right down to our contemporary times. The main theme of this work is the phenomenological examination of being by Martin Heidegger in consideration of the failure of traditional metaphysics in the treatment of the concept of being. Heidegger criticises traditional metaphysics for its failure to properly treat the question and meaning of being. Before and after Heidegger, many other philosophers and thinkers have criticised metaphysics meanwhile other reject metaphysics and discard it as a discipline without value and necessity in the human quest for knowledge and truth in the conception of reality. In his critique, Heidegger highlighted the weakness of traditional metaphysics to explain the meaning and question of being. After which he went further to propose a solution to the weakness he had found in the conception of metaphysics by traditional thinkers. He proposed the phenomenological analysis of the being. Heidegger described this being *as* the being that is there and aware of its presence and in possession of intelligence. His answers consist of an existentialist analysis of the being of *Dasein*. The main problem in this work is thus to question the credibility of Heidegger's critique of traditional metaphysics. The problem we are tackling in this work is the question of the pertinence of Heidegger's critique of traditional metaphysics. The question is thus if the critic of traditional metaphysics by Heidegger in our contemporary postmetaphysical society enables us to value metaphysics in a postmetaphysical era? Does Heidegger's critic of metaphysics enable us value metaphysics in a postmetaphysical era? Does the phenomenology of Heidegger's *Dasein* help to improve our conception of the valuability of Metaphysics in a postmetaphysical era? We shall use the phenomenological and historical methods, alongside the analytical/critical method to examine Heidegger's conception of being. The historical method to enable us digests the genealogy of the problem of being. The phenomenological method to enable us examines Heidegger's existentialist analysis of *Dasein*. From our research, findings and examination of Martin Heidegger's conception of being in his analysis of *Dasein*, we can assert that inspite of the criticism and rejection of metaphysics; it still has a value inspite of the proclamation of the postmetaphysical era.

Key Words: Metaphysics, Being, Postmetaphysics, Liquid Modernity

RÉSUMÉ

L'idée d'une post-métaphysique qui implique une généalogie dans la conception de l'être par des penseurs de diverses époques, a conduit à la critique et au rejet de la métaphysique comme mode de pensée jusqu'à notre époque contemporaine. Le thème principal de ce travail est l'examen phénoménologique de l'être par Martin Heidegger en considération de l'échec de la métaphysique traditionnelle dans le traitement du concept d'être. Heidegger critique la métaphysique traditionnelle pour son incapacité à traiter correctement la question et le sens de l'être. Avant et après Heidegger, de nombreux autres philosophes et penseurs ont critiqué la métaphysique tandis que d'autres rejettent la métaphysique et la rejettent comme une discipline sans valeur et sans nécessité dans la quête humaine de la connaissance et de la vérité dans la conception de la réalité. Dans sa critique, Heidegger a souligné la faiblesse de la métaphysique traditionnelle pour expliquer le sens et la question de l'être. Après quoi il est allé plus loin en proposant une solution à la faiblesse qu'il avait trouvée dans la conception de la métaphysique par les penseurs traditionnels. Il a proposé l'analyse phénoménologique de l'être. Heidegger appelait cet être Dasein, l'être qui est là et conscient de sa présence et en possession de l'intelligence. Ses réponses consistent en une analyse existentialiste de l'être du Dasein. Le principal problème de ce travail est donc de s'interroger sur la crédibilité de la critique heideggerienne de la métaphysique traditionnelle. Le problème que nous abordons dans ce travail est la question de la pertinence de la critique heideggerienne de la métaphysique traditionnelle. La critique de la métaphysique traditionnelle par Heidegger a l'ère contemporaine de la postmétaphysique permet-elle vraiment de valoriser la métaphysique à une époque postmétaphysique ? La critique heideggerienne de la métaphysique peut-elle nous permettre de valoriser la métaphysique à l'ère post-métaphysique avec son analyse existentialiste du Dasein ? La phénoménologie du Dasein de Heidegger contribue-t-elle à améliorer notre conception de la valeur de la Métaphysique à une époque post-métaphysique ? Nous utiliserons les méthodes phénoménologique et historique, parallèlement à la méthode analytique/critique pour examiner la conception de l'être chez Heidegger. La méthode historique pour nous permettre de digérer la généalogie du problème de l'être. La méthode phénoménologique pour nous permettre d'examiner l'analyse existentialiste du Dasein de Heidegger. De nos recherches, découvertes et examen de la conception de l'être de Martin Heidegger dans son analyse du Dasein, nous pouvons affirmer qu'en dépit de la critique et du rejet de la métaphysique ; elle a encore une valeur nonostant la proclamation hative de l'ère post-métaphysique.

Mots clés : Métaphysique, Être, Post-métaphysique, Modernité liquide

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

The notion of being has kept philosophers in great turmoil for decade's beginning from ancient times till date. This term being, has received multiple explanations in the different epochs of history. The concept of being for a modern man, which is contained in the nature of language, has kept academicians worried in the post-metaphysical era. The pre-Socratic era in metaphysics had a cosmological bearing, it was cosmologically oriented. The philosophers of this period were concerned with the nature and origin of the universe. It is for this reason that Thales, in his wisdom, thought there could be nothing than water, Anaximander after him talked about the *Apeiron* as this basic stuff and source of the universe, many more pre-Socratic philosophers stated their views in a like manner like Thales and Anaximander.¹ The history of ideas has recorded a series of arguments by different philosophers like Parmenides, Heraclitus, Plato, Aristotle, Rene Descartes, Nietzsche, Edmund Husserl, Heidegger and many others, concerning the nature and existence of being. The argument has stationed around being existing either physical or metaphysical for pre-postmetaphysical times.²

During the Socratic and post Socratic era metaphysics had a different understanding, which was to find out the nature of reality, thus, Plato came up with his doctrine on the world of Forms claiming that reality is in the ideal world which he described as the world of Forms. Aristotle differed from the perspective of Plato and postulated that reality is found in the combination of Form and Matter.³ Thus the position held by the Socratic and post-Socratics thinkers can be considered to have a double understanding of reality from metaphysical and epistemological perspective. This is a philosophical issue that has trouble philosophers for centuries. However, one of the philosophers who advance a very compelling solution in my understanding to this problem and question of being within this era is Plato with his doctrine of appearance and reality. Plato lays emphasis on metaphysics as a form of thinking which transcends from the physical to the metaphysical aspects of reality. Meanwhile placing metaphysics above everything in the field of philosophising.

Rene Descartes, the French philosopher and mathematician, had said being is that which can be conceived by the mind, thus in his thoughts he asserted that being is in thought alone and

¹ W. D. HAMLYN, *Metaphysics*, Cambridge University Press, 1984., 12.

² This can be observed in the arguments presented by the pre-Socratic philosophers like Parmenides and Heraclitus on the concept of being, changelessness and change. They spend time to discuss on the nature of being if being experiences change or if being is permanent. Parmenides held that everything in reality is permanent being is one and unchanging. Thus change for Pamenides is an illusion meanwhile Heraclitus held that change is a reality, being experiences change.

³ S. NELSON, *Metaphysics Ahistorical Exposition*, Unpublished, 2020, 135.

said “I think therefore I am” to him, being is in thoughts only.⁴ What we can think of is what he calls being. Being is found in the ideas we contain in our brains, thus, being is in our minds. A wonderful reflection on the question of being should face the metaphysical/epistemological aspects of being. Whether being exists because of our knowledge or being exists independent of our knowledge. In the *Meno*, Plato examines this question as Socrates asks Meno, “if virtues are virtues because of our knowledge of them or if virtues are virtues independent of or knowledge of them existing.”⁵ We experience in this modern society the view that being is a product of convention. The truth is subjective and relative, it is multidimensional and contextual. However, contrary to Rene Descartes, we have the philosophical school of Empiricism. Empiricism held that being was not found in thought alone but in matter as our senses can enable us to understand and know. They said what is real is that which can be grasped by the sense, that every thought was a product of experience and knowledge gotten through the senses from experience.

In the 19th and 20th century, Martin Heidegger, a German philosopher, contributed to this historical problem by urging thinkers to avoid comparing ideas and contrasting between objectivity and subjectivity in the process of thinking and philosophical reflections of being. He however does not downplay on the importance of the discourse. He holds to the view that being is the being that is there and aware of its presence as being there. The philosophers of language in modern/contemporary times after concluding that being is found in language still continue the contemplation of being if it is a convention, which means a product of human agreement about the nature of reality or if it is a concept of the naturalism school of thought, having an origin that is objective and above human understanding. The philosophers of language assert that being is a convention in contemporary thinking or for a modern thinker who is moved by materialism. Being for a modern man has many natures and moods of revealing itself. The puzzling question remains and continues to spark arguments as thinkers come in various epochs of history and attempt a solution to this puzzling issue of being.

The modern and contemporary conception of being has made the issue so serious that we find the need to look at the question of being again as the needs of the times demand. The conception of being, criticism and rejection of metaphysical realities has paved the way for a need to give rational backings to the problem and question of being in contemporary times. Thus,

⁴ N. L. Geisler, *A History of Western Philosophy, Volume II: Modern and Post-Modern: From Descartes to Derrida*, Bastion Books, U.S.A., 2012, p. 8-10.

⁵ PLATO, *Protagoras and Meno*, W. Guthrie(Trans), Penguin Books Ltd, New York, 1956, 120, 74d-75a

the problem and question of being is an old age problem that has existed for decades and discussed by many philosophers and thinkers who face this problems at different times and different situations in the history of thought as seen from the genealogy of the problem of being with pre-Socratic philosophers to post-Socratic philosophers and right down to the postmodern and contemporary philosophers and thinkers.

The birth of concepts such as post-truth, modern metaphysics, postmodernism, postmodern, transhumanism, alternative facts, social constructionism, antimetaphysics⁶ and many others have directly confronted the core of philosophy which is metaphysics itself.⁷ These new concepts seek to prove that metaphysics is built on conventions. They want to destroy metaphysical thinking by proposing alternatives, representations, imaginary concepts of the very foundations on which metaphysical thinking is built. They propose new foundations for themselves and reject their original foundations like in the case of postmetaphysics.⁸ These new ways and philosophical schools of thought seek to contextually explain the nature and meaning of reality based on the changes that the society is experiencing and not based on objective principles and foundations.

The conception of being in our present society has been subjectified. Truth is viewed perspectival with many dimensions that are relative to the observer of a particular trend of thinking. Science has devalued the human person, with the advancement in science, precisely technology and artificial intelligence; there has been the transfer of human values to machines. Philosophy has experienced a paradigm shift by which metaphysics is considered to be less important and valueless discipline in philosophical inquiry and thinking. The idea of postmetaphysics which involves the genealogy in the conception of being by thinkers of various epochs is a long and timeless historical problem. This difference in the conception of being has led to the criticism and rejection of metaphysics across history.

The criticism in the conception of reality by philosophers beginning from ancient period till date is what could be described as postmetaphysics. For example Parmenides held that being was one and changeless, however, another philosopher Heraclitus held that being was not one

⁶ This is the total and complete rejection of metaphysics by a philosopher or group of philosophers.

⁷ The meaning of these concepts is found within the chapters of this work with explicit explanations for a better understanding of the write up.

⁸ G. W. SHEA, *Nietzsche as a postmetaphysical philosopher of life*, Rowan University, Department of philosophy and Religion, https://youtu.be/N_GtKH15Qm8.com, 14/02/2023. The term postmetaphysics originates from a deep desire to break away from previous traditions of thinking. Thus, postmetaphysics comes from the prefix "Post" and the term "metaphysics" which simply stands for the metaphysical thinking that comes after the previous metaphysical thoughts

and that change is a reality. Plato held that being is an idea that an individual conceives in the mind meanwhile Aristotle his student asserts that being is a combination of matter and form. This theory involves the sequential change in the conception of being by the rejection and disapproval of previous theories of being meanwhile proposing new theories that can answer to the demands of the times in a particular moment of history. Heidegger criticized traditional metaphysical terminology in favor of an individual interpretation of the works of past thinkers. Heidegger criticized traditional metaphysics by saying that traditional metaphysics had explained the meaning of being ontotheologically. This means that traditional metaphysics had explain the ontology of God and the Theology of Being in their explanation of the meaning of the term being.⁹

Heidegger criticises traditional metaphysics for its failure to properly treat the meaning and question of being. Before and after Heidegger, many philosophers and thinkers have criticised metaphysics meanwhile some reject metaphysics and discard it as a discipline without value and necessity in the human quest for knowledge and truth in the conception of reality. For example Immanuel Kant had declared the end of metaphysics when he criticised metaphysics meanwhile David Hume lunch a book burning campaign with the intentions to destroy all the books of metaphysics and anything metaphysical in the study of reality.¹⁰ We also have the law of three stages of Comte and The rejection of metaphysics by the Logical positivist. In his critique, Heidegger highlighted the weakness of traditional metaphysics to explain the meaning and question of being. After which he went further to propose a solution to the weakness he had found in the conception of metaphysics by traditional thinkers.

The major concern of this work is the phenomenological examination of being by Martin Heidegger. Martin Heidegger was an existentialist philosopher. The Existentialist¹¹ sought to understand how man can achieve the richest and most fulfilling life in the modern world. Man, for the Existentialists, is a free being who acts freely and as such is responsible for his actions. Freedom helps man to live an authentic life. Martin Heidegger, a German Philosopher, in his *Sein und Zeit*, makes an analysis of a being which he calls *Dasein*. Heidegger treats *Dasein* as authentic and inauthentic. He thus created a philosophical terminology that is quite difficult to

⁹ I THOMSON, *Ontotheology? Understanding Heidegger's Destruktion of Metaphysics*, International Journal of Philosophical Studies Vol.8 (3), p. 299.

¹⁰ S. NELSON, *The Value of Metaphysics in a Postmetaphysical Era*, IN *The International Journal of Humanitatis Theoreticus*. Vol. 4. (Issue: 2); December, 2020, 01.

¹¹ Philosophers of the 19th and 20th centuries who made the concrete individual central to their thought.

understand, but even harder to translate.¹² He proposed the phenomenological analysis of the being. Heidegger called this being *Dasein*, the being that is there and aware of its presence and in possession of intelligence. His answers consist of an existentialist analysis of the being of *Dasein*.

The main problem in this work is thus to question the credibility of Heidegger's critic of traditional metaphysics. The problem we are tackling in this work is the question of the pertinence of Heidegger's critique of traditional metaphysics. Does the critic of metaphysics by Heidegger in our contemporary postmetaphysical society enable us to value or devalue metaphysics in a postmetaphysical era? Can Heidegger's critic of metaphysics enable us to value or reject metaphysics in our contemporary society with his existentialist analysis of *Dasein*? Does the phenomenology of Heidegger's *Dasein* help to improve our conception of the valuability or transvaluability of Metaphysics in a Liquid Modernity? Does the phenomenology of being of Heidegger surpass the traditional metaphysical thinking that has existed for decades in our contemporary society?

The question we are tackling in this work is whether the science or study of what we consider to be existing and real depend on our thinking and knowledge of it as existing and real or if it is independent of our thinking and knowledge of it existing and considered real in our contemporary society? Is the study of being as such based on the knowledge and thinking of a being or it is independent of the knowledge and thinking of a being? Does metaphysical thinking have any absolute basis in philosophy or it is relative in the founding pillars of philosophy. Should metaphysical thinking be discarded and a new thinking like post-metaphysic thinking upheld and encourage in the study of reality? What is the valuability of metaphysical thinking in a post-metaphysics era? Of what need should there be a discussion on the discipline of metaphysics and the metaphysical way of thinking.

The aim of this work is to take back metaphysics from the postmodernist thinkers in reiterating the true nature of metaphysical thinking. We use the terminology *take back metaphysics* to explicitly make known the sever nature of this issue we tackling. It is an old and ancient issue in metaphysics that has been discussed by many metaphysicians across the history of ideas. One major aim of this write up thus is to counter the attack on the backbone of philosophy which is metaphysics by modern thinkers in our contemporary society. It is also

¹² J. MARIAS, *History of Philosophy*, DOVER Publications Inc., 1967, p.425.

aimed at stressing the foundational pillars of Philosophy which is metaphysical thinking, a science of reality as such.

The focal point is on the value of metaphysics in a post-metaphysics era. The point of focus on this work is to discuss the valuability of metaphysics in a postmetaphysical era where most or all metaphysical realities are being rejected and discarded by a consumable and materialistic society, in the contemporary period of philosophy. It is meant to dismantle the process involved in the gradually transvaluating of metaphysical ideals to post-metaphysical ones. The work seeks to revive metaphysics from the gigantic consumerism of postmodern and modern tradition of Philosophy. To remind philosophy that her mother board consists of metaphysical thinking, for the whole of Philosophy is built on metaphysical thinking and any attempt to devaluate metaphysics will in return devaluate or destroy philosophy.

This work seeks to remind philosophers that an off root of metaphysics means an off root of Philosophy itself. The destruction of metaphysics entails the destruction of philosophy as a discipline and way of thinking in the human society. The work aims to present the rejection of metaphysics, and the rejection of philosophy and rationality by the postmodern man and society who hold firm to the concepts of social constructionism of knowledge and reality. It seeks to outline the regressive altitude of modern and postmodern thinkers on the question and problem of being, as going back to the 15th and 16th century with Edmund Husserl. During this period in history, philosophy was rejected and metaphysical destroyed by the advancement and development of science in Europe. The development of science came with the rejection of the spiritual dimension of reality and elevation of the physical aspects as experimental sciences presented proved the nature of physical reality at the time.¹³

And lastly, the work seeks to present a blend between the classical culture of Philosophy and the present modern/postmodern culture of Philosophy. The nature of paradigm shifts in philosophical thinking (metaphysics) across history from ancient times till date. It presences a link between the classical thought pattern and the contemporary thought pattern which is previewed to help us understand our present status quo and provide solutions to the issues of our times. while leading us into a new age with a concept know as postmetaphysical thinking to metaphysically examine reality contextually in the modern and postmodern society by the contemporary intellectual and thinker.

¹³,H. EDMUND, *The Crisis of European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology*, David Carr(Trans), Northwest University Press, 1970, p.05.

From our research, findings and examination of Martin Heidegger's conception of being in his analysis of *Dasein*, we will be able to assert if the criticism and rejection of metaphysics contribute to the rejection or add meaning to the value of metaphysics in a postmetaphysical era. It will be from this perspective that we shall determine if metaphysics still has a value with all the criticism and rejection or if it should be discarded by looking at the significance of our study in our contemporary society. We hope to know if metaphysics still has a value in the postmetaphysical era. If it is still a source of certitude in philosophical thinking. If it is a backbone to ethical theories and principles. If it is still a necessity in a quest for truth by a Genuine Intellectual pursuit in our contemporary society.

Our whole enterprise in this thesis will be decisively focused on responding to the aforementioned problems. We shall use the phenomenological and historical methods, alongside the analytical/critical method to examine Heidegger's conception of being. The historical method to enable us to digest the genealogy of the problem of being. The historical method will enable us to gradually navigate the critique of metaphysics across the history of philosophy. It is also going to help us better understand the roots of the criticism and rejection of metaphysics right up to this era. The phenomenological method will enable us to examine Heidegger's existentialist analysis of *Dasein*. It is going to help us in the analysis of *Dasein* and understanding of Heidegger's deconstruction of western metaphysics by looking at the properties and structure of *Dasein*. This method will also be used to disclose the phenomenological understanding of being by Martin Heidegger. It will reveal to us the full meaning of Heidegger's critique and the proposed solution that Heidegger levied for his critique of traditional metaphysics. The deductive approach will be helpful in the critical analysis and the drawing of general conclusions from particular facts respectively. The inductive approach shall be used in sections of the work that demands conclusions drawn from particular facts that present an assertion of the truth and knowledge. Also, we shall use the metaphysical approach to examine the reality both physically and non-physically to attain the fullness of truth in the evaluation of a concept.

The phenomenological method will also be used to bracket our preconceived ideas so as to observe our reality without prejudices and examine being the way it is. Another method to be used is the hermeneutical methods, for the content reflection, while following a good means of interpretation with regards to tradition and the principles put in place by philosophy in the interpretation of philosophical text. In addition to these approaches, we shall use the philosophy

of language approach to tackle some areas of the thesis based on syntax, semantics and other linguistic characters. The work is strategized systematically following the methodological framework of three parts and six chapters. The chapters are equally distributed in the three parts.

The first chapter shall constitute a preliminary consideration that will furnish us with foundational background knowledge with a clarification of the meaning of major terms in the work with the intended to buffer our understanding of the whole project. In the second, we shall focus on philosophers and thinkers of the ancient and modern times who influenced Martin Heidegger to develop his philosophy of being. In chapter three we shall discuss Martin Heidegger's critique on western metaphysical traditional thinking and some contributions from other philosophers on the critic of western metaphysical thinking and the rejection of metaphysics. In chapter four, we shall explicitly talk about Martin Heidegger's philosophy of beings post metaphysically as response to the problem of being and a critique of traditional metaphysical thinking and the rejection of metaphysic by the contemporary thinker. Chapter five will consist and explore a critical evaluation of Heidegger's philosophy of beings and postmetaphysics as a response to the rejection and attack of metaphysics in the postmodern and contemporary society. And lastly, the final chapter shall tackle the flourishing philosophical implications or significance and relevance of this thesis in our contemporary society, the value of metaphysical thinking in a postmetaphysical era or liquid modernity.

Man from time immemorial has been concerned with the very origin of his existence and his ultimate destiny. Thus from the above discussion it should be clear to any reader that we are talking about the philosophy of being of Martin Heidegger. Martin Heidegger was born on the 26th of September 1889 in the Black Forest region of Messkirch. While at the Archiepiscopal Seminary of St. George, his mentor G. Conrad, who was influenced by Edmund Husserl's Phenomenology, which made a great impression on Heidegger, gave him a copy of Brentano's "On the Manifold Meaning of Being according to Aristotle". He was influenced by the Danish Philosopher, Soren Kierkegaard and by the German Philosopher, Friedrich Nietzsche. He rejected traditional philosophic terminology and coined hundreds of new, complex words. He was promoted as associate professor at the university of Marburg, where he wrote his book, *Being and Time (Sein und Zeit)* in 1927. Later on he wrote another book in 1959, *Existence and Being*. Apart from the above named books, others include *Kant and the Problem of Metaphysics*, *the Concept of Time* and many other books. Heidegger's original treatment of themes such as human

finitude, death, nothingness, and authenticity led many to associate him with existentialism. He died on Freiburg on 26th of May 1976.

Heidegger writes in German, a language which I am not versed with, the language barrier encounter given that Heidegger is a philosopher that is very difficult to understand given his linguistic turn and style of philosophy by inventing and coining new terms that have meaning only in the context of his philosophy and writing. Heidegger uses terms that are not found in the dictionaries and can only be given proper understanding in his own context of writing. Furthermore, his *being and time*, *introduction to metaphysics* and *the fundamental question of metaphysics* used here are translations by different translators who might have omitted or failed to give proper meaning of a term as it is found in the original German Language, thus, these translators might not have translated with exactitude the thoughts of Heidegger or give proper meaning to them. I shall grapple with these problems by relying on German – English lexicons and on dictionaries dedicated to explaining key concepts in Heideggerian terms. Because the event of understanding “lets itself be addressed by tradition,” for “we stand always within tradition,”¹⁴ I shall depend on the growth of history that transmits Heidegger’s writings and influences my present reception of them. Thus, Heidegger’s works translated from German into English and commentaries, where applicable, shall be used. While rejecting pessimism in this academic endeavour, the existence of Left and Right Heideggerians, following different interpretations of the writings of Heidegger, is a reality one must admit before exposing this philosopher’s foundation of being. To avoid the impact of these controversies in the elucidation, I shall rely more on the works of Heidegger himself.

¹⁴H-G. GADAMER, *Truth and Method*, G. BARDEN – J. CUMMING (eds.), Sheed and Ward, 1975, pp.250 -251.

This Gadamerian conception of “understanding” is relied upon here because it is in harmony with Hegel’s dialectical process in which new acquisition of knowledge is a mediation of the past within a new and expanded context, even if this is teleological for Hegel but non teleological according to Gadamer.

PART ONE
THE SEMANTIC AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF
HEIDEEGER'S CONCEPTION OF METAPHYSICS

CHAPTER ONE

PRELIMINARY CONSIDERATION ON HEIDEGGER'S CONCEPTION OF METAPHYSICS

PARTIAL INTRODUCTION

Man is a being who by his very nature cannot abstain from action. Although man has not chosen to live, he is continually taking action and engaging in chosen policies. In acting, man is faced with the problem of stating whether his actions are free or determined. This has an important place in ascertaining whether man is responsible or not for his actions. Man can be responsible for his free actions but this cannot be the case with actions that are determined. There is also the problem of just acting in conformity with the majority of persons regardless of the rightness or wrongness of what they do. This makes man lose his unique individuality and authenticity. The Existentialist¹⁵ sought to understand how man can achieve the richest and most fulfilling life in the modern world. Man, for the Existentialists, is a free being who acts freely and as such is responsible for his actions. Freedom helps man to live an authentic life.

Martin Heidegger a German Philosopher, in his work *being and time* makes an analysis of a being which he calls *Dasein*. Heidegger treats *Dasein* as authentic and inauthentic. The postmetaphysical thought in Heidegger's philosophy is seen from his rejection of traditional philosophic terminology in favor of an individual interpretation of the works of past thinkers. We are going to be focus on the thought of Heidegger in our work. In this chapter of our work, our preoccupation shall be to clarify the meaning of some key terms that have a direct link in contributing to our understanding of the work. Thus, chapter one shall be wholly dedicated to the clarification of the meaning of major and key terms of this write up as outlined in the following paragraphs. We shall beginning with the term metaphysics later on to being and so forth.

¹⁵ Philosophers of the 19th and 20th centuries who made the concrete individual central to their thought.

1.1 Conceptual Clarification

1.1.1. Metaphysics

The term metaphysics come from two Greek terms *meta* which means after or above, and *phusika* which means nature. The term metaphysics can be defined etymologically as the study of being or reality after the physics.¹⁶ Thus, metaphysics is a branch of philosophy which studies reality as a whole, which involves in the study of the totality of being, the nature and structure of reality seen and unseen. It studies things such as the concept of universals, being, change, causation, matter, space, time and many others. Due to the fact that metaphysics has gone to the extend of studying things beyond speculations and things that experiments in science cannot answer, it has understood as a discipline, which involves the linked of nonphysical, physical and spiritual realities. Hence, E. Craig describes metaphysics as a discipline with two distinct investigations, in the first instance with the investigation into the nature of reality. And in the second instance it is involved with the investigation to unveil what is ultimately real.¹⁷ According to B. van Nodern, the branch of philosophy known as comparative philosophy explains that each culture and tradition has its own philosophy which pertains to it.¹⁸

Metaphysics does an investigation to reveal these philosophies in various cultures and tradition across the globe in every human society. However, metaphysics is a branch of philosophy that pertains to all the cultures of philosophy in the universe. It is the foundation on which any philosophical thinking is constructed. It is from metaphysics that other cultures of philosophy explain their philosophies. It is in this idea that white head defines metaphysics as nothing but the descriptions of the generalities which applies to all the details of practice and thinking.¹⁹ For him, metaphysics covers all the other areas of study in life. Metaphysics is the life giver of every form of thinking that man can ever come across. According to Edward Craig, Metaphysics is way of thinking under the discipline Philosophy which is divided into general and specific metaphysics²⁰ For him, general metaphysics seeks to engage in the most general investigation possible concerning the nature of reality. The principles applying to all or everything that is in existence, this involves, making clear distinctions between things that are real weather seen or unseen. On the other hand specific metaphysics seeks to unveil what is

¹⁶ W. C. JOHN ET N. MARKOSIAN., *An Introduction to Metaphysics*, Cambridge University Press, 2010, pp. 1-2.

¹⁷ C. Edward(Ed)., “*Metaphysics*,” in *Routledge Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, Routledge, 1998, p. 338.

¹⁸ B. V. NORDEN, *Taking Back philosophy*, Columbia University Press, 2017, 44.

¹⁹ A. N. WHITEHEAD, *Process and Reality*, Corrected Edition, Griffin & Sherburne(ed), The Free Press, 1978, p. 13.

²⁰ E. CRAIG(Ed), *The Shorter Routledge Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, Routledge, 2005, pp. 656-659.

ultimately real. In this case, metaphysics offers border line cuts answers in contrary to our daily experience of the world. From the understanding of Craig, metaphysics is thus a type of ontological thinking which consists of “what is existence” and “what things exist.” From the recorded works of Andronicus of Rhodes a student of Aristotle in his collection of Aristotle’s work, metaphysics is from the Greek word *meta ta phusika*.²¹ He explains that Aristotle used this word in Greek to describe sections of philosophy as the theological sciences.

Metaphysics for Aristotle was therefore the science of immaterial, spiritual or abstract realities. A science of being as being, for Aristotle says “ it is the function of the philosopher to be able to investigate all things”²². Thus, for him, the job of a philosopher is to involve himself in a metaphysical reflection and thinking. Aristotle also say metaphysics is the science that does an investigation into the causes and principles of things, a science inquiries into the first principles and highest causes in the order of existence and also in thought.²³ It a science which inquires on the nature of causes and principles of things to determine the different kinds of causality, the formal, material, efficient and final and from the principles in order of epistemology and validity.²⁴ Therefore, for Aristotle, metaphysic is the study of being as such. However, in modern times, we have had different definitions of metaphysic very slime to that of Aristotle. Metaphysics is the exploration of the most general features of the world. It is a discipline that seeks to understand these worldly features better. Its aim is to employ a large scale investigation of the way things are together. However, in modern times, we have new ways of defining metaphysics. From ancient till present times, metaphysics has been and is and will be a discipline of reality as a whole. It is a form of thinking which is higher, an abstraction which is not like any other practical discipline or philosophical investigation, because it involves physical and nonphysical realities. The notion of metaphysics we shall endorse in this work is as the branch of philosophy from the traditional sense which is involved with the rationalization and conception of reality from the foundations of a first philosophy.

²¹ A.R. LACEY, *A Dictionary of Philosophy*, Routledge,third edition, 1996, pp.206-209. A central part of metaphysics is ontology. this studies being in particular. These days, it is concern with what there is, e.g. material objects, minds, persons, universals, numbers, facts, etc. there is the question of whether these all ‘are’ in the same sense and to the same degree, and how notions like being, existence, and subsistence are related together.

²² ARISTOTLE., *Met.*, IV, 1004 a, p. 34.

²³ ARISTOTLE., *Met.* IV, 1003 a, p. 26.

²⁴ T. WILLIAM., “*Metaphysics*.”*The Catholic Encyclopaedia*. Vol. 10. Robert Appleton Company, 1911. 4 Aug. 2013. Copyright by Kevin Knight 2009.

1.1.2. Post-metaphysics

The terms postmetaphysics, nonmetaphysics, antimetaphysics,²⁵ and postmetaphysical thinking has kept many thinkers and academicians worried about the meaning, style and way of philosophizing about metaphysics in the modern and contemporary periods in the history of ideas. However, these terms are equivocal in meaning concerning the understanding of metaphysics in the contemporary period of philosophy. The term postmetaphysics originates from a deep desire to break away from previous traditions of thinking. Thus, postmetaphysics comes from the prefix “Post” and the term “metaphysics” which simply stands for the metaphysical thinking that comes after the previous metaphysical thoughts²⁶ W. George explains that postmetaphysics is not antimetaphysics but a methodological suspension of metaphysical interpretations or metaphysical principles that have been considered before the moment of suspension and propositioning of a new methodological way for understanding reality in its totality.

One of the concepts that has been very discursive as well as the question of being in metaphysics is the question of change. Change is a reality which is self-evident with the advancement of thinking, things and time. Postmetaphysics is a discursive concept of change in metaphysics as it presents a new path of metaphysical thinking for the present contemporary society according to some thinkers. Philosophy involves multiple brands of information, evaluation and conclusion. If we consider philosophy as a way of thinking like any other form of thinking in human history, which patterns to the most general features of being in the universe. We shall discover that there are always discoveries in the field of thinking, for example, J. Habermas in explaining postmetaphysics says;

*First, postmetaphysical thinking is something that has developed from specific social and historical processes. Postmetaphysical philosophy is not merely a philosophical method but a philosophical movement that evolved in response to critiques of what came before. But second, it is not a normative empty historical development. Postmetaphysical thinking reflects an acceptance of principled critiques of earlier, more metaphysical approaches to philosophical questions.*²⁷

One of this new and ancient discovery in the field of philosophising or thinking is what has been called *postmetaphysics*. According to J. Habermas the concept postmetaphysics is a

²⁵ By Antimetaphysics we mean a way of metaphysical thinking in which we refute metaphysics and refute the principles of metaphysics, meanwhile nonmetaphysics is a negation of metaphysics the opposite of what metaphysics is, the type of philosophizing that is not considered to be metaphysical.

²⁶ W. G. SHEA, *Nietzsche as a postmetaphysical philosopher of life*, Rowan University, Department of philosophy and Religion, https://youtu.be/N_GtKH15Qm8.com, 14/02/2023

²⁷ B. FULTNER, *Jürgen Habermas key Concepts*, Routledge, 2011, pp. 35-36.

form of philosophy that has developed from the specific social and historical processes.²⁸ For Barbara, postmetaphysics is a way of thinking in his understanding of Habermas. Habermas holds that postmetaphysics is a just a philosophical method of thinking in the modern society but that it also a philosophical movement that evolved in a response of what came before.²⁹ Barbara highlights two distinct meanings of the term postmetaphysics first from the perspective of Habermas as above, and second phase he explains that postmetaphysics is not a normatively empty historical development but a development of thinking in the specialty of metaphysics.³⁰ To Habermas this way of thinking is a reflection of the acceptance of the critical evaluations of the principles of earlier thinkers with the employment of a metaphysical approach to philosophical questions.³¹ According to Habermas, there has been no alternative to postmetaphysical thinking; to him it has been a period of postmetaphysics from Hegel.³² To him it is a philosophy that develops from partial social and historical processes. Habermas describes postmetaphysics as a philosophical movement that emerged and developed as a response to the criticism of what came before the age of the criticism.³³ This can be seen when Habermas says;

*Metaphysical thinking in the past was stucked, he holds that historical figures like Plato, Plotinus, Neo-Platonist, Augustine, Thomas Aquinas, Cusanus and Pico de Mirandola, Descartes, Spinoza and Leibniz up to Kant, Fichte, Schelling and Hegel. Ancient materialism and Scepticism, late-medieval nominalism and modern empiricism are antimetaphysical countermovements but they remain within the horizon set by metaphysics itself.*³⁴

Postmetaphysical philosophy is therefore a philosophy which sprung from the change that philosophy has experienced based on criticism of previous philosophised concepts in philosophy. Postmetaphysics thinking in Habermas view is a philosophy which can be described in the light of the deep social practice of philosophy in our contemporary society. These points in his postmetaphysical thinking can be divided into the detranscendentalism use of reason, rational reconstruction, weak transcendentalism, context-transcending validity and soft naturalism.³⁵

²⁸ B. FULTNER , *Jürgen Habermas key Concepts*, Rutledge,2011, pp. 35-36.

²⁹ *Ibid.*

³⁰ *Ibid.* p. 36.

³¹ *Ibid.*

³² J. HABERMAS, *Postmetaphysical Thinking: Philosophical Essays*, (Trans) by William Mark Hohengarten, The MIT Press Cambridge, Massachusetts and London, 1992, p. 39.

³³ F. BARBARA, *Jürgen Habermas key Concepts*, Rutledge,2011, pp. 35-36.

³⁴ J. HABERMAS, *Postmetaphysical Thinking: Philosophical Essays*, (Trans) by William Mark Hohengarten, The MIT Press Cambridge, 1992, p. 29.

³⁵ *Ibid.* Habermas rejects the metaphysical pretence of purification from bodily elements to occupy a position above or beyond the world. Rationality is itself embedded in historically conditioned practices, which contain assumptions about the right kinds of questions, the appropriate kinds of evidence, and the legitimate philosophical agendas. By speaking of the “use of reason” Habermas emphasizes a practice of reasoning that is not capable of being purified or rendered neutral of its historical conditions.

The idea of postmetaphysical thinking has some characteristics that could be highlighted in order to make better the understanding of this concept for the better understanding of this work. One of these characteristics is procedural rationality in which transcendental foundation in metaphysics looks for a totality which is rational in itself. Rationality is thought as being which organizes the contents of the world from which it can itself be read off, reason is involved with the whole as well as the parts.³⁶ Reasons are thought of as something formal as long as the rational content evaporates into the validity of results.

*In a dialogue, philosophy can play its role as an interpreter, not in the sense that it posses true knowledge about the good life but in the sense that it mediates the dialogue between expert knowledge and everyday practices by providing them with a critique and reflection about which rationality should be taken as an orientation toward mutual understanding.*³⁷

Procedural rationality is thus a procedure of argumentation on how all disciplines can arrive at a truth claim. In this context therefore, philosophy is seen to be comparative in nature, playing the role of the interpreter between disciplines and mediating between them without any claims of true knowledge. Another aspect of postmetaphysics is the situation of reason, the situating of reason. Habermas says:

*“Today, many areas are dominated by a contextualism that confines all truth claims to the scope of local language games and conventionally accepted rules of discourse and assimilates all standards of rationality to habits or conventions that are only valid in situating”*³⁸

For him, postmetaphysics considers reason to be finite and something that is socially constructed. The notion of truth is relative and socially constructed with the use of language and other elements. It is a de-transcendentalized reason which stands for the end and the spirit of absolute metaphysics by integrating thought based on language.³⁹ Thus truth is perspectival and non-transcendental; it is socially constructed with the use of language games. Postmetaphysics is thus a methodology which involves a suspension of metaphysical principles or metaphysical interpretations.⁴⁰ A method of thinking that involves the use of procedural reasoning, reasoning

In this way the subject of knowledge is “detranscendentalized”: finite and only capable of philosophical reflection because she has a wealth of everyday and common-sense knowledge already.

³⁶ J. HABERMAS, *Postmetaphysical Thinking: Philosophical Essays*, (Trans) by William Mark Hohengarten, The MIT Press Cambridge, 1992, pp. 34-35..

³⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 38-39.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 49.

³⁹ S. ALEXANDER, “*Post-Metaphysical Thinking : A Habermasian Perspective On The Critique Of Traditional Metaphysics*” in *Online Jurnal Universitas Katolik Parahyangan*, Atma Jaya Catholic University, 2011, p. 39.

⁴⁰ W. G. SHEA, *Nietzsche as a postmetaphysical philosopher of life*, Rowan University, Department of philosophy and Religion, https://youtu.be/N_GtKH15Qm8.com , 14/02/2023

from real or practical life situation, or social reasoning and the reasons behind the social activities and ways of doing things in the society.

1.1.3. Liquid modernity

The term Liquid modernity explains a multiverse universe of things that are happening in the modern/contemporary society. Contemporary thinkers are rattled on what term used in description of this rapidly globalizing era which could also be known as postmodern. Z. Bauman place himself at the center of this debate by coining the term “liquidity” which presents a quality of liquids and gases in contradistinction to “solidity” which stands for a foreseeable and workable world or conventional world.⁴¹ This involves an observation of a social change that desires to unseal the consequences of advanced social differentiation and estrangement⁴² Bauman explains from his observation of the present status quo that “fluids” are bound to “undergo continuous change in shape when subjected to such a stress that enables them to experience change”.⁴³ To him fluids travel easily as the law of fluids will explain that they flow, spill, run over, splash, unlike solids that are easily stopped with a signify stability and resistance.⁴⁴ Bauman uses this ideology as an analogy to explain his understanding of the uncertain, unstable nature of thought, values and social systems in our contemporary society and historical epoch. This, however is not a new idea in the history of ideas, in the *Communist Manifesto* about one and a half century ago, the “melting of solids” was coined by Marx and Engels to refer to a treatment that the animated modern spirit and thought allocated to the society at the time “stagnant and frozen in her habitual ways”.⁴⁵

The term modernity etymologically originates from the word modern which comes from the Latin word “*modus*” which means “now” or the present. It is an adjective which designates a point in time, whatever is current. It involves the positive probability of a new beginning on the basis of human autonomy and consciousness of the legitimacy of the present, the now.⁴⁶ This signifies a certain tension within the modern society for it finds itself in a process by which the

⁴¹ P. BEILHARZ, “Bauman And Heller: Two Views Of Modernity And Culture”, IN *Comparative Literature: East & West*, 1(1), 2017, p. 54.

⁴² R. LEE, *Reinventing Modernity: Reflexive Modernization Vs Liquid Modernity Vs Multiple Modernities*, IN *European Journal Of Social Theory*. 9 (1), 2006, pp. 355-368.

⁴³ *Ibid.*

⁴⁴ M. BRADBURY, “*What Was Postmodernism*”, IN *International Affairs* 71, 4, 1995, p. 767.

⁴⁵ Z. BAUMAN, *Liquid Modernity*, Polity Press, Cambridge, 2000, p. 3. This dissolving of whatever persists over time calls for the profanation of the sacred, disavowing and dethroning of the past. First and foremost, tradition, the protective armour forged of the beliefs which allowed the solids to resist ‘liquefaction’

⁴⁶ G. DERANTY, “*Modernity*” IN *The Blackwell Encyclopedia Of Sociology*, G. Ritzer (ed.), Blackwell Publishing, 2007, p. 3068.

society is in constant renewal of itself.⁴⁷ Little or no agreement is established about its cultural features. Most often it is associated with the “tendency of fragmentation of experience, commodification, rationalization of all aspects of life and a speeding up of the speed of daily life”.⁴⁸ To this effect, Z. Bauman affiliates modernity with, the modes of social life and changes in Europe beginning from the 17th century, which to him became worldwide in their influence”.⁴⁹ When Bauman makes reference to Theodore Adorno, he explains that the “modern spirit” in other words modern thoughts originated specifically in the aftermath of the Lisbon disaster in 1755,⁵⁰ an event he assumes provoked an enormous reaction from *Le Philosophe* of the time.

As a reaction to modernity, postmodernity sprung up as a general term that emphasizing on the existence of different worldviews and different conceptions of reality, rather than one ‘correct’, ‘true’ one.⁵¹ These two historico-epochal terms represent certain fundamental differences that recreate endless debates and arguments about their true meaning which signifies constant battles and wars of definitions and counter definitions.⁵² In the process of evaluating the thoughts of Beilharz in the eighties, we get to understand that Z. Bauman felt that the term “postmodern” was problematic as a wet of appetite for intellectual hunger and thus he begins using the term liquid modernity to better describe the global condition of constant mobility and change he saw in relationships, identities, cultures within the contemporary society.⁵³ For him, the term postmodernity was a shoot that sprung from the stock of modernity’s failure to rationalize the world and to defend its cultural capacity for change. Far from talking about modernity and postmodernity, Bauman decided to write of a crisis of the transition from solid modernity which involves a solid form of social life and thinking to a more liquid form of social life.⁵⁴ In his writing, he argues that we have moved from a period where we understood ourselves as “pilgrims” in search of deeper meanings of life to a period where we act as “tourists” in search of multiple fleeting social experiences.⁵⁵ The contemporary man wants new experiences every second, minuet, hour and day of his life. This person does not want any repeated event, activities

⁴⁷ G. DERANTY, “Modernity” IN The Blackwell Encyclopedia Of Sociology, G. Ritzer (ed.), Blackwell Publishing, 2007, p. 3068.

⁴⁸ N. ABERCROMBIE ET ALII (Eds.), “Modernity” IN The Penguin Dictionary Of Sociology, Third Edition, Penguin Books, 1984, pp. 269-70.

⁴⁹ A. GIDDENS, *The Consequences Of Modernity*, Stamford University Press, 1990, p. 1.

⁵⁰ Z. BAUMAN, *Lessons of the Holocaust*, 2012. [Online] Available on: <https://www.Youtube.Com/Watch?V=EHeqz7ejo2c>.

⁵¹ D. WOUTER ET ALII, “Bauman’s (Post)Modernism and Globalization”, IN *Geographical Approaches*, 2005, p. 13.

⁵² M. BRADBURY, “What Was Postmodernism”, IN *International Affairs*, 71(4), 1995, p. 764.

⁵³ P. BEILHARZ, “Bauman And Heller: Two Views Of Modernity And Culture”, IN *Comparative Literature: East & West* 1(1), 2017, p. 54.

⁵⁴ R. DREHER, “What Are We Conserving?” IN *The American Conservative*, 2017. [Online] Available on: <https://www.Theamericanconservative.Com/Dreher/What-Are-We-Conserving/>. (Page Consulted On 16/04/23, 12: 38pm).

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*

or experiences, he wants constant and fresh things with his experience of life. Thus liquid modernity is to describe this altitude of the modern man where the modern man experiences change like a liquid, new activities and things as stress subjects him to desire for a change.

1.1.4. Being

According to Mark Okrent, the term being is always frequently conceived as a property or special sort of entity.⁵⁶ However, it is generally recognized that it is neither of them. He adds thus that the question concerning being should not be understood in terms of the nature of being like the nature of an object or a character of some property. To him, there are four questions that constantly pop up when we talk about being as the history of ideas presents it to us. In the first instance is about which things are there? The second is what is it to be? Third, is it ever appropriate to treat “is” as a predicate and if not then how should it be understood? And lastly, how is it possible to intend that something is? For him, the Twentieth century reflections and thinking has focused on the first and third questions, however, in the works of German Philosophers like Martin Heidegger who focused on the fourth question.⁵⁷

For Aristotle, there are three types of beings as follows. The concept of being is key and stands out clearly in the study of Aristotle’s metaphysics. Spiritual beings and all other beings inclusive insofar as they are real and non-material form the proper scope of metaphysics. Aristotle identifies three types of beings as follows: Firstly, we have real being. Real being for Aristotle refers to anything that is thought of existing independently of the mind in the order of reality. It can also be called ontological being that which really is. God for example is an ontological being. The second type of being is logical being. This type of being refers to anything that remains and depends totally on the mind. It is also known as rational beings. For example, a winged lion, a flying horse, etc. The third type of being is moral being. This type refers to any existing thing that can be known in reference to the law. Such beings mark the boundary between right and wrong. For example, man is a moral being because he is guided by law of nature. Worthy of note is the fact that, both logical and/or moral beings all have value only in reference to real being. This is because, it is only in reality (the state of things as they actually exist as opposed to notional idea of them or the totality of a system, known and unknown), that is, in the world of real being that the values of these beings are expressed.

⁵⁶ M. OKRENT, *The Shorter Routledge Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, Edward Craig(Ed), Routledge, 2005, pp. 87-88.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*

1.2 The Origin of Post-metaphysics

1.2.1. Philosophical Background

The fast and rapidly changing trends in the world today characterized by a marked growing and insatiable desire and interests of the people in the present status quo who crave for newness of everything over the traditional ways is awakening some serious concerns. This is a similar case to the idea of liquid society described by Zygmunt Bauman, a society in which there is a mad rush for novelty.⁵⁸ Hence, David Harvey holds that there has been a sea-change in cultural as well as in political, economic practices since the period of 1972, which is bound up with the emergence of the new dominant ways in which we experience our life in space and time.⁵⁹ A new way of thinking and reflecting about everything in our world. What is responsible for this sea-change, he names it post-modernist fraud with capitalist tendencies as he says:

... there is some kind of necessary relation between the rise of postmodernist cultural forms, the emergence of more flexible modes of capital accumulation, and a new round of 'time-space compression' in the organization of capitalism. But these changes, when set against the basic rules of capitalistic accumulation, appear more as shifts in surface appearance rather than as signs of the emergence of some entirely new postcapitalist or even postindustrial society.⁶⁰

This to him can be seen as an insinuation of the post-modern thought patterns, which involves building a dominant spirit in the alteration of the world's traditions and histories till date. One most noticeable and key idea of these features of post-modernity is globalization.⁶¹ A new way of thinking about the world like a global village where everybody is one with little or no differences and barriers or boundaries. Philosophically, postmetaphysics like any other school of thought is a way of philosophizing which is different from previous ways. It is a school of thought which is distinct in its own way from the modern and medieval periods of history. It represents a change in the intellectual framework that has traditionally been practiced by philosophers. It is a revolutionary change that brings into our world a new way of thinking with the aim of proving new concepts or providing solutions to the problems of the times at an epoch in the history of ideas.

⁵⁸ C. KUTARNA, "Age of Discovery: Living in Liquid Modernity", IN Psychology Today, January, 2018. [Online] available on: <https://www.psychologytoday.com/intl/blog/age-discovery/201801/living-in-liquid-modernity>. (Accessed April 20th 2022 3pm.)

⁵⁹ D. HARVEY, *The Condition of Postmodernity: An Enquiry into the Origins of Cultural Change*, Blackwell Cambridge Publishing, 1989, p. vii.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*

⁶¹ K. THOMPSON, "From Modernity to Post-Modernity", IN *Revise Sociology* April 9, 2016.

The idea of postmetaphysics has been in the nature of philosophy⁶² from ancient times, from the beginning of thinking and the existence of the human being. However, in this epoch, there is need for a change in traditional thinking in order to battles the changes our world is facing or undergoing. There is need for newness in the field of philosophising in order to counter the thought patterns of our present society. Philosophy according Habermas thus comes into the picture as it has done for decades to provide the rational backings of these changes and how they can be observed with regards to reason.⁶³ Therefore, philosophically postmetaphysical is a concept that will always be seen in the front line of philosophical reflections because it involves a change in intellectual activities by philosophers of a particular age. It signifies a turning point and a transition from one philosophical millennium to another. Beginning from ancient times with problem of the basic stuff from everything was made, the problem of change, the problem of knowledge with the sophist and Socrates, the medial period of philosophy with the relationship between faith and reason, the modern period with the growth of science and the separation of philosophy and theology led by the enlightenment and here now the contemporary times. It is a genealogy of thinking across the ages and the transition from one epoch to another. Considering the idea that J. Habermas propose a new way of thinking and reflecting metaphysically about the modern society and the problem of our times, it is important to look at the positive aspect of his concept of postmetaphysics. According to Alexander Seran,

What makes post-metaphysical thinking different from traditional metaphysics is that post-metaphysical thinking takes the form of discourse ethics in resolving questions over truth claims through dialogue with the empirical sciences. In this way, metaphysical ideals about truth, justice, power, freedom, etc., find a new ground to be preserved. Accordingly, postmetaphysical thinking can be characterized as both the end of traditional metaphysics and a return to it in a new guise. The former means the end of absolute claim (one-sided claim) about truth and the latter could mean the beginning of procedural rationality (a multi-sided argument) where metaphysics comes across with the empirical sciences questioning the validity of a claim based on its truth, truthfulness, and rightness.⁶⁴

⁶² We read from in the history of philosophy that the pre-socratics were concerned with the question of the primary stuff followed by the question of change and next to the question of ethics and with the relation of faith and reason by the mediaval thinkers, and the development of science and separation of philosophy and theology in moder times alongside the question of knowledge, which shall continue to the next epoch of history and to the next age of thinking as we continue to look back and segment with new concepts similar but different from those of the past. Postmetaphysics thus becomes a reality in philosophy as it is seen in every turning point and major change in the history of philosophy from various epochs in the history of ideas. It presents itself to us as a traditional way of thinking that has been in existence for a long time today and will continue to be in existence.

⁶³ J. HABERMAS, *Postmetaphysical Thinking: Philosophical Essays*, (Trans) by William Mark Hohengarten, The MIT Press Cambridge, 1992, p. 49.

⁶⁴ S. ALEXANDER, "Post-Metaphysical Thinking : A Habermasian Perspective On The Critique Of Traditional Metaphysics" IN Online Jurnal Universitas Katolik Parahyangan, Atma Jaya Catholic University, 2011, p. 43.

The idea of postmetaphysics has some wonderful and intellectually beautiful to contribute to our present state of affairs in the domain of ethics and philosophy. A Seran explains that from ancient times, postmetaphysics has brought about a dramatic and drastic change in the conception of metaphysics after Kant. He says;

After Kant, metaphysics in its traditional forms came to an end. However, in the linguistic sense, post-metaphysical thinking may suggest or imply a return to metaphysics in its new forms thereby repairing any damage to the fried of metaphysics wrought by the conflict between the advocates of traditional metaphysics and thereof contemporary metaphysics.⁶⁵

For him, the idea of postmetaphysics is not bad as it still odes not only reject metaphysics but it tries to present a new way of metaphysically reflection about issues in the modern and contemporary societies.

1.2.2. Historical Perspective

According to L. Zhi, history is the totality of events of which man is the principal author, and also a unity of man and nature and a progressive expression of the activities of the individual in other words the activities of man.⁶⁶ For any history to take place, it must do so within time. Thus history and time are two aspects which cannot be separated. History is seen as a philosophical world where it is the totality of the modes of being and of human creations in the world or the totality of “spiritual life” or of cultures.⁶⁷ We shall dwell here on the progressive aspect of history; this view holds that history is moving towards perfection, towards novelty. This understanding of history is because it is this aspect of history which concerns us or more valuation to our understanding of the concept of postmetaphysics in this work. Sidney Pollard in speaking about the idea of progress in history S. Pollard says:

A belief in progress implies that things will in some sense get better in the future. It is never a belief in a religious sense, as a dogma, nor is it based on the hope of a conjunction of favorable accidents. It is, instead, always in the nature of a scientific prediction based on the operations of the laws of social development.⁶⁸

Progress is seen here to be that which can only be caused by human mediation and creativity in the occurrence of events, not by some divine intervention. This also is the type of progress held by Willard. For him, history is progress, a progress towards a certain state of affairs

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶⁶ L. ZHI, *History as the Object of Totality*. IN: *The Concept of the Individual in the Thought of Karl Marx*. Marx, Engels, and Marxisms. Palgrave Macmillan, 2023, pp. 37-47.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 4. From this point of view, history could divided into five types; history as decadence, as a cycle, as the reign of chance, as progress and as the providential order.

⁶⁸ S. POLLARD, *The Idea of Progress*, Penguin Books, 1968, p. 9.

in which man will be at the centre of everything.⁶⁹ Man will achieve his desires with the transformation of the world into a paradise of his liking. He contest that man will use all the powers of nature in order to place them at his disposal.⁷⁰ History as progress can only be done by man being at the centre of it. As such, an inquiry into the present situation of man in relation to the planet earth will be of necessity. From this idea of progress in history, we understand clearly that a change in the way we conceive the world will always be reality in every days experience of our lives in the Planet earth. Change in our understanding of the universe and all its contain is an unavoidable or necessary activity of man. Postmetaphysics is thus an eminent changing situation of history that no one can do with but embrace the concept for it has been in the nature of history to experience change and progress in knowledge of the world by progressing from one event to another over time. According to Libby, our solar system is subjected to time.⁷¹ Aristotle defines time as that within which events take place.⁷² The concept of time naturally implies movement and change for they both take place within time. The pre-sacratics philosophers like Heraclitus⁷³, Parmenides⁷⁴ and Zeno had a serious discussion on the concept of change after a serious argument and theories on the substance from which everything originates. The change in thinking is a good example to explain the nature of postmetaphysical thinking in history with the records of historical events and their sequence of transiting from one epoch to another. The paradigm shift experienced by the ancients was a proof of the revolutionary change that takes place in philosophy after a period of time in history. Time naturally is associated with the universe. This is so because many philosophers and scientists hold that the universe was created within time and may be moving towards an end or what in other words could be considered as perfection.

Thus, W. Libby says that our solar system has time moving directionally from a beginning towards an end or perfection.⁷⁵ The simple implication of this is that the universe including the earth and our solar system had a beginning within time. This beginning according

⁶⁹ W. LIBBY, "Man's Place In The Physical Universe," IN J. Platt (ed.), *New Views on the Nature of Man*, 1.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 12-14.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, p. 1.

⁷² ARISTOTLE, *MetaphysicsIV*, Ch. 11, 219aff.

⁷³ A. KENNY, *A New History of Western Philosophy, Ancient Philosophy Vol I*, Oxford University Press Inc., 2004. P. 13. We can summarize the whole doctrine of Heraclitus in what is he says unity in diversity. Things change and thereby take on many different forms, but nevertheless, they contain something which continues to be the same throughout all the flux of change. Between the many forms and the continuing element, there must be some basic unity. Something that does not change: fire.

⁷⁴ F. Gopleston, *A History of Philosophy Volume I Greece And Rome*, by Doubleday, 1994, pp. 47-54. Change to him is the confusion between appearance and reality, because the process of change involves movement in a flux. Change will mean from being to being or from non-being to non-being making non-being something, if there is motion it must be from being to being hence no motion.

⁷⁵ W. LIBBY, "Man's Place In The Physical Universe," IN J. Platt (ed.), *New Views on the Nature of Man*, p. 1.

to W. Libby goes back to about five billion years or as back as our records and memories can tell us. Thus, he says:

*The earth as we see it, now appears to be some five billion or so years old... We find that all our natural time clocks, such as the lead made by decaying uranium and thorium, the argon made by decaying radioactive rubidium 87 give us the answer that the oldest rocks on earth are apparently around three billion years old.*⁷⁶

This evidence is of course based on what we have around us and that which has most probably been on earth since its origin. Evidence from outer space also plays a part in determining the age of the earth. W. Libby in this regard says “the main group of meteorites⁷⁷ falling in from space runs around five billion years old; it seems to be reasonable assumption that the earth itself was formed about five billion years ago.”⁷⁸ So far, W. Libby has been pointing to the fact that the universe or that the earth has a beginning within time as recorded by history. But as he says above, the universe seems to be moving towards an end hence highlighting the teleological aspect of history which gives us insights of postmetaphysics as in changes of thought and conception of the Universe over time and across history. Reasons he advances for this are “there was a very different initial state some time ago, that our solar system and our star are somehow running down, and that there will come a time when the sun will no longer shine and the planets would have fallen into the sun.”⁷⁹ The universe or at least that part in which man finds himself is subjected to time. Man happens to be the principle of intelligence in the universe, a curious being and lover of knowledge. Postmetaphysics as situated in history thus appears as a theory to represent the transiting epoch of thought about the events of time with man at the centre of this happenings.

1.2.3. Scientific Background

The question we asks ourselves here is ethical which is whether science is in confirmation or contradiction with human values in our times, for ethical values are backed up with the use of metaphysical thinking and theories. H. Jonas holds that the new kinds, types and dimensions of action require a commensurate ethic of foresight and responsibility which is as novel as the eventualities which it must meet.⁸⁰ A value, as defined by I. Barbour, is a “general characteristic

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 2.

⁷⁷ Meteorites are very large heavenly bodies running through space at supersonic speeds. They run at such speed that upon collision with another body, destruction of that body is almost inevitable. This is even most likely if the size of the meteorite is greater than the other body. Quite a number of them have collided with the earth over time causing great destructions.

⁷⁸ W. LIBBY, “*Man’s Place In The Physical Universe*,” IN J. Platt (ed.), *New Views on the Nature of Man*, p. 12.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*

⁸⁰ H. JONAS, *The Imperative of Responsibility: In Search of an Ethics for the Technological Age*, p. 18.

of an object or state of affairs that a person views with favour, and believes is beneficial.”⁸¹ Science as the systematic study of nature involves itself with many activities. Scientific activities require tolerance, disinterestedness, rationality, freedom of thought, and the right dissent. Scientific knowledge is universal, and its pursuit demands cooperation, honesty and loyalty to truth. Once these elements are taken into consideration in any scientific development, human values will be respected and the *Other* will be viewed as an end in himself/herself. In line with the aforementioned, Richard Niebuhr admits that there is an important ethical dimension in scientific inquiry, but he says that this represents only a limited range of values.⁸² I. Barbour presents many positive claims that developments in science achieve things like: higher living standards, opportunity for choice, more leisure, and improved communication with many items like radio, television, and good network systems making the world a global village.

H. Jonas’ holds that, philosophy must work out a new theory of being in which the position of human beings in the cosmos and their relationship to nature are of central concern.⁸³ Human beings have a pride of place in the universe which must always be recognized in the presence of the *Other*. Paul Tillich, quoted by I. Barbour, claims that the rationality and impersonality of technological systems undermine the personal presupposition of religious commitment.⁸⁴ As Gabriel Marcel affirms, the technological outlook pervades our lives and excludes a sense of the sacred.⁸⁵ David Bolter, on his part, maintains that we think of ourselves in the image of our technologies.⁸⁶ Man has become a slave to his production. One can say that science is not wrong insofar as it respects the dignity of the *I* and the *Other*. Once it goes against the fundamental aspect of man (life), it should be rebuked. Furthermore, when human values like responsibility, dialogue, respect for the *Other* as an end in himself/herself are taken into consideration in the scientific enterprise, Lévinas’ metaphysics of the face will be made eminent.

In our times, postmetaphysical thinking in the realm of science is observed from the enslavement of man by his scientific developments and productions, technology has become the dominant symbol of progress, at least its most visible external measure. In this connection, progress comes almost to be equated with material betterment. I. Barbour maintains that

⁸¹ I. BARBOUR, *Ethics in an Age of Technology*, p. 26.

⁸² *Ibid.*, 29. Why then do scientists produce things that go against man’s nature or lead to the destruction of man? In the words of Lévinas, why produce things that will destroy the face (the *Other*) and if care is not taken, destroy even the *I* who inverted the things?

⁸³ L. VOGEL, “*Closer to the Bitter End*,” H. JONAS, IN Graduate Faculty Philosophy Journal, the Philosophy of Hans Jonas, p. 30.

⁸⁴ I. BARBOUR, *Ethics in an Age of Technology*, p. 14.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 28.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 158.

advancing technology is expected to raise the material well-being of mankind by heightening the productivity of the global economy, multiplying the kinds as well as the quantities of goods which contribute to the enjoyment of life, and at the same time lightening the burden of labour.⁸⁷ Thus, following in the lights of Francis Bacon, we must emphasize, as presented by I. Barbour, that we must cast a critical look at the possibilities and limits of progress in general, lest we concede too much to the demands of its alleged vehicle.⁸⁸ All technology which does not have as its back bone the respect of the *I* and the *Other*, is not worthwhile since it may lead to the destruction of its maker, and others. Lévinas' instance on the non-intentional knowledge in man squares up in this regard, for man has to listen to the voice of the infinite Being (God) calling him to encounter love beyond the face of the *Other*.

In today's societies, different theories spring up. Among these theories is genetic engineering, which could greatly benefit agriculture, but must be used with care because of its environmental and social impact on man. Many attempts are being made in screening for genetic diseases. A genetic counselor can calculate the probability of an inherited disease that could lead to untold suffering and decide to terminate the pregnancy.⁸⁹ If a woman's ova are fertilized by the sperm of her husband or a donor in a test tube (in vitro fertilization) the ovum to be replanted could be selected for sex and perhaps other characteristics.⁹⁰ A prominent example is presented by I. Barbour when he asserts: "in the United States, a deep-freeze bank has been established containing the sperm of men of outstanding mental or physical abilities, from among which women can choose to be artificially inseminated."⁹¹ Man has a duty in all situations to preserve life which is his greatest temporal good. In doing this, consideration should be made for the *Other* such that the *I* will not use modern techniques to kill instead of saving life. Any scientific system or technology which goes against the fundamental principles of man; that of self-preservation and procreation, destroys the metaphysical dimension of the face, that which explains authenticity in the relationship with the *Other*. The need for the redirection of technology that leads to the respect for the *Other* is necessary. Who is responsible when we use a

⁸⁷ I. BARBOUR, *Ethics in an Age of Technology* p. 158. There is an increase in the discussion of the idea of progress than a "better life" in terms of greater consumption of greater varieties of goods at greater ease: a better mankind is expected from it in terms of ethical and cultural quality and of a socio-political order.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 160-162.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 194-196.

⁹⁰ *Ibid* p. 196.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*, .

computer program which causes injury or harm to the *Other*? Moral responsibility is therefore a broader concept which the *I* has to reconsider in dealing with the *Other*.

1.2.4. Metaphysical Perspective

Looking back at the history of ideas we clearly identify different views that different thinkers from different cultures at different times in history have held concerning the idea or concept of metaphysics. These developments concerning metaphysics come as a result of the fact that change is a reality. As time is going, things are changing and thinkers are improving on their conception of the universe and all it contains. Philosophers who fall in a class of thinking also developed and grow in their rational activities in the world of many thinking activities. Metaphysics as one of areas of philosophy that has received criticisms and rational backings on its subject matter has also contributed greatly to our understanding of the changes over time in the discipline of metaphysics. When Immanuel Kant launched an attack on the metaphysics by declaring the end of metaphysics.

Post-metaphysical thinking involves the sequential change and dialectic thinking done by metaphysicians across history on the concept of being. It concerns itself with a criticism of previous views by philosophers meanwhile suggesting new ways of thinking about being. M. Heidegger formulates the question of the meaning of being so as to better explain it, although this question had been tackled in the ancient period by Anaximander and Parmenides. He aims to bring to the limelight the question of being discussed by Aristotle, Aquinas and Hegel.⁹² Heidegger is out to answer the question which was once asked but according to him has long been forgotten.⁹³ Do we have an answer today to the question of the meaning of being? Heidegger anchors his quest for Being in the analysis on the human being who alone among other beings seeks Being.⁹⁴ We will look at Heidegger's considerations of some being or entity, and the obvious choice, *Dasein* which will guide us towards understanding being.⁹⁵ Heidegger's own notion of being contrasts with beings or entities discussed by Western philosophy. The latter focus on individual beings or types of beings to the exclusion of being as such⁹⁶ and Heidegger explicitly points out how different his conception

⁹² M. HEIDEGGER, *Existence and Being*, Vision Press Ltd, 1968, p. 26. He sets out to answer the question of being which according to him Western philosophy had failed to answer although he takes most of his time working out what it means for being to be, and he does limit this being to man as such. He calls trees, stones and other things below human existence entities.

⁹³ M. INWOOD, *Heidegger*, Oxford University Press, 1997, p. 8.

⁹⁴ M. GRENE, "Martin Heidegger," in P. EDWARDS (ed.), *The Encyclopaedia of Philosophy*, vols. 3, p. 459.

⁹⁵ M. INWOOD, *Heidegger*, p. 8.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 12.

of being is from that of the Greek thinkers. Heidegger looks at the concept of being as the most universal which goes beyond that of a genus and is obscure and indefinable.⁹⁷

PARTIAL CONCLUSION

Our work started with an introduction to the subject matter. We started explaining in details the meaning of term Metaphysics, by looking at the historical roots of the term and the meaning of the term. We saw that it originated from a student of Aristotle who uses the term metaphysics to distinguish the works of his master Aristotle that discuss about non-physical realities. We also looked the meaning of the term postmetaphysics. We saw that the term postmetaphysics originated from a deep desire to break away from previous philosophical traditions of thinking by some philosophers of a particular age. Thus, postmetaphysics as we saw came from the prefix “Post” and the term “metaphysics” which simply stands for the metaphysical thinking that comes after the previous metaphysical thoughts in the history of ideas⁹⁸ The next term that was defined was the term Liquid Modernity. According to Z. Bauman who coined the term, it refers to “liquidity” which presents a quality of liquids and gases in contradistinction to “solidity” which stands for a foreseeable and workable world or conventional world.⁹⁹ This involves an observation of a social change that desires to unseal the consequences of advanced social differentiation and estrangement¹⁰⁰ Later on we saw being for Aristotle, as that which refers to anything that is thought of existing independently of the mind in the order of reality. It can also be called ontological being that which really is. The second part of the chapter was dedicated to an examination of the genealogy of postmetaphysics from a philosophical, metaphysical, scientific and historical perspectives in the history of ideas. At this point we shall continue into the next chapter to look at the philosophers who influenced Heidegger to develop his philosophy of being as a postmetaphysical response to the attack of metaphysics by some philosophers and critical thinkers as the present moment and the history of philosophy presences to us.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 26.

⁹⁸ C W. G. SHEA, *Nietzsche as a postmetaphysical philosopher of life*, Rowan University, Department of philosophy and Religion, https://youtu.be/N_GtKH15Om8.com, 14/02/2023

⁹⁹ Cfr. P. BEILHARZ, “Bauman And Heller: Two Views Of Modernity And Culture”, IN *Comparative Literature: East & West*, 1(1), 2017, p. 54.

¹⁰⁰ R. LEE, *Reinventing Modernity: Reflexive Modernization Vs Liquid Modernity Vs Multiple Modernities*, IN *European Journal Of Social Theory*. 9 (1), 2006, pp. 355-368.

CHAPTER TWO

PHILOSOPHICAL INFLUENCE ON MARTIN HEIDEGGER'S PHILOSOPHY

PARTIAL INTRODUCTION

In chapter one we did a clarification of the meaning of key terms. These are terms that are necessary in our understanding of this work. Chapter consisted of the conceptual clarification of concept. In chapter two we shall discuss about those thinkers whose thought enabled Heidegger to develop his philosophy of being. We shall begin to look at ancient philosophers and later on to German and Modern philosopher. Heidegger canters his quest for Being in the analysis on the human being who alone among other beings seeks Being.¹⁰¹ Looking at Heidegger's considerations of some being or entity is in our interest in this work, and the obvious choice, *Dasein* which will guide us towards understanding being.¹⁰² Heidegger's notion of being contrasts with beings or entities discussed by traditional Western metaphysicians and philosophers. The latter focus on individual beings or types of beings to the exclusion of being as such¹⁰³ and Heidegger explicitly points out how different his conception of being is from that of the Greek thinkers.

Heidegger looks at the concept of being as the most universal which goes beyond that of a genus and is obscure and indefinable.¹⁰⁴ He has this to say about the question of being:

*On the basis of the Greeks' initial contributions towards an interpretation of being, a dogma has been developed which not only declares the question about the meaning of being to be superfluous, but sanctions its complete neglect. It is said that 'being' is the most universal and emptiest of concepts... Nor does this most universal and hence indefinable concept require any definition, for everyone uses it constantly and already understands what he means by it.*¹⁰⁵

Heidegger posits that since being has been viewed as a universal and indefinable concept, this in a way, blocks man from analysing it but he continues to use this term. Although Heidegger takes the Greek thinkers to be his model, he deviates in his starting point and brings in what is perceptible, what he terms '*Dasein*.' This appears in Heidegger's ontological structure which had never been contemplated by the Greeks. It is from this point of view that he intends to explain the problem of being in a new way.¹⁰⁶ This new way shall be seen in the following chapters. We shall now look at those thinkers who contributed to Heidegger's development of his philosophy.

¹⁰¹ M. GRENE, "Martin Heidegger," IN P. EDWARDS (ed.), *The Encyclopaedia of Philosophy*, vols. 3, p. 459.

¹⁰² M. INWOOD, *Heidegger*, p. 8.

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*, p. 12.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 26.

¹⁰⁵ M. HEIDEGGER, *Being and Time*, J. MACQUARRIE- E. ROBINSON (trs.), Basil Blackwell, 1959, p. 21.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, 27-28.

2.1 Ancient Philosophers

2.1.1 Parmenides's Ontology

At the time of sages, who would later be described or called philosophers expressed themselves in prose, albeit in epigrams, Parmenides decided to compose a poem, which in it he poured out his intellectual content. Xenophanes had done the composition of poems before him.¹⁰⁷ In this poem, Parmenides was convinced he had found the fundamental truth and wanted to communicate it to the world.¹⁰⁸ Parmenides was born at Elea in 540 B.C. He was the pupils of Xenophanes, he was active on civil affairs or politics.¹⁰⁹ For him, nothing that exist in reality experiences change, he holds that being is one and unchangeable, change and movement are illusory.¹¹⁰

Change to him is the confusion between appearance and reality, because the process of change involves movement in a flux. Parmenides explained that change as a reality will simply mean movement from being to being or from non-being to non-being making non-being something which is impossible, for if there is motion it must be from being to being hence no motion.¹¹¹ His thoughts on the nature of reality is drawn from the verb “to be”, because for anything to be means that it is in existence. Thus, he used the word “become”, by explaining that if anything in nature were to “become”, it would mean that a particular reality has become something else from what it is which will be untrue.¹¹²

All change and movement will affirm what is becoming and what is becoming signifies what is contrary to the real nature of a thing; thus, becoming will mean the opposite of being which will be absurd. Therefore, being is One and unchanging, the real world is intelligible. The explanation of being given by Heidegger is base of his reading of Greek philosophers. He had seen that the Greeks and pre-Socratic alongside some western philosophers had not define being the way its supposed to be defined. He want to reiterate from what he believes that the philosophical problems are he is tackling are the main concerns from his understanding of traditional Greek society of philosophers that existed in Greece at the time of the pre-Socratic.

¹⁰⁷ N. L. CORDERO, *By Being, it is the thesis of Parmenides*, Parmenides Publishing, 2004, 14.

¹⁰⁸ Parmenides allegorically explains his ideas with a journey toward the Goddess's home. For it about the genealogy of the gods, the invention of women, the ages of humanity, or the propitious days for carrying out particular activities, all these realities expounded by the muses who “when they wish, know how to proclaim true things” (Theogony 28).

¹⁰⁹ P. GLENN, *The History of Philosophy*, 47-48.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*

¹¹² *Ibid.*,

2.1.2 The Universal Becoming of Heraclitus

According to Heraclitus, everything that exist in nature experiences change. He held that everything in reality is in flux, everything is constantly changing.¹¹³ For him, nothing stays. Everything is in motion. Thus, one can only step into a river once given that fresh waters are flowing in the stream constantly. Everything is in motion, reality is constantly changing. However, it would be a mistake to think that Heraclitus meant that there are no stable things in reality.¹¹⁴ We can summarize the whole doctrine of Heraclitus in what is he says unity in diversity. Things change and thereby take on many different forms, but nevertheless, they contain something which continues to be the same throughout all the flux of change. Between the many forms and the continuing element, there must be some basic unity. Something that does not change: fire.

For Heraclitus, the conflict of opposites in the process of change is essential in the being of the One.¹¹⁵ The One only exist in the tension of opposites; he says, “we must know that war is common to all and strife is justice; and that all things come to being and pass away in strife.”¹¹⁶ . It is in the nature of the One to be One and many at the same time, it should be identified in difference. Thus, reality is One and at the same time many. The idea of change held by Heraclitus agrees to concrete universals, the One exist in the many, identity in difference. For him, the essence of all things is Fire. He describes fire as the proper essence of reality, for in the process of fire, there are two paths, the upwards and downwards paths.¹¹⁷ He then said change is in both paths, he held that the cosmos came into being by the virtue of this process. He holds on the view that sense-experience tells us that fire lives by feeding and transforming into itself into heterogeneous matter. It changes them to itself and without these things it would die and cease to exist. Its existence does depend on strife and tension.

Heraclitus holds that there cannot be change without something changing, thus that thing which is changing he calls it fire.¹¹⁸ Change starts from fire being condensed to moisture and under compression it turns into water and from water to earth, which he calls the downwards movement. In the other hand the upwards path begins from earth being liquefied to water, from

¹¹³ A. KENNY, *A New History of Western Philosophy, Ancient Philosophy Vol I*, Oxford University Press Inc., 2004. P. 13.

¹¹⁴ F. COPLESTON, *A History of Philosophy, Vol I, Greece and Rome*, p. 39.

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*

water, everything else comes into being. He refers to everything as evaporation of water from the sea, hence, the upward path.

Heraclitus does describe the process of change as unity in diversity. To say the world is in a flux to him meant that the world was an ever-living fire.¹¹⁹ Fire must constantly be feed and it will continue to give something in the form of heat, smoke or ashes. It was not enough according to Heraclitus to point out to the basic stuff of reality like water of Thales, for this would not answer the question of how the basic stuff changed into other realities.¹²⁰ This doctrine of Heraclitus helped Plato to understand that the physical world is in constant change and motion. The point of examining Heraclitus postmetaphysical thinking if from his argument against Parmenides and his students Zeno that change is a reality.

The change in thought and argument concerning the notion of being gave Heidegger an opportunity to see their errors and understand need for a change in the question of being. It also made Heidegger to realize how traditional western metaphysical tradition had deviated in the explaining the meaning of being. The concept of change as handled by Heraclitus is the heart of postmetaphysical thinking which involves a change of thought across history by a thinker. Thus Heraclitus as one of the ancient philosophers contributed greatly for Heidegger to develop his philosophy as he was able give more opportunity for reflection with his arguments against Parmenides and Zeno of Elea on the notion of being. Thus, conception of being by Heraclitus enabled Plato to develop his metaphysics which in return help Aristotle right down to Heidegger. Heidegger found more reasons to give a proper treatment of the meaning and question of being after realizing the failures of the western tradition thought on treatment of the question and meaning of being.

2.1.3 The Idealism of Plato

Idealism is a philosophical school of thought claiming that ideas are the true objects of knowledge, that ideas are prior to things, and that ideas provide the grounds of being to things.¹²¹ Thus for Plato in his metaphysic and epistemology, ideas are the only true things that exist in reality which he describes as Forms. Real being exists as ideas in our minds. Thus, the truth exists abstractly in the mind; it exists as Forms for the only true things are Forms. Plato's

¹¹⁹ E. SAMUEL, *Socrates to Sartre, A History of Philosophy*, McGraw Hill Inc., New York, 1982, 13-15. The basic element which was changing is fire.

¹²⁰ W. GUTHRIE, *The Greek Philosophers, from Thales to Aristotle*, Methuen and Co Ltd, 11 New Fetter Lane, 1967, pp. 45-46.

¹²¹ B. NICHOLAS ET Y. JIYUAN, *The Blackwell Dictionary of Western Philosophy*, Blackwell Publishing Ltd, 2004, p. 322.

metaphysics was primarily inspired by the discussion of being by Parmenides and Heraclitus. Plato is one of the key philosopher in the history of western philosophy as he stands in position of merit with the contribution he made in philosophical thinking. Plato inspired Heidegger in many aspects however; we shall briefly examine the contribution of Plato in Heidegger's development of his philosophy. Plato's metaphysics constitute of his theory of Foms which he explains about two real of existence. The intelligible world and the world of appearance. Plato labels a number of characteristics for forms like the following. First, an idea is the representation of the essence of a thing in the mind.¹²² There are different types of ideas according to logicians; we have simple ideas, intuitive ideas, abstractive ideas and compound ideas. Socrates speaks to *Euthyphro* saying:

*Remember that I did not ask you to give me two or three examples of piety, but to explain the general idea, which makes all pious things to be pious. Do you not recollect that there was one idea which made the impious impious, and the pious pious?*¹²³

To Plato, an idea is that which exist as a non-sensible entity, and is unchanging. These ideas are supreme entities from which every being derives its essence. For example, to see an object physically is a shadow, the essence of an object is seen with the soul.¹²⁴ In the *Meno*, Socrates ask Meno to tell him what virtue is in the universal, and not to make a singular into a universal in the process of answering the question.¹²⁵ We had earlier seen that the Forms are universal in existence, thus, we consider the Forms in this case to be Universals.

Also, N. Markosian holds that Virtuehood must be something objective.¹²⁶ Virtuehood can be instantiated by many things. There are many virtues in existence; however, one thing makes them all virtues which is the Form of virtue known as virtuehood, which is multiply instantiable. To Markosian, this is the characteristic that distinguishes universals from particulars, which holds that Universals can be instantiated by many particulars; but particulars are not

¹²² Intuitive ideas are ideas of physical things in the world around us formed by the mind from sense findings. Simple ideas are ideas that not be further simplified. Compound ideas are ideas that can be simplified to fall under their categories. Abstractive ideas are ideas gotten from a second abstraction of ideas that already found in the mind.

¹²³ PLATO, *Great Books of the Western World*, 7. H. Robert(Ed), Encyclopedia Britannica, Inc., 1952, p. 193.

¹²⁴ *Ibid.*, . Ideas to him are objective and universal absolutes. They exist as spiritual realities in the world of Forms. Socrates asked Cebes in the *Euthyphro* saying; "Shall we proceed a step further, and affirm that there is such a thing as equality, not one of wood or stone with another, but that, over and above this, there is absolute equality?" Thus, the existence of the Form of equality is very clear in Plato's mind as objective entities. Everything that is equal in the physical world strive to attain absolute equality but will fall short of it. The Forms exist as absolute equals.

¹²⁵ PLATO, *Protagoras and Meno*, W. Guthrie(Trans), Penguin Books Ltd, 1956, p. 120, 74d-75a.

¹²⁶ J. CARROLL ET N. MARKOSIAN, *An Introduction to Metaphysics*, Cambridge University Press, 2010, p. 229.

instantiated by more than one thing.¹²⁷ Thus, Forms are common elements in particulars as they have the ability from their Universal characteristic to instantiate more than one thing.

It is important to recall that Forms exist as universals in the world of Forms. As universals, we discover that the Form of equality, goodness and many others, have some common ground by which we attribute the name Form to them. They have a single essence, they share the same characteristics of immortality, eternity, existing out of time and space. Universals are abstract objects such as qualities, relations and numbers; they are things which cannot be precisely located in space and time.¹²⁸ Plato's concept of knowledge also inspired Heidegger such that he wrote and explained about the essence of Truth. He explained this in relation to what Plato had said in the Allegory of the Cave as Plato explains how we gain knowledge.

From this perspective, we now look at how Plato's philosophy influences Martin Heidegger in his philosophical thought. Wrathall holds it that M. Heidegger is a notoriously violent reader of other philosophers, in which he reads the works of other philosophers in order to discover the unsaid in their thought and philosophizing.¹²⁹ According to Mark Wrathall Heidegger's claims about truth like the idea that propositional truth is grounded in truth as world disclosure. he also adds that Heidegger's critique of the self-evidence of truth as correspondence were first revealed in a powerful sense by his reading of Plato.¹³⁰ Heidegger in his understanding of Plato presents an argument where he clearly says contemporary representations of truth are an account of truth as correspondence of an outgrowth of Plato's doctrine or thoughts.¹³¹ For him, there is an ambiguity between the concept of truth as property of our representation of things and as a property things. He thus conceives truth based on a historical influence from the thinking of Plato's doctrine of ideas, he says, what matters in all of our fundamental orientations toward beings is the achieving a correct view of our ideas.¹³²

¹²⁷ *Ibid.*, *An Introduction to Metaphysics*, 229. The forms all have a singular essence, which defines them. The existence of the Forms as universals gives them an upper hand to act as principles of unity for all particular forms. To every particular then, there is a universal Form of that specie present in it. A plurality of particulars could participate in a single Form of Universal, for example, the Form of Goodness has so many things that partake in it. We can speak of a good dress, good wine, good food, good man but all these particular instances share in the main Form of Goodness.

¹²⁸ R. JONATHAN ET O. URMSON(Ed), *The Concise Encyclopedia of Western Philosophy*, Routledge, 2005, p. 382. However, particulars are sometimes defined as objects of thought, particulars are objects of perception or sensation in the acquisition of knowledge. They can be located in space and time as concrete reality in the physical world. The Forms have individuation as a common factor to their existence in the universe.

¹²⁹ Mark Wrathall, *Heidegger on Plato, Truth, and Unconcealment: The 1931–32 Lecture on The Essence of Truth*, Routledge, Brigham Young University, 2004, p. 03.

¹³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 01.

¹³¹ M. Heidegger, *Pathmarks*, William McNeill(Ed), Cambridge University Press, 1998, pp. 178-179.

¹³² M Heidegger, *The Essence of Truth on Plato's Cave Allegory and Theaetetus*, Trans(Ted Sabler), Continuum, 2002, pp. 178-180.

It also very important to note that Heidegger gained much interest in Plato's cave allegory because of his belief that Plato's doctrine cave allegory is a grounding for propositional truth, he explains that it grounds on the basis it views truth as a property of things, he thinks that Plato's concept presents the an open or new grounds to rethink the idea of truth.¹³³ Heidegger was interested in the dialogues of Plato because he believed that truth or Unconcealment¹³⁴ is a concept which needs to be approached by understanding by via negative.¹³⁵ He express his mind by saying the Greek language explains the concept clearly "*a-letheia*" which in other words is un-concealedness. For Heidegger, self-evident truths should be questioned on the basis of essence of truth as correspondence, but another indication of a fact about human beings. He believes that one major reason for returning to Plato is because it was Plato who first laid the foundations for our own notion of truth, given that our present understanding of the essence of self-evident truth was taken for granted in the philosophy of Plato, however, Plato was the first to lay the foundations on which we trend today.¹³⁶

The final reason for Heidegger's focus on Plato and the cave allegory in particular is that, Heidegger believes, Plato's work is the point at which the old fundamental experience, while still alive, is fading and the new experience is opened up. Thus, the cave allegory, on Heidegger's view, both lays the foundation for thinking truth exclusively as correspondence, but at the same time should be understood as an inquiry into the nature of Unconcealment.¹³⁷ At this point we can see clearly that the works of Plato were of interest to Heidegger because of Plato's contribution to philosophy. Heidegger as a philosopher who looks for the unsaid things about an individual philosopher did the same with Plato. He spoke about truth, essence of truth and Unconcealment by critically examine ng the cave allegory of Plato. He looks at Plato as a philosopher who stands at the foundation of thinking truth, the essence of truth , untruth, and truth and Unconcealment.¹³⁸

¹³³ M. Wrathall, *Heidegger on Plato, Truth, and Unconcealment: The 1931–32 Lecture on The Essence of Truth*, Routledge, Brigham Young University,2004, p. 02.

¹³⁴ *The Blackwell Companion to Heidegger*, Blackwell publishing,2004.

¹³⁵ M. Wrathall, *Heidegger on Plato, Truth, and Unconcealment: The 1931–32 Lecture on The Essence of Truth*, Routledge, Brigham Young University,2004, p. 02.

¹³⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 06

¹³⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 08.

¹³⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 09.

2.1.4 The Hylomorphism of Aristotle

The term Hylomorphism originates from two Greek words, “*hule*” which means “*matter*” and “*morphe*” which means “*form*”, this term thus means the doctrine of form and matter.¹³⁹ Also it is a theory first elaborated by Aristotle, who claimed that reality is constituted by the combination of form and matter and that each living thing is composed of soul as form and body as matter. However, S. Borruso holds that the term entity stands for two meanings; the first signifies the things that are divided into the ten categories, while the second stands to indicate the truth of a propositions.¹⁴⁰ If we consider the meaning of entity in the first sense, it means everything must have something in common which is known as essence. Every entity can be assigned by its essence to a genus or specie of its kind. Animality for instance, is the essence for animals; humanity is the essence for human beings. Thus, for him Forms exist as entities of various substances in genus and species with some particular characteristics that distinguish them from other beings. In the process of causality, Forms are a source of being and unity for all particular things in existence. In his metaphysics Aristotle explains that being is made up of matter and form. Form being the principle of individuation and designation. Aristotle was a student of Plato who found great trouble with Plato’s idealism. He thus decided to explain the meaning of being by stating in hylomorphist doctrine that being was composed of Matter from the physical or material cause and form the informal or non-material cause.

According to Heidegger, in his reading of Aristotle’s Nicomachean ethics, ethics is concerned directly with the being of man.¹⁴¹ From his understanding of Aristotle, the being of man taken not ontically as a being of an object but as the being of being human in its respective being, which is a being to whose understanding constitute the understanding of being belongs which he names as *Dasein*.¹⁴² He observes to what extent the term *ethos* or the ethical has a function in another way of calling it *Dasien*. In another lecture, Heidegger clarifies what brings things to light from the Aristotelian perspective.

Heidegger was influenced by Aristotle’s metaphysics which talks about what it is that unites all modes of beings. This in many ways is what unites and ignites the basic question of being in Heidegger’s philosophy. Hence from his study and reading of the Greeks precisely

¹³⁹ B. NICHOLAS ET Y. JIYUAN, *The Blackwell Dictionary of Western Philosophy*, Blackwell Publishing Ltd, 2004, pp. 315-316.

¹⁴⁰ S. BORRUSO(Trans), *De Ente Et Essentia*, 19. In the second sense, any statement affirming or denying anything turns into entities even realities that are not things. Nevertheless, in the first sense, nothing can be called entity if it is not an actual thing.

¹⁴¹ M. Heidegger, *Grundprobleme der Phänomenologie in Gesamtausgabe (GA24)*, p. 322.

¹⁴² Aristotle, *The Nicomachean Ethics*, 1094 b p. 7.

Aristotle's metaphysics he developed and coined the fundamental question of being, why does anything exist at all? what is it to be? The formulation of this question was fascinated by the Greeks and Heidegger spends considerable time reading the Greeks writings and philosophy. For Heidegger reflecting on Greek thought was an authentic retrieval of the past in which he retrieved the question of being which has been largely forgotten by the metaphysical tradition of the past.

2.2. Influence From Modern Thinkers

2.2.1. The Historicism of William Dilthey

Historicism is a philosophical school of thought which denied the legitimate place of temporal distance in understanding and so the meaning of a text could only be gotten by going back solely to the past. This meant that the interpreter's prejudices had no role to play in interpretation. Such is Gadamer's bone of contention with this school of thought. The problem of a "critique of historical understanding" (historiography) was particularly closed to the heart of Wilhelm Dilthey.

Wilhelm Dilthey was a German born philosopher who dedicated the later part of his life to the study of history, and one of the leading advocates of this doctrine *Historicism*. It gave detailed suggestions about the use of the sources, the role of philology and other matters of technique in history.¹⁴³ For historicism¹⁴⁴, the only inroad into understanding someone's work is to have recourse to history which it limits just to the past, rejecting the present that is equally very vital. Hence, the interpreter should pretend as if nothing happened and transpose himself into the context in which the text was written. Consequently, this implies two things: firstly, the Husserlian *epoche*, which involves the bracketing of all prejudices; and secondly, there must be a method to be followed in order to arrive at understanding.

Heidegger was also very much influenced to develop his philosophy by William Dilthey. Dilthey stressed the role of interpretation and history in human activities greatly influenced Heidegger. Dilthey had stresses the role of interpretation which coincided with the philosophical reflection of Heidegger based on the forgetfulness of the question of being in what he later explained as *Ontotheology*. Hermeneutics in Heidegger understands. Heidegger makes the following remarks about William Dilthey, he says the image of Dilthey which is still widely

¹⁴³ H. RICKMAN, "Geisteswissenschaften," IN The Encyclopedia of Philosophy, vol. 1 and 2, p. 405.

¹⁴⁴ For instance, disciples of this school of thought like Dilthey and Friedrich Schleiermacher (his predecessor) were prepared to admit that the text is a product of history but would not admit that the interpreter is also a product of history. They denied the temporal distance – nothing happened between the time when the text was written and now.

disseminated today is that of the sensitive interpretation of the history of the spirit, especially the history of literature who also endeavours to distinguish between the natural and the human sciences.¹⁴⁵

Thus the division of Dilthey work could be divided into the research of the science of man, the society and the state. According to Dilthey everything centres on psychology by which life is understood within a historical context of its development, effects and understood as the way in which misunderstands life however in a derivative form.¹⁴⁶ According to Heidegger in being and time, Dilthey contributed greatly with his rational inquiry to put too little stress on differentiation generally between the optical and the historical methods of the human sciences.¹⁴⁷

Dilthey thus contributed greatly to Heidegger's development of his philosophy with his discussion on the interpretation of history and method of sciences. He enabled Heidegger to develop his concepts which he used to explain the reality, existence and condition of the human being, *Dasein in being and time*. The development of Heidegger was therefore propagated by the views of Dilthey which inspired Heidegger such that he acknowledges in being and time as seen in the previous sentences.

2.2.2. The Theist Existentialism of Kierkegaard

Existentialism is a philosophical school of thought which argues that existence precedes essence and starts its philosophical work from individual and particular existence.¹⁴⁸ This doctrine is the source of its name. Existentialism is characterized by its concern with individuality and concreteness. The school of thought that developed in the 19th and 20th century is thinking that started before this era of history. It is a school of thought that developed within this period of philosophy known as existentialism.¹⁴⁹ According to Paul Kleinman, existentialism could be explained as a philosophical school that sprung up in the 19th century in which he says:

Existentialism is not a school of thought so much as a trend that appears throughout philosophy during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Prior to this time, philosophical thought had grown to become increasingly more complex and abstract. In dealing with ideas of nature and truth, philosophers began to exclude the

¹⁴⁵ Cfr., M. HEIDEGGER, *Being and Time*, p. 449-450.

¹⁴⁶ *Ibid*

¹⁴⁷ *Ibid*. p. 191.

¹⁴⁸ B. NICHOLAS ET Y. JIYUAN, *The Blackwell Dictionary of Western Philosophy*, Blackwell Publishing Ltd, 2004, 238-239.

¹⁴⁹ Existentialism takes its name from a philosophical reference to human existence that is, to the uniquely self-conscious and self-determining character of a human life as it is lived, enjoyed, and suffered in the first person rather than described or explained from an ostensibly neutral third-person perspective. The attempt to provide a philosophical account of the distinctive features of human existence that distinguish a human life from the nominally similar "existence" of other animals, plants, and things is the common goal of existentialist philosophers.

*importance of human beings. However, starting with Soren Kierkegaard and Friedrich Nietzsche in the nineteenth century, several philosophers emerged placing a newfound focus on the human experience.*¹⁵⁰

For him from the above quotation, he explains the origin of this way of philosophising as beginning with Soren Kierkegaard as the father of existentialism and followed by Fredrich Nietzsche. We are looking at this school of thought of how Kierkegaard as a philosophy in his way of thinking influenced Heidegger to develop his own philosophy. Kierkegaard was a philosopher was trained in Hegel' philosophy and very much involved by Nietzsche and Karl Max. the philosophers who wrote in historical times. He was a critic of his time and a protestant who observed high frequency of evil and high attendance of church by all. Kierkegaard made a distinction between what we are and what we ought to be, by drawing our attention to the fact sin separates us from God. In his dialectic of existence, he proposed three stages in which the human being Man is overwhelmed by the worries of this life in his quest for authenticity.

S. Kierkegaard admits the fact that one can only claim to be alive if and only if one has a goal that gives one's life directionality. This goal he insists must be one of great significance. It is practically impossible to go through life entirely unharmed.¹⁵¹ Many people think we can do so, especially by eliminating any and all conditions that make tragedy possible. Man, more often than not, finds himself in situations that make him doubt the fundamental reason of his existence. These circumstances are described by Kierkegaard as despair or frustration-situations that manifest a deep lack of faith in God and in oneself.

Kierkegaard has a threefold stratification of life: the aesthetic, ethical and religious spheres of life. The order in which he sets them is not coincidental. There is progression from the one to the other in ascending order. The third class, the religious, has two categories, religiousness A and B. In the former he treats religion as an extension of the ethical sphere, while the latter focuses on the leap of faith and truth as subjectivity.¹⁵² This classification by Kierkegaard is of prime importance to the becoming of the self.

I. Barbour argues that philosophy makes pertinent contributions to ethics by clarifying concepts, and analyzing universal principles. Religion too makes distinctive contributions in both theory and practice.¹⁵³ Likewise, the most fundamental ethical principles, he declares, such as the value of the individual and respect for non-human nature, are very much dependent upon one's

¹⁵⁰ P. KLEINMAN, *From Plato And Socrates To Ethics And Metaphysics, An Essential Primer On The History Of Thought*, p. 35.

¹⁵¹ S. KIERKEGAARD, *The Sickness Unto Death*, Princeton University Press, 1980, p. 13.

¹⁵² S. KIERKEGAARD, *Subjective Truth, Inwardness, Truth is Subjective*, Princeton, Part 2, p. 204.

¹⁵³ I. BARBOUR, *Ethics in an Age of Technology*, p. 41.

knowledge of the Ultimate Reality.¹⁵⁴ Accordingly, he affirms that ethics can never be divorced from metaphysics, especially in relation to the transcendental properties of One, Good, Beauty and Truth, which are convertible and assure a high sense of morality.¹⁵⁵ Kierkegaard is very categorical when he declares that in the religious sphere of life, especially B, we are capable of confronting our impotence. When we do this, we resist the urge to simply stop caring about our existence due to the effects of despair. Because of this conviction that God will intervene in our affairs, we are able to take a fearless and passionate interest in things, even those we know are beyond our control. Therefore, faith according to Kierkegaard is the corner stone of man's dignity, since it makes man draw closer to the Invisible power that established him as a self (God). Hence, to be a Christian, is to stand prepared to sacrifice ourselves in an attempt to realize God's will.¹⁵⁶ Only he who has affirmed his spiritual state can be ready to die for God's will. This indicates that those who recognize, nurture and manifest their awareness of being a composite of body and spirit, are capable of ascertaining their dignity in a number of ways that the world considers foolish and stupid.

It is necessary that we touch the fundamental area which Kierkegaard regards as the main cure to despair; self-consciousness. We have so far seen the role played by religion and especially science in determining human character. Now we can evaluate the hinge of the aforementioned features of this sickness: self-conscious. Emphasis on death is common to Kierkegaard who holds that our being is an existence towards death, an illness which must lead to death.¹⁵⁷ Our existence, therefore, is a movement towards an end in death, which Heidegger has propounded. Here we are looking at death not as an end but a movement towards an end.

Existentialist philosophy according to Stephen owes its roots in the blending of the French and German philosophy of existence which inspired and guided Heidegger to develop his thoughts into what could be described as postmetaphysical thinking when he criticised the western conception of metaphysics by proposing a new way of thinking of asking the question of being.¹⁵⁸ The mental position of Kierkegaard enabled Heidegger to develop his existentialist philosophy of being. It's from this perspective that Heidegger did a critical analysis of the being he calls *Dasein*, from the existentialist reflection of reality by Kierkegaard.

¹⁵⁴ I. BARBOUR, *Ethics in an Age of Technology*, p. 41.

¹⁵⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁵⁶ S. KIERKEGAARD, *Becoming Subjective, in Concluding Unscientific Postscript to Philosophical Fragments*, p. 135.

¹⁵⁷ R. SOLOMON, *From Rationalism to Existentialism: The Existentialists and their Nineteenth Century Backgrounds*, Harper & Row, 1972, p. 226.

¹⁵⁸ S. MICHELMAN, *Historical Dictionary of Existentialism*, The Scarecrow Press, Inc., 2008, p. XI.

2.2.3. The Nihilism of Friedrich Nietzsche

The term Nihilism comes from the Latin word “*Nihil*” which means nothing or not anything, it is the belief that all values are baseless and that nothing can be known or communicated, It is mostly associated with a radical skepticism that condemns existence.¹⁵⁹ Thus the thought of Nietzsche on this idea that the corrosive consequences of this school of thought will destroy the nature of metaphysics, morals and religious convictions precipitating the greatest crisis in human history. Even though Schopenhauer influenced Nietzsche, there is a deviation of what Nietzsche holds on the notion of the will and what Schopenhauer holds on the notion of the will and the pessimism that flows from there. Schopenhauer talks of the will to live which is frustrated by misfortunes and sufferings. As such, Schopenhauer poses his pessimism, that is, everything in life is worthless since it will inevitably be crumbled by misfortune and suffering. Nietzsche, on the other hand talks of the will to power.

For Nietzsche, everything that exists has at its bottom and in its totality, will to power as he affirms it in various ways. For him therefore, the essence of the world is will to power and equally, the most intimate essence of being.¹⁶⁰ The will to power has its greatest relevance for Nietzsche’s philosophy in his notion of the Superman. It is the basic drive underlying all human activities, and fear or laziness are to be considered as the most universal trait of this will to power. While fear makes us avoid something, the will to Power which is a positive motive makes us strive for it. For Nietzsche, when the powerful hurt others, they are not motivated by the wish to hurt. They do so incidentally in the process of using their power creatively.¹⁶¹ Nietzsche’s attempt is to reduce practically all human behaviour to the striving for excellence, which is to overpower one’s neighbour and even take the place of God. This will to power therefore pushes him to announce God’s death, which would mean man’s liberation and the existence of the superman.¹⁶²

Nietzsche considers will to Power as devilish, a devil that diverts man from achieving culture or a psychological urge that will help him explain the diverse and complex types of human behaviours. He thus considers this will to Power as the basic drive of all human efforts.¹⁶³ Furthermore, Nietzsche asserts that the will to Power is tyrannical. This is in the sense that man

¹⁵⁹ F. JAMES, *The Internet Encyclopedia of philosophy*, 1998, p. 730.

¹⁶⁰ F. Nietzsche, *Beyond Good and Evil*, Princeton University Press, 1886, p. 186.

¹⁶¹ W. Kaufmann, *Nietzsche: Philosopher, Psychologist, Anti-Christ*, Double Day and Company, 1950, p. 97

¹⁶² F. Nietzsche, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, Routledge and Kegan Paul Ltd, 1883, p. 11

¹⁶³ R. C. Solomon, *Nietzsche: A Collection of Critical Essays*, Anchor Press, 1973, pp. 227-228

must oppose tyrants to become a tyrant and that negative qualities are not imbedded in man's nature but only develops. Man by nature is altruistic but an unreserved love for power is what makes him bad.¹⁶⁴ Nietzsche's will to power, despite some negatives connotations it carries, disproves Schopenhauer's pessimism of life because man can always use this drive to overcome anything that may bring him pain, suffering and misery; aspects which form the foundation of Schopenhauer's pessimism. After examining Arthur Schopenhauer pessimistic view of human existence, we will now move to the third part of our work where we shall be looking at the implications of Schopenhauer's thought in our contemporary society, especially from the point of view of the Religious, Political and Socio-Ethical.

Heidegger's reading of Nietzsche may be better off understood with the statement he makes about Nietzsche by saying that the interpretation of Nihilism and our view point with respect to it from our relation to history in general.¹⁶⁵ Heidegger claims that what Nietzsche undertakes with regard to the world entirely is a kind of negative theology, which tries to grasp the absolute as purely as possible which holds at bay all relative which means all those that relate to human determinations. In this sense, Nietzsche for Heidegger is determined of his world totality is a negative theology without the Christian God.¹⁶⁶ According to Stephen Michelman, in which he says;

Friedrich Nietzsche is the second major 19th-century precursor of existentialism. Nietzsche's influence on existentialism, while significant, is, however, more diffuse and harder to pinpoint. His concepts of the "death of God," nihilism, the "Overman," the "will to power," and the "transvaluation of all values" cast a spell over most European intellectuals of the early 20th century, including many existentialists¹⁶⁷

Nietzsche had great influence on Heidegger as he also contributed reality to the philosophical school of thought known as existentialism which is highlighted as seen in the above quotation. Concepts such as the death of God, the will to power and the idea of Nihilism in Europe at the time of Nietzsche's writing from historical perspectives greatly inspired Heidegger to develop his existentialist philosophy.

He regarded Nietzsche as the greatest thinker in the history of philosophy since Plato given Nietzsche's position on metaphysics which is the end of metaphysics as found in his

¹⁶⁴ F. Nietzsche, *Will To Power*, Vintage Books, New York, 1968, p. 407.

¹⁶⁵ L. P. Hemming(Ed) et alii, *The Movement of Nihilism; Heidegger's Thinking After Nietzsche*, Continuum International Publishing Group, 2011, p.45.

¹⁶⁶ Heidegger, *Die ewige Wiederkehr des Gleichen* (GA44), p. 100

¹⁶⁷ S. MICHELMAN, *Historical Dictionary of Existentialism*, The Scarecrow Press, Inc., 2008, p. XIV.

philosophy. For Martin Heidegger, Nietzsche's philosophy is the end of metaphysics so long as it reverts to Greek philosophy to the very commencement of Greek thought, taking up such thought in a way that is peculiar to Nietzsche's philosophy alone because Nietzsche's fundamental position of metaphysics is the end of metaphysics. It performs the greatest and most profound Plato.

2.2.4. The Epistemological Phenomenology of Edmund Husserl

Phenomenology is the school of thought which is involved in the study of the evolutionary process of consciousness from its simplest to its most sophisticated forms.¹⁶⁸ The father of this school of thought was Edmund Husserl, who was influenced by F. Brentano. Husserl regarded phenomenology primarily as a scientific methodology aimed at the things themselves. This does not mean, however, that phenomenology according to Husserl should be concerned with proving the existence of a thing. According to Brentano, descriptive psychology is the science which specifies the laws governing the succession and nature of our psychic experiences. Brentano also influenced Husserl with his account of intentionality, mind and object, in which he says for the mind to be perceived is to perceive something. For Husserl phenomenology began with Franz Brentano.¹⁶⁹

The objective of Husserl's phenomenology is to find a universal foundation for philosophy and science. For Husserl, every act of consciousness is always consciousness of something. Phenomenology to him is the contemplation of pure essences on the basis of exemplary individual intuitions of experiences; phenomenology is a viewing of essences' which examines the meaning of perception, judging, feeling, as such.¹⁷⁰ Phenomenology to Husserl thus lays the ground work for all the sciences. In terms of logic, phenomenology for Husserl paves the way by elucidating the way concepts are constituted in concrete experiences.¹⁷¹

Husserl limits phenomenology to the study of the absolute certain, and if the only thing we are certain of is that consciousness is always consciousness of something, then great care must be taken to ensure that, that of which we cannot be certain does not corrupt the absolute

¹⁶⁸ B. NICHOLAS ET Y. JIYUAN, *The Blackwell Dictionary of Western Philosophy*, Blackwell Publishing Ltd, 2004, p. 516.

¹⁶⁹ D. MORAN, *Introduction to Phenomenology*, Routledge, 2000, p. 12. Franz Clemens von Brentano was born in January 1838 at Marienberg-am-Rhein in Germany. Soon after his birth the family later relocated to Aschaffenburg still in Germany. Brentano graduated from the Royal Bavarian Gymnasium in 1855, and after a year at the Lyceum, he enrolled into the philosophy faculty in 1856. At the University of Munich where he spent three semesters, followed by one semester studying theology at the University of Wurzburg. He later went to Berlin where he started attending lectures in psychology. He died in 1917.

¹⁷⁰ D. Moran, *Introduction to Phenomenology*, Routledge, 2000, p. 106.

¹⁷¹ *Ibid.*

validity of the phenomenological method.¹⁷² For Husserl phenomenology is a return to *Phenomena*. When Husserl uses the term *phenomena* he means the things that appear to us. These are things which appear concretely to us, and also things that are thought. In the crisis of the European sciences, Husserl clearly explains his philosophy and concept of phenomenology as the study of consciousness.¹⁷³ Husserl started by explaining that European science as gradually considered truth to be objective. He then concluded that the European sciences has reduced reality to the physical where truth is basically physical and can be explained objectively with experimentation. They dismiss the spiritual dimension of reality Husserl the went forward to explain that phenomenology is the study of conciseness from the first person point of view which involves the subject. Kant contributed to this idea with the phenomena and the Numina. For Kant, phenomena mean things as they appear to us. Meanwhile Numina is the things as they appear in themselves.¹⁷⁴ Phenomenology in the thinking of Husserl rejects the position of Kant, by saying things don't differ from the way they are and how they appear to us.

Husserl also criticised Descartes concept of “I think therefore I am” for to Husserl to think is to think of something, thus, it is not I think therefore I am but I think therefore I think of something.¹⁷⁵ To think thus is to think of something, hence what Husserl described as intentionality. Husserl talks of two concept one which is known a *Noesis* which to him means the process of the intention of consciousness. And also, we have *Noema* is the thing as they appear to us. Thus for him, to be conscious is to be conscious of something. He then proposed the method of phenomenological bracketing which in Greek is described as philosophical *epoche*. This means that in every sphere of thinking and reflection, phenomenology should involve the suspension of judgment and approach reality as it is without any prejudices so as to judge reality as it is. He then ended by saying we can judge reality the way it is if we bracket our prejudices.

In the early life of Heidegger, he was influenced by Husserl and he turned his attention to mathematics. Further in 1919, he turned to philosophy and became Husserl's assistant in the University. During these years, his attention was on phenomenology and he was so focus paying attention to the original project of phenomenology as was seen by Husserl, back to things themselves. In 1924, Heidegger became an associate at the University of Marburg, where he

¹⁷² R. SHEFFLER, *Interpreting Otherwise than Heidegger*, Duquesne University Press, 1993, pp. 15 – 18.

¹⁷³ H. EDMUND, *The Crisis of European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology*, David Carr(Trans), Northwest University Press, 1970, p.05.

¹⁷⁴ *Ibid* pp. 116-118.

¹⁷⁵ *Ibid*. pp. 75-83

wrote *Sein und Zeit*. Initially Heidegger carried out Husserl's original project which was getting back to things themselves. However, in 1924 with *Being and Time*, he deviated from Husserl by stating that phenomenology is much older than Husserl, and is a Greek way of thinking.¹⁷⁶ Thus Heidegger does not only regard Greek philosophy as the foundation and origin of thinking but also sees the Greek philosophy to be the first philosophical tradition to discuss the problems of beings he is to handle. Heidegger then said phenomenology is not a mere study of the intentional structures of consciousness. He also holds that phenomenology is a fundamental study of the relation between Dasein and Being.

Thus what he considered in philosophy and phenomenology was raising the question of being which to him is always raised with the being of the human being. However, in his deviation, Heidegger acknowledges the contributions of Husserl in shaping his ideas and development of philosophy. Heidegger in *Being and Time* says, the following investigations would not have been possible if the ground had not been prepared by Edmund Husserl, with whose logical investigations phenomenology first emerged.¹⁷⁷ Husserlian phenomenology emphasises on transcendental reduction meanwhile the goal of philosophy as concern with being for Heidegger. For Heidegger "to let that which shows itself be seen from itself in the very way from which it shows itself from itself." The metaphysical issues discussed by Heidegger of the question of being, forgetfulness of being, the overcoming of this forgetfulness and the destruction of the metaphysical tradition, while finalizing the real problem with Dasein and being or more concretely the being of man. Heidegger, on the other hand, considers phenomenology as the science of the being of beings. This means that being the subject matter of phenomenology is familiar because everyone has some grasp of what it is for something to be. In this light therefore, one belongs to the others oneself... the others, whom one designates as such in order to cover over one's own essential belonging to them, are those who are there initially and for the most part in everyday being-with-one-another.¹⁷⁸

¹⁷⁶ M. HEIDEGGER, *Being and Time*, The New American Library, Inc., 1975, pp. 126-128.

¹⁷⁷ H. EDMUND, *The Crisis of European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology*, David Carr(Trans), Northwest University Press, 1970, pp. 75-83.

¹⁷⁸ M. HEIDEGGER, *Being and Time*, The New American Library, Inc., 1975, pp. 126-128.

PARTIAL CONCLUSION

We started our discussion in chapter one by examining the meaning of some key terms as being used in this work. We also explained the nature and sequential change in the conception of being across history as a postmetaphysical concept in the philosophy of Martin Heidegger. In chapter two we set out to experiment in the laboratory of reason those thinkers whose ideas and philosophy enabled Heidegger to develop his philosophy. Our task in this chapter was thus to look at those who helped Heidegger to develop his philosophy of beings. What we discovered from the ancient period of philosophy so that the metaphysical ideas of Parmenides greatly influenced Heidegger in the development of his philosophy of being. Another philosophy that greatly influenced Heidegger was Plato with his theory of idea or what could be described as philosophical idealism also inspired Heidegger. Plato's doctrine on truth also ennobled Heidegger to develop his philosophy of being. Another post-Socratic philosopher from the ancient period who inspired Heidegger was Aristotle with his metaphysics of being of the explanation of what being is. In the modern period of history Heidegger was greatly influenced by the fathers of existentialism like Kierkegaard and Fredrich Nietzsche, these two great thinkers enabled Heidegger to develop his philosophy easily with their ideas. Another thinker who inspired Heidegger was Wilhelm Dilthey, with his conception of history and explanations. We have lastly Edmund Husserl the teacher and greatest thinker that influenced Heidegger's philosophy with his concept on phenomenology. These are the great minds that contributed in different ways from different perspective to enable Heidegger develop his philosophy as we read and understand it today. At this point, we shall proceed to the next chapter to observe the critique of traditional conception of being across the history of ideas by Heidegger and by some modern thinkers.

PART TWO
THE PROBLEM OF THE PERTINENCE OF HEIDEGGER'S CRITIQUE
OF METAPHYSICS

CHAPTER THREE

THE CRITIC OF TRADITIONAL METAPHYSICS BY HEIDEGGER

PARTIAL INTRODUCTION

We have seen from previous chapters that Heidegger's philosophy had many thinkers contributing to his understanding of being which led him to explain the meaning of being as he did. However, our task in this chapter is to discuss the critique of the western metaphysical tradition by Heidegger and some modern thinkers. The critique and rejection of metaphysical thinking by some thinkers; who understand metaphysics as unimportant. M. Heidegger thus, formulates the question of the meaning of being so as to better explain it, although this question had been tackled in the ancient period by Anaximander and Parmenides. Heidegger does explain the question and meaning of being explicitly by analysing *Dasein*.

He aims to bring to the limelight the question of being discussed by Aristotle, Aquinas and Hegel.¹⁷⁹ He sets out to answer the question of being which according to him Western philosophy had failed to answer although he takes most of his time working out what it means for being to be, and he does limit this being to man as such. He calls trees, stones and other things below human existence entities. Heidegger is out to answer the question which was once asked but according to him has long been forgotten.¹⁸⁰ Therefore, this chapter is dedicated to examination of the failures of the western traditional canon and its weakness to give a proper explanation to the meaning of being. We shall thus continue with this chapter to examine the critics of western philosophy as presented by Heidegger and some modern philosophers.

¹⁷⁹ M. HEIDEGGER, *Existence and Being*, Vision Press Ltd, 1968, p. 26.

¹⁸⁰ M. INWOOD, *Heidegger*, Oxford University Press, 1997, p. 8.

3.1. Logical Positivist Thinkers

3.1.1. The verification Principle of A. J. Ayer

A. J. Ayer¹⁸¹ holds among other beliefs, a principle known as the verifiability theory of meaning, according to which if you make a factual statement¹⁸² but no one has any idea of what empirical observations would verify it, then your words, do not really express a genuine factual proposition.¹⁸³ The basic doctrine of the logical positivists is the theory of meaning, according to which the cognitive meaning of a sentence is its method of verification: if a sentence is not verifiable, directly or indirectly, then it is cognitively meaningless.¹⁸⁴ From this doctrine of verification, Ayer considers that since metaphysical statements cannot be verified, then metaphysics is an illusion. Ayer defines a metaphysical statement as “a sentence which purports to express a genuine proposition but does, in fact, express neither a tautology nor an empirical hypothesis.”¹⁸⁵

N. Brooke and K. Bruder classify the 20th century as one characterized by world wars, nuclear weapons, television, space travel, and genetic engineering.¹⁸⁶ Hence, Brooke and Bruder assert that philosophy was influenced by the writings of these English philosophers known as Logical Positivists¹⁸⁷ and their writings gained the name, Analytic Philosophy. We may ask ourselves how special the analytic method was to the logical positivists and why they depended so much on logical analysis as a basis for their philosophy. Logical Positivism was influenced by Russell and Wittgenstein on the verifiability theory of meaning, the rejection of metaphysics and

¹⁸¹ A. J. AYER, *Language Truth and Logic*, Dover Publications, Inc. 1952, p. 1. Sir Alfred Ayer was born in 1910 and educated as King's Scholar at Klein and as a classical scholar at Christ Church, Oxford. After spending a short period at the University of Vienna, he became Lecturer in Philosophy at Christ Church in 1935 and Research Student in 1935. Under the influence of Immanuel Kant, who had posited that our real knowledge of a thing is what we experience and who thought that beyond the thing in itself one is not sure of the knowledge one gets, Ayer first of all seeks to eliminate those statements which claim to describe what we cannot experience. Ayer calls these statements metaphysical statements and thinks that they express “non-sense” which makes them meaningless.

¹⁸² A. J. AYER, *Language Truth and Logic*, p. 41. A factual statement, according to A. J. Ayer, is any statement whose truth value can be achieved by a series of observations. For example, “John is a murderer”. This statement is factual if John, as a proof of his being a murderer, has a knife in his jacket with blood stains on it.

¹⁸³ Cfr. N. BROOKE et K. BRUDER, *Philosophy the Power of Ideas*, Mayfield Publishing Company, 1990, p. 107. This doctrine of verifiability was held among a group of professors in the University of Vienna in about 1950, who called themselves logical positivists.

¹⁸⁴ M. WEITZ, *20th- Century Philosophy: The Analytic Tradition*, The Free Press, 1966, p. 8. “Meaning” is always understood in the sense of “cognitive meaning”. The thesis that the sentences of metaphysics are meaningless, is to be understood in the sense that they have no cognitive meaning, no assertive content. The obvious psychological fact that they have expressive meaning is thereby not denied. (Cfr. A. J. AYER (ed.), *Logical positivism*, p. 81.)

¹⁸⁵ A. J. AYER (ed.), *Logical positivism*, p. 41.

¹⁸⁶ N. BROOKE et K. BRUDER, *Philosophy the Power of Ideas*, p. 445.

¹⁸⁷ Logical positivists are a group of philosophers, mathematicians and scientists in the University of Vienna. They were led by Moritz Schlick. Their doctrine is called logical positivism. Their central tenet is the verifiability principle which we shall discuss later.

theology, the emotive theory of moral judgments, the unity of science, the conception of language as a calculus and so on.¹⁸⁸ Moreover, the basic doctrine of the logical positivists is the theory of meaning, according to which the cognitive meaning of a sentence is its method of verification: if a sentence is not verifiable or is not a truth value tautology, it is cognitively meaningless.¹⁸⁹

According to Ayer, the principle of verification is supposed to furnish a criterion by which it can be determined whether or not a sentence¹⁹⁰ is literally meaningful.¹⁹¹ In another sense, it is saying that a sentence is literally meaningful if and only if the proposition it expresses is either analytic or empirically verifiable.¹⁹² In this case, it is assumed that every proposition is either true or false and to say that a sentence expresses what is either true or false would entail saying that it is literally meaningful.¹⁹³ For Ayer, metaphysical assertions are meaningless because they bear no relation to fact.¹⁹⁴ For example, the proposition: “the red shirt on the table is mine”, is practically verifiable because the red shirt can be seen on the table. It follows that if the red shirt is on the table, then the proposition can be true. This is quite different from verifiability in principle which is logically possible though we can not verify the propositions. He thus says:

*Plainly we all understand, in many cases believe, propositions which we have not in fact taken steps to verify. Many of these are propositions which we could verify if we took enough trouble. But there remain a number of significant propositions, concerning matters of fact, which we could not verify even if we chose: simply because we lack the practical means of placing ourselves in the situation where the relevant observations could be made.*¹⁹⁵

Ayer admits that there is a difficulty in verifying significant propositions using practical verifiability. This is because, as we earlier mentioned, there is a lack of observable conditions which could facilitate the practical verifiability of significant propositions. Giving an example, Ayer notes:

¹⁸⁸ M. WEITZ, *20th- Century Philosophy: The Analytic Tradition*, p. 8.

¹⁸⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁹⁰ D. J. O’CONNOR, *A Critical History of Western Philosophy*, The Free Press, 1964, p. 495. The logical positivists tended to speak indifferently of sentences, statements and propositions. It is sometimes important to distinguish these. For example, a sentence belongs to a particular language. It is meaningful or not but it is not properly said to be true or false. It is not verifiable and does not stand in logical relations to other sentences: a statement or proposition may be expressed by different sentences in the same or in different languages, but does not itself belong to a particular language, it is properly said to be true or false, it is verifiable or not, it does stand in logical relations to other statements or propositions. A statement is said to be whatever is expressed by an indicative sentence, whether the sentence is cognitively meaningful or not, while a proposition is said to be whatever is expressed by a cognitively meaningful sentence.

¹⁹¹ A. J. AYER, *Language Truth and Logic*, p. 31.

¹⁹² *Ibid.*

¹⁹³ *Ibid.*

¹⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 36. Moreover, Ayer uses a modified verification principle after bringing out two set divisions of verifiability. We shall examine the various types of verification principles. Let us consider the first division: practical verifiability and verifiability in principle. Ayer affirms that practical verifiability has to do with propositions which could be verified directly with our senses.

¹⁹⁵ *Ibid.*

A simple and familiar example of such a proposition is the proposition that “there are mountains on the farther side of the moon”. No rocket has yet been invented which would enable me to go and look at the farther side of the moon, so that I am unable to decide the matter by actual observation. But I do know what observations would decide it for me, if, as is theoretically conceivable, I were once in a position to make them. And therefore I say that the proposition is verifiable in principle, if not in practice, and is accordingly significant.¹⁹⁶

Ayer seeks refuge in verifiability in principle after deliberating on the fact that some propositions could not be verified due to lack of observations which will lead us to the determination of their truth value. For Ayer, verification in principle allows us to value such propositions which have meaning but could not be verified.¹⁹⁷ But do metaphysical statements fall into this set of propositions which could only be verified in principle? Ayer answers this question by stating:

Such a metaphysical pseudo-proposition as “the Absolute enters into, but is itself incapable of, evolution and progress”, is not even in principle verifiable. For one cannot conceive of an observation which would enable one to determine whether the Absolute did or did not enter into evolution and progress.¹⁹⁸

Ayer still adheres to his belief that metaphysical statements such as the one quoted above make no sense to an English speaker since the speaker cannot go any further to check their verification.¹⁹⁹ It should be noted here that for Ayer, truth is in virtue of meaning. This leads us to the next division of verifiability that Ayer makes. Ayer posits that “a proposition is said to be verifiable in the strong sense of the term, if and only if its truth could be conclusively established in experience”.²⁰⁰ On the other hand, “it is verifiable in the weak sense, if it is possible for experience to render it probable”.²⁰¹ This distinction raises the question: “in which sense are we using the term when we say that a recognized proposition is genuine only if it is verifiable?”²⁰² Ayer answers this question with examples thus:

It seems to me that if we adopt conclusive verifiability²⁰³ as our criterion of significance, as some positivists have proposed, our argument will prove too much. Consider, for example, the case of general propositions of law-such propositions, (namely), as “arsenic is poisonous”, “all men are mortal” ... it is of the very nature of

¹⁹⁶ A. J. AYER, *Language Truth and Logic*, p. 36.

¹⁹⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁹⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁹⁹ *Ibid.* After bringing forth this pair of verifiability, Ayer notices that the truth value of some propositions which could be verified in principle will be wanting. For following from this verification in principle, the proposition that the planet Earth has mountains and rivers and seas, will imply that the planet Jupiter will also have mountains since both Earth and Jupiter are planets. Logically, the proposition is significant but the truth value is questioned.

²⁰⁰ A. J. AYER, *Language Truth and Logic*, p. 37.

²⁰¹ *Ibid.*

²⁰² *Ibid.*

²⁰³ Conclusive verifiability as used in this case refers to those statements or propositions which are irrefutable at any time. They are definitely true or false.

*these propositions that their truth cannot be established with certainty by any finite series of observations. But if it is recognized that such general propositions of law are designed to cover an infinite number of cases, then it must be admitted that they cannot even in principle, be verified conclusively.*²⁰⁴

From this quote, Ayer indirectly admits the limited nature of verifiability in the strong sense, for many if not all truths could not be verified conclusively. Verifiability in the weak sense is preferable since it allows propositions, such as general propositions of law, to be true in themselves and would not require any limited series of observation: otherwise, the general propositions of law will be treated as statements of a metaphysician.²⁰⁵

3.1.2. The logical analysis of Rudolph Carnap on the philosophy of the Mind

According to Henry Van Laer the word analysis comes from a Greek verb, ‘*analyein*’, which means to dissolve or to separate.²⁰⁶ That is, it is resolving a complex proposition into a simpler one for better understanding. Analytic philosophy is the predominant 20th century philosophical tradition in English-speaking countries. It had its roots in British empiricism and holds that analysis is the proper method of philosophy. N. Brooke and K. Bruder note that the importance of analysis came into existence with the doctrine on knowledge of the 19th century philosopher, Immanuel Kant.²⁰⁷ According to Russell, both in logic and the theory of knowledge, analysis is very important especially in the case of belief.²⁰⁸ This was seemingly a great intellectual achievement, since the method of analysis, to those who were familiar with it, seemed to yield substantial and “demonstratable” results, which were akin to those achieved by science.²⁰⁹ One of those familiar with this method of analysis was Ludwig Wittgenstein, Russell’s student.²¹⁰ The analytic method was the basis of his *Tractatus Logico Philosophicus*²¹¹. However, holding firmly

²⁰⁴ A. J. AYER, *Language Truth and Logic*, p.37.

²⁰⁵ *Ibid.*

²⁰⁶ H. LAER, *Philosophy of Science*, Duquesne University, 1956, p. 72.

²⁰⁷ N. BROOKE et K. BRUDER, *Philosophy the Power of Ideas*, 457. Commenting on I. Kant’s epistemology, Brooke and K. Bruder state that for I. Kant, we can have certain knowledge, of an object, through experience. But concerning the other world, I. Kant asserts that of the thing-in-itself, complete skepticism is unavoidable. I. Kant also noted that when rules that apply to the experienced world are applied to a reality beyond our experience, contradictions and mistakes are the result. As it can be seen, I. Kant doubted knowledge beyond the sensible world, taking the position of a skeptic. Knowledge gotten, according to I. Kant, should be in conformity with rules that could be analyzed. From this point of view, I. Kant recommends analysis as an excellent method of philosophizing.

²⁰⁸ B. RUSSELL, *An Inquiry into Meaning and Truth*, Penguin Books, 1962, p. 18.

²⁰⁹ N. BROOKE et K. BRUDER, *Philosophy the Power of Ideas*, p.458.

²¹⁰ A. J. AYER (ed.), *Logical Positivism*, the Free Press, 1959, p.11.

²¹¹ J. HARTNACK, *Wittgenstein and Modern Philosophy*, Maurice Cranston (trans.), Anchor Books, Doubleday and Company, 1962, p. 45. The *Tractatus* is a book of about eighty pages but has exercised a greater influence on 20th century philosophy than almost any other single work. This most outstanding work of L. Wittgenstein has contributed much to the philosophy of the logical positivists.

to the fact that analysis is the proper method of philosophy, the logical positivists²¹² intended to take possession of the discoveries of modern logic.²¹³ This earned them the appellation “Logical”.²¹⁴ It should be noted that the attempt to bring philosophy within the domain of logic was carried further by Rudolf Carnap in his book “*Logical Syntax of Language*”. As a matter of fact, philosophy, he said in the forward of this book is to be replaced by the logic of science, that is to say, by the logical analysis of the concepts and sentences of the sciences, for the logic of science is nothing other than the logical syntax of the language of science.²¹⁵ Taking from Auguste Comte’s conception of “positive knowledge”²¹⁶, the logical positivists believed that we could consider any knowledge as real if the facts are observable.²¹⁷ Knowledge at this stage was considered scientific and any contradiction to scientific knowledge was an illusion or “negative knowledge”.

According to Ayer, philosophy has as its peculiar business to ascertain and make clear the meaning of statements and questions. For the positivists, metaphysics is the cause of chaos in the history of philosophy.²¹⁸ This is because metaphysics has meaningless sentences and the logical positivists argue that a language consists of a number of words which make up its vocabulary, and rules of syntax, including rules which determine how the words may be put together to form sentences.²¹⁹ Consequently, there are at least two ways in which a sequence of words may fail to express a genuine statement. Either one or more of the words may have no sense, or the sequence may be counter-syntactical.²²⁰ If grammatical syntax corresponds to logical syntax, pseudo-statements could not arise. In as much as metaphysical sentences are formed counter syntactically, logically speaking, even when syntactically correct, grammatically speaking, they

²¹² F. COPLESTON, *A History of Philosophy*, Vol IX, Search Press, 1974, pp. 74-79. Auguste Comte (1798-1857), was the founder of positivism, a philosophical and political movement which enjoyed a very wide diffusion in the second half of the 19th century. The classical positivism of Auguste Comte maintains that the human mind develops through three distinct stages: the first is the religious stage in which man tends to have a religious worldview and interprets events in a religious way. Man, at this primitive stage, depends on religion in order to explain reality. The second stage is the metaphysical stage in which man tends to give abstract, metaphysical explanations to reality. Man resorts to metaphysics in his attempt to explain things and events in the world. The third stage is the positive stage or the stage of positive science. This stage according to A. Comte is a stage of mature scientific mentality.

²¹³ A. J. AYER (ed.), *Logical Positivism*, p. 10.

²¹⁴ *Ibid.*

²¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 24.

²¹⁶ F. COPLESTON, *A History of Philosophy*, Vol IX, pp. 74-79. “Positive knowledge” is knowledge attained in A. Comte’s third stage of the development of the human mind.

²¹⁷ A. J. AYER (ed.), *Logical Positivism*, p. 152.

²¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p.86.

²¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p.38.

²²⁰ D. J. O’CONNOR, *A Critical History of Western Philosophy*, p. 495.

are meaningless because of the meaninglessness of metaphysical words.²²¹ But the metaphysician would say that he does not intend this empirical meaning”.²²² The meaning of the word “principle” has been distorted in its use in the metaphysical realm for one cannot observe the earth coming out of water as its principle. This could be applied to other metaphysical words such as Being, Infinite, Absolute, The One and so forth which when combined to other words, though they may be syntactically correct, express nothing but one’s feeling.²²³

According to Ayer, in order to make philosophy achieve its purpose of being a genuine branch of knowledge, it must be defined in such a way as to distinguish it from metaphysics.²²⁴ This is because metaphysics is a kind of poetry and the metaphysician is no more than a misplaced poet. Moreover, this emotivistic feature in Ayer’s thought prompts him to say that metaphysicians may have considerable value as means of moral inspiration.²²⁵ He goes further to posit that although the greater part of metaphysics is merely the embodiment of routine errors, there remain a number of metaphysical passages which are the work of genuine mystical feeling and they may more plausibly be held to have moral or aesthetic value.²²⁶ From this point, Ayer declares the independence of philosophy from metaphysics. In the combat for the elimination of metaphysics, Ayer stresses that philosophy is wholly independent from metaphysics although the analytic method is commonly believed by its critics to have a metaphysical basis.²²⁷ For Ayer, philosophical propositions are not factual, but linguistic in character, that is, they express definitions, or the formal consequences of definitions and this is part of logic as he states:

*The propositions of philosophy...do not describe the behavior of physical, or even mental, objects: they express definitions... accordingly, we may say that philosophy is a department of logic. For we shall see that the characteristic mark of a purely logical enquiry is that it is concerned with the formal consequences of our definitions and not with questions of empirical fact.*²²⁸

²²¹ A. J. AYER (ed.), *Logical Positivism*, p. 67. Ayer maintains that “these words are ambiguous and vague for when we say that the world arises from water, we observe that things or processes of the kind water are frequently or invariably followed by things or process of the kind earth.

²²² *Ibid.*

²²³ *Ibid.*

²²⁴ A. J. Ayer, *Language Truth and Logic*, p. 44. Ayer also maintains that even though metaphysical statements have no literal meaning, that is, they are not subject to any criteria of truth or falsehood, they may still serve to express, or arouse emotion and thus be subject to ethical standards.

²²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 45. Nonetheless, Ayer strongly holds that a poet is far better than a metaphysician because sentences produced by the poet have literal meaning while those propounded by a metaphysician have no literal meaning.

²²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 45. Here, we see Ayer bringing out two types of metaphysics: that produced by a philosopher who has been duped by grammar, and that produced by a mystic who is trying to express the inexpressible. But all these for Ayer remain useless for being duped by grammar causes one to make pseudo-statements and trying to express the inexpressible is illogical.

²²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 56.

²²⁸ A. J. AYER, *Language Truth and Logic*, p. 57.

From this quote we see Ayer stressing the indispensability of logical analysis in philosophy. Due to the application of logic, it will be impossible to take a false statement to be true and a true statement to be false.²²⁹ This application of logic to philosophical questions, supposedly, yields a clear cognitive content of philosophy, leading us to a positive result which is worked out in the domain of empirical science.²³⁰

This brings to light the impossibility of philosophy without logical analysis as philosophy depends on logical analysis for distinct clear solutions to philosophical problems. Ayer goes further to confirm that philosophy does not in anyway compete with science.²³¹ According to him, propositions in philosophy are not factual but linguistic in character; they express definitions or the formal consequence of definitions. This makes philosophy a department of logic. At the initial state of eliminating metaphysics, Ayer states that “we may begin by criticizing the metaphysical thesis that philosophy affords us knowledge of a reality transcending the world of science and common sense”.²³² He further maintains that it is possible to be a metaphysician without believing in transcendent reality. This is because metaphysical utterances are due to the commission of logical errors rather than to a conscious desire on the part of their authors to go beyond the limits of experience.²³³

3.1.3. The Empiricism of David Hume

Empiricism is a philosophical doctrine which lays emphasis in the sphere of sense-perception, and the relation between sense-data and material objects, the problem of the external world, and the results and methodology of the sciences.²³⁴ It embraces concreteness and particularity, and encourages rigorous standards of clarity and precision. Empiricism claims that the sciences provide our best knowledge of reality. Rational enquiry into the problem of knowledge is one of the major characteristics of the Modern Era. Philosophizing in this epoch is the intellectual reawakening of thinkers, which dates back to the sixteenth and seventeenth

²²⁹ A. J. AYER, *The Problem of Knowledge*, Penguin Books Ltd., 1956, p. 68.

²³⁰ A. J. AYER, (ed.), *Logical Positivism*, p. 60.

²³¹ A. J. Ayer., *Language Truth and Logic*, p. 57. It is clear that the possibility of philosophical analysis is independent of any assumptions, that is, it deals with facts. From this point of view, it is even more obvious that philosophical analysis is independent of any metaphysical assumptions. This is because it is absurd to suppose that the provision of definitions and the study of their formal consequences, involve meaningful metaphysical assumptions. This leads us to examine what Ayer says concerning the fact that metaphysicians claim to have knowledge and truth of transcendent reality.

²³² *Ibid.*, p. 33.

²³³ A. J. AYER, *Language Truth and Logic*, p. p. 33. Ayer enunciates that all metaphysical statements start from sense experience, “and if so”, he continues, “what valid process of reasoning can possibly lead him to the conception of a transcendent reality?”

²³⁴ B. NICHOLAS ET Y. JIYUAN, *The Blackwell Dictionary of Western Philosophy*, Blackwell Publishing Ltd, 2004, 208.

centuries where by Edmund Husserl, cried out loud for the disregard of metaphysics and philosophy by the development and advancement of modern science. This modern period had two perspectives of philosophy: Rationalism as the thesis, and Empiricism as the antithesis. And the debatable question for the time was; ‘Is knowledge innate or sensational?’ To this, the rationalists, led by René Descartes laid emphasis upon the rational capacity of the human mind, which they considered the source of truth both about man and about the world, hence concluded knowledge was innate²³⁵ In contra opinion, David Hume, John Locke,²³⁶ supported by followers; their diverse perspectives challenged such an assumption of the continental rationalists, who had launched modern philosophy upon an optimistic view of man’s rational powers, by claiming that the mind is passive in the process of knowledge.²³⁷ His knowledge of experiment gained from sciences thus underscores his philosophy as an empiricist. And in his theory of knowledge Hume states that, “Knowledge is restricted to ideas, not Plato’s Ideas or Forms, but ideas that are generated by objects we experience. The origin of ideas is *experience* and experience takes two forms, *sensation* and *reflection*.”²³⁸

Hence, we have the Empiricists’ doctrine; that the scope of our knowledge is limited to, and by our experience.²³⁹ Contextually, *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding* is Locke’s principal and famous philosophical treatise written in 1671AD and published in 1690AD in which he sets out to make an inventory of our “ideas” their kinds and origins, hence consolidating his empiricist position. In Book II of the *Essay* made up of three chapters, of which chapter II treats ‘Simple Ideas’ which is our focus in this write up. Preceded by a first chapter talking about ‘Ideas in General, and their Originals,’ this second chapter proceeds to treat ‘Simple Ideas’. Firstly, Locke says simple ideas are “uncompounded appearances.”²⁴⁰ Hence, for a better understanding of the nature of our knowledge, it is worth noting that some of the ideas we have are simple and some complex. More so, the qualities that affect our senses though found in the things themselves; so united and inseparable in the same subject produce ideas in our minds in single files simple and unmixed.²⁴¹ Secondly, the mind can neither make nor destroy these ideas,

²³⁵ S. E. STUMPF, *Socrates to Sartre: A History of Philosophy*, McGraw-Hill Book Company Inc., 1982, p. 227.

²³⁶ The founder of British empiricism and an Idealist born in 1632 at Wrington, Somerset, he died seventy-two years later in 1704. Locke grew up in a puritan home, trained in the virtues of hard work and the love of simplicity.

²³⁷ S. E. STUMPF, *Socrates to Sartre: A History of Philosophy*, p. 255.

²³⁸ S. E. STUMPF, *Socrates to Sartre: A History of Philosophy*, p. 257.

²³⁹ *Ibid.*

²⁴⁰ J. LOCKE, “An Essay Concerning Human Understanding” in *The Complete Works of John Locke*, Delphi Classics, 2017, p. 96.

²⁴¹ *Ibid.*

states Locke.²⁴² He claims that “Sensation” and “Reflection” are the lone ways by which simple ideas; the objects of all our knowledge are suggested and furnished to the mind. Because of this, the mind can neither invent/fashion any new simple idea by its own power rather than through the senses nor can any force of the mind destroy those already present there through either of the two ways. However, Locke holds that the mind can through reflection associate simple ideas to any extent in order to bring forth new complex ideas.²⁴³ Lastly, Locke asserts that “only the qualities that affect the senses are imaginable.”²⁴⁴ To this he says the scope of our knowing is limited within the five senses given us by God. That is why it is impossible for anyone to imagine any other qualities in bodies, howsoever constituted besides sounds, tastes, smells, visible and tangible qualities.²⁴⁵ Locke thus ends by asserting that the variety of having more senses than having been counted is suitable to the wisdom and power of the Maker: reason why if man had but four senses, the object of the fifth sense would have been out of his notice as now those belonging to a sixth or seventh sense can be.²⁴⁶

In the late 19th century and with the popularity of the empiricism of David Hume, science was making great and striking advances, just a situation that Husserl had decrease with the crisis of the European sciences.²⁴⁷ Due to this, metaphysical philosophy seemed like an illusion. To many scientists and scientifically trained philosophers, metaphysics had become a mass of meaningless words. The 19th and 20th centuries realized the success of the natural sciences so much so that philosophers, like David Hume, believed that philosophy should itself be held to the strictly empirical method and consequently banish every metaphysical explanation.²⁴⁸ Clouded by this success of the natural sciences, Hume posited that any volume of metaphysics we take in our hand has no experimental reasoning concerning a matter of fact and existence, thus, should be committed to flames for it is nothing but sophistry and illusion.²⁴⁹

Reflecting critically on key philosophical issues in our contemporary society, we come to realize that some philosophical traditions are being neglected and extinguished from the sphere of philosophical studies. Metaphysics as a philosophical tradition like any other philosophical

²⁴² J. LOCKE, “An Essay Concerning Human Understanding” in *The Complete Works of John Locke*, 2017, p. 96.

²⁴³ *Ibid*

²⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 97.

²⁴⁵ *Ibid.*

²⁴⁶ *Ibid.* p. 84.

²⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 458.

²⁴⁸ L. DE RAEYMAEKER, *The Philosophy of Being: a Synthesis of Metaphysics*, Edmund Ziegelmeyer (trans.), B. Herder Book Co., 1954, p. 85.

²⁴⁹ A. J. AYER (ed.), *Logical Positivism*, the Free Press, 1959, p. 10.

tradition experiences this extinction from the sphere of the academia. Philosophy as an academic discipline has the character of universality. Philosophy as the mother of all sciences from its definition covers any other area of studies in academics. The gigantic nature of western philosophy tradition over oriental philosophies and other philosophical traditions that are still in the process of developmental like African philosophy has made some philosophical traditions to go to extinction.

3.1.4. The Pragmatism of Williams James

William James gives a general definition of truth which seems to be in line with what the rationalists conceive of truth. But his use of agreement is disputable as pointed out by O'Connor: "Had James been more painstaking in developing the pragmatic meaning of agreement he might have avoided some of the harsher rejections of his doctrine and some of the confusion it engendered."²⁵⁰ According to William James, an idea cannot be true if it has no valuable practical effects in man's living; and that practical effects can only be verified through the application of that idea and seeing the nature of its practical consequences. It is only by use of this process that the conformity or agreement between an idea and its object can be known and thus, its truth or falsity. This is unacceptable because the pragmatic method of verification is contentious in that it is being reduced to sense experience and therefore renders ideas which cannot be verified by sense experience meaningless. It is evidently clear that we cannot rely on James' principle of verification because empirical verification alone is inadequate as a test for truth and meaningfulness of ideas. This is because empirical verification cannot go beyond sense experience. Truth in its elementary sense is simply conformity between the knower and the thing known. There can be said to be a kind of equalization that takes place between the two, in the sense that they are associated with one another in a harmonious, non-conflicting way. That is what Glenn means when he says:

*Truth is a relation; it exists between two things. The two things are mind on the one hand and something judged by the mind, that is, some judged reality, on the other hand.*²⁵¹

When the judging mind forms a judgment which accurately squares with the reality about which the judgment is made, there is truth in the judging mind. In other words, when we know things accurately and factually, we have the truth about them. Truth therefore is the relation of

²⁵⁰ D. O'CONNOR, *A Critical History of Western Philosophy*, Free Press, 1985, p. 450.

²⁵¹ P. GLENN, *An Introduction to Philosophy*, p. 195.

equality, of squaring up, of adequation, between the mind and reality. However, since things are knowable, since they can be rightly judged upon by the mind, there is truth in them to know. As the conformity between the intellect and reality: *adaequatio intellectus et rei*, a clear distinction has to be made between these two elements, thought and reality, in order not to fall in a pragmatic error in which the knower is prior or still where the needs of the knower prevail. These two elements in the act of knowledge must unite with one another, add on to one another, conform to one another in the most perfect way possible. As we have seen in formal logic, even the acts of corresponding to sensation or to simple apprehension possess a material truth;²⁵² nevertheless, truth understood as the knowledge of the conformity between knower and known is achieved only in judgment and not in the workability or usefulness of an idea as the pragmatists maintain. In fact, only in this does the mind reflect on the contents of apprehension in order to affirm their correspondence with reality.²⁵³ Considerable stress has already been given to the fact that the essence of knowledge is relational; and the immediate effect of knowledge, as we have seen, is the assimilation by the intellect of the forms of what is known, so that knowledge sets in place the most intimate kind of bond between knower and known.²⁵⁴ Just as knowledge itself is relational, so too is the truth that qualifies it. In the most general terms:

*Truth is a relation between the mental world and the extra-mental world. Specifically, it is a relation between ideas and what those ideas represent ... although truth is very much concerned with what is "out there," it is first and foremost in the mind, as a quality of the mind's knowledge.*²⁵⁵

In the case of ontological truth, it is a relation between things and the divine intellect; in the case of logical truth, it is a relation between the human intellect and things. And the essence of the truth relation is the existence of a kind of parity, an equalization of sorts, between intellect and things. From these viewpoints, truth can be understood from two different perspectives. According to William James, truth in the strict sense of the word does not exist. Truth for him is any idea which makes itself useful to any person. Whatever works best and combines with the collectivity of experience's demands, is what he calls truth. However, this conception of truth falls into the capital error of ignoring the intrinsic nature of truth which lies in the relationship between the knower and the reality known; hence we have two types of truth:

²⁵² Since they are in conformity with reality, therefore they are true. This is what has put the pragmatists to hold firm to their conception, reducing truth to a mere workable consequence without having recourse to judgment. They limited themselves to simple apprehension and hold their conclusion.

²⁵³ J. J. SANGUINETI, *Logic and Gnoseology*, Urban University Press, 1987, pp. 246-247.

²⁵⁴ D. MCINERNEY, *Epistemology*, The Priestly Fraternity of St Peter Elmhurst, 2007, p. 153.

²⁵⁵ *Ibid.*

*From metaphysics we learn that truth is a transcendental attribute of being. Every being, every actually existing thing, simply by reason of its status as such, is true. This is called ontological truth, or the truth of being. Every being is true simply because it is really there.*²⁵⁶

We have said that the central aspect of truth is the fact that it is relational, consisting of a relation between mind and thing. Indeed, it scarcely needs to be said that real beings do not depend on the mind for the fact of their existence. But there is a mind upon which the existence of things does depend, and that is the divine mind. Here we have the relation that pertains to ontological truth, the truth of being; it is the relation between the mind of God and being. It is obvious that human knowledge would not be possible if there were not intelligible objects capable of being known. All created things are true simply because they exist, and they exist because they are known by God.²⁵⁷

As we have said above, ontological truth is the truth of being. Logical truth is the truth that resides in the human mind, as a quality of the mind's knowledge of the truth of being. Logical truth is expressed in the form of statements or propositions.²⁵⁸ Logical truth, then, the truth that exists in the human mind, is expressed in statements, so that, looking at things from a linguistic point of view, it is only statements that, in the strictest sense, are either true or false. This is truth in the mind, or truth of thought, or truth of knowledge. Its technical name is logical truth."²⁵⁹ Things do not conform to the intellect as James holds, rather, the human intellect conforms to things, and it is just that conformity of intellect to things that constitutes the essence of logical truth.

3.2. From Modern Thinkers

3.2.1. The Kantian Criticism

Kant's critical philosophy involves a number of critiques raging across many fields in philosophy, he held that every proposition has a contradiction which he named *antimonies*, things exist with their contradictions, e.g. being and non-being. To begin with, Friedrich Paulsen makes an assertion that, "There are three attitudes of the mind towards reality which lay claim to truth,"

²⁵⁶ D. McINERNEY, *Epistemology*, The Priestly Fraternity of St Peter Elmhurst, 2007, p. 154.

²⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 155.

²⁵⁸ The two terms are for all practical purposes synonymous, which in grammatical terminology, are known as declarative sentences. A declarative sentence is one that says something (predicate) about something (subject). And the practical test that can be applied to any sentence to determine whether or not it is a declarative sentence is to ask of it: can it be either affirmed or denied, that is, can it be identified as either true or false?

²⁵⁹ P. GLENN, *An Introduction to Philosophy*, p. 195.

they are “Religion, Philosophy, and Science.”²⁶⁰ Immanuel Kant ²⁶¹(1724 –1804) is one of the most influential philosophers in the history of Western Philosophy. His contributions to metaphysics, epistemology, ethics and aesthetics have had a profound impact on almost every philosophical movement that followed him. That profound impact began with the Enlightenment in the 17th and 18th centuries where Kant, who was a culminating figure himself established the motto: *sapere aude* meaning “Dare to think” for oneself. Furthermore, in a passage from the *Critique of Pure Reason*, which was the defining work of Immanuel Kant’s critical philosophy, he writes that, “I have therefore found it necessary to deny *knowledge*, in order to make room for *faith*.”²⁶² The original form of positive dogmatism in the Western world is the idealistic philosophy of the Greeks whereas the original form of negative dogmatism is found in their materialistic philosophy.²⁶³ From this, F. Paulsen deduces that the real purpose of the critical philosophy, the philosophy of Kant, is to overcome the opposition which has extended through the entire history of human thought. And so, Kant undertakes with positive dogmatism to restore the agreement between faith and knowledge. Again, all dogmas of every religion are the diverse expressions of the conviction that the world exists for the sake of the good, and that nature and history find their explanation in the purposes of God. Kant’s philosophy especially with respect to Ontotheology by which Kant takes on Ontology as the study of being and theology as the study of God, hence leading up to Ontotheology. In a bit to introduce us to Kant’s dualistic treatment of being, F. Paulsen makes an assertion in response to the introduction into his ontology. He states:

*Kant’s answer is, by means of the distinction between a sensible and a super-sensible world. The world which constitutes the object of mathematico-scientific knowledge is not reality as such, but only the appearance of reality to our sensibility. The world of religious conviction, on the contrary, is the super-sensuous reality itself. This can never become the object of scientific knowledge, on account of the nature of human cognition, which presupposes perception.*²⁶⁴

²⁶⁰ F. PAULSEN, *Immanuel Kant: His Life and Doctrine*, J. E. CREIGHTON ET ALBERT LEFEVRE, Trans, Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1902, p. 1. He adds that, although these three disciplines sprung from a single root, they become differentiated in the higher stages of mental life, reunite, and again stand opposed to one another in a variety of ways, receiving their characteristic stamp through the manner in which this process takes place. And essentially, F. Paulsen avers that, it is also true that every philosophy is essentially determined through the attitude which it adopts towards religion and science.

²⁶¹ IMMANUEL KANT was born in Koenigsberg in April 22 1724 and he flourished within the years 1724-1804. He entered the University of Koenigsberg at the age of sixteen as a student of philosophy and Mathematics. Kant begins where Newton had left off, and shows how through the immanent activity of physical forces, cosmic systems arise and perish in never-ending rotation! That is why in one of his works, *Universal History of Nature and Theory of the Heavens*, he makes an Attempt to treat of the Formation and Origin of the Entire Structure of the World according to Newtonian Principles.

²⁶² I. KANT, *Critique of Pure Reason*, Norman Kemp Smith, tr., St Martin’s Press, 1965, p. 26.

²⁶³ F. PAULSEN, *Immanuel Kant: His Life and Doctrine*, pp. 3-5.

²⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 5-6.

This leads us to the fact as we find in the notes that, So much for the supposed Enlightenment optimism which thought reason made autonomous would supplant the superstition and dogmatism of religion. With Kant, reason again must answer to religion, it must give way to religion in other words, when reason knows its limits, it effectively *transcends* itself in the discovery of religion. This is the reason why states in *Fides et Ratio* that, "... every philosophical system, while it should always be respected in its wholeness, without any instrumentalization, must still recognize the primacy of philosophical *enquiry*, from which it stems and which it ought loyally to serve."²⁶⁵ Another critique that Kant albeled against metaphysics is what he described as Ontotheology. At the broadest level Kant had distinguished two general types of theology: that which comes from reason and that of revelation. Within the category of reasoned theology he distinguished two further types, natural theology and transcendental theology. Within natural theology, Kant differentiated between physico-theology and an ethical or moral theology. Transcendental theology or reasoned-based theology, he divided into ontotheology and cosmotheology.

He used this term to explain a transcendental theology of being alongside the term cosmotheology. Kant himself defined the relationship between ontotheology and cosmostheology as follows: Transcendental theology aims either at inferring the existence of a Supreme Being from a general experience, without any closer reference to the world to which this experience belongs, and in this case it is called cosmotheology; or it endeavours to cognize the existence of such a being, through mere conceptions, without the aid of experience, and is then termed ontotheology. Consistently with Kant's definition, philosophical and theological writers sometimes use the words ontotheology or ontotheological to refer to the metaphysical or theological views characteristic of many rationalist philosophers.

3.2.2. The Antifoundationalism of Friedrich Nietzsche

According to Robin Le Poidevin, the critique of metaphysics by Nietzsche is what could be considered as anti-metaphysics as he says in the companion to metaphysics in the following terms:

Nietzsche's main concern in his early work was the condition of contemporary European culture, which he judged to be inferior to that of the pre-Socratic Greeks. He used Schopenhauer's metaphysics to interpret the achievements of the latter and the fall off of modern culture from its standard. He criticizes modern culture in effect

²⁶⁵ J. PAUL II, Encyclical Letter *Fides et Ratio*, Libreria Editrice Vaticana, September 14 1998, n. 4.

*for having become anti-metaphysical, for having accepted that the empirical world is the only one. By following Socrates' preference for the rational and clear over the artistic and mythical, it has come to assume that only science gives us truth. Nietzsche's early work sets out to combat this assumption.*²⁶⁶

Thus from the above quote, Nietzsche is expressing his critique of metaphysics in two fronts. First against the metaphysical idealism of pre-Socratic philosophers and the godly nature of the sciences in the modern and contemporary cultures and Europe. He explains that science has gain more grounds and has rejected metaphysics while relying every explanations on empirical evidence and physical data of reality. In his middle works poidevin writes that Nietzsche aims to induce scepticism about any metaphysical world by thus contributing to the anti-metaphysical modern culture he was previously against in his early works in showing that it is cognitively superfluous.²⁶⁷

3.2.3. Martin Heidegger's Ontotheological Critique

The term “*Ontotheology*” originated from I. Kant in direct conjunction with “*cosmotheology*.” Kant invented these terms “*cosmotheology*” and “*Ontotheology*” to distinguish two transcendental theology.²⁶⁸ He defined the relationship between the terms *ontotheology* and *cosmostheology* as follows:

*Transcendental theology aims either at inferring the existence of a Supreme Being from a general experience, without any closer reference to the world to which this experience belongs, and in this case it is called cosmotheology; or it endeavours to cognize the existence of such a being, through mere conceptions, without the aid of experience, and is then termed ontotheology.*²⁶⁹

Regarding the supra-sensible we can know only that it exists; that is the ultimate point to which knowledge attains. In rejecting critically on its own nature and limits, the understanding recognizes that there is an absolute reality beyond the world of sense. And now the spirit of man which is something more than understanding claims, as a moral being, to be a member of this absolute reality, and defines the nature of this reality through its own essence. This is Kant s doctrine of the primacy of the practical reason over the theoretical.²⁷⁰ Ontotheology, according to Kant from the perspective of I. Thomson, was the type of transcendental theology characteristic

²⁶⁶ R. Le Poidevin(Ed) et alli, *The Routledge Companion to Metaphysics*, Routledge., 2012, 161.

²⁶⁷ R. Le Poidevin(Ed) et alli, *The Routledge Companion to Metaphysics*, Routledge., 2012, 163

²⁶⁸ Transcendental theology is a term invented by Kant to describe a method of discerning theological concepts.

²⁶⁹ *Ibid.*

²⁷⁰ Cf. F. PAULSEN, *Immanuel Kant: His Life and Doctrine*, 6. At the broadest level Kant had distinguished two general types of theology: that which comes from reason and that of revelation. Within the category of reasoned theology he distinguished two further types, natural theology and transcendental theology. Within natural theology, Kant differentiated between physico-theology and an ethical or moral theology. Transcendental theology or reasoned-based theology, he divided into ontotheology and cosmotheology.

of Anselm of Canterbury's ontological argument which believes it can know the existence of an original being, through mere concepts, without the help of any experience whatsoever.²⁷¹ Kant thus distinguishes between rationally-oriented ontotheological and empirically-oriented cosmotheological discussion. Heidegger argued for a broader definition of the word ontotheology and idealistic metaphysic.²⁷² In this our research presentation, we will unpack the meaning of Heidegger's initially strand which claim that metaphysics has an ontotheological structure. We will situate Heidegger's understanding of ontotheology within the broader context of his thought, outlining the significance of his deconstruction of metaphysical foundationalism for his critique of nihilism.²⁷³

We will reconstruct the most important components of the original account of the history of metaphysics which Heidegger offers in support of his claim that metaphysics is ontotheology, and investigate one of the deepest problems for this account which is the problem of being. In the final part of our work which is also the concluding section, we will show briefly that Heidegger's deconstruction of metaphysics has a positive dimension whereby it helps motivate the recovery of a non-metaphysical understanding of Being. We will analysis briefly the one of Heidegger's concept of metaphysics as 'ontothology'. For Heidegger, western metaphysics had spent it entire time since Thales to explain the theology of being and the ontology of God.²⁷⁴ For him the explanation of being given by western metaphysics is wrong for western metaphysics had spend time explaining the being of God and not the being as that which exist. For in his critique involves the Being that is cause of everything in existence. According to Mary-Jane quoting Heidegger, "to those who can read metaphysics is ontotheology", for her when Heidegger says metaphysics he means the whole history of western philosophy, he means the calculative thinking in which a thinking subject represent being as objects, a thinking which further maps the subjective objective split into a host of dualism, form versus matter, body and mind etc.²⁷⁵ According to her, when Heidegger's interpretation of Nietzsche, with Nietzsche's proclamation of the end of metaphysics in the end of Platonism, and overturned it but did not overcome it. The dead of God is the end of metaphysic for Heidegger understands of Nietzsche.

²⁷¹ *Ibid.*

²⁷² J. E. CREIGHTON, *Immanuel Kant: His Life and Doctrine*, p.Vii.

²⁷³ I Thomson, *Ontotheology? Understanding Heidegger's Destruktion of Metaphysics*, International Journal of Philosophical Studies Vol.8 (3), p. 299.

²⁷⁴ M. J. Rubenstein, *Introduction to the theory of Ontotheology on Martin Heidegger*, October 5th 2011.

²⁷⁵ *Ibid*

When Heidegger says if the task for Hegel is to think what has been thought in western philosophy then the task for me Heidegger is to think what has not been thought. If Hegel is looking to consummate metaphysic, then Heidegger in our understanding is looking to overcome metaphysics. However for both of them what has been thought for Hegel is the same thing that has not been thought for Heidegger which is being. Philosophy for Heidegger has thought about beings but not about being itself, thus what he says the forgetfulness of being. Being is what allows philosophy to be. Being according to Mary-Jane is the condition for metaphysics, metaphysics cannot get up without being, and yet metaphysics has not thought about being. the issue is thus that metaphysic cannot think that which sets it in motion. Heidegger explains that the forgetfulness of being by metaphysics is the objectification of being by metaphysic. Thus, Heidegger concluded by saying metaphysics is ontotheological. Mary-Jane says Ontotheology refers to things in terms of being in reality and theology things in terms of one Supreme Being the metaphysics considered the two, hence the name Ontotheology.²⁷⁶

3.2.4. Martin Heidegger's Revolution on the question of Being

To unfold the fundamental question of metaphysics that Heidegger asks, we begin first to look at it from the linguistic part of speech in English which is the interrogative sentence. Let us therefore consider our interrogative sentence in this respect. ‘‘why are there beings instead of nothing?’’ looking at this question, we understand that the question has a break. ‘‘why are there beings at all?’’ at this point the question is posed. In asking this question, we consider what is put into question. What is questioned? The indication of that in relation to which what is questioned is questioned. What is asked about? It is so because what is questioned is indicated unequivocally, beings. What is asked, is the why that is the ground. What follows therefore is the question sentence, ‘‘instead of nothing?’’ is just an appendix that insert itself, on its own for the sake of an introductory way of speaking, as an additional turn to the phrase that says nothing about what is asked.²⁷⁷

The question is more unequivocal and decisive without the appended turn of the phrase. ‘‘why are there beings at all?’’ But the appended ‘‘instead of nothing?’’ is invalid not only because we are looking for a precise formulation of the question, also because it says nothing at all. What more are we to ask about nothing? Nothing is simply anything. Bringing up nothings

²⁷⁶ M. J. Rubenstein, *Introduction to the theory of Ontotheology on Martin Heidegger*, October 5th 2011.

²⁷⁷ M. Heidegger, *Introduction To Metaphysics*, Yale University Press, 2000, pp. 24-25

has not gain on the knowledge of beings. Talking about nothing is making it into something. Therefore to speak about nothing which is something will be to speak against what we are saying, going against the law of contradiction. Talking about nothing is illogical; talking about nothing is not only contradictory to the thought.²⁷⁸ Whatever both disrespects the fundamental law of thinking and destroys faith and the will to construct is pure nihilism.²⁷⁹ We will strike from our interrogative sentence the superfluous turn of the phrase. ‘‘instead of nothing?’’ and restrict the sentence to a precise form, ‘‘ why are there beings at all?’’ This question had its origin; in this question it would find its end. The end question about what is not and about nothing has gone side by side with the question of what is, since its origin. It doesn’t do so superficially, the question about nothing takes shape with the originality with which the question about beings is asked in each case. The manner of asking about nothing can serve as a criterion for the manner of asking about beings. If we reflect about this, then the interrogative sentence at the start ‘‘why are there beings at all instead of nothing?’’ looks more suitable to explain the question about beings than the abbreviated version.

Our talk of nothing here is merely a strict respect for original tradition, in regards to the sense of the fundamental question. Still this talk of nothing is always contrary to thought in general and leads to disintegration in particular. What if the concern for fundamental thinking rules and fear of nihilism, which all will advise against the talk of nothing leads on a misunderstanding? This is the case; the misunderstanding played in this case is not an accident. It is only because it long lacked an understanding about the question of beings.²⁸⁰ Which seems from a state of unawareness and consciousness of being that is increasingly rigid. It is only an illusion of rigor when one appeals to logic in general, in order to prove that all thinking and talk about nothing is contradictory and therefore senseless.²⁸¹ Logic is then taken as a tribunal. Whoever speaks against logic is suspected, implicit or explicitly. One cannot talk about nothing as if it were something. Nothing remains principally inaccessible to all sciences. But the reverse is the case for philosophy.

Philosophy stands in a completely different domain and rank of spiritual Dasein. Apart from the philosophy, the poet can also talk about nothing. This is so because, in comparing mere science to philosophy and poetry, an essential superiority of the spirit holds sway in philosophy

²⁷⁸ M. Heidegger, *Introduction To Metaphysics*, Yale University Press, 2000, pp. 24-25.

²⁷⁹ *Ibid.*

²⁸⁰ M. Heidegger, *Introduction To Metaphysics*, pp. 24-25

²⁸¹ *Ibid.*

and poetry.²⁸² The poet always speaks as if beings were expressed and addressed for the first time. To talk of nothing always remains unfamiliar. This talk doesn't allow itself to be made common. This is the more reason why we do talk about nothing immediately as if it were to describe a picture or a tree. Listening to the poets we hear them say a lot about nothing.²⁸³ So there is something special about nothing. Let us go back to the abbreviation "why are there beings at all?" asking this way means we begin from beings. They are. They are given to us; they are in front of us and can be found before us at any time, known to us at certain domains. The beings given us on this mode are immediately interrogated on the ground. The questioning therefore proceeds towards this ground, such a way just broadens the question. This type of questioning is represented in the formula, why are there beings?, what is their ground? One is asking after the other indirectly. The question here is not for all beings as such. Therefore if we begin with the sentence "why are there beings at all instead of nothing?" the appendix blocks us from a direct start with being as unquestionably given to us. Looking at being is our focus and not being which is held by the method of question of beings. Now it is clear at this time that the appendix "instead of nothing" is an essential component of the whole interrogative sentence which completely express a different question from what is meant by the question. Therefore, the unfolding of the this question can be summarised as thus, the seeming superfluity of the phrase "instead of nothing", the connection between the question of nothing and the question of being, the superiority of philosophy and poetry over logic and science, the example of the talk of nothing by Knut Hamsun and the wavering of beings between being and possibility of not being.

In Heidegger's view, the meaning of Being is intimately bound up with the phenomenon of 'time' and has been bound up in this way since the beginning of philosophic thought.²⁸⁴ Because the objects in the world come to humanity from the past and are used in the present for the sake of future goals, Heidegger posited a fundamental relation between the mode of being of objects, of humanity and of the structure of time. "It is from the standpoint of time that *Dasein* comprehends and interprets being. Time is the horizon for the understanding of being."²⁸⁵ The question of the authenticity of individual *Dasein* cannot be separated from the 'historicality' of *Dasein*. On the one hand, *Dasein*, as mortal, is 'stretched along' between birth and death, and thrown into its world, that is, thrown into its possibilities. *Dasein* is charged with the task of

²⁸² *Ibid.*

²⁸³ M. Heidegger, *Introduction To Metaphysics*, Yale University Press, 2000, p. 28.

²⁸⁴ M. HEIDEGGER, *Existence and Being*, Vision Press Ltd., 1968, p. 34.

²⁸⁵ J. MARIAS, *History of Philosophy*, p. 428.

assuming these possibilities. On the other hand, *Dasein's* access to this world and these possibilities is always *via* a history and a tradition—this is the question of ‘world historicity,’ and among its consequences is Heidegger's argument that *Dasein's* potential for authenticity lies in the possibility of choosing a ‘hero’. Thus, more generally, the outcome of the progression of Heidegger's argument is the thought that the being of *Dasein* is time.²⁸⁶ The possibility of what *Dasein* may become rests with its own choices; hence *Dasein* can choose himself and win himself by his own achievement. *Dasein* may sometimes be regarded as authentic (*eigentlich*) or inauthentic (*uneigentlich*).

PARTIAL CONCLUSION

The history of philosophy has presented philosophers have had as part of their preoccupation the attainment of certitude. Our sole aim in this chapter was to examine the critique of traditional metaphysics by Martin Heidegger and other philosophers. The logical positivists were not exempted from this philosophical task to gain certitude on the concept of being. They went as far as bringing out what they thought hinders philosophers from attaining certitude. They discovered that most philosophers spent much time on abstract concepts which they called metaphysics. In order to combat this pseudo form of knowledge, the positivists took it as a task to eliminate this supposedly chaotic philosophy. Alfred Jules Ayer, a leading logical positivist, in his *Language, Truth and Logic* brings out some criteria which he thinks can get rid of that which hinders the attainment of certitude. Thus the logical positivist reject metaphysics and the consider metaphysics as a chaotic brand of thinking in philosophy. We also have the empiricist and pragmatist philosophers who criticized metaphysics as a science of fiction and abstract thinking without any practical bearings. Martin Heidegger also added his voice to this critique by question the meaning of being explained by western metaphysics and the critique of western metaphysics as the ontology of God and the Theology of being. We shall thus continue in the next chapter with a critical analysis of Heidegger's conception of being. His analysis of being is a response to the critiques he levied on metaphysics.

²⁸⁶ M. HEIDEGGER, *Existence and Being*, p. 428.

CHAPTER FOUR

MARTIN HEIDEGGER'S CONCEPTION OF BEING

PARTIAL INTRODUCTION

Post-metaphysical thought in the philosophy of Heidegger involves the sequential change in the conception of being contrary to his predecessors and teachers in the field of metaphysical inquiry. The post-metaphysical thinking of Heidegger is thus visible from the change in thought done by Heidegger while criticising previous thinkers, on the question and meaning of being when he says:

On the basis of the Greeks' initial contributions towards an interpretation of being, a dogma has been developed which not only declares the question about the meaning of being to be superfluous, but sanctions its complete neglect. It is said that 'being' is the most universal and emptiest of concepts... Nor does this most universal and hence indefinable concept require any definition, for everyone uses it constantly and already understands what he means by it.²⁸⁷

Heidegger posits that since being has been viewed as a universal and indefinable concept, this in a way, blocks man from analysing it but he continues to use this term. Although Heidegger takes the Greek thinkers to be his model, he deviates in his starting point and brings in what is perceptible, what he terms 'Dasein.' This appears in Heidegger's ontological structure which had never been contemplated by the Greeks. It is from this point of view that he intends to explain the problem of being in a new way.²⁸⁸ He does this explicitly by analysing *Dasein*. Our main aim in this chapter shall be to explicitly bring out the meaning being as expressed by Heidegger from a postmetaphysical perspective. This chapter thus involves a response to the criticism of the pervious chapter. It is an attempt to provide a solution to the problem of being. And answer to the question and meaning of being by Martin Heidegger. We shall gradually examine the meaning and question in the following paragraphs as we begin with the properties of being

²⁸⁷ M. HEIDEGGER, *Being and Time*, J. MACQUARRIE- E. ROBINSON (trs.), Basil Blackwell, 1959, pp. 21.

²⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 27-28.

4.1. The Properties of Beings

4.1.1. Dasein as an approach to the World

Contrary to the being that is one and changeless like Parmenides said, Heraclitus on the other hand that being is always changing, Plato with the Forms and Aristotle with substance, Hegel and the Absolute spirit right down to Heidegger with Dasein. Heidegger states clearly that *Dasein* is an being in which in its nature is open to possibilities through the process of interpreting itself. He says:

As understanding Dasein projects its being upon possibilities. This Being-towards-possibilities which understands is itself a potentiality-for-Being, and it is so because of the way these possibilities, as disclosed exert their counter-thrust upon Dasein. The projecting of the understanding has its own possibility- that of developing itself. This development of understanding we call "interpretation."²⁸⁹

Although we see *Dasein* to be open to possibilities, Heidegger does not in any way suggest human existence to be just a possibility but that actuality is grounded in possibility.²⁹⁰ Here we see Heidegger giving us a new way of understanding the term being. The postmetaphysical thought of him is made visible from this change in thought pattern. The principle that possibility is prior to actuality and priority is given to possibility over actuality comes up more often in Heidegger's philosophy.²⁹¹ This happens just for the reason that though actuality does not come up very often in his philosophy like that of possibility, actuality is embedded in possibility. There are two aspects of *Dasein's* openness; we have what Heidegger calls state-of-mind (*Befindlichkeit*) and understanding.²⁹² State-of-mind is Heidegger's term for the receptive aspect of *Dasein's* way of being. Heidegger has this to say:

But to be affected by the unserviceable, resistant, or threatening character of that which is ready-at-hand, becomes ontologically possible only insofar as Being-in as such has been determined existentially beforehand in such a manner that what it encounters within-the-world can matter to it in this way. The fact that this sort of thing can matter to it is grounded in one's state-of-mind...Dasein's openness to the world is constituted existentially by the attunement of a state-of-mind.²⁹³

There is a great difficulty of translating *Befindlichkeit*. Affectedness for H. Dreyfus best captures this as our being is already affected by things.²⁹⁴ State-of-mind for Heidegger means 'the mode in which one is to be found,' that is, *Dasein* is always in a mode. He calls *Dasein's* mode of

²⁸⁹ M. HEIDEGGER, *Being and Time*, p. 188.

²⁹⁰ R. KEARNEY, "Heidegger and the Possible," J. BASTABLE (ed.), in *Philosophical Studies*, vol. 27, 1980, p.178.

²⁹¹ M. GELVEN, *A Commentary on Heidegger's Being and Time*, p. 76.

²⁹² Affectedness (*Befindlichkeit*) as proposed by H. Dreyfus could be used as a synonym for *state-of-mind* which is translated by John Macquerrie and Edward Robinson.

²⁹³ M. HEIDEGGER, *Being and Time*, p. 176.

²⁹⁴ H. DREYFUS, *Being-in-the-World*, MIT Press, 1991, p.168.

awareness of the actual as state-of-mind.²⁹⁵ *Dasein* becomes aware of itself in its ‘here,’ and aware of actuality and possibility due to its state-of-mind. It is the basis for which the world matters to *Dasein*.²⁹⁶ Heidegger further explains that in interpretation, understanding becomes itself, it does not become something else.²⁹⁷ Dreyfus affirms that for Heidegger, understanding discloses *Dasein* to its current world.²⁹⁸ Heidegger strongly holds that understanding is very important because it provides an account of how *Dasein* is aware of possibilities and thus provides a basis for his theory of interpretation. Heidegger affirms that understanding reveals to *Dasein* its mode of existence by making it able-to-be (*Seinkönnen*), literally translated as ‘to be able to be.’²⁹⁹

4.1.2. *Dasein* ability to interpret and understand the world

According to Heidegger, the being of *Dasein* is a discussion of the human being’s experience in the world. Heidegger deviated from the discussion of being in that previous philosophers made a distinction on Being and beings like Aristotle. He holds that *Dasein* expresses its interpretation and understanding of Being-in-the-world through discourse and assertion. Language is a medium through which *Dasein* communicates with others. Heidegger says: “discourse is expressed by being spoken out, and has always been so expressed; it is language.”³⁰⁰ In language, *Dasein*’s being is interpreted. ‘Idle talk’ is merely a repetition of the everyday, conventional, shallow and unscrutinized acceptance of the interpretations of the public. Gossip is an inauthentic use of discourse that simply repeats what is heard and accepted by the public without critically examining the grounds or validity of the subject matter in question. Heidegger further asserts on this by saying the:

*Idle talk is constituted by just such gossiping and passing the word along... And indeed this idle talk is not confined to vocal gossip, but even spreads to what we write, where it takes the form of ‘scribbling’... Idle talk is the possibility of understanding everything without previously making the thing one’s own.*³⁰¹

No decisive content is communicated in idle talk because gossip is concerned only with a repetition of clichés which reflect the present and restricted world horizons of the ‘they’ or anonymous *one*. Idle talk is groundless but it is part of the everyday being of the ‘they’. “The

²⁹⁵ M. GELVEN, *A Commentary on Heidegger’s Being and Time*, pp. 78- 79.

²⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 80.

²⁹⁷ M. HEIDEGGER, *Being and Time*, 188.

²⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 84.

²⁹⁹ M. GELVEN, *A Commentary on Heidegger’s Being and Time*, p. 84.

³⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 211.

³⁰¹ *Ibid.* p. 212.

‘they’ prescribes one’s state-of-mind and determines what and how one ‘sees’.³⁰² Thus, what is said in the talk is understood but what the talk is about, is only approximately understood and superficially too. This vagueness and approximation are characteristic of idle talk. The attitude of *Dasein* towards the world, its objects and its people that is articulated in idle talk is curiosity. People travel around the world from one place to another to see rivers, mountains, colourful birds and other sights, people even go to the moon merely for the sake of curiosity. For him, ambiguity another aspect of *Dasein*’s interpretation and understanding of the world. It is the dubious nature of information that is disseminated by the ‘they’. Ambiguity is about public gossip which leads to inauthentic relations. The fallen *Dasein* as being-in and being-with the ‘they,’ starts to take on an existential character that is more negative, similar to Kierkegaard's notion of the ‘crowd’. The *Dasein* who has fallen into falsehood closes itself off from authentically Being-in-the-world and even more significantly from Being-with and Being-toward itself. This portrays *Dasein* as being in a state of guilt. Guilt can be understood in the everyday common sense of *having debts* or *owing*. It could also be understood as the signification of *being responsible for*, that is, being the cause or author of something or even being the occasion for something. Thus, in the latter sense of being responsible, one can be guilty without *owing* and on the other hand, one can owe something without being responsible for it. Another person can incur debts with others for me.³⁰³ But neither of these two forms of being guilty are the authentic kind of being of *Dasein*’s Being-guilty.

Rather, the specific mode of ‘being-guilty’ which is a kind of being which belongs to *Dasein*, is that in which these two accounts of ‘having debts to someone’ and ‘having responsibility for something’ come together in the “kind of behaviour which we call *making oneself responsible*.”³⁰⁴ Guilt is a phenomenon of *Dasein*. Guilt seems to be inevitable and this leads Heidegger to ask: “Is it possible that what is understood as ‘guilty’ in our inauthentic interpretation lies in *Dasein*’s being as such, and that it does so in such a way that so far as any *Dasein* factually exists, it is also guilty?”³⁰⁵ The inauthentic *Dasein* is guilty with regard to itself, because it is neglectful of its authentic self. The guilt of the inauthentic *Dasein* appears as a debt that *Dasein* owes its own authentic self. This is because of the neglect of the authentic self in *Dasein*’s lostness in the ‘they’. However, not only the inauthentic *Dasein* is guilty. We

³⁰² M. HEIDEGGER, *Being and Time*, p. 213.

³⁰³ *Ibid*, p. 327.

³⁰⁴ M. HEIDEGGER, *Being and Time*, p. 327.

³⁰⁵ *Ibid*, p. 326.

mentioned earlier that *Dasein* is a being which makes choices. In every choice that a man makes, another thing is sacrificed leading to guilt. Thus every action implies guilt. However, it is impossible to exist without acting. “*Dasein* is essentially guilty not just guilty *on some occasions*, and *on other occasions not*.”³⁰⁶ Hence, guilt is an irremovable quality of the human being. Nevertheless, this does not mean that *Dasein* has done something wrong. The guilt which Heidegger talks about is clearly not a moral quality which man may or may not possess. Rather, it is a form of negative existence of neglecting oneself. Authentic existence is moving from the ‘they’ to the individual self. “The self of everyday *Dasein* is the ‘they-self,’ which we distinguish from the authentic self.”³⁰⁷

For Heidegger, *Dasein* ceases to be at the point of death and Heidegger uses the terms *Dasein* ‘no-longer-being-there’ (*Nicht-mehr-dasein*) and so *Dasein*’s being is annihilated when what is still outstanding in its being has been liquidated.³⁰⁸ Death is something we cannot experience in actuality and what is important in the analysis of death is not how one actually feels at the moment of death but what impending death can mean to one in the fullness of one’s life.³⁰⁹ At this point, *Dasein* reaches its wholeness in death, and simultaneously loses its being there.³¹⁰ Heidegger makes the point that *Dasein* can gain an experience of death and this is for the simple reason that *Dasein* is essentially with others.³¹¹ This shows the finiteness and meaninglessness of *Dasein* at the point of its non-existence. Gelven affirms that death provides us with a ‘complete’ or ‘total’ account of human existence beginning with birth and ending in death such that death is seen as that perspective from which one sees the totality of human existence.³¹² It is only through death that *Dasein* reaches its totality and wholeness which enables interpretation and understanding of the concept of death for *Dasein* by *Dasein*.

According to Heidegger in the understanding and interpretation of the world, he holds to the view that death remains a phenomenon of life such that this life must be understood as a kind of being to which there belongs a being-in-the-world and the ending of that which lives. Heidegger terms this ‘perishing’.³¹³ The ending of anything that is alive is denoted as perishing (*verenden*).

³⁰⁶ M. HEIDEGGER, *Being and Time*, pp. 327.353.

³⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 167.

³⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 280.

³⁰⁹ M. GELVEN, *A Commentary on Heidegger’s Being and Time*, p. 145.

³¹⁰ M. HEIDEGGER, *Being and Time*, p. 201.

³¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 281.

³¹² M. GELVEN, *A Commentary on Heidegger’s Being and Time*, p. 145.

³¹³ M. HEIDEGGER, *Being and Time*, pp. 290-291.

Heidegger simply means that death is part of life and death limits *Dasein's* being-in-the-world.³¹⁴ Because death is an end to *Dasein's* being-in-the-world, death remains an ultimate possibility. Heidegger argues that with the death of *Dasein*, it has fulfilled its course and even if it is unfulfilled, that is, even if it is not satisfied with its activities, *Dasein* ends in death.³¹⁵ Heidegger gives an analogy of a fruit which is unripe but which moves towards its ripeness,³¹⁶ to say that this is how *Dasein* comes to its ripeness in death.³¹⁷ Ending here for Heidegger signifies stopping, in other words when something is no longer present-at-hand.³¹⁸ The ending, Heidegger maintains is not *Dasein's* being-at-an-end (*Zu-ende-Sein*) but *Dasein's* being-towards-the-end (*Sein-Zum-Ende* or *Sein-Zum-Tode*).³¹⁹

4.1.3. Dasein as Discourse

There are many things we designate as 'being' in various senses. Anything we have in view, anything which we acquire, Heidegger affirms, is being. Therefore, being simply lies in the fact that something is, it's being as it is, that is in reality or what he terms 'in- presence-at-hand' and in subsistence.³²⁰ *Dasein* for Heidegger exists in the world which is a fact that being is. He states in like manner that *Dasein* is 'and has to be.' The fact that *Dasein* is disclosed in *Dasein's* state-of-mind must be conceived as an existential attribute of the entity which has being-in-the-world, and thus *facticity* is a characteristic of *Dasein's* being; one taken up into existence.³²¹ H. Dreyfus maintains that in Heidegger's terminology, we can say that the human being can be characterised by factuality, male or female, but because human beings exist, they must be understood in their *facticity* as a gendered way of behaving, that is, masculine or feminine.³²² The fact is that *Dasein* is within a temporal world.

4.1.4. Dasein as Concern

In discussing *Dasein* as concern we talk about conscience. Conscience for Heidegger is that which calls and gives understanding. Conscience is actually not a call but it should be

³¹⁴ J. TIETZ, *An Outline and Study Guide to Martin Heidegger's Being and Time*, p. 130.

³¹⁵ M. HEIDEGGER, *Being and Time*, p. 288.

³¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 287.

³¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 288.

³¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 289.

³¹⁹ *Ibid.*

³²⁰ M. HEIDEGGER, *Being and Time*, p. 26.

³²¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 173- 174.

³²² H. DREYFUS, *Being-in-the-World*, p. 24.

understood as a kind of discourse.³²³ Conscience is a phenomenon of *Dasein* that is found only in *Dasein*'s kind of being. Heidegger notes:

*As a phenomenon of Dasein, conscience is not just a fact which occurs and is occasionally present-at-hand. It 'is' only in Dasein's kind of Being, and it makes itself known as a Fact only with factual existence and in it.*³²⁴

Dasein is a being-with others which understands and can listen to others. When *Dasein* is lost in the 'they', it fails to hear or listen to its own self because of the noise of the 'they'. In order to be brought back from the 'they-self', it must find itself through the call of conscience. Heidegger thus holds to the following view:

*The call of conscience has the character of an appeal to Dasein by calling it to its ownmost potentiality-for-Being-its-Self; and this is done by way of summoning it to its ownmost Being-guilty.*³²⁵

Heidegger's analysis of conscience as a kind of calling shows that it adapts itself quite well with the disclosure of discourse. In this call the discourse is with *Dasein* itself. It is the self that does the calling; it is the self that is called; it is the self that is called about; and it is the self to which the self is called. That is, the self is called to its own unique and authentic self. Although conscience is described as a call to authenticity, it is one that is never uttered. This call is not put into words yet it is not obscure or indefinite. In this regard, Heidegger holds: "*Conscience discourses solely and constantly in the mode of keeping silent.*"³²⁶ The call of conscience is often neglected and is rarely heard as Alan Paskow succinctly articulates:

*For the most part, Dasein preoccupies himself with the 'calculations' of day to day living so that he closes off those moments of silence and repose in which it would be possible to listen in the right way to the voice of conscience.*³²⁷

Even when the voice of conscience is heard, it is still possible that the call be misunderstood. Conscience never miscalls but the call can be misheard. In this connection, Heidegger remarks:

*When 'delusions' arise in the conscience, they do so not because the call has committed some oversight (has miscalled), but only because the call gets heard in such a way that instead of becoming authentically understood, it gets drawn by the they-self into a soliloquy in which causes get pleaded, and it becomes perverted in its tendency to disclose.*³²⁸

In spite of the fact that conscience is rarely heard and even when it is heard it can also be misunderstood, the call of conscience is a call of care. Heidegger states that "*conscience*

³²³ M. HEIDEGGER, *Being and Time*, pp. 316 - 317.

³²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 313.

³²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 314.

³²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 318.

³²⁷ A. PASKOW, "The Meaning of My Own Death," in N. CLARKE (ed.), *International Philosophical Quarterly*, Vol. XIV, No 1, March 1974, p. 55.

³²⁸ M. HEIDEGGER, *Being and Time*, pp. 318 - 319.

manifests itself as the call of care the caller is *Dasein*, which, in its thrownness (in its Being-already-in), is anxious about its potentiality-for-being.”³²⁹ Care is a generalized structure of concern. Man is ultimately concerned about himself and it is this concern which is care. This care, in other words, is ownership of *Dasein*'s freedom. Care can be described as the search for self identity for *Dasein* always seeks to define himself. This search for self identity concerns everyman as men often ask questions in order to define their lives. Thus, in conscience *Dasein* calls itself. In fact, *Dasein*, in its very being is care.³³⁰

The self that does the calling is the self that has lost the comfortable feeling of belonging to the ‘they-self’. The self that is called is the self that has been lost in the ‘they’ so that it can become authentic. The call is about the self in the sense that conscience awakens an awareness in which the mode of existence of the self is revealed; either as authentic or inauthentic. The call is to the self in that it is an appeal to the self to be authentic.³³¹ Hence, Heidegger notes: “the call comes *from* me and yet *from* beyond me.”³³² Even with the call of conscience, man has to realize that he is a mortal being.

4.2. The Structure and Reality of Being

4.2.1. Thrownness of *Dasein* into Existence

Heidegger posits that the existent *Dasein* does not encounter itself as something present-at-hand³³³ within-the-world but as something thrown into existence, existence as an entity which has to be itself substantiality.³³⁴ Heidegger calls the activity of existing, being-in-the-world.³³⁵ *Dasein* needs to take a stand on what it is, thus it is a self- interpreting foundness or givenness which Heidegger calls ‘thrownness.’³³⁶ He further propounds that for *Dasein* to be-in-the-world, implies it has been left over to itself by being thrown into the world and this abandonment is shown clearly in *Dasein*'s resoluteness, that is, its task of deciding its mode of existence.³³⁷ This shows the authenticity of *Dasein*. In such a situation, *Dasein* does not for the most part have knowledge that

³²⁹ HEIDEGGER, *Being and Time*, p. 322.

³³⁰ *Ibid.* p.323.

³³¹ M. GELVEN, *A Commentary on Heidegger's Being and Time*, p. 167.

³³² M. HEIDEGGER, *Being and Time*, p. 320.

³³³ Present-at-hand simply means being ‘here’ or ‘there’ at the particular moment.

³³⁴ M. HEIDEGGER, *Being and Time*, p. 321.

³³⁵ H. DREYFUS, *Being-in-the-World*, p. 41.

³³⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 173. The expression ‘thrownness’ is meant to suggest the *facticity* of being delivered over to the world.

³³⁷ M. HEIDEGGER, *Being and Time*, p. 236.

has been delivered concerning its own death which belongs to Being-in-the-World.³³⁸ *Thrownness* into death Heidegger opines reveals itself in a more primordial manner in *Dasein's* state-of-mind called anxiety or dread “*Angst*”.³³⁹ Anxiety for Heidegger is different from fear. Anxiety is not revealed to us in a mode of terror or fear of frustration. Anxiety has to do with one’s awareness of one’s impending death and preparing for it.³⁴⁰ This allows us to choose whether to prepare for our own death or not. Heidegger propounds:

*Anxiety in the face of death must not be confused with fear in the face of one’s demise. This anxiety is not an accidental or random mood of ‘weakness’ in some individual; but a basic state-of-mind of Dasein, it amounts to the disclosedness of the fact that Dasein exist as thrown being towards its end.*³⁴¹

Anxiety for Heidegger is not negative. It is not a state of weakness, rather it is a state of being aware of one’s self which remains a fact that man is a being-towards-death. For Gelven, dread confronts us with ourselves. Dread therefore discloses to *Dasein* that it is going to die, thus through this awareness of dread, the full import of the *facticity* of death becomes disclosed.³⁴² Though anxiety helps one to know one’s self, one might be tempted to deliberately avoid such a reality.

Another aspect that clearly shows the postmetaphysical nature of Heidegger’s philosophy is in his discussion of the essence of being. Heidegger clearly takes a new path to talk about the essence of being compared to previous thinkers in the history of thought. He goes further to discuss the essence of the being of *Dasein*. Heidegger admits that *Dasein's* essence is grounded in its existence. He is out not to show what *Dasein* is but what it means for *Dasein* to be. For him, the essence of *Dasein* lies in its existence he thus explains:

*Accordingly those characteristics which can be exhibited in this entity are not ‘properties’ present- at- hand; they are in each case possible ways for it to be, and no more than that. All the Being- as- it- is which this entity possesses is primarily Being- so when we designate this entity with the term ‘Dasein’, we are expressing not its “what” (as if it were a table, house, or tree) but its Being.*³⁴³

Dasein's being is an issue for which it depends on the fact that this being is ‘in each case mine,’ that *Dasein* needs to be addressed with a personal pronoun ‘I’ or ‘you’: *Dasein* therefore is not a substance with an essential nature and with properties or ‘accidents’ as Aristotle held. *Dasein*

³³⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 291.

³³⁹ M. HEIDEGGER, *Being and Time*, p. 295.

³⁴⁰ M. GELVEN, *A Commentary on Heidegger's Being and Time*, p. 151.

³⁴¹ M. HEIDEGGER, *Being and Time*, p. 295.

³⁴² M. GELVEN, *A Commentary on Heidegger's Being and Time*, p. 151.

³⁴³ *Ibid.*, p. 67.

is simply the possibility of various ways of being.³⁴⁴ If the ‘I’ is an essential characteristic of *Dasein*, then it is one which must be interpreted existentially.³⁴⁵ J. Kockelmans posits that by Heidegger’s notion of ‘*Dasein*’s essence lying in its existence,’ man always necessarily relates himself to possibilities, his being distinguished from the being of things in that it can always be realized. Man arrives at a way proper to him, that is, relating himself toward his being as an ‘*ownmost* possibility,’ in other words man transcends himself insofar as his possibilities clearly confirm he exists.³⁴⁶ Heidegger does not in any way downplay the scholastic view that God’s essence is His existence. God is a necessary being but Heidegger does not want to make a nonsensical claim that *Dasein* is a necessary being. The very meaning of *Dasein* is one who reflects on one’s existence, knowing what it means to be, though not fully. Insofar as such a thing happens then, this is *Dasein*.³⁴⁷ *Dasein* therefore stands forth, creating its own ways of being, in a way that no other entity does.³⁴⁸ This proves the fact that *Dasein* is.

4.2.2. Existentiality Authenticity and Inauthenticity of Dasein

Existence is a special character of *Dasein* for, of all entities, *Dasein* alone ‘exists’ or has existence. The word ‘existentiality’ refers not to existence in the sense in which sticks and trees exist, but to the inner personal existence for the designation of which it has become.³⁴⁹ According to O. Joseph in his understanding of Martin Heidegger, the being that exists is man. Man alone exists. Trees, Angels, God and many others exist but do not exist.”³⁵⁰ The verb and noun *existieren et Existenz*, respectively are derived from Latin words which literally mean ‘to stand forth’ and ‘standing forth.’³⁵¹ *Dasein* is an entity which stands forth, creating its own being in a way that no other entity does. Thus, “*the essence of Dasein lies in its existence.*”³⁵² However, to say that the essence of *Dasein* lies in its existence does not in any way coincide with the Scholastic meaning of the term existence as applied to God when it is said that God’s essence is His existence. This in another way clearly brings out the postmetaphysical thinking of Heidegger whereby he deviates from the traditional way of understanding the essence and existence of being

³⁴⁴ M. INWOOD, *Heidegger*, p. 19.

³⁴⁵ M. HEIDEGGER, *Being and Time*, p. 132.

³⁴⁶ J. KOCKELMANS, *Martin Heidegger*, Duquesne University Press, 1965, p. 142.

³⁴⁷ M. HEIDEGGER, *Being and Time*, pp. 44- 45.

³⁴⁸ M. INWOOD, *Heidegger*, p. 20.

³⁴⁹ M. GRENE, “Martin Heidegger,” in P. EDWARDS (ed.), *The Encyclopedia of Philosophy Vols. 3 & 4*, p. 459.

³⁵⁰ J. OMOREGBE, *A Simplified History of Western Philosophy, Vol. 3, Contemporary Philosophy*, Joja Educational Research and Publishers Limited, 1991, p. 38.

³⁵¹ S. NELSON, *Metaphysics, A Historical Exposition, unpublished, 2020, p. 100.*

³⁵² M. HEIDEGGER, *Being and Time*, p. 67.

and Being that was distinguished by the scholastics. Heidegger makes clear the being of *Dasein* for everything in existence. This means that God is a necessary being but “Heidegger by no means wants to make the absurd claim that *Dasein* is necessary.”³⁵³ The existence of *Dasein* is characterized in every case by a unique ‘mineness’. *Dasein* is always addressed with a personal pronoun ‘I am,’ ‘You are.’³⁵⁴ *Dasein* has no fixed nature, but its essence lies in its always having its being, to be, and having it as its own. The human being’s essence is in his existence, for numerous possibilities are open to him whereby he may choose different kinds of being for himself. “*Dasein* is its possibility.”³⁵⁵ The possibilities of what he may become are the pivotal points by which the human being is oriented. John Macquarrie states:

*Dasein is never complete in its being. To exist is always to be on the way, so that one can never as it were, pin down the existent at any precise moment and give an exhaustive description. He is constituted by possibilities rather than properties... Dasein makes its essence as it goes along, fulfilling his possibilities or letting them slip, but always on the move from one situation to the next. This is what is meant by saying that ‘the essence of Dasein lies in its existence.’*³⁵⁶

Dasein is not a substance with an essential nature and with properties or ‘accidents’. *Dasein*’s potentiality or possibility is prior to its actuality: *Dasein* is not a definite actual thing, but the possibility of various ways of being. Thus, man is not a ready-made product; he is a *free* being who decides for himself his mode of being. Man is a being, who is not yet what he is; man is more than what he actually is at any given moment. Man always projects himself in his possibilities and lives towards this projected self. It is therefore clear that *Dasein* has the potentiality of becoming what it wants but this possibility is not absolute because circumstances place restrictions on what man can do since he does not have absolute control over his possibilities. As Heidegger says, “existentiality is essentially determined by facticity.”³⁵⁷

In his discussion of the Authentic and inauthentic existence of *Dasein* Heidegger had the following said. First before we proceed, the prime maxim of Socrates, one of the most revered persons in the history of Philosophy, was “*man Know thyself.*”³⁵⁸ This maxim is not applied when *Dasein* is inauthentic; here, the self is not really known because it is neglected. *Dasein* is inauthentic when he is busy, excited, and preoccupied with other things than himself. This is when man lives his daily life without any serious reflection and simply does things because *one*

³⁵³ M. GELVEN, *A Commentary on Heidegger’s Being and Time*, Harper & Rows, 1970, p. 44.

³⁵⁴ M. HEIDEGGER, *Being and Time*, p. 68.

³⁵⁵ *Ibid.*

³⁵⁶ J. MACQUARRIE, *Martin Heidegger*, Lutterworth Press, 1968, p. 13.

³⁵⁷ M. HEIDEGGER, *Being and Time*, p. 236.

³⁵⁸ R. ALLEN, *Greek Philosophy: Thales to Aristotle*, The Free Press, 1966, p. 19.

has to do them. The consequence is that man becomes an undifferentiated self-lacking individuality and personal decision.³⁵⁹ This makes a person conform to the ‘they’ mentality as Heidegger affirms:

*We take pleasure and enjoy ourselves as they [man] take pleasure; we read, see, and judge about literature and art as they see and judge; likewise we shrink back from the ‘great mass’ as they shrink back; we find ‘shocking’ what they find shocking.*³⁶⁰

The ‘they’ is anyone including myself in so far as I do, think, and feel what ‘they’ do, think, and feel. It is anonymous as it is everyone and no one for anyone can represent the ‘they’.³⁶¹ Thus, I am no longer my own individual self but the ‘they-self.’ “The ‘who’ is not this one, not that one, not oneself “*manselbst*”, not some people “*einige*”, and not the sum of them all. The ‘who’ is the neuter, *the “they” or “das Man”*³⁶² This mode of being is that of inauthenticity which is failure to stand by one’s self. The inauthentic self is most confident that all its problems have been solved as it covers its real being; that which is capable of making choices. The ‘they-self’ considers that all its choices have been made and all it has to do is to live out the implications.³⁶³ Heidegger considers the ‘they’ as a thief of the individuality of *Dasein*:

*The ‘they’ is there alongside everywhere [ist überall dabei], but in such a manner that it has always stolen away whenever Dasein presses for a decision. Yet because the ‘they’ presents every judgment and decision as its own, it deprives the particular Dasein of its answerability... It can be answerable for everything most easily, because it is not someone who needs to vouch for anything. It ‘was’ always the ‘they’ who did it, and yet it can be said that it has been ‘no one’.*³⁶⁴

With the ‘they’, there is the loss of responsibility. The individual *Dasein* is no longer responsible for anything as the ‘they’ is responsible for everything and this is a mark of inauthenticity. *Dasein*’s inauthenticity does not mean that *Dasein* does not exist. “Rather, it has fallen into anonymity and depersonalization. Such an individual is referred to by the impersonal pronoun *one*.”³⁶⁵ The characteristics of the inauthentic *Dasein* include everydayness, fallenness and guilt. According to the view of Heidegger, “the self of everyday *Dasein* is the *they-self*.”³⁶⁶ The kind of being in which *Dasein* maintains itself for the most part is called *everydayness*. Reiterating this point, Heidegger declares by saying:

³⁵⁹ W. SAHAKIAN, *History of Philosophy*, p. 349.

³⁶⁰ M. HEIDEGGER, *Being and Time*, p. 164.

³⁶¹ *Ibid.*

³⁶² *Ibid.*

³⁶³ Cfr. M. GELVEN, *A Commentary on Heidegger’s Being and Time*, p. 160.

³⁶⁴ M. HEIDEGGER, *Being and Time*, p. 165.

³⁶⁵ W. SAHAKIAN, *History of Philosophy*, p. 349

³⁶⁶ M. HEIDEGGER, *Being and Time*, p. 167.

*'Everydayness' manifestly stands for that way of existing in which Dasein maintains itself 'every day' 'alle Tage'. And yet this 'every day' does not signify the sum of those 'days' which have been allotted to Dasein in its 'lifetime'.*³⁶⁷

The 'they' or *das Man*, which is nothing definite, prescribes the kind of being of everydayness. In *Dasein's* everydayness the agency through which most things come about is one of which it must be said that 'it was no one'.³⁶⁸ The term everydayness describes how the 'they' move in the realm of the customs, habits, and conventions of everyday life or existence. Thus, everydayness is a way to be to which that which is publicly manifest belongs. This is more or less familiar to any individual *Dasein* as a way of existing which it may have as its own. While everydayness stands for the manner in which every day *Dasein* lives, fallenness points to that tendency of losing oneself in the 'they'. Fallenness is the universal tendency of man to lose himself in his activities and concerns, thus alienating himself from his unique and personal future possibilities. Fallen man exists as mere presence, retreating from his genuine self which always involves his past and his future. The existential significance of fallenness is that quite often, the individual loses awareness of himself by being absorbed in the inauthentic 'they'. This absorption "has mostly the character of Being-lost in the publicness of the 'they'."³⁶⁹ Thus, it is the non-awareness of the significance of what it means to be.³⁷⁰ "Fallenness into the 'world' means an absorption in Being-with-one-another, in so far as the latter is guided by idle talk, curiosity, and ambiguity."³⁷¹ Thus, the characteristics of fallenness are idle talk, curiosity and ambiguity. These are interconnected as Heidegger shows:

*Idle talk discloses to Dasein a Being towards its world, towards Others, and towards itself, a being in which these are understood, but in a mode of groundless floating. Curiosity discloses everything and anything, yet in such a way that Being-in is everywhere and nowhere. Ambiguity hides nothing from Dasein's understanding, but only in order that Being-in-the-world should be suppressed in this uprooted "everywhere and nowhere".*³⁷²

Idle talk, curiosity and ambiguity deceptively assure *Dasein* that it is living a secure, genuine and full life. Fallenness is tranquilizing but this does not seduce man into stagnation and inactivity; man is instead driven in uninhibited 'hustle'. This, however, portrays inauthenticity because it alienates man from himself.

³⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 422.

³⁶⁸ M. HEIDEGGER, *Being and Time*, p. 165.

³⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 220.

³⁷⁰ Cf. M. GELVEN, *A Commentary on Heidegger's Being and Time*, p. 106.

³⁷¹ M. HEIDEGGER, *Being and Time*, p. 175.

³⁷² *Ibid.*, p. 177.

The authenticity or authentic mode of existence simply means being aware of one's existence and taking responsibility for one's actions which one freely chooses. Whatever is mine is my *own* and the German term is *eigen*. From *eigen* comes *eigentlich*, which Macquarrie and Robinson have translated as 'authentic'. Heidegger uses the term in a special sense which is connected with 'my own-ness'. Authenticity, therefore, is the mode of *Dasein's* existence in which one is aware of one's *own* existence.³⁷³ Authentic existence is characterized by an explicit awareness of what it means to be. Authenticity need not of course imply eccentricity. Eccentricity can be inauthentic, while conformity to standard practices can be authentically chosen. An authentic existence can only be found, if one understands oneself as a totality. Although man finds himself for the most part in the mode of inauthenticity, Heidegger notes that this can be reversed if *Dasein* specifically brings back itself from its loss in the 'they':

When Dasein thus brings itself back from the 'they', the they-self is modified in an existentiell manner so that it becomes authentic Being-one's Self. This must be accomplished by making up for not choosing. But 'making up' for not choosing signifies choosing to make this choice- deciding for a potentiality-for Being, and making this decision from one's own Self. In choosing to make this choice, Dasein makes possible, first and foremost, its authentic potentiality-for-Being.³⁷⁴

In order for *Dasein* to find its authentic self, it must be shown this self in its possible authenticity. *Dasein* has to be summoned from the 'they' by the voice of conscience. An authentic self is a self willing to be open to the call of conscience. If a man is totally deaf to his conscience; if he does not feel any guilt, it can be said that he lacks an awareness of what it means to be a man. To want to have a conscience on the other hand is the basis for authenticity.

As mentioned earlier, an authentic existence can only be found if one understands oneself as a totality. One can see oneself as a whole, only when one faces the hard fact that one is mortal. Man is a being-unto-death (*Sein Zum Tode*) and by facing death, we can see and delineate the limits of our being. We begin to see the limited amount of time yet available and also realize that it must not be wasted. Death is the most certain of all the possibilities of *Dasein* for as soon as man comes to life, he is at once old enough to die. Although many possibilities are open to *Dasein*, there is a final possibility, a possibility to end all other possibilities, and this is death.³⁷⁵ Reflection on the reality of death reveals man's potentiality and unique possibility. One has to anticipate one's own death. For Heidegger:

³⁷³ M. GELVEN, *A Commentary on Heidegger's Being and Time*, p. 47.

³⁷⁴ M. HEIDEGGER, *Being and Time*, p. 313.

³⁷⁵ M. INWOOD, *Heidegger*, p. 61.

Anticipation turns out to be the possibility of understanding one's ownmost and uttermost potentiality-for-Being that is to say, the possibility of authentic existence... Death is Dasein's ownmost possibility. Being towards this possibility discloses to Dasein its ownmost potentiality-for-Being, in which its very Being is the issue. Here it can become manifest to Dasein that in this distinctive possibility of its own self, it has been wrenched away from the 'they'.³⁷⁶

As one anticipates one's death, anxiety arises which should be distinguished from fear. The authentic mood that discloses death is anxiety whereas the inauthentic mood is fear. The authentic mood of death focuses not fearfully on an actual event but on a possibility. Anxiety arises from man's finitude and the nothingness he feels within him. As man becomes conscious of his death, there also arises a difference in the choices he makes during his life. Heidegger, however, makes a distinction between anxiety and fear when he says:

Anxiety does not see' any definite 'here' or 'yonder' from which it comes. That in the face of which one has anxiety is characterized by the fact that what threatens is nowhere. Anxiety 'does not know' what that in the face of which it is anxious is.³⁷⁷

Thus, while fear is related to some definite object for "that in the face of which we fear, the 'fearsome', is in every case something which we encounter within-the-world,"³⁷⁸ anxiety is not caused by any such definite object. Anxiety is related to nothingness which for Heidegger is death. Authentic being towards death is related to 'resoluteness'; only if one is aware of one's finitude does one have reason to act now rather than to procrastinate, and it is the crucial decision made with a view to the whole course of one's life that gives life unity and shape. It is closely related to freedom and choice. To be authentic means that one is resolute, one is free to make a choice of one's own manner of existence.³⁷⁹ Resoluteness for Heidegger is "letting oneself be called forth to one's ownmost *Being-guilty*."³⁸⁰ Man should let himself be called by conscience from the state of guilt. Man's wish for a conscience arises from his anxious state of mind. In resoluteness, the human being is prepared for anxiety, and as one moves through time, one achieves authentic existence. Heidegger, in this light, goes on to state:

When the call of conscience is understood, lostness in the 'they' is revealed. Resoluteness brings Dasein back to its ownmost potentiality-for-Being-its-Self. When one has an understanding Being-towards-death—towards death as one's ownmost possibility—one's potentiality-for-Being becomes authentic and wholly transparent.³⁸¹

³⁷⁶ M. HEIDEGGER, *Being and Time*, p. 307.

³⁷⁷ HEIDEGGER, *Being and Time*, p. 231.

³⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 179.

³⁷⁹ Cf. M. GELVEN, *A Commentary on Heidegger's Being and Time*, p. 170.

³⁸⁰ M. HEIDEGGER, *Being and Time*, p. 353.

³⁸¹ *Ibid.*, p. 354.

The resolute man like any other *Dasein* is guilty, he knows that he is guilty and he wants to have a conscience. It is in realizing the nature of his conscience and his guilt that he becomes resolute. Resoluteness focuses on the individual's unique assertion of his own existence, freely grounded in responsibility and guilt. However, Heidegger insists that authenticity does not imply a detachment or isolation from others in the world, for the self, even the authentic self, is by nature with others and in a world:

*Resoluteness, as authentic Being-one's-Self, does not detach Dasein from its world, nor does it isolate it so that it becomes a free-floating "I". And how should it, when resoluteness as authentic disclosedness, is authentically nothing else than Being-in-the-world? Resoluteness brings the Self right into its current concerned Being-alongside what is ready-to-hand, and pushes it into solicitous Being with Others.*³⁸²

Again, the benefit of being resolute is not limited to the individual *Dasein*. When *Dasein* is resolute as Heidegger notes, it can become the conscience of others. It is also only by authentically being oneself in resoluteness that "people can authentically be with one another—not by ambiguous and jealous stipulations and talkative fraternizing in the 'they' and in what 'they' want to undertake."³⁸³ Thus, one can say with M. Gelven:

*Authenticity, then, never implies a hermit-like loneliness or stoic detachment from world events. It does suggest a clear awareness of the self as self, and a realization that one alone is responsible for the way one exists, and it avoids the slavery of the they-self.*³⁸⁴

The resolute *Dasein* achieves or wins his authenticity when he takes over his unique past, anticipates his unique future, and chooses in such a manner that his past and future are integrated. The past is held in memory, the future is courageously faced, and the moment is creatively affirmed as the opportune time for decisive action.

4.2.3. The presence and being in the world

The word *Dasein* plays an important role in Heidegger's work and is already so familiar to any English-speaking reader who has read this work though it still remains an enigma. Heidegger's translators seem simply to leave *Dasein* untranslated except in some areas where they break it up with a hyphen '*Da-sein*' to show its etymological constructions literally meaning '*Being there*'.³⁸⁵ *Dasein* means 'to exist,' or 'to be there,' 'to be here.' The term *Dasein* was first used by I. Kant who defined it as the existence of any entity, but Heidegger restricts this to human beings as their being is

³⁸² M. HEIDEGGER, *Being and Time*, p. 344.

³⁸³ *Ibid.*, p. 353.

³⁸⁴ M. GELVEN, *A Commentary on Heidegger's Being and Time*, p. 170.

³⁸⁵ M. GELVEN, *A Commentary on Heidegger's Being and Time*, Harper & Rows, 1970, p. 23.

different from the being of other entities in the world.³⁸⁶ “*Dasein* is an entity for which, in its being, that being is the issue”³⁸⁷ which is not characteristic of other entities. Heidegger uses the terms ‘*ontisch*’ (ontical) and ‘*ontologisch*’ (ontological) as concerned primarily with *entities* and *being* respectively. Heidegger chooses Human existence as an object to be investigated which he calls *Dasein*. In every German discourse, the term refers to human existence and this meaning is not abandoned by Heidegger. *Dasein* consist of two parts, *da*, meaning ‘here’ and *sein* ‘to be’; the etymological meaning of *Dasein* is ‘to be here’ or ‘to be there.’³⁸⁸ M. Gelven in the same light with G. Gray avers that the basic meaning of *Dasein* is ‘openness,’ in other words, *Dasein* to a certain extent understands itself as being-towards-possibility. Heidegger states that *Dasein* in its nature is open to possibilities through the process of interpreting itself, thus:

*As understanding Dasein projects its being upon possibilities. This Being-towards-possibilities which understands is itself a potentiality-for-Being, and it is so because of the way these possibilities, as disclosed exert their counter-thrust upon Dasein. The projecting of the understanding has its own possibility- that of developing itself. This development of understanding we call “interpretation.”*³⁸⁹

Although we see *Dasein* to be open to possibilities, Heidegger does not in any way suggest human existence to be just a possibility but that actuality is grounded in possibility.³⁹⁰ The principle that possibility is prior to actuality and priority is given to possibility over actuality comes up more often in Heidegger’s philosophy.³⁹¹ This happens just for the reason that though actuality does not come up very often in his philosophy like that of possibility, actuality is embedded in possibility. There are two aspects of *Dasein*’s openness; we have what Heidegger calls state-of-mind (*Befindlichkeit*) and understanding.³⁹² State-of-mind is Heidegger’s term for the receptive aspect of *Dasein*’s way of being. Heidegger has this to say:

*But to be affected by the unserviceable, resistant, or threatening character of that which is ready-at-hand, becomes ontologically possible only insofar as Being-in as such has been determined existentially beforehand in such a manner that what it encounters within-the-world can matter to it in this way. The fact that this sort of thing can matter to it is grounded in one’s state-of-mind...Dasein’s openness to the world is constituted existentially by the attunement of a state-of-mind.*³⁹³

³⁸⁶ M. INWOOD, *Heidegger*, p. 18.

³⁸⁷ M. HEIDEGGER, *Being and Time*, p. 236.

³⁸⁸ M. GELVEN, *A Commentary on Heidegger’s Being and Time*, p. 24.

³⁸⁹ M. HEIDEGGER, *Being and Time*, p. 188.

³⁹⁰ R. KEARNEY, “Heidegger and the Possible,” J. BASTABLE (ed.), in *Philosophical Studies*, vol. 27, 1980, p. 178.

³⁹¹ M. GELVEN, *A Commentary on Heidegger’s Being and Time*, p. 76.

³⁹² Affectedness (*Befindlichkeit*) as proposed by H. Dreyfus could be used as a synonym for *state-of-mind* which is translated by John Macquerrrie and Edward Robinson.

³⁹³ M. HEIDEGGER, *Being and Time*, p. 176.

There is a great difficulty of translating *Befindlichkeit*. Affectedness for H. Dreyfus best captures this as our being is already affected by things.³⁹⁴ State-of-mind for Heidegger means ‘the mode in which one is to be found,’ that is, *Dasein* is always in a mode. He calls *Dasein*’s mode of awareness of the actual as state-of-mind.³⁹⁵ *Dasein* becomes aware of itself in its ‘here,’ and aware of actuality and possibility due to its state-of-mind. It is the basis for which the world matters to *Dasein*.³⁹⁶ Heidegger further explains that in interpretation, understanding becomes itself, it does not become something else.³⁹⁷ Dreyfus affirms that for Heidegger, understanding discloses *Dasein* to its current world.³⁹⁸ Heidegger strongly holds that understanding is very important because it provides an account of how *Dasein* is aware of possibilities and thus provides a basis for his theory of interpretation. Heidegger affirms that understanding reveals to *Dasein* its mode of existence by making it able-to-be (*Seinkönnen*), literally translated as ‘to be able to be.’³⁹⁹

4.2.4. The Temporisation of *Dasein*

Heidegger argues that being has traditionally been viewed in terms of time, from its Greek word *ousia*, and associated with *parousia*, meaning ‘presence.’⁴⁰⁰ The Greeks viewed being in terms of temporal presence.⁴⁰¹ There might be a reason for this although Plato viewed Being from a different point of view, that is believing Being to be unchanging and eternal. Heidegger does not believe in any supra-temporal beings such as God.⁴⁰² *Dasein* is temporal and it is *Dasein*’s temporality that makes the world temporal. According to him, no world exist above or below *Dasein*’s and so *Dasein* is above other entities and takes over some of the functions that were traditionally ascribed to God because it has the advantage that it is finite in the world.⁴⁰³

Heidegger does not only declare the intimate connection between time and being, but also between time and *Dasein*.⁴⁰⁴ Heidegger intimates that we shall point to the concept of *temporality* as the meaning of being, *Dasein*.⁴⁰⁵ Knowing fully well that *Dasein* is something which understands

³⁹⁴ H. DREYFUS, *Being-in-the-World*, MIT Press, 1991, p. 168.

³⁹⁵ M. GELVEN, *A Commentary on Heidegger’s Being and Time*, pp. 78- 79.

³⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, p.80.

³⁹⁷ M. HEIDEGGER, *Being and Time*, p. 188.

³⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 84.

³⁹⁹ M. GELVEN, *A Commentary on Heidegger’s Being and Time*, p. 84.

⁴⁰⁰ M. HEIDEGGER, *Being and Time*, p. 47.

⁴⁰¹ M. INWOOD, *Heidegger*, p. 56.

⁴⁰² M. HEIDEGGER, *Being and Time*, p. 39.

⁴⁰³ M. INWOOD, *Heidegger*, pp. 58-60.

⁴⁰⁴ H. DREYFUS, *A Companion to Heidegger*, Blackwell Publishing Ltd, 2005, p. 311.

⁴⁰⁵ M. HEIDEGGER, *Being and Time*, p. 38.

and interprets something as being within time, always means being 'in time'. The way in which being and its modes and characteristics have their meaning is determined primarily in terms of time and interpreting being as such includes working out the temporality of being, and thus he emphasises that *Dasein's* being finds its meaning in temporality.⁴⁰⁶ He maintains,

*The temporal Interpretation of everyday Dasein must start with those structures in which disclosedness constitutes itself: Understanding, State-of-mind, falling, and discourse. The moods in which temporality temporalizes are to be laid bare with regard to these phenomena, and will give us a basis for defining the temporality of Being-in-the-world. This leads us back to the phenomenon of the world, and permits us to delimit the specifically temporal problematic of worldhood...*⁴⁰⁷

For Heidegger, *Dasein* in order to interpret itself, must start with some structures in which openness or *disclosedness* is primordial to itself. Dreyfus helps clarify this by commenting that *disclosedness* is the manner in which *Dasein* is open to the world. Heidegger identifies four elements that are permanent to the structures of *disclosedness*, that is, understanding (or projection), affectivity, falling and discourse. These modes of temporalisation provide the ground for determining the temporality of being-in-the-world.⁴⁰⁸ The world for Heidegger does not mean 'environment' or what surrounds us as presented by science. He sees the world as a function of our interaction with it.⁴⁰⁹ The temporality of being-in-the-world emerges and at the same time shows its foundation in spatiality. It seems to make up another basic attribute of *Dasein's* temporality. That is why Heidegger talks of *Dasein* as having a 'Spatio-temporal' character, hence *Dasein's* specific spatiality must be grounded in its temporality.⁴¹⁰ Temporality thus shows *Dasein* is finite and limited and this shows its meaninglessness.

⁴⁰⁶ M. HEIDEGGER, *Being and Time*, pp. 39- 41.

⁴⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 384.

⁴⁰⁸ H. DREYFUS, *A Companion to Heidegger*, p.312.

⁴⁰⁹ J. TIETZ, *An Outline and Study Guide to Martin Heidegger's Being and Time*, Humanities Press, 2001, p.61.

⁴¹⁰ M. HEIDEGGER, *Being and Time*, p. 418.

PARTIAL CONCLUSION

This chapter was dedicated to the analysis of Heidegger's understanding of being. his meaning of the concept of being. At the outset of his quest for the meaning of Being, Heidegger laid a charge on western metaphysics that it has always concerned itself with particular beings and not with Being as such. Western metaphysics, according to him, was ontical not ontological. James Collins articulated this charge thus:

*Ever since the lines of speculation hardened with Aristotle, there has been a fundamental confusion between Das Sein and Das Seiende, between being itself and this or that concrete instance of that-which-is. Metaphysicians declare themselves to be investigating the nature of being whereas their statements really bear upon this being, a being, beings, or the totality of that which is.*⁴¹¹

Heidegger, therefore, set a task for himself as he mentioned that the aim of *Being and Time* was to work out the question of the meaning of being and to do so concretely.⁴¹² An inquiry about what it means to be; *ens qua ens*, is ontological whereas an inquiry about an entity is ontic. In dealing with particular beings, traditional metaphysics was ontical. Thus, Heidegger introduced a new approach to the study of Being which he called ontology; which is concerned with Being as such and not with particular beings. Heidegger deserves some credit for giving a new approach to the problem of Being, and thus from this new approach do we describe Heidegger as a postmetaphysical philosopher.

These two concepts of ontic and ontology are closely related to the other Heideggerians notions of authenticity and inauthenticity. We saw earlier that inasmuch as *Dasein* is concerned with other beings than its own being, it is inauthentic whereas when *Dasein* is conscious of its being and resolutely takes its own decisions, it is authentic.

⁴¹¹ J. COLLINS, *The Existentialists*, Henry Regenery Company, 1967, p. 177.

⁴¹² M. HEIDEGGER, *Being and Time*, p.19.

PART THREE
CRITICAL EVALUATION OF MARTIN HEIDEGGER'S CONCEPTION
OF BEING AND PERSPECTIVES

CHAPTER FIVE

CRITICAL EVALUATION ON HEIDEGGER'S CONCEPTION OF BEING

PARTIAL INTRODUCTION

In chapter four we spend considerable time to examine the concept of *Dasein* as held by Heidegger. We examined Heidegger's understanding and explanation to the concept of being. We observe the response given to the critique of the western traditional understanding of the question and meaning of being, The term *Dasein* was not unique to Heidegger as it had been used by other philosophers before him. For example, the term *Dasein* was used by Kant for the existence of any entity.⁴¹³ Heidegger used the term *Dasein* in a different way. "In ordinary German, *Dasein* means existence in the usual sense: being there in space and time as contrasted with not being at all."⁴¹⁴ It comes from the verb *Dasein*, which means 'to exist' or 'to be there, to be here'.

Everything that exists can therefore be called *Dasein*; in the sense that it is (t)here. In traditional German Philosophy, the term may be used quite generally for any kind of being or 'existence' but in everyday usage it stands for human existence. Heidegger follows this everyday usage and restricts the term *Dasein* to human beings. Sometimes, but not always, Heidegger hyphenates the word, *Da-sein*, to stress the sense of being (t)here.

Heidegger does not use the term 'man' for the human being. The term 'man' connotes an existent completed in himself but as we shall see later, Heidegger's *Dasein* has no fixed essence. Nevertheless, if *Dasein* is that being "for which, in its Being, that very Being is essentially an *issue*"⁴¹⁵ then *Dasein* can only refer to the human being. Heidegger himself states that "Dasein is not only close to us - even that which is closest: we *are* it, each of us, we ourselves."⁴¹⁶ Therefore, *Dasein* is a technical term Heidegger uses to refer to the human being. Heidegger uses the human being as a means to resolve the problem of Being. Our main goal in this chapter will be to critical evaluate the concept of being by Heidegger in his philosophy as treated in chapter four above. We shall proceed in the following paragraphs as below.

⁴¹³ M. INWOOD, *Heidegger*, Oxford University Press, 1997, p.18.

⁴¹⁴ M. GRENE, "Martin Heidegger," in P. EDWARDS (ed.), *The Encyclopedia of Philosophy Vols. 3 & 4*, p.459.

⁴¹⁵ M. HEIDEGGER, *Being and Time*, p.117.

⁴¹⁶ *Ibidem*, p.36.

5.1. From An Affirmative Perspective and Positive Thinking

5.1.1. Hans G. Gadamer on tradition, history and hermeneutics

Looking at the history of philosophy, change and tradition have always been at the center of inquiries in history. We shall look at H. Gadamer's view of tradition. Gadamer is a philosopher who lived within the 1900s.⁴¹⁷ Hans-Georg Gadamer is an important figure in the development of twentieth century hermeneutics. Gadamer developed a distinctive and thoroughly dialogical approach, grounded in Platonic-Aristotelian as well as Heideggerians thinking, that rejects subjectivism and relativism, abjures any simple notion of interpretive method, and grounds understanding in the linguistically mediated happening of tradition. Gadamer's work concentrated in four main areas: the first, and clearly the most influential, is the development and elaboration of a philosophical hermeneutics, the second is the dialogue within philosophy and within the history of philosophy, with respect to Plato and Aristotle in particular, but with Hegel and Heidegger.

The third is the engagement with literature, particularly poetry, and with art and the fourth is what Gadamer himself terms 'practical philosophy' encompassing contemporary political and ethical issues. He is however, one of the most important thinkers of the twentieth century, having had an enormous impact on a range of areas from aesthetics to jurisprudence, and having acquired a respect and reputation in Germany, and elsewhere in Europe. To him, after Kant made the aesthetic judgment and the idea of testing transcendental principles, the claim of truth was allowed to the natural sciences. In addition, according to the modernist view, objectivity can only be reached by autonomous use of reason without prejudices. According to him, the way of communicating truth is traditional, we ought to do something or think that something is true because a speaker or text says it. Rather, we learn that something is true only from hearing, or reading and interpreting verbal or maybe written knowledge.⁴¹⁸

Tradition thus is a form of legitimate authority that determines our institutions, attitudes and even the way we use our reason. Philosophical hermeneutics gives proofs of the dangers of putting tradition and reason opposite to each other. It is through tradition, which in this case is our way of life, beliefs, prejudices, conceptual scheme, language, etc. that we understand the

⁴¹⁷ <https://www.standfordencyclopediaofphilosophy.com>.

⁴¹⁸ A. F Maderey, *Understanding Tradition(s)*: Hans-Georg Gadamer and Elémire Zolla's Hermeneutics of the Spirit, 2012, p.1.

world. Thus, so long as we have reasons to believe, it is true; tradition is constantly being affirmed, welcomed and cultivated. Our relationship with tradition can not be objectified.

Mastering the language is a necessary precondition for coming to an understanding in a conversation.⁴¹⁹ “Rather, language is the universal medium in which understanding occurs. Understanding occurs in interpreting. That the fusion of horizons that takes place in understanding is actually the achievement of language.”⁴²⁰ Because the event of understanding “lets itself be addressed by tradition,” for “we stand always within tradition,”⁴²¹ Tradition could be defined as a body of long-established customs and beliefs (behavioural patterns) in a community or group or people, usually one that is being handed down from one generation to the next. Gadamer uses tradition interchangeably with culture and history, all referring to one’s prejudices, which shape one’s life consciously and or unconsciously

Gadamer reacting to Dilthey goes against tenets of historicism on so many grounds: In the first place, he affirms that in using *epoche*, this cancels out the dialogical nature of understanding wherein the interpreter and the text encounter each other in a conversational mode,⁴²² until an agreement is reached (the truth, meaning or understanding). This is not possible. Secondly, instead of returning solely to the past, the interpreter makes present (*hic et nunc*) what was there at the time of writing. He is to make the text come alive again. By so doing, the temporal distance which historicism shuns now appears as a continuity of heritage and tradition, in the process of “presencings.” That is of mediations through which the past already functions in and shapes the interpreter’s present horizon. It follows that the past is never an agglomeration of the objects to be recovered or better still duplicated by the interpreter. Rather, it is what has been termed by Gadamer as “effective history” (*wirkungsgeschichte*) which alone paves the way for a conversation between each new interpreter and the text, or any work of art he is out to understand. This as such, requires no fixed methodology as dictated by historicism.

Here, Heidegger is once more followed in anchoring understanding in the concerns of the interpreting object, one of practical involvement. However, more than Heidegger one situates

⁴¹⁹ H. G. GADAMER., *Truth and method*, G. BARDEN – J. CUMMING (eds.), Sheed and Ward, 1975, p.403.

⁴²⁰ *Ibid.*, p.407. What makes “coming to an understanding” possible is language, which provides the *Mitte*, the “medium” or “middle ground,” the “place” where understanding, as we say, “takes place”. Language is the *Vermittlung*, the communicative mediation which establishes common ground. But Gadamer stresses that that ground is not established by any explicit agreement or “social contract” that could be negotiated in advance, nor by any purely psychological processes of “empathy” or “sympathy.”

⁴²¹ H-G. GADAMER, *Truth and Method*, pp. 250-251. This Gadamerian conception of “understanding” is relied upon here because it is in harmony with Hegel’s dialectical process in which new acquisition of knowledge is a mediation of the past within a new and expanded context, even if this is teleological for Hegel but non teleological according to Gadamer.

⁴²² H-G. GADAMER, *Philosophical Apprenticeships*, Sullivan R. (trans.), MIT Press, 1990, p.186.

this structure of involvement in history.⁴²³ The concerns one brings into the process of interpretation are not just one's preoccupations, but at same time contain subjects of concern that have developed within a historical tradition to which one belongs. Because we are products of history, this explains why what one generation holds as belief and assumes is grounded in (as a continuation of) what a previous generation has formulated and suspected. This could also be a reaction to it. For instance, the knowledge that an individual or community has of a particular domain or object, is not just a product of that individual or community alone; rather, it is one of history. In this connection, as P. Juhl corroborates, a statement about the meaning of an artistic work is neither one of individual perspectives nor of personal prejudices of a hand full of interpreters.⁴²⁴ On the contrary, it is one which represents their inheritance. From the above point of view, Gadamer is right when he states that "the anticipations of meaning that govern our understanding of a text is not an act of subjectivity, but proceeds from the community that binds us to tradition."⁴²⁵ And so even where interpreters attempt to part from tradition and confront their subject-matter without preconceptions, the tradition still retains its normative force.⁴²⁶ This simply shows how minute interpreters and their individual points of view matter.

5.1.2. The existentialism of Jean Paul Sartre

According to Sartre, the being of appearance is no longer carried by another being. Primarily, the solely existing entities are things as they are, and the things whose appearing they are arise later, secondarily, as concepts which refer to sets of things as they are.⁴²⁷ But at first Sartre focuses on the option, that there is no being at all, that there are solely phenomena. He associates this assumption with the idealistic theory of Berkeley, whose catchphrase has been *esse est percipi*, to be is to be perceived. According to this view, being is nothing more than the cognition of being. This leads to the self-contradictory conclusion, that nothing exists at all: If any existence is in fact cognition, cognition is in fact just cognition of cognition, and each phenomenon just a phenomenon of a phenomenon. The system lacks a fixed point, to which it is attached: if everything is just an illusion, than it's an illusion, that everything is just an illusion. Sartre draws the conclusion, that it is inevitable to regard existence as transphenomenal, as

⁴²³ G. WARNKE, *GADAMER: Hermeneutics, Tradition and Reason*, p. 78.

⁴²⁴ P. JUHL, *Interpretation*, Princeton University Press, 1980, p.8.

⁴²⁵ H-G. GADAMER, *Truth and Method*, p.261.

⁴²⁶ G. WARNKE, *GADAMER: Hermeneutics Tradition and Reason*, p.79.

⁴²⁷ J. SARTRE, *Being and Nothingness*, Hazel E. BARNES (Trans), Citadel Press, 1965, p. xlix.

something, which is beyond appearing.⁴²⁸ When Sartre talks about being in *Being and Nothingness*, he talks about: Existence in its common use and A kind of material of existence, on which every existing thing participates. He then distinguishes two subspecies of being the Being-in-itself and the Being-for-itself.

Being-in-itself is Sartre's explanation of the phenomenon of being, an existent thing. It is simply the act of existing, and is separate from consciousness. Sartre calls being the ever present foundation of the existent, and is something which cannot ever be removed nor ever fully made known to consciousness.⁴²⁹ This is because consciousness is the revealed-revelation of existents, the process of revealing things, of understanding, and is always in the pursuit of meaning.⁴³⁰ Sartre goes on to say that although meaning can become its own being, this is distinct from the being of existents. Sartre's explanation of being-in-itself is threefold: Being is in itself, Being is what it is, and Being is: Being is in itself, this meant to draw attention to the unity of things in themselves. There is neither potency nor becoming, in their being. It is consciousness which looks for and understands becoming, or growth. At all phases of development, a tree is a unity unto itself. The three is perfectly at one with itself, it is in-itself and thus has no relation to itself.⁴³¹ Being is what it is- This meant to clarify that the being of in-itself is not a self, as the itself implies. An apple is an apple; it is not a self. Neither does it have the task of becoming what it should be. It is not aware of itself or of its own being, there is no selfhood. Beings simply are what they are.⁴³² Being is- By saying being is Sartre is saying "that being can neither be derived from the possible nor reduced to the necessary. Essentially, Sartre is stating that things simply are; things exist without reason or justification. The discussion of things existing necessarily involves meaning, which is a function of the consciousness not the in-itself. Furthermore, one should not speak of the in-itself as either possible or impossible

Being-for-itself refers to the being of mankind. In describing this being, we arrive at its distinguishing characteristic, consciousness. Sartre is critical of the seventeenth century philosopher Rene Descartes for his failure to move beyond the functionality of the cogito, or thinking consciousness. Sartre says that when Descartes realized "I doubt, I think". He fell into the error of substance, meaning, that Descartes concluded that thought was substantive, that the

⁴²⁸ J. SARTRE, *Being and Nothingness*, Hazel E. BARNES (Trans), Citadel Press, 1965, p. xl.

⁴²⁹ J. SARTRE, *Transcendence of the Ego*, tr. Forrest Williams and Robert Kirkpatrick, Noonday Press, p. 123.

⁴³⁰ T. BUSCH, *The Power of Consciousness and the Force of Circumstances in Sartre's Philosophy*, Indiana University Press, 1990, p.22.

⁴³¹ J. CATALANO, *A Commentary on Jean-Paul Sartre's Being and Nothingness*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980, p.68.

⁴³² C. HOWELLS ed., 1992, *Cambridge Companion to Sartre*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992, p. 128.

mind was spiritual in-itself. Descartes' conclusion was that man is this cogito, a thinking substance.⁴³³ To avoid and move beyond this conclusion, Sartre's being-for-itself, is based upon a pre-reflective cogito. A pre-reflective cogito is the conscious awareness of self, rather than the outward intentionality of consciousness perceiving something. The pre-reflective consciousness is the awareness of what one is doing. Sartre explains that reflective consciousness is the process of counting cigarettes, yet the pre-reflective consciousness is the awareness of the counting. However, Sartre is very clear in his warning not to mistake this as two separate consciousnesses. He says that the pre-reflective state is that "which renders reflection possible; there is a pre-reflective cogito which is the condition of the Cartesian cogito.

Essentially, Sartre is explaining that the pre-reflective cogito, the awareness of self, is "nothing," it is the nothingness or lack of identity. Sartre goes onto paradoxically defines being-for-itself as a being which is not what it is and which is what it is not. He explains that it "is" in the fact that "it appears in a condition which it has not chosen meaning, that man is born into certain conditions, man appears to others in certain forms, various roles and in that respect for-itself man "is"⁴³⁴. Yet, saying that it is what it is not refers to the nothingness at the base of our existence. This is the nothingness of the pre-reflective cogito; the nothingness of our identity and our struggle to achieve a unified meaning of self. Thus it is clear that being-for-itself is the opposite of the being-in-itself. The in-itself is not self aware because it is completely contained within itself. The for-itself is self aware because it exists in the nothingness that is the pre-reflective cogito's awareness of self. While the in-itself exists independent of meaning, it is the for-itself which is creating meaning of the in-itself. Yet, is itself a nihilated self looking for meaning.⁴³⁵

Thus, according to J. Sartre there are two kinds of being, the being of consciousness and the being of things, the being-in-itself. Now questions arise, and the purpose of the remaining part of "Being and Nothingness". On the one hand the spontaneity of consciousness prevents, that anything can affect consciousness. The being of the things is not able to cause phenomena of consciousness, thus a causal connection in this direction can be excluded. On the other hand it's excluded as well, that consciousness affects being-in-itself, because the phenomena of

⁴³³T. BUSCH, *The Power of Consciousness and the Force of Circumstances in Sartre's Philosophy*, Indiana University Press, 1990, p. 98.

⁴³⁴J. SARTRE, *Transcendence of the Ego*, tr. Forrest Williams and Robert Kirkpatrick, Noonday Press, 1962, 108.

⁴³⁵*Ibid*, p. 108.

consciousness don't contain unconscious components, and a force, which affects the outer world would be an unconscious component. The area of consciousness is totally isolated.⁴³⁶

The human reality is concrete nothingness is its consciousness. Consciousness, or awareness, is a concrete nothingness because consciousness is not perfectly one with itself or its 'object.' But consciousness is not thereby separated from itself by a void, for then consciousness would in no way be one with itself. This concrete nothingness cannot be pictured, but an approach can be made to understand it if we repeatedly ask ourselves what we are. When I question myself. I recognize that no characteristics define my existence; my existence precedes my essence. This ability to question myself is a sign of a basic lack of identity with myself. It is a sign of a constant sliding from perfect identity, a sliding that, for Sartre, is the nothingness within me.⁴³⁷

5.1.3. On the Ontic and Ontological thinking of Heidegger's philosophy of being

At the outset of his quest for the meaning of Being, Heidegger laid a charge on western metaphysics that it has always concerned itself with particular beings and not with Being as such. Western metaphysics, according to him, was ontical not ontological. James Collins articulated this charge thus:

*Ever since the lines of speculation hardened with Aristotle, there has been a fundamental confusion between Das Sein and Das Seiende, between being itself and this or that concrete instance of that-which-is. Metaphysicians declare themselves to be investigating the nature of being whereas their statements really bear upon this being, a being, beings, or the totality of that which is.*⁴³⁸

Heidegger, therefore, set a task for himself as he mentioned that the aim of *Being and Time* was to work out the question of the meaning of being and to do so concretely.⁴³⁹ An inquiry about what it means to be; *ens qua ens*, is ontological whereas an inquiry about an entity is ontic. In dealing with particular beings, traditional metaphysics was ontical. Thus, Heidegger introduced a new approach to the study of Being which he called ontology; which is concerned with Being as such and not with particular beings. Heidegger deserves some credit for giving a new approach to the problem of Being. These two concepts of ontic and ontology are closely related to the other Heideggerian notions of authenticity and inauthenticity. We saw earlier that inasmuch as *Dasein* is concerned with other beings than its own being, it is inauthentic whereas

⁴³⁶ V. HOVEN and al eds, *Sartre Today. A Centenary Celebration*, Berghahn Books, 2005, p. 106.

⁴³⁷ J. CATALANO, *A Commentary on Jean-Paul Sartre's Being and Nothingness*, University of Chicago Press, 1980, p. 237.

⁴³⁸ J. COLLINS, *The Existentialists*, Henry Regener Company, 1967, p. 177.

⁴³⁹ M. HEIDEGGER, *Being and Time*, J. MACQUARRIE – E. ROBINSON (trs.), Basil Blackwell, 1962, p. 19.

when *Dasein* is conscious of its being and resolutely takes its own decisions, it is authentic. Applying this to Heidegger's claim, one notices that as traditional metaphysics concerns itself with individual beings rather than Being as such, it is ontical and consequently inauthentic. This implies that Heidegger's ontology which deals with Being itself is authentic.

The foregoing gives one the impression that in reading Heidegger's *Being and Time*, the meaning of Being as such will be clearly brought out. This is quite the contrary for Heidegger never really works out the meaning of Being as such. In the quest for the meaning of Being, Heidegger ends with an analysis of *Dasein* thereby treating a particular being rather than Being itself. This makes Heidegger appear as Sisyphus in the myth of Sisyphus, who was condemned by the gods to roll a huge stone up a hill, only to see it roll back down again. This repeats itself forever.⁴⁴⁰ This is because Heidegger criticized traditional metaphysics, raising expectations only to get back to what he criticized. Heidegger talked only about *Dasein* as a being which understands Being and which is going to reveal Being to us but Heidegger never really states clearly the meaning of Being. Heidegger was thus also inauthentic. The better approach to the problem of Being, therefore, is that of openness to Being allowing Being to reveal itself to man. In this way, man will stand in the light of Being watching Being as it unfolds itself to him. Man must let Being be.⁴⁴¹

5.1.4. The Being and Having of Gabriel Marcel

Marcel writes in a profuse and elusive style, making it virtually impossible to capture his thought in any brief form.⁴⁴² Gabriel Marcel authored over a dozen books and more than 30 plays in total. There is in Marcel's works, however, a basic distinction, which provides one with a significant clue to his thought. This is the distinction between a problem and mystery. His works.⁴⁴³ The philosophical approach known as existentialism is commonly recognized for its view that life's experiences and interactions are meaningless. Many existentialist thinkers are led to conclude that life is only something to be tolerated, and that close or intimate relationships with others should be avoided. Following Sartre's characterizations of the isolated self, the death of God, and lived experience as having "no exit" especially disgusted Marcel after his conversion

⁴⁴⁰ B. MOORE – K. BRUDDER, *Philosophy: The Power of Ideas*, p. 516.

⁴⁴¹ J. OMOREGBE, *Metaphysics Without Tears*, Joja Educational Research and Publishers Ltd., 1996, p.202.

⁴⁴² S. STUMPF, *Socrates To Sartre, A History of Philosophy* (2nd Edition), McGraw-Hill, 1966, p.143.

⁴⁴³ B. Treanor, *Gabriel Honoré Marcel*, *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, Stanford University, Thu Mar 3, p.2016. . His philosophical Legacy includes Journal Entries and dramatic work, philosophical expression in essays and monographs. Some of his significant philosophical works include: *Being and Having* (1965), *The Mystery of being* Volume I & II (1950-51), *Man against Mass Society* (1962), *Creative Fidelity* (1964), *The existential Background of Human Dignity* (1963), among others.

in 1929. As a result, he became a noted opponent of atheistic existentialism, and primarily that of Jean-Paul Sartre. Marcel's then developed philosophical works which mark emphasis on the concrete, on lived experience. This leads Marcel throughout his life, to balk a designation of his philosophy as "Theistic existentialism." Gabriel Marcel centres his existentialist philosophy upon the problem of Being. He develops this idea of being in his famous *The Mystery of Being*. In understanding what Gabriel Marcel means by a problem and a mystery, it will be well to consider the question, "What am I?" Marcel purports that, it is not possible, to answer the question "What am I?" by reducing it to a problem, analysing its parts, and then producing a solution. Referring to a problem and mystery, he says:

*A problem is something which I meet, which I find completely before me, but which I can therefore lay siege to and reduce. But a mystery is something in which I am myself involved, and it can therefore only be thought of as a sphere where the distinction between what is in me and what is before me loses its meaning and initial validity.*⁴⁴⁴

Marcel considers a problem as something that bars one's way, placing an obstacle in front of one that must be overcome. A problem implies that we lack some information or knowledge and that all we need to do is look for it, engage in "research," and thereby overcome our temporary ignorance. A problem usually revolves around an object or a relationship between objects. As a result, information regarding objects and their relationships can be gathered and calculated. Marcel states that the question "What am I?" cannot be reduced to a problem, because the "I" is not an object.⁴⁴⁵ He however, considers himself an object in some respect by stating that:

*I am some sort of object, since I do have a body, my being is a combination of subject and object; and because the subjective part of myself can never be eliminated, I cannot be reduced to a mere object, and therefore the question about my existence is not merely a problem: it is a mystery.*⁴⁴⁶

In this context, Marcel means by the word mystery certain kinds of experiences that are permanently incapable of being translated into objects "out there"; in which these experiences always include the subject, and are therefore matters of mystery.⁴⁴⁷ Existence for Marcel therefore, is a mystery. The elements of mystery is virtually irreducible precisely because human existence is a combination of "being and having."⁴⁴⁸ Marcel purports the notion of being in a variety of contexts in which one of the more illustrative points of entry, is the distinction he

⁴⁴⁴ G. Marcel, *Being and Having*, Katharine Farrer (trans), Dacre Press, Westminster, 1949, p.117.

⁴⁴⁵ S. STUMPF, *Socrates To Sartre, A History of Philosophy* (2nd Edition), 143.

⁴⁴⁶ G. Marcel, *The Mystery of Being, vol.1, Reflection and Mystery*, G. S. Fraser (trans), The Harvill Press, 1951, p.216.

⁴⁴⁷ S. STUMPF, *Socrates to Sartre, A History of Philosophy* (2nd Edition), p.143.

⁴⁴⁸ *Ibid*, p.144.

makes between being and having. This distinction is obvious for example; whereas having things and ideas can be translated into objective and therefore cognitive terms, being is always the element of subjectivity. Marcel's emphasis this view is evident when he claims:

The ambiguous role played by my body not only points out the distinction between being and having, but also shows that we relate to other things and persons differently in these two modes. Having corresponds to things that are completely external to me. I have things that I possess, that I can dispose of—and this should make it clear that I cannot “have,” for example, another person. Having implies this possession because “having always implies an obscure notion of assimilation”⁴⁴⁹

Most people would readily acknowledge a difference between having a house and being hospitable. However, there are other cases where the distinction between having something and being something is much more significant. A case in point is, when we hope, we do not have hope. We are hope.⁴⁵⁰ In the end, human existence derives its deepest meaning from the subjective affirmation of Being through fidelity. Marcel says that “the essence of man is to be in a situation.” He implies a man's relation to Being is different from a stone's. For one thing, “man is the only being who may make promises,” a phrase of Nietzsche's, which Marcel wanted to underscore. To be able to make a promise places Marcel into a unique relationship between himself and another, a kind of relationship that could not possibly exist between two objects.⁴⁵¹ This moral dimension of existence led Marcel to believe that the ultimate character of man's relationships involves the element of fidelity.

The fact is that when I commit myself, I grant in principle that the commitment will not again be put into question. And it is clear that this active volition not to question something again, intervenes as an essential element in the determination of what in fact will be the case...it bids me to invent a certain modus vivendi...it is a rudimentary form of creative fidelity.⁴⁵²

This highlights fidelity as a commitment. Fidelity therefore is the major clue to the nature of one's own existence, for it is through fidelity that a person continues to shape his life, thereby expressing his faith in whatever is other than he is, and it is therefore in expressing fidelity that a person's life achieves a responsible and authentic continuity. Fidelity is discovered in friendship and in love, where it has the power to overcome the “objectivity” of the other and to produce a new level of intimacy. In a deeper sense, too, a person affirms Being through fidelity insofar as he responds a world that makes demands and in which he assumes responsibilities.⁴⁵³ This is the

⁴⁴⁹ G. MARCEL, *Being and Having*, Katharine Farrer (trans), Dacre Press, Westminster, 1949, p.83.

⁴⁵⁰ J. HERNANDEZ, *Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, University of Texas at San Antonio.

⁴⁵¹ G. MARCEL, *Existence: New Scholasticism* 38, no. 2, 1964, p.16.

⁴⁵² G. MARCEL, *Creative Fidelity*, Robert Rosthal (trans), Farrar, Strauss and Company, 1964, p.162.

⁴⁵³ G. MARCEL, *Creative Fidelity*, Noonday Press, 1970, p.32.

deep existentialist theme in Marcel, which he discovers in the question “What am I?” a question whose answer is illusive because it does not constitute a problem but is rather a mystery.⁴⁵⁴

The most fundamental ideological disagreement between Marcel and Sartre is over the notion of autonomy. Marcel views autonomy to be a discovery of the self as a being receptive to others, rather than as a power to be exerted. Marcel’s autonomy is rooted in a commitment to participation with others, and is unique in that the participative subject is committed by being encountered, or approached by, another individual’s need. Sartre’s notion of commitment is based on the strength of the solitary decisions made by individuals who have committed themselves fully to personal independence. Yet, Marcel took commitment to be primarily the response to the appeal directed to the self as an individual⁴⁵⁵

5.2. From A Negative Perspective

5.2.1. The Notion of Being by Emmanuel Levinas

Bruns comments that Levinas, criticizes Heidegger for repressing the ethical dimension of our being-in-the-world in favor of ontology, where ontology means a concern with the unity of being or totality of all that is.⁴⁵⁶ Bruns sustains this criticism of Levinas, by quoting Hodge, the ethical in Heidegger’s thinking according to Hodge includes the relation to a nonhuman as well as human alterity.⁴⁵⁷ Bruns then resolve that Levinas reverses completely this interpretation of being-for-the-sake-of others in order to replace fundamental ontology with a fundamental ethics, where the relation of one-for-the-other is no longer an ontological defect. According to Bruns, the originality of Levinas’s own philosophical view lies in the following statements: firstly, that for Levinas it is the face of the other that singles me out and makes me what I am. Also for him, being human starts out from a position of responsibility to and for others rather than from one of consciousness and self-reflexive freedom. And lastly, that being-for-others is the adventure, which gives human existence its meaning and transcendence.

In today’s society where materialism and relativism are eating up the very fabric of man, there are many who hold that happiness consists in having what they want no matter the harm they may cause to the *Other*. Thomas Aquinas posits that happiness cannot be found in any

⁴⁵⁴ S. STUMPF, *Socrates To Sartre, A History of Philosophy* , p.144.

⁴⁵⁵ B. FRIEDRICH, Marcel’s Concept of Availability,” In *The Philosophy of Gabriel Marcel: The Library of Living Philosophers*, 17., in Paul Arthur Schlipp and Lewis Edwin Hahn ed., Open Court, LaSalle, 1984, p.197.

⁴⁵⁶ R.PALMER, *Hermeneutics*, Northwestern University press, 1969, p.31.

⁴⁵⁷ *Ibid.* p.50,

created values because these values are a part of the whole and a part cannot give the ultimate.⁴⁵⁸ With T. Aquinas we come to terms with the fact that, happiness denotes a certain ultimate completeness and it can only be applied to God in full, for He acts as He exists.⁴⁵⁹ It is only with the notion that true happiness has two dimensions: relation with the Infinite (God) and the *Other* that the *I* will be able to arrive at true happiness.. Metaphysics, for Levinas, is that which tends towards something else entirely, towards the absolute *Other*.⁴⁶⁰ Levinas goes ahead to state what metaphysics is not:

*It does not long to return, it does not rest upon any prior kinship, a desire without satisfaction, it does not coincide with negativity, the desire that pushes the I to seek the other and it occupies itself in the search of the other. For we speak lightly of desires satisfied, or of sexual needs, or even of moral and religious needs. Love itself is thus taken to be the satisfaction of a sublime hunger.*⁴⁶¹

The metaphysical desire then is longing for the *Other*. Philosophy is the work of reflection that is brought to bear on reflective, everyday life of what is passed over in the naivety of what passes from common sense.⁴⁶² The desire is absolute if the desiring being is mortal and this desire is for the invisible. Levinas uses Metaphysics and ethics to mean the same thing.

Metaphysics for Levinas is not a branch of philosophy which studies being, rather it is the sort of knowledge that comes from within, and is aptly understood as the voice of God urging one to do good towards the *Other*. Levinas contends *cum vivo* that the metaphysical desire has another intention; it desires beyond everything that can simply complete it.⁴⁶³ It is the desire for the absolute *Other*, which is beyond satisfaction. It is not a physical or psychological desire, but one that surpasses temporality; it is insatiable because the desire does not have any fulfilment. This could be seen in the light of Levinas' categorical statement: "to die for the invisible, this is metaphysics."⁴⁶⁴

In the aforementioned words, he explains that the invisible is the only qualifier of what metaphysics is. The invisible is the personal presence of God who resides in the *I – Other* encounter and love of God resides in the love for neighbour. In this same manner Levinas ascertains that Ontology, which reduces the *Other*, promotes freedom – the freedom that is the

⁴⁵⁸ T. AQUINAS, *Summa Theologiae*, I-II, q.2, a.8.

⁴⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, I-II, q.3, a.2.

⁴⁶⁰ E. LEVINAS, *Totality and Infinity*, p.34.

⁴⁶¹ *Ibid.*, pp.33-34.

⁴⁶² Cfr. S. CRITCHLEY et R. BERNASCONI (eds.), *The Cambridge Companion to Levinas*, Cambridge, University Press, 2002, p. XXX – XXXV.

⁴⁶³ E. LEVINAS, *Totality and Infinity*, p.34

⁴⁶⁴ *Ibid.*

identification of the *I* not allowing itself to be alienated by the *Other*.⁴⁶⁵ This means that a course that renounces metaphysical desire renounces the marvel of exteriority from which that desire lives. This led Levinas to come up with the dictum: Metaphysics precedes ontology.⁴⁶⁶ It is the unconscious affective knowledge; this knowledge comes from within and from a being that is infinitely distant and who overflows his ideas such that its authority as an existent is already in every question we could raise concerning the meaning of being. This knowledge for him is more ultimate, invisible and superior to Ontology; it stands under or supports Ontology.⁴⁶⁷

Philosophy has long placed ontology above metaphysics, being above existence. The terms have to be reversed according to Levinas. It is existence, rather than being, which “breaks through all the generalities of being.”⁴⁶⁸ Beginning with Husserl⁴⁶⁹ and Heidegger,⁴⁷⁰ Levinas’ notion of being becomes a merge of the idea of consciousness and interrelation in beings from Husserl and Heidegger respectively. In this light, being is that which is conscious of its own existence and is aware that his existence is in relation to another being the *Other*. Being has other descriptions according to Levinas. For him being is exteriority; and no thought could better obey being than by allowing being itself to be dominated by exteriority. Exteriority is true in the face-to-face encounter that is no longer entirely vision, but goes further than vision.⁴⁷¹ Being exists but its existence is made real only in its ability to relate with other beings, for it is in this relationship that it comes to a fuller understanding of itself. The phenomenology of being cannot therefore be completely grasped without understanding the exteriority of the face.

5.2.2. Slavoj Zizek on Heidegger’s intellectual Honesty

According to Slavoj Zizek, Heidegger’s involvement in the Narcis Party contributed to his philosophical insights negatively. He says the difficult truth to admit is that

⁴⁶⁵ E. LEVINAS, *Totality and Infinity*, p.42.

⁴⁶⁶ *Ibid.*

⁴⁶⁷ *Ibid* pp.47-48.

⁴⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, p.51.

⁴⁶⁹ R. SHEFFLER, *Interpreting Otherwise than Heidegger*, Duquesne University Press, 1993, pp.15 – 18. Husserl regarded phenomenology primarily as a scientific methodology aimed at the things themselves. This does not mean, however, that phenomenology according to Husserl should be concerned with proving the existence of a thing. In the face, the prospect of proving the existence of things outside the self was for Husserl extremely problematic. So for Husserl, every act of consciousness is always consciousness of something. Husserl limits phenomenology to the study of the absolute certain, and if the only thing we are certain of is that consciousness is always consciousness of something, then great care must be taken to ensure that, that of which we cannot be certain does not corrupt the absolute validity of the phenomenological method.

⁴⁷⁰ M. HEIDEGGER, *Sein Und Zeit* (Being and Time), The New American Library, Inc., New York 1975, pp.126-128. Heidegger, on the other hand, considers phenomenology as the science of the being of beings. This means that being the subject matter of phenomenology is familiar because everyone has some grasp of what it is for something to be. In this light therefore, one belongs to the others oneself... the others, whom one designates as such in order to cover over one’s own essential belonging to them, are those who are there initially and for the most part in everyday being-with-one-another.

⁴⁷¹ E. LEVINAS, *Totality and Infinity*, p.290.

Heidegger is “great” not in spite of, but because of his Nazi engagement, that this commitment is key constituent of his “greatness.”⁴⁷² John Lechte makes the following remark concerning Heidegger and the Nazi party by saying

*Martin Heidegger is as famous for changing the focus of philosophy and modern thought toward the notion of being as he is infamous for joining the Nazi party in the 1930s, becoming the Rektor of the University of Freiburg from 1933 the year of Hitler's appointment as Chancellor to 1934, and witnessing the withdrawal of Edmund Husserl's license to teach.*⁴⁷³

For Zizek, M. Heidegger is a great philosopher because of his involvement with the Nazi Party. He explains that most defenders of Heidegger and Heideggerians do not make mention of the faulty activities of Heidegger and the Nazi party which are hidden historical truths that have been concealed by the western philosophical tradition. Zizek explains that according to the supporters of Heidegger like Mark Wrathall, Heidegger's involvement with the Nazi party was a means to overcome the political Naiveté of his time.⁴⁷⁴ To Wrathall, Heidegger joined the Nazi party in order to save whatever could be saved of the University's autonomy.

Zizek then said Heidegger's greatness comes from the fact that he was involved with the Nazi socialist party which in turn made of him a great historical and intellectual figure while hiding his true identity as it is the case of tales, myths, politics to always conceal the truth about an individual in an event in history as he presents with the story of Hiding the tree in a forest as found in G.K. Chesterton's *The Sign of the Broken Sword* presenting the story from *The Innocence of Father Brown* and the mystery of his companion.⁴⁷⁵ He blames Heidegger for concealing himself in the forest of western metaphysics without revealing his true political identity which has influenced his writings. For Zizek, Heidegger's account on the ontological nature of being is faulty based on the claim that Heidegger was not able to make a distinction of the double meaning of the uncealment of being, he says:

It seems that Heidegger was not ready to draw all the consequences from this necessary double meaning of "unconcealedness," which, to put it bluntly, would have compelled him to accept that "ontological difference" is ultimately nothing but a rift in the ontic order (Incidentally, in the exact parallel to Badiou's key admission that the Event is ultimately nothing but a torsion in the order of Being). This limitation of Heidegger's thought has a series of philosophical and ethico-political consequences. Philosophically, it leads to Heidegger's notion of historical destiny which delivers

⁴⁷² S. J. ZIZEK, *In Defense of Lost Causes*, British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data, 2008, p.119.

⁴⁷³ J. LECHTE, *Fifty Key Contemporary Thinkers from Structuralism to Post-Humanism*, Routledge, 2008, p.26.

⁴⁷⁴ Robespierre, *Virtue and Terror*. p.103

⁴⁷⁵ S. J. ZIZEK, *In Defense of Lost Causes*, British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data, 2008, pp. 95-98.

*different horizons of the disclosure of being, destiny which cannot and should not be in any way influenced by or dependent on ontic occurrences.*⁴⁷⁶

From this quote Zizek criticises Heidegger on the basis that Heidegger did not clarify the meaning of the Unconcealment of truth as it leads us into two meanings which are confusing. The first is the Unconcealment of truth in the Horizon of meaning in which being forgets itself in the horizon in which he dwells and the second is the Unconcealment of truth in the horizon of meaning itself.⁴⁷⁷ He explains that for Heidegger the ontological difference that Heidegger presence reality to be finite. He says Heidegger presence the ontic difference as a withdrawal of the ontological difference of being. Thus in order to arrive at the ontological truth Heidegger had to err ontological.

Zizek said, after observing the afro mentioned about Heidegger and his philosophical thinking, Heidegger spend his whole life in the field of philosophy to defend a lost cost. For him, Heidegger's philosophy is a defence of a lost cost because after Heidegger's involvement with the Nazi party and the effects it had on him, he never apologized for his actions and activities with the Nazi party making his philosophical endeavours and pursuits to be a lost cause of intellectual action that Heidegger spend time hunting in his lifetime as an intellectual. The ontic blinded to the truth of Heidegger's political Nazis' regime was a positive condition of Heidegger's insight. Thus for him, Heidegger is great because of his Nazi engagements. He therefore concluded on his criticism against Heidegger by saying Heidegger spend his entire life lifetime to defend of a lost cause in philosophical thinking.

According to Treydon Lunot, when Heidegger talks about being-with, in his understanding of Zizek, Heidegger does not clearly delineate thinking about relation, but in terms of Zizek, it is lacking in Heidegger what could be described as a space of subjectivity and inter-subjectivity.⁴⁷⁸ A space that is visible between subjectivity and inter-subjectivity which he explains as relation. For Zizek with inter-subjectivity there is always an alienation, a fundamental divide and its deeper and the being with, which is not in Heidegger. Treydon thus explain the central critique of Heidegger by Zizek as is that Heidegger can not thinking the negativity of the subject that withdraws from orderness and a close circle of the subject that is not capable of truly recognising the other and receiving it. Thus there is a nativity of Heidegger's notion of being-with, because he does not accord for the radical negative which to Lunot is in two folds and the

⁴⁷⁶ S. J. ZIZEK, *In Defense Of Lost Causes*, British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data., 2008, pp.127-128.

⁴⁷⁷ S. J. ZIZEK, *In Defense Of Lost Causes*, pp.124-125.

⁴⁷⁸ S. J. ZIZEK., *Zizek's critique of Heidegger*(online(available on <http://youtube.qNTNTuQ8zds.com>

second aspect is that Heidegger can think self-relating properly and can not think relation properly. He thus criticise Heidegger base of the absence of relation in his philosophy, S. Zizek describes this situation in the process of criticising Heidegger by saying it is the scandal of the other. According to Zizek, Heidegger's question concerning technology was right question however, for him, martin Heidegger gave the wrong answer to this question. He holds to the view that the essence of technology is not what Heidegger advocates, T. Brockelman speaks about Zizek's understanding of Heidegger by saying he considers Heidegger to be an anti-modernist thinker, thus he says:

It's easy enough to understand how Heidegger himself could allow this other insight to disappear behind the façade of a thoroughgoing anti-modernism. It's easy enough to believe that, when, after the "turn" in his thought, Heidegger develops his argument concerning "modern technology," he does so simply to prevent the "thinking" he apparently advocates.⁴⁷⁹

Thus, Heidegger is seen here simply as an individual thinker who wants to expose his thoughts on modernity and deny the concept of modernity and its advocacy from the perspective of science with the question concerning technology. Hence he says Heidegger asked the right question but gave the wrong answer to the question concerning technology.

5.2.3. Theodor Adorno's critique of Heidegger's Crypto-Idealism

According to T. Adorno, metaphysics in all its endeavours has always desired transcendence and it's because of this transcendence desire that metaphysics traditional in its endeavours. Metaphysics as a science of reality as such has the natural desire to go beyond what is seen and unseen to give rational backings to the reality we experience. For him then,

This means that metaphysics must be given a materialist twist. Metaphysics can only survive, he argues, in so far as it accepts materialism as its ontological condition: The course of history forces materialism upon metaphysics, traditionally the direct antithesis of materialism.⁴⁸⁰

Adorno understands metaphysics as a discipline which is a waste of time, for contemporary man has a materialistic twist and mind-set. For to him, metaphysics traditionally has been an anti-thesis to materialism and in the modern society materialism is the leading culture of the people.

Thus for him Heidegger's metaphysical question to clarify the meaning and question of being in his philosophy being is a waste of time, because it has no practical bearing for a

⁴⁷⁹ T. BROCKELMAN, *Žižek and Heidegger The Question Concerning Techno-Capitalism*, Continuum International Publishing Group, , 2008, pp.24-26.

⁴⁸⁰ Theodor Adonor, *Negative Dialectics*, p.365.

contemporary man and for the contemporary society. Adorno thus dismiss the idea of metaphysics, while rejecting Heidegger's contributions to our understanding of reality by explaining that it is a waste of time. Adorno charges Heidegger with *crypto-idealism* in which he says Heidegger neglected his own foundationalism which involves "his conception of man and being" with fundamental ontology which betrays its own Cartesian expectation that all philosophical investigations proceed from first principles that reside in pure thought.⁴⁸¹ From this point of view Adorno concludes on Heidegger's ontology as a pure form of Rationalism. For Adorno, the fundamental ontology of Heidegger because of its crypto-idealism does not acknowledge the irreducibility of reality that breaks it due to its arrogance of an idealist consciousness.⁴⁸²

He also criticises Heidegger on the basis of philosophical essayism in which he explains that the change from a philosophical system to essay will mean that philosophy must surrender its security and open itself to real meanwhile encouraging species of interpretations that is limited and contextual and unsymbolic. To him, the change from a system to essayism is a means of forsaking the formalism and abstraction of traditional philosophy, for to him, interpretation must and should counter the disorder of things. Adorno blames Heidegger for a regression in the concept of phenomenology after the hard work of Husserl his teacher and master, as he says:

*Husserlianism, in other words, bears within itself a disavowed truth, the dialectical seed of its own undoing. Heidegger's philosophy, however, seems at first glance to lack this antinomical structure because it wilfully abandons reason for the sake of worldly immediacy.*⁴⁸³

Theodor Adorno believes that the conception of phenomenology held by Husserl was the ideal meanwhile that held by Heidegger was a regression from the original which to him is Husserllian. In the conception of metacritique of Adorno which to him is a method of philosophical interpretation that aims to expos the unconscious meanwhile Heidegger's destruction which aims to expose the unthought.

5.2.4. Martin Buber's Critique of Heidegger's Minimalism

M. Buber holds strongly that Heidegger's man in the face of death is a creature of solicitude rather than community, his authentic existence is secured in relation to himself alone and not existentially to others. Heidegger's *Dasein* for him is therefore monological and hence

⁴⁸¹ ,P. E. GORDON., *Adorno and existence*, Harvard University Press, 2016, p.48.

⁴⁸² *Ibid.*,p.49.

⁴⁸³ ,P.E. GORDON., *Adorno and existence*, p.78.

has no room for the “thou”.⁴⁸⁴ W. Lujipen in the same light recounts that the Heideggerian man is condemned to isolation. *Dasein* has been deprived of the love of his fellow man. Man cannot live without being loved, and cannot die without love and so who ever faces death alone, is a mutilated human being.⁴⁸⁵ J. Caputo points out that Heidegger’s being, though religious is not Christian; it is a mysticism without God.⁴⁸⁶ Heidegger in rejecting Nietzsche’s idea of the eternal return as a return to metaphysics, clearly shows that his thought is even more thorough-going, thereby rejecting the idea of eternity.⁴⁸⁷ S. Rosen argues:

*Heidegger speaks of being as event, occurrence, gift, and so forth, because of his intention, constant since Being and Time, to eradicate from the domain of Philosophy any vestige of eternity. The constant presence of nothingness in Heidegger is identical with perpetual absence of the eternal.*⁴⁸⁸

Rosen declares that Heidegger seems to lay emphasis on the nothingness of *Dasein* which is clearly shown in his later analysis of death, rejecting life after death. With Heidegger’s remarkable analysis of death, he fails to look at man as a composite being. He treats man as a material (body). Man is a composite of body and soul. Heidegger in ignoring the spiritual part of man, that is the soul in his existential analysis of *Dasein* towards its ultimate possibility, makes us ask questions about his philosophy. Heidegger defining death as the ‘end’ of *Dasein* makes it clear that *Dasein* does not exist after its own death. He therefore tends to think that *Dasein* ceases to exist at the point of death. Heidegger therefore downplays the composite nature of man. Heidegger has contributed enormously to solving the question of the meaning of being in his *Being and Time*. He looks at being in a concrete way in his existential and ontological analysis of *Dasein* especially in terms of the examination of his concept of death. Augustine of Hippo had earlier given the most penetrating analysis of being-towards-death, when he said:

*From the first movement that we find ourselves in a mortal body, something happens which steadily leads us towards death. Each one of us is nearer death a year hence than a year ago...Our entire life time is nothing but a racing towards death, in the course of which no one is permitted to stop for a little while or slow down his walk; all are forced to keep in step, all are driven on the same speed.*⁴⁸⁹

From the very moment one is born, one’s being moves towards an end and as one grows older, one approaches one’s death more and more. In this case, one views this point of non-existence as something which is forth coming. one considers one’s own death as a possibility

⁴⁸⁴ M. BUBER, *Between Man and Man*, Beacon Press, 1947, p.27.

⁴⁸⁵ W. LUIJPEN, *Existential Phenomenology*, Duquesne University Press, 1960, p.27.

⁴⁸⁶ J. CAPUTO, *Mystical Elements in Heidegger’s Thought*, Ohio University press, Athens 1978, p.37.

⁴⁸⁷ E. CHEN, “How Taoist is Heidegger,” in *International Philosophical Quarterly*, 45, 1 (2005), p. 10.

⁴⁸⁸ S. ROSEN, *Nihilism: A Philosophical Essay*, Yale University Press, 1969, p.126.

⁴⁸⁹ ST. AUGUSTINE, *De Civitate Dei*, XIII. P.10.

which makes one authentic. There should be no point in time when one should stop contemplating this mystery of death for it makes one live an authentic life whereas if one were to avoid thinking of death, one will automatically be living an inauthentic life. The theory of creationism explains the origin of the human soul. It holds that a child's soul is directly created, made out of nothing, by the supreme cause. An immaterial reality like that of the soul cannot be produced by the material parent's body (material traducianism) or directly from the parent's soul (spiritual traducianism).⁴⁹⁰ The soul is created by God alone. Aquinas affirms that God alone, who is the creator of all things, creates a soul at the moment of conception.⁴⁹¹ Man cannot exist without the soul and so too Heidegger's *Dasein* cannot exist without the soul. This counteracts therefore Heidegger's concept of *thrownness* of *Dasein* which he claims *Dasein* has been thrown in the world. Heidegger bases his argument merely on the fact that *Dasein* is simply matter. Aquinas had neatly presented the creation of the soul thus:

*The human soul begins to be: for it is not eternal, nor does it exist before the body. It therefore remains that it comes into being by way of creation... Only God can create. Hence, He alone brings the human soul into being.*⁴⁹²

The soul does not exist before birth. It exists at the moment of conception. It is not eternal, rather it is eviternal that is, it has a beginning but no end. God who is eternal has the power to bring the human soul into existence. P. Glenn avows that since the human soul is a substantial form, it cannot be produced until the conditions requiring its production are present and therefore the "soul does not exist until it exists as a substantial form of a human body. Therefore, the moment of the soul's creation is the moment of its substantial unity with its body."⁴⁹³ J. Donceel⁴⁹⁴ holds that if the soul was put in existence by God on the occasion of a certain temporal event, that is birth, why should it be reduced to non-existence on the occasion of another temporal event- death? He further proceeds to say that a being's existence is destroyed by annihilation (decomposition). The human soul does not fall prey to any decomposition.

⁴⁹⁰ J. DONCEEL, *Philosophical Anthropology*, Sheed and Ward, INC., 1967, p.441.

⁴⁹¹ T. AQUINAS, *Summa Theologiae* I, q. 76, a. p.1.

⁴⁹² T. AQUINAS, *Summa Contra Gentiles* II, 87, p.2.

⁴⁹³ P. GLENN, *Psychology*, B. Herder Book Co., St. Louis 1962, p.195.

⁴⁹⁴ J. DONCEEL, *Philosophical Anthropology*, p.416.

PARTIAL CONCLUSION

There is no access to Being other than *via* beings themselves, hence pursuing the question of Being inevitably means asking about a being with regard to its being. The problem of Being can only be resolved through a particular being. But the question of Being must first turn towards man, for more than all other beings, man excels in the comprehension of Being. “Man stands in the openness of Being.”⁴⁹⁵ Only *Dasein* can be said to have or not have meaning. Hence, Being is meaningful only in terms of human existence. Since man is that being for whom the question: what is Being, matters, Heidegger proposes to start his journey towards Being with man as he lives his daily life. In Heidegger’s treatment of man, he was influenced by existentialist concerns since he was an Existentialist and a Phenomenologist. He, therefore, tried to answer questions about how to live and how to live *authentically*, that is, living with integrity in a politically and technologically seductive and dangerous world where the individual lives according to the views of the majority. Thus, Heidegger dealt with the question of the authenticity of *Dasein*; a being-in-the-world. At this point we realize that the contribution of Heidegger as a philosopher to our understanding of the notion of being is really great. It is for this reason that we have philosophers like Jean Paul Sartre, Maurice Mole Ponty, Gabriel Marcel, Hans George Gadamer and many other with the inspiration from Heidegger contribute to explain the meaning and question of being alongside Heidegger. On the other side, every coin has two sides and there exist no philosophical theory and concept without a thesis and antithesis. Philosophers like Emmanuel Levinas, Slavoj Zizek, Theodor Adorno, Martin Buber and many others examine the weaknesses of Heidegger’s concept of being. Thus, these philosophers spend credible time to examine the weaknesses and negative contributions of Heidegger’s philosophy of being. We thus examined some the weaknesses of Heidegger’s philosophy with the help of these thinkers.

⁴⁹⁵ E. CORETH, *Metaphysics*, Herder and Herder, 1968, p.28.

CHAPTER SIX

LOGICAL IMPLICATIONS OF HEIDEGGER'S CONCEPTION OF BEING

PARTIAL INTRODUCTION

Applying this to Heidegger's claim, one notices that as traditional metaphysics concerns itself with individual beings rather than Being as such, it is ontical and consequently inauthentic. This implies that Heidegger's ontology which deals with Being itself is authentic. The foregoing gives one the impression that in reading Heidegger's *Being and Time*, the meaning of Being as such will be clearly brought out. This is quite the contrary for Heidegger never really works out the meaning of Being as such. In the quest for the meaning of Being, Heidegger ends with an analysis of *Dasein* thereby treating a particular being rather than Being itself. This makes Heidegger appear as Sisyphus in the myth of Sisyphus, who was condemned by the gods to roll a huge stone up a hill, only to see it roll back down again. This repeats itself forever.⁴⁹⁶ This is because Heidegger criticized traditional metaphysics, raising expectations only to get back to what he criticized. Heidegger talked only about *Dasein* as a being which understands Being and which is going to reveal Being to us but Heidegger never really states clearly the meaning of Being. Heidegger was thus also inauthentic. The better approach to the problem of Being, therefore, is that of openness to Being allowing Being to reveal itself to man. In this way, man will stand in the light of Being watching Being as it unfolds itself to him. Our main aim in this chapter therefore is to examine how Heidegger's postmetaphysics of being can be of help in today's world view of life. How can our discussion in this work help a modern student or teacher to better understand reality. We shall look at the positive and negative importance and relevance aspects of the concept being as handled by Heidegger in a postmetaphysical era of philosophy where metaphysics is being rejected by postmodern and contemporary man. We shall examine the relevance of this concept from the perspective of science, ethics, philosophy, politics and many others in the following paragraphs.

⁴⁹⁶ B. MOORE et K. BRUDDER, *Philosophy: The Power of Ideas*, p.516.

6.1. Philosophy and Metaphysics

6.1.1. Placid Tempels on the notion of being as Force in African World View

One of the philosophers who contributed greatly to our understanding of African metaphysics from an African perspective is Placid Tempels⁴⁹⁷ in his work “*The Bantu Philosophy*” he handles the question of being according to a primitive traditional African society. In *Myths and Reality*, Paulin Hountondji described the *Bantu Philosophy* as a work of ethnophilosophy.⁴⁹⁸ According to Tempels, all of life collectively of the Bantu people is revolving around the concept of a unique value that is ‘Vital force’. All that exists in Bantu metaphysics according to Tempels is this force. Just as being is absolute in Parmenidian sense, in the same way force pervades Bantu ontology. Force or power in Bantu notion is inseparable from the definition of being. Placid asserts that there is no idea among Bantu of being as divorced from force. Without force being cannot be conceived. Comparing the western and Bantu notions, Tempels observes that ‘force is the nature of being,⁴⁹⁹ force is being and being is force.⁵⁰⁰ Kagame maintains that all beings, all essences in whatever form it is they are conceived, can be subsumed under the concept force. Forces encompass all being from God down to minerals. There is a constant vital interaction among being that is to say forces. Tempels argues that this concept of separate beings of substance which find themselves side by side entirely independent one for another is foreign to Bantu thought. Bantu hold that created beings preserve a bond with one another, a intimate ontological relationship, comparable with the casual tie which binds creature and the creator. He further argues that all creatures exist in a relationship according to the laws of a hierarchy.⁵⁰¹

⁴⁹⁷ Bom Frans Tempels was a Belgian Franciscan in the Congo who became famous for this book *Bantu philosophy*. He was born on Feb 18, 1906 in Berlaar Belgium. He took the name Placide on his entry into a Franciscan seminary in 1924. *Bantu Philosophy* written by Placide was first published in 1959. Placide Tempels died on October 09 1977 in Berlaar Belgium. Cf. Wikipedia: *History and works of Placide Tempels*, viewed, 05/11/2022, 23:24pm.

⁴⁹⁸ P. HOUNTONDI, *African Philosophy: Myths and Reality*, Hutchinson & Co. Publishes Ltd, 1983, p.34. This work indeed opened the floodgates to a deluge of essay which aimed to reconstruct a particular worldview, a specific worldview commonly attributed to all Africans, abstracted from history and change, and moreover, philosophical through an interpretation of beliefs, customs, tradition and proverbs.

⁴⁹⁹ P. TEMPELS, *Bantu philosophy*, Colin King, Trans, Presence Africaine, 1959, p.50.

⁵⁰⁰ C. CHUKUEMEKA, *Open Journal of Philosophy, An Appraisal of Man’s Essence in Bantu Ontology*, Vol.05 No. 04(2015), 05/11/2019. 12:23am.

⁵⁰¹ This philosophy also hold that there is an interaction of forces with forces, a metaphysical interaction among beings transcends the mechanical, chemical and physical interactions. Following from this, the Bantu see that in a created force there is a casual action emanating from the very nature of that created force and influences other forces. One force will weaken or strengthen another. They hold that man is the centre. The other less creatures like animals have inferior forces and these inferior forces has as their purpose to increase the vital force and serve men while they are on earth.

Bantu ontology is essentially a theory of forces and they have a dynamic conception of being. Being is power, not only that it possess power, for that will merely mean that power is an attribute of being, but that its very essence is power: For Tempels, power is not an accident: it is even more than a necessary accident, it is the very essence of being. Being is power, power is being. Our notion of being is ‘that which is’, theirs is ‘the power that is’. Where we see concrete being, we see concrete forces. Where we would say that being is distinguished by their essence or nature, Bantus will say that forces differ by their essence and nature.⁵⁰² Power is not only a reality but also a value to the Bantu people. This vital power can increase or diminish. When a Bantu says for instance: ‘I am becoming strong’ or that ‘my vital strength is reduced’, these statements are to be taken literally as implying an essence modification of the human nature itself.⁵⁰³ Proper to our discussion is the relation of the metaphysical concept of vital force to being according to Placid Tempels. When looking at the relation between the vital force of placid Tempels as being of Heidegger. Tempel’s Bantu philosophy is a philosophical exposition for the richness of African philosophy. Central to African metaphysics is force or what could still be described as vital force. According to placid Tempels, the meaning of being in the African context is different from that in the western context, for the western it is static however for the African it is dynamic as seen above.⁵⁰⁴ N. Shang and F. Stanilaus made explicit by saying, force is a necessary element for being and is inseparable from being in the African sense, force in the primitive sense is never separated of being: in the western thought being is that which is , while bantu says being is that which has force.⁵⁰⁵ Thus force in an African metaphysics is not only an attribute but an act or live as a beings which are forces. It is not an accidental reality or an accident with a substance in the Aristotelian sense. For is more than just a mere necessary attribute of beings, force is the nature

⁵⁰² P. HOUNTONDJI, *African Philosophy: Myths and Reality*, 1983, p.35.

⁵⁰³ *Ibid*, pp.35-36. These forces interact with each not merely mechanically or chemically but fundamentally metaphysically. There is a metaphysical dependence which link creatures permanently to the creator and in this sense, the creature is by its very nature permanently dependent on its creator for its existence and subsistence. God or Creator is at the top of the ontological ladder, followed by the ancestors; the founders of the clan, the arch patriarchs to whom God first communicated the vital forces. This is followed by the dead of the tribe in order of seniority (intermediaries) through which the elder forces exert their influence on the living generation. Then the living in order of their vital power, lower forces, animals, plants, vegetables or mineral fit at the bottom of the scale stratified according to vital power or rank. Interaction between these forces is not haphazard, but takes place according to strict and immutable laws.

⁵⁰⁴ S. NELSON ET S. FOMUTAR, *Metaphysical insights into placid tempel’s bantu philosophy in the context of contemporary African Philosophy* IN *Revue Philosophique Bantu*, Les Editions Du Net, N^o 8, June 2022, p. 73. For Tempels, being to the bantu is force. And this force is characterised by vitality. Once characterised is it termed vital force. However in the western understanding of the concept of being, force is understood as an attribute of being, which be separated and identified separately from a being.

⁵⁰⁵ *Ibid*.

of being, force is being and being is force, force and being are convertible⁵⁰⁶ Thus, the distinction between force and being in the African sense of the word is not really much apart from terminological differences. According F. Stanilaus and S. Nelson, concrete being in western philosophy are just mere forces in the Bantu world view of placid Tempels. They elaborate on this aspects being by saying in differentiating between beings in the western metaphysical we talk about nature and the essence of a being, meanwhile in the situation of bantu primitive thought it is about the different forces that are there in existence basing our explanations on the essence and nature of a particular force.⁵⁰⁷ In Bantu thought pattern, there exist the in force, the ancestral force, the human force, the animal force, vegetable force and the mineral force all existing in a hierarchical order.⁵⁰⁸ The classification of the being in the African context is done according to vital force. This also helps in distinguishing beings based on similarities and relations. Being in the African metaphysics from the perspective of Bantu is not just that which is, or that which exist but also that which has force, tat which is force. Being in the African sense and understanding is force or better off vital force. For Tempels, being exist as individual forces in the Bantu sense of the word but while all being interconnected to one another, this can be term as a unity of interconnectedness. There exist an ontological grounds on which being is conceived in Bantu as an individual and being of the community as per its involvement and interaction with vital force. The Bantu makes a difference between being perceived by the senses and being perceived by as that which is found beyond the senses, which could be explained as the contingent and Necessary elements of being respectively.⁵⁰⁹

The bantu term *muntu* as used by Tempels stands and represent a person or an individual in western thought from the bantu sense of understanding and thinking. And the *Great Muntu* stands or represent God in the western sense of the meaning of the word in terms of beings, the *muntu or great muntu* is a living force in the world view of the bantu people. The *muntu* is the supreme force amongst created beings because it is endowed with wisdom and intelligence,

⁵⁰⁶ P. TEMPELS, *Bantu philosophy*, Colin King, Trans, Presence Africaine, 1959, p.24.

⁵⁰⁷ S. NELSON ET S. FOMUTAR, *Metaphysical insights into placid tempel's bantu philosophy in the context of contemporary African Philosophy* IN Revnue Philosophique Bantu, Les Editions Du Net, N^O 8, June 2022, p.73. There thus exists a huge difficulty to explain the nature of reality in the African context while applying western ideologies. For the western conception of reality is different from the African conception and cannot be fitted in as earlier seen with J. S. Mbiti on the African traditional religion.

⁵⁰⁸ S. NELSON ET S. FOMUTAR, *Metaphysical insights into placid tempel's bantu philosophy in the context of contemporary African Philosophy*, 2022., pp.73-74.

⁵⁰⁹ Ibid Considering one of these forces in the bantu sense is man, man in the bantu sense is made up of breath, shadow and body. Breath not being a synonym to the western conception of the human soul, but a manifestation of life, which is mortal and does not survive death and self evident to the ordinary bantu person.

which other beings or forces lower than it do not possess. The *muntu* dominates plants, animals and minerals, the Bantu hold with high esteem the fact that man is capable of knowing, they regard knowledge and wisdom like forces which constitute metaphysical knowledge and understanding of other forces.⁵¹⁰ According to Tempels, all forces can become stronger or weaker, depending on the amount of knowledge and wisdom that one possess. More knowledge and wisdom, more power and strength that a force possess, since knowledge and wisdom are forces.⁵¹¹ This practical aspect of it observed as the elderly in the African society are in possession of more wisdom and knowledge compare to the young hence more force is allocated to elderly people compare to the young people. The elder can see while sitting down while the young can not see even after climbing the tallest tree in the forest. However, a being can become very strong and powerful with strong force compared to other beings but the power to create other being and forces is reserved to the one fore known as the *great muntu*. Only God has the power to create new forces or beings. In talking about the relation between forces in bantu, N. Shang and F. Staniluase say:

*In the African context, though individual forces exist in their individuality, they entertain a certain interdependence and interaction that is ontologically founded, all individuals beings from man right down to minerals sustain natural interactions. Forces are independent of each other.*⁵¹²

From the above quotation, we realise that forces in the African sense of the word are interconnected to one another. No force in the reality exists as a singularity. Tempels explain that beings have an ontological relation that is preserved bond with one another that binds the created being and the creator, thus to the bantu, there is interaction between being and being or force and force.⁵¹³

6.1.2. The Concept of Paradigm Shift in Philosophy by Jürgen Habermas

According to Thomas Kuhn, a historian and philosopher of science, paradigm shift occurs when a fundamental change in the understanding of a field of study and conditions have changed or more easier when earlier assumptions are disproved.⁵¹⁴ Kuhn believed that in philosophy,

⁵¹⁰ P. TEMPELS, *Bantu philosophy*, Colin King, Trans, Presence Africaine, 1959, 27, pp.46-47.

⁵¹¹ *Ibid.*, p.27.

⁵¹² S. NELSON ET S. FOMUTAR, *Metaphysical insights into placid tempel's bantu philosophy in the context of contemporary African Philosophy* IN Revue Philosophique Bantu, Les Editions Du Net, N^o 8, June 2022, p.77.

⁵¹³ Placid Tempels, *Bantu philosophy*, Colin King, Trans, Presence Africaine, 1959, pp.28-29. Bantu doe differentiates about vital force according to their rankings, of which the most powerful is God which is both spirit and creator. He is force itself, that gives existence, sustains and increase or decrease the forces of others. True force of wisdom in bantu thought lies in ontological force of knowledge, this involves the knowledge of the functioning of the vital forces, hence the true sage is God who knows everything.

⁵¹⁴ Cfr., T. S. KUHN, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, 2rd Ed, The University of Chicago Press, Ltd, 1962, 43.

every doctrine and traditional adopted activities of a discipline will always change after a period of time, thus change was a reality that he never doubted in the realm of philosophy which he explained in terms of paradigm in the domain of sciences. Paradigm Shift is a fundamental change in approach or underlying assumptions⁵¹⁵ it is change in method and way of thinking. It's a movement from state of an event or activity to another. The idea of change is a metaphysical concept that has existed in the history of philosophy for decades. Change is a reality that is self-evident begging from the pre-Socratics with Thales. According to Heraclitus, everything that exist in nature experiences change. Everything in reality is in flux, everything is constantly changing.⁵¹⁶ For him, nothing stays. Everything is in motion. Thus, one can only step into a river once given that fresh waters are flowing in the stream constantly. Everything is in motion, reality is constantly changing. However, it would be a mistake to think that Heraclitus meant that there are no stable things in reality.⁵¹⁷ The One only exist in the tension of opposites; he says, “we must know that war is common to all and strife is justice; and that all things come to being and pass away in strife.”⁵¹⁸ For him, the essence of all things is Fire. He describes fire as the proper essence of reality, for in the process of fire, there are two paths, the upwards and downwards paths.⁵¹⁹ Heraclitus holds that there cannot be change without something changing, thus that thing which is changing he calls it fire.⁵²⁰ He does describe the process of change as unity in diversity. To say the world is in a flux to him meant that the world was an ever-living fire.⁵²¹ Fire must constantly be feed and it will continue to give something in the form of heat, smoke or ashes. It was not enough according to Heraclitus to point out to the basic stuff of reality like water of

⁵¹⁵ K. SORBELLA, *A Paradigm Shift in Management Philosophy Future Challenges in Global Organizations*, IN https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-29710-7_2, 2020, p.13.

⁵¹⁶ A. KENNY, *A New History of Western Philosophy, Ancient Philosophy Vol I*, Oxford University Press Inc., 2004. P.13.

⁵¹⁷ F. COPLESTON, *A History of Philosophy, Vol I, Greece and Rome*, p.39. We can summarize the whole doctrine of Heraclitus in what is he says unity in diversity. Things change and thereby take on many different forms, but nevertheless, they contain something which continues to be the same throughout all the flux of change. Between the many forms and the continuing element, there must be some basic unity. Something that does not change: fire.

⁵¹⁸ *Ibid.*, It is in the nature of the One to be One and many at the same time, it should be identified in difference. Thus, reality is One and at the same time many. The idea of change held by Heraclitus agrees to concrete universals, the One exist in the many, identity in difference.

⁵¹⁹ *Ibid.* He then said change is in both paths, he held that the cosmos came into being by the virtue of this process. He holds on the view that sense-experience tells us that fire lives by feeding and transforming into itself into heterogeneous matter. It changes them to itself and without these things it would die and cease to exist. Its existence does depend on strife and tension.

⁵²⁰ *Ibid.*, Change starts from fire being condensed to moisture and under compression it turns into water and from water to earth, which he calls the downwards movement. In the other hand the upwards path begins from earth being liquefied to water, from water, everything else comes into being. He refers to everything as evaporation of water from the sea, hence, the upward path.

⁵²¹ E. SAMUEL, *Socrates to Sartre, A History of Philosophy*, McGraw Hill Inc., 1982, pp.13-15. The basic element which was changing is fire.

Thales, for this would not answer the question of how the basic stuff changed into other realities.⁵²²

The concept of postmetaphysics as a paradigm shift consists of a change in the conception of philosophy from one age to another. For example, Heidegger was the person who discovered that language has been misunderstood which had consequences in various fields one of them being the humanities. One of the students of Heidegger called Gadamer, explains that the problem of the humanities was that the logical self-reflection that accompanied the development of the human sciences in the 19th century is wholly governed by the model of natural sciences. He thus suggested that we in the humanities need to change it his basis. We also have Habermas who spoke about the shift in paradigms from philosophy of consciousness(being epistemology) to philosophy of language. Jacque derrida also added his voice by saying this was the moment when language invaded the universal problematic, the moment when in the absence of origin, everything became discourse.

6.1.3. Metaphysics thinking as the Quest of truth for a Genuine Intellectual by Bernard Fonlon

According to B. Fonlon, the Genuine Intellectual or scientific philosopher (the true philosopher) is one who has the aptitude or the capacity to take into himself all the abilities of the present, all the contributions of the past, and all the hopes of the future. Fonlon maintains that this man must be a university of knowledge.⁵²³ He further elucidates that the Real Intellectual must be a man whose mind is constructed on the foundation of philosophical and scientific knowledge.⁵²⁴ An individual who has the will comes to the realization that the mind of the Genuine Scholar cannot reign superlative in the area of reason when he is not in search for the truth. In this vein, Fonlon holds that the search for the truth should be the major preoccupation in the life of any Intellectual.⁵²⁵ Metaphysics as a science of being as such thus involves the quest for truth and reality going through every area of life be it physical or non-physical. In this regard, he says a

⁵²² W. GUTHRIE, *The Greek Philosophers, from Thales to Aristotle*, Methuen and Co Ltd, 11 New Fetter Lane, 1967, pp.45-46.

⁵²³ B. FONLON, *The Genuine Intellectual*, p.113.

⁵²⁴ *Ibid.* pp.113-114. The type of knowledge Fonlon is propounding is that knowledge which is able to question, which searches, which inquires, and which is able to unearth the fundamental causes of things in the cosmos and in human society. In fact, the person must be a researcher of knowledge, not just mere knowledge but knowledge of and for the truth and knowledge that will be able to better the human situation morally, socially, psychologically, economically, and spiritually.

⁵²⁵ *Ibid.* Taking this into account, he holds firmly that the True Intellectual must be a faithful and steadfast person who goes out to wage warfare against falsehood, evil and vice. Since truth is an indispensable principle or quality in the life of the Unadulterated Intellectual, Fonlon uses the analogy of “goodness” and “beauty” to show how the Legitimate Intellectual must strive for the truth. He holds that as “goodness” and “beauty” are embedded in the truth, so too a Genuine Intellectual must be a permanent seeker of what is good and right and at the same time avoiding what is evil and wrong.

true intellectual(Philosopher) can only succeed when he remains a diligent student all the days of his life because the moment he says goodbye to his books and ceases to inquire, to reflect and to focus on the searching light into his own life, he ceases *ipso facto* to be a Scholarly Person.⁵²⁶ Truth as a metaphysical concept must be the fundamental principle in the life of the Genuine Intellectual in all aspects life be it political, moral, psychological, socio-cultural, economical or spiritual. According to Fonlon, if one is considered as a seeker and a finder of truth, he must be able to put all his philosophical knowledge at the disposal of the community. This is only achieved when he sets out to seek the truth.⁵²⁷ For him, truth as one of the primary principles in the life of the Genuine Intellectual or scientific philosopher is not only for his benefit. It also leads to the discovery of new knowledge that will be able to benefit humankind at large.⁵²⁸ Moreover, the search for truth by the Genuine Intellectual helps to widen the existing store of human wisdom.⁵²⁹

Our quest here was to demonstrate that for Bernard Fonlon, a true metaphysical inquiry should be tilted towards a quest for truth which in other words is the ultimate reality or things in existence. He does not use the word metaphysic *per se* in his writings but an understanding of his writing will lead us to the understanding of what a true metaphysical spirit requires. What he describes and explains as the genuine intellectual, and the characteristics he labels for a genuine intellectual as seen in the first section of our discussion in this area. Among the primary occupations in the universe which allow man to manifest and realise himself in the world is the search for truth especially truth in relation to human beings which in a transcendental activity of the mind. Through this quest for truth, any Scholar engages himself in constructive tasks of explaining the fundamental causes of things in the universe and reasons for the nature and existence of beings. For this reason Fonlon holds that the search for truth must be the fundamental preoccupation in the life of a Scholarly Person which he describes as a genuine intellectual.⁵³⁰ That is, he must pursue the truth with vigor's and fervent determination. In relation to this, one will realise that truth helps this person to transcend or go beyond other beings found in the universe. In Fonlon's estimation, an Intellectual must be a faithful and steadfast person who goes out to wage warfare against falsehood, evil and vice and thereby safeguards the concept

⁵²⁶ B. FONLON, *The Genuine Intellectual*, p.116.

⁵²⁷ B. FONLON, *The Genuine Intellectual*, p.130.

⁵²⁸ *Ibid.*

⁵²⁹ *Ibid.*

⁵³⁰ B. FONLON, *The Genuine Intellectual*, p.155.

of truth from falsehood.⁵³¹ Thus, only that which is outstanding and sound in judgment, proved to be true should be taken hold of. In this perspective, Raymond Gaita holds that “the practical consequences would be disastrous if the idea of objective and metaphysical truth were seriously undermines.”⁵³² In addition, Simone Weil supports this point by saying that “the need for truth is more sacred than any other need” for truth is like food for the soul of man which is non-physical and real.⁵³³ A. Rosmini in the same light elucidates that the intellectual’s or a philosopher’s role is confined to the teaching of virtue which is the truth.⁵³⁴ Following from this, it will not be fallacious for one to say that those who do not profess the truth cannot be considered in the realm of intellectuals or philosophers. William James also added by saying, the concept of truth enables one to raise critical questions concerning the nature of things in the universe and to reflect on such questions in order to inform the community in which one lives, about the long or short sight-effects that may beset the community .⁵³⁵ This brings to mind the fact that the best protection against this threat is the rightful manner of pursuing truth. This point really ties with Fonlon’s contention in relation to the concept of seer and prophet. He states:

*Thanks to the philosophical bent of mind, thanks to his penetrating insight into the soul of man, thanks to his comprehensive knowledge of the past that he is able to warn the society, should the need arise, against impending cataclysm.*⁵³⁶

This concept of truth as Fonlon holds does not deviate from what Plato propounded in the ancient period in relation to the true philosopher. According to Plato, a true philosopher will never intentionally receive into his mind any falsehood; he must continue to love the truth.⁵³⁷ For the human mind is meant for truth, not falsehood. In line with Plato, Raimond Gaita states: “it is not a joke to say that the love of truth is an obligation fundamental to an intellectual or academic vocation.”⁵³⁸ Hence, one will come to the understanding that the Genuine Thinker cannot be a lover of truth or wisdom and falsehood at the same time which is against the principle of non-contradiction. Also, we realise that there is nothing more analogous to wisdom than truth which Fonlon regards as one of the primary principles in the life of an Intellectual or philosopher. In connection to this, Fonlon tells us that the Genuine Scholar must be a chief searcher of truth not

⁵³¹ *Ibid.*

⁵³² R. GAITA, *A Common Humanity*, Text Publishing Company, 2001, p.188.

⁵³³ S. WEIL, in *A Common Humanity*, 188.

⁵³⁴ A. ROSMINI, *Introduction to Philosophy*, Rosmini House, 1876, p.112

⁵³⁵ W. JAMES, *Psychology*, Briefer Course, New York 1892, p.369.

⁵³⁶ B. FONLON, *To Every African Freshman or The Nature End and Purpose of University Studies*, 86.

⁵³⁷ PLATO, *Republic*, VI, p.216.

⁵³⁸ R. GAITA, *A Common Humanity*, p.197.

only in his own field of specialization but in the entire intellectual domain.⁵³⁹ This is in line with Plato's contention which states that the true philosopher who desires to maintain this fundamental principle of truth is drawn towards knowledge by every form and is fascinated by the pleasures of the soul, and will hardly feel bodily pleasure.⁵⁴⁰

6.1.4. The advent of postmetaphysics as a disclosure of the valuability of metaphysics in post-metaphysical era.

The concept we are handling in our work is not an antimetaphysical or a concept that aims for the rejection of metaphysics as seen in the previous chapter by some authors. From the meaning of the term as a way of thinking which involves a rejection of previous theories and proposal of new theories that can be able to give rational backings to the problems of the times as faced by the metaphysicians of a particular age.⁵⁴¹ Postmetaphysics for Habermas is a theory that seeks to counter the present modern trend of thinking and observation of metaphysics as a science of being with no practical dimension by proposing a new way to look at reality in which he proposed procedural rationality. For to Habermas,

*Postmetaphysical thinking is the linguistic turn, situating reason, and overcoming logocentrism among the most important motive forces of philosophizing in the twentieth century, in spite of the boundaries between schools. To be sure, they have not only led to new insights but also to new prejudices.*⁵⁴²

It is a theory that seeks to give rational backings to the misunderstandings and prejudices of the contemporary period individual by thinkers and intellectual in the contemporary society. According to Prof. Eduardo Mendieta postmetaphysical thinking in his understanding of Habermas is not a critique of metaphysics but a way to let a modern man understand and study metaphysics successfully.⁵⁴³ Habermas also contributes in his philosophy of postmetaphysical thinking when he explains the relation between postmetaphysics and metaphysics first by letting us see what he describes as identity thinking in postmetaphysics in which the conception of the one and the many has a link. This link by which he presents thinking as a logical and ontological or idea and being as one; one is more real in platonic language by saying only ideas are real which is metaphysics, meaning he is using his postmetaphysical philosophy to defend

⁵³⁹ B. FONLON, *Lumbering of Later Years*, Centre d'édition et de Production Pour L'enseignement et la Recherche, 1982. p.19.

⁵⁴⁰ PLATO, *Republic*, Vi, p.216.

⁵⁴¹ W. SHEA., *Nietzsche as a postmetaphysical philosopher of life*, IN theorizing at Rowan, A serie of lectures sponsored by the department of philosophy and religion, Rowan University TM, //htp://youtube.com, 20/12/2022.

⁵⁴² J. HABERMAS, *Postmetaphysical Thinking*, (Trans)William Mark Hohengarten, The MIT Press Cambridge, 1992, p.08.

⁵⁴³ E. MENDIETA, *Discussion on the History of Religion and the Gnealogy of postmetaphysical thinking*, Pen state Colledge, IN Eroupean Academy of Religion., 2021.

metaphysics in a postmetaphysical era.⁵⁴⁴ According to Prof. Eduardo Mendieta, postmetaphysics as found in the examination of Habermas with the emergence of nominalism and empiricism either arise a first philosophy which he describes to either be metaphysics or ontology. This he explains as metaphysical thinking that is holistic and universal which is to be thought of in the contemporary times as a Cartesian, transparent and self-knowing epistemic subject, by which in this way idealism is transformed into the self-puzzling subject.⁵⁴⁵ The quest for a holistic outlook demands a different form of life, Habermas does makes this clear in chapter three of his work as he paves the way for being in postmetaphysical thinking giving a new face to metaphysics by say telling us about identity thinking, the doctrine of ideas or idealism and a strong concept of theory which are all unified in the philosophy of consciousness.⁵⁴⁶

According to Prof. Eduardo Mendieta, Habermas's conception of postmetaphysics was an exercise to retrieve metaphysics from the contemporary thinkers and their misunderstandings and prejudices. For him Habermas argues that postmetaphysical thinking awakes at the collapse of metaphysical thinking, in he says "the later takes in what remains of metaphysical thinking but now chasing and guided by procedural conception of reason that is socially and historical situated: a reason dissolve in a historical conception of an epistemic subject in a linguistically constituted inter-subjectivity that thus leads to a deflation of the extra-ordinary."⁵⁴⁷ Postmetaphysical thinking does advance with identity thinking, idealism and a strong concept of theory which gives primacy to the theory of practice, however not entirely to metaphysical thinking. Postmetaphysical thinking aims at the holistic view that brings back the one and the many, the whole and its part in terms of the linguistification of reason. Linguistically achieved understanding which from the outset is inter-subjectively generated. Habermas does end his thinking by saying, philosophy even in its postmetaphysical form will be able neither to replace nor to reform religion as long as religious language is the bearer of semantic contest that is inspiring an ever indispensable.⁵⁴⁸ Finally according to prof. Eduardo Mendieta, the history of western philosophy and other philosophical traditions that have a genealogy of their events, have been nourished by its millennia dialogue with religion, faith and philosophy, postmetaphysical

⁵⁴⁴ J. HABERMAS, *Postmetaphysical Thinking*; (Trans) by William Mark Hohengarten, The MIT Press Cambridge, 1992, p.28.

⁵⁴⁵ E. MENDIETA, *Dicussion on the History of Religion and the Gnealogy of postmetaphysical thinking*, Pen state Colledge, IN Eroupean Academy of Religion., 2021

⁵⁴⁶ J. HABERMAS, *Postmetaphysical Thinking*; (Trans)William Mark Hohengarten, The MIT Press Cambridge, Massachusetts and London, 1992. p.28-37.

⁵⁴⁷ E. MENDIETA, *Dicussion on the History of Religion and the Gnealogy of postmetaphysical thinking*, Pen state Colledge, IN Eroupean Academy of Religion, 2021

⁵⁴⁸ J. HABERMAS, *Postmetaphysical Thinking*; (Trans) William Mark Hohengarten, The MIT Press Cambridge, 1992. P.28-37.

thinking is thus the continuation of the actual age by the means of a thorough linguistification and alphabetification of reason and inter-subjectivity of reason⁵⁴⁹ According to Shang Nelson, the concept of postmetaphysics presents us with a new insight of metaphysical thinking for to him metaphysics is the base and foundation on which any other discipline is built.⁵⁵⁰ For him, postmetaphysics helps us to understand the value of metaphysics as a science that investigates the heart of reality. Metaphysics studies the principles of all things seen and unseen. It gives us the most profound knowledge attainable by man about the nature of everything in existence. In addition to this he says the most and supreme value of metaphysics lies precisely in the fact that it provides us with the ultimate and profound truth about being.⁵⁵¹

6.2. Ethics, Science and Politics

6.2.1. Ethical relativism, cultural subjugation and the gigantic nature of advanced cultures

Reflecting upon some key philosophical issues in our contemporary society, we come to realize that some philosophical traditions and cultures are being neglected and extinguished from the sphere of philosophical studies. Philosophy as an academic discipline has the character of universality and as mother of all sciences from its definition covers any other area of studies in academics. The gigantic nature of western philosophy over oriental philosophies and other philosophical traditions those that are still in the process of development like African philosophy has made some philosophical traditions and cultures to go to extinction.⁵⁵² Some philosophies have been completely silenced by the gigantic nature of western philosophy considered as the standards for philosophical studies and reflections. The western philosophical tradition considered as the standards for philosophical reflection while philosophy is an academic discipline and the mother of all sciences from its definition. Thus, the gigantic nature of western philosophy over other philosophical cultures is a call for concern and critical examination. Have philosophical traditions been in dialogue in the history of thought before the gigantic westernization of philosophical canon as the standard for philosophical reflections and thinking?

Brain Van Norden says talks this problem in his book called *taking back philosophy* where he elaborates the need for dialogues and an equal treatment of all philosophical culture across the

⁵⁴⁹ E. MENDIETA, *Discussion on the History of Religion and the Genealogy of postmetaphysical thinking*, Pen state College, IN European Academy of Religion., 2021

⁵⁵⁰ S. NELSON, *The Value of Metaphysics in a Postmetaphysical Era*, IN *The International Journal of Humanitatis Theoreticus*. Vol. 4. (Issue: 2); December, 2020, p.59.

⁵⁵¹ *Ibid.*

⁵⁵² B. VAN NORDEN, *Taking Back philosophy*, Columbia University Press, 2017, p.09.

universe. According to B. Nicholas tradition is inherited from previous generations and is transmitted, perhaps in an altered form, to future generations, it is the bond and continuity of a nationality, culture, or religion.⁵⁵³ Thus, philosophy as a discipline which also has a tradition and system of operating. Philosophical traditions develop from various cultures around the universe. Every culture in the universe has its own philosophy. There are many philosophical traditions As there are many philosophical cultures, for every tradition originates from a culture which has a philosophy. We have the western philosophical Cannon. There are three main dominant philosophies in Chinese philosophy which are Confucianism, Buddhism and Taoism. We shall examine these philosophies briefly. Beginning with Confucianism. Confucius is one of the most important philosophers in Chinese philosophy⁵⁵⁴. He was born in 551 B.C.E in the fifth century. He was born at a time when china was going through serious political crisis. In his twenties, he became an inspiration for his disciples. Though with this tutor for his disciples, he desired to take part in public office. With the failure to attain his desire, he engaged in a journey of service to the authorities of china from one province to another for thirteen years. He was finally given the chance to live his dreams at a very old age, however he engaged in teaching and editing the great Chinese classics.

Buddhism is a philosophical tradition that was propagated by an Indian prince called Siddhartha Gautama, who was born in the year 566 B.C.E.⁵⁵⁵ His father was a King, Gautama lived with his family until he was twenty-nine years old. He then left his family and became an ascetic, and spend six years studying with two great teachers of India. Learning by practicing meditation and Yoga. At thirty-five years old, he achieved the title of the Buddha which means the “awakened one.” He spend the rest of his life teaching and organizing his followers, and died at the age of eighty-one years old. His philosophy stems from his determination to sit under the Buddhist tree and meditate in order to find a solution to the problem of suffering. After siting and meditating under this tree he was enlightened. He understood the origin of suffering and how man can stop suffering. He taught this in what is known as the four noble truths in Buddhism.⁵⁵⁶ Harmony for the Buddha could be found by following a middle ground between extremes of pleasure or asceticism.

⁵⁵³ B. NICHOLAS ET Y. JIYUAN, *The Blackwell Dictionary of Western Philosophy*, Blackwell Publishing Ltd, 2004, p.694.

⁵⁵⁴ N. PEIMIN, *The philosophy of Confucius*, in <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/316100503>.

⁵⁵⁵ M. EMMANUEL(Ed), *A companion to Buddhist philosophy*, John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 2013, pp.1-2.

⁵⁵⁶ Ibid., Life is suffering, suffering is caused by ignorance and desire, we can end suffering by ceasing our desires, and lastly we can do this by living a life following what he calls the eight fold paths.

6.2.2. Transhumanism, Artificial Intelligence and Technology advancement in Science

The birth of transhumanism has directly confronted the core of the sciences which is philosophy itself. Transhumanism for N. Bostrom is a movement that has gained more grounds in recent times, it promotes an interdisciplinary approach from human beings and the enhancement of the human organism and human condition with the advancement of technology.⁵⁵⁷ Artificial Intelligence can be defined as a broad area of computer science that makes machines seem like they have human intelligence, if machines can solve problems, complete a task, or exhibit other cognitive functions that humans can, then we refer to them as having artificial intelligence.⁵⁵⁸ Meanwhile technological advancements involve the development that the field of science from the domain of technology is experiencing. These new concepts seek to proof that science is belt on conventions. It wants to destroy science by proposing false, alternatives, Representations, imagery concept of the very foundations on which science is belt.

Man's role no doubt is the application of his intelligence to matter. It however seems that if this technology as Libby holds is not checked, controlled or limited, it may itself become disastrous to man, even though it is primarily aimed at making man's life on earth better. In this regard, A. Fagothey, in opposition to Libby asserts: "man is beginning to realize that unless a halt is called soon to his improvident exploitation of nature, he will destroy himself by the excess of his own cleverness."⁵⁵⁹ This is so because he is getting to an extreme in the performance of his role whereby whatever he can do, he wants to do it. This however should not be the case because not all that man can do ought to be done. Man has exploited the earth's mineral resources all in a bid to advance it technologically but due to some extremes in the exploitations, there is the problem of pollution, diseases and the earth's resources are themselves going to be extinct.⁵⁶⁰ Also, man through technology can and has developed the nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction which are themselves produced for and against man. In this regard, I. Barbour posits:

But today, there is widespread evidence, not only of the new scale of technological power, but also of the mixed character of its impact on humanity and nature. A nuclear holocaust would wipe out modern civilization and produce climate changes and famine that could conceivably jeopardize human life itself. Toxic chemicals, deforestation, soil erosion and multiple pollutants together with continuous population growth are

⁵⁵⁷ B. Nick, *Transhumanistic Values In The Ethical Issues for the 21th Century*, Fredrick Adams(ed), Philosophical Document Center Press , 2003, p.01.

⁵⁵⁸ B. NICK , *Superintelligence: Paths, Dangers, Strategies* , Oxford University Press, 2014, p.39.

⁵⁵⁹ A. FAGOTHEY, *Right and Reason*, The C.V Mosby Company,, Saint Louis 1976, p.383.

⁵⁶⁰ Ibid.

*severely damaging the environment. Ours is a planet in crisis...The control and direction of technology involves ethical values such as justice, freedom, and environmental stewardship.*⁵⁶¹

With the pollution of the environment, the diseases, the apparent extinction of the earth's resources and the production of such weapons of mass destruction, man must thus check, control and limit his application of intelligence to matter. There is need for an ethics of technology, which will check and limit the powers of technology. This is because not all that man can do ought to be done. It is in this light that H. Jonas calls on man to seek "the least harm" and not "the greatest good" in matters of technology.⁵⁶² In addition, according to L. Winner, one of the negative consequences of an unchecked or unlimited technology is that it shapes all human activities to its own requirements, thus making itself an autonomous system.⁵⁶³ Man tends to adapt his needs according to the trends of technology rather than the reverse. Technology is not as such a neutral means to human ends but an all-encompassing system that imposes its patterns on every aspect of man's life and thought.⁵⁶⁴ This also leads A. Borgmann to intimate the selection of technologies that encourage genuine human fulfillment when he says: "we should challenge the rule of technology and restrict it to the limited role of supporting the humanly meaningful activities associated with a simpler life."⁵⁶⁵ After having examined the limitations in Libby's thoughts, we shall now look at some of the benefits of man's application to matter so far. In other words, we shall look at the benefits of technology to man today.

Philosophy as a science entails that it is a systematized collection and analysis of Data. The scientific view of postmetaphysics is what can be understood from the philosopher of science called Thomas Kuhn when he explains about the evolutionary change in science as a Conceptual scheme.⁵⁶⁶ A paradigm theory is a theory that helps to provide scientist working in a particular field with a broad theoretical framework.⁵⁶⁷ This conceptual scheme gives them the basic assumptions, key concepts and methodology in scientific research and experimentation..

According to Heidegger, there is something fundamentally wrong with modern technology in our present era; In today's view, reality can only be seen as a raw material or what

⁵⁶¹ I. BARBOUR, *Religion in an Age of Science*, SCM Press, 1990, p.XV.

⁵⁶² H. JONAS, *Imperative of Responsibility: In Search of an Ethics for the Technological Age*, Chicago University Press, p.138.

⁵⁶³ L. WINNER, *Autonomous Technology*, Cambridge: MIT Press, 1977, p.155.

⁵⁶⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵⁶⁵ A. BORGMANN, *Technology and the Characteristics of Contemporary Life*, University of Chicago Press, 1984, p.203.

⁵⁶⁶ T. S. KUHN, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, 2nd Ed, The University of Chicago Press, Ltd, 1962, p.43.

⁵⁶⁷ <https://www.paradigmcoaching.ie.com,14/11/2022>, 9:40am.

he calls standing reserves.⁵⁶⁸ The present situation has been made by humans, the way of revealing was not chosen by humans. However, our understanding of the world has developed over time across the ages. Today, being has a technological character by which humans relate to the world and other beings in a dominating way. Thus to him the technological understanding of being is to be looked upon as the ultimate danger of mankind. He indicates the danger of human beings interpreting themselves as raw material for technological works. He then proposed that the only way out of this was “the will not will to power.” Heidegger talks about the technological will to power as something which has no space for corrections. He insists on the fact that we need to observe the possibilities of depending on technology but not enslaving ourselves to technology. Therefore, to him, technology is not a human activity but developed beyond human control.

According to Heidegger, the revelation of everything by modern technology is of great danger to the human existence; for its ontological relation to reality is being reduced to exploitation.⁵⁶⁹ The present human understanding of technology is a danger to human thought because the human thought will become unable to conceive an alternative ontological relation to the world. To him, one of the disturbing dangers of technology is the well-developed and uncontrolled nature of technology by man. Man has developed technology to the point that man himself is unable to control the productive power of technology. Heidegger fears that someday calculative thinking will be accepted and practiced as the only way of thinking.⁵⁷⁰ This type of thinking deals with the quantifiable and the measurable, for calculations refuse to accept anything that is not countable. Heidegger also fears that technological calculation may satisfy our material needs and diminish our spiritual needs in such a way that we may not discover what we had lost even decades to come.⁵⁷¹ The present human understanding of technology is very dangerous because it seems to be that the only way of knowing the truth and knowing being is through technology. According to Heidegger, technology is ontologically devastating given the surpassing nature of the revelation of being compared to other modes of revealing being in our contemporary society.⁵⁷² With everything in existence standing as reserves ready for use, distances has disappeared, we speak about distance in an existential sense of the word. For

⁵⁶⁸ L. WILLIAM(Trans), *The Question Concerning Technology and Other Essays*, Garland Inc., 1977, p.5.

⁵⁶⁹ L. WILLIAM(Trans), *The Question Concerning Technology and Other Essays*, Garland Inc., 1977, p.28.

⁵⁷⁰ *Ibid*, p.33.

⁵⁷¹ L. WILLIAM(Trans), *The Question Concerning Technology and Other Essays*,p.28.

⁵⁷² *Ibid*, p.26.

example, the distance between earth and sky, the distance between mortals and immortals. Mankind now objectifies the world in order to exploit it and everything that man comes in contact with has an extension of its own. For example, the sky that man believed to be beyond human reach and aided in the contemplation of nature has now been integrated as part of the standing reserves ready for exploitation by mankind. Thus, technological humankind is an illusion that may become accepted as the reality which will be a disaster to mankind.

6.2.3 Alternative Facts and Value of Truth in Post-Truth Political Life.

A postmodernist thought is against modern art and architecture. The modern art is considered to be highly elitism. It indicates a decline in standards.⁵⁷³ There is equally in the postmodern period the idea of reduction of power; where all institutions, human relations are masks of power.⁵⁷⁴ It is widely acknowledged that national governments are no longer the site of democratic politics and democratic citizenship rights. Several scholars have argued that in an age of globalization citizenship cannot be confined within the boundaries of nation-states; it must become transnational.⁵⁷⁵ In tracing the history of this fact, Arendt carries her readers into the politics of deception and mostly its impact and place in contemporary societies. Arendt's views may enable us reflect on the idea of alternative facts or lies telling in in politics⁵⁷⁶ and the value of truth in a post-truth world. Hannah Arendt's definition of politics clings on the fact of human plurality.⁵⁷⁷ where words and deeds gave way to action,⁵⁷⁸ Arendt found that neither philosophy nor theology can give an adequate definition to politics.⁵⁷⁹ She considers politics to be established only among individuals who recognize themselves to be *equal*: "*Man*, as philosophy or theology knows him, exists, or is realized, in politics only in the equal rights that those who are most different guarantee for each other."⁵⁸⁰ Or,

⁵⁷³ D. LEWIS, *Christianity and Postmodernism*, p.87.

⁵⁷⁴ B. DUIGNAN, *Postmodernism, Encyclopedia of Britannica*, September 04th 2020, p.3.

⁵⁷⁵ G. RITZER, *The Blackwell Companion to Globalization*, p.23.

⁵⁷⁶ C. C. EJIMOFOR, *The Idea of Human Freedom in John Stewart Mill: A Critical Examination in Socio-Political Philosophy*, Pontifical Urban University, Rome 1988, pp.83-84. Etymologically, *politics* is derived from the Greek word *polis* meaning a "city-state." It is coined out as there is true need for government to regulate the relationship between an individual member of a society and another. Therefore, politics is the science and art of government. As a science, it concerns the state and the conditions essential to its existence and development. In this case, a study of politics must naturally include an analysis of government and its working agents, with its subject-matter closely related to history, economics and ethics. It is closely to this common definition that Arendt also develops her own understanding of politics.

⁵⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, 93-95. She writes: "Politics deals with the coexistence and association of *different* men. Men organize themselves politically according to certain essential commonalities found within or abstracted from an absolute class of differences." These words are further emphasized when she reiterates: "Politics arises *between men* and is established as relationships."

⁵⁷⁸ H. ARENDT, *The Human Condition*, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago 1958, p.25.

⁵⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, pp.94-96.

⁵⁸⁰ H. ARENDT, *The Promise of Politics*, J. Kohn(ed.), Schocken Books, 2007, p.4.

*Authentic politics can exist only if numbers of people are brought up to want to take part in political life and do so in the “right spirit” or finding themselves in a fluid situation because of insurgency discover for themselves the right spirit in which to take part.*⁵⁸¹

It is this relation that gives rise to freedom which is at the very heart of political life and in which politics has its meaning.⁵⁸² The public realm for her is seen as the place of true freedom just like in the case of the inhabitants of the Greek *polis*, for whom freedom was located in the political sphere.⁵⁸³ However, for her, freedom is an act of being free manifest in the performance of action within a context of equal yet diverse peers.⁵⁸⁴ H. Arendt is not interested in seeking out a systematic and essential definition of truth as Aristotle or Thomas Aquinas does from the perspective of metaphysics. Rather, she is mostly concerned with the phenomenon of political rejection of truth and its impact on man and society. That is why in *Truth and Politics*, she approaches the truth via two ways (which she borrows from some of her predecessors): *rational* and *factual*. By *rational truth*, Arendt means the truth of the philosopher. That is why she also calls it *philosophical truth*. It is the truth of the mind, of reflection or contemplation as in Plato. In philosophy, the definition mostly held for truth is the *adequatio rei et intellectus* (the conformity between a thing and the intellect).⁵⁸⁵ Thus, truth is different from any other form of knowledge, distinct by virtue of its certitude, directness, or infallibility.⁵⁸⁶ Worth noting here, is the fact that truth is considered to be given in solitude though it is meant to be universal and absolute.⁵⁸⁷ Traditionally, a fact is defined as “the worldly correlate of a true proposition, a state of affairs whose obtaining makes that proposition true.”⁵⁸⁸ In other words, a fact is the state of a thing as it cannot be denied, once it has happened. If rational truth is disclosed rightly in solitude or individual thoughts, a factual true statement is not at all. Arendt observes that factual truth has three qualities:

Factual truth... is always related to the people: it concerns events and circumstances in which many are involved; it is established by witnesses and depends upon testimony; it

⁵⁸¹ D. VILLA (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Hannah Arendt*, p.135.

⁵⁸² H. ARENDT, *The Promise of Politics*, p.116-117.

⁵⁸³ H. ARENDT, *The Human Condition*, p.50-58.

⁵⁸⁴ H. BRUMKHORT, “Equality and Elitism,” in *The Cambridge Companion to Hannah Arendt*, p.180.

⁵⁸⁵ T. AQUINAS, *De Veritate*, I, p.9.

⁵⁸⁶ PLATO, *The Republic*, A. D. LINDSAY (trans.), J.M.Dent & Sons Ltd., 1950,p.VI –VII.

⁵⁸⁷ H. ARENDT, *Between Past and Future: Eight Exercises in Political Thought*, p.225. In other words, this truth is obtained through contemplation of the philosopher but it imposes itself on every mind. For Arendt, this truth is apolitical by nature when it opposes the people’s opinion and sets itself above consent and deliberation. The traces of this opposition are found first in Plato and down the ages to the modern period.

⁵⁸⁸ E. LOWE, “Fact,” in *The Oxford Companion to Philosophy*(2nd ed.), T. HONDERICH(ed.), Oxford University Press, 2005, p.287.

*exists only to the extent that it is spoken about, even if it occurs in the domain of privacy.*⁵⁸⁹

Hence factual truth belongs to the public realm and is known by the people. It is political by nature, where it shares the same realm with opinion. Factual truth, according to Arendt seems not to be opposed to opinion. This is so because they depend, contrarily to the philosophical, to the realm of the public: they depend for their existence on human testimony. However, Arendt says, lying is the very opposite of facts. For Arendt, “the danger to the political world in modern times is the loss of the factual world that emerges, paradoxically, at the heart of the political realm that ordinarily creates, and depends on historical remembrance.”⁵⁹⁰

According to her, lying at first had two characteristics: in the first place it concerned “either *true secrets*, data that had never been made public, or *intentions*, which anyhow do not possess the same degree of reliability as accomplished facts...;”⁵⁹¹ traditionally, lies-telling dealt with “*particulars* and was never meant to deceive literally everybody...”⁵⁹² Arendt goes on to make mention of a modern art of lies-telling which differs from the traditional. This no longer “works within political history and is subordinated to particular political purposes,” but lies which “deceive...everyone in society (...); and it is aimed not at particular facts but at the entire framework of *factuality* as such.”⁵⁹³ In other words, with Arendt, the modern lies-telling in politics no longer works within the framework of action defined by it; but politics finds itself subjugated to modern lies: “The danger of the lie is thus...a substitution of its own action for that of true political beginnings.”⁵⁹⁴ It is this question of modern lie that constitutes the essence of Arendt’s reflection of the *Pentagon papers*. According to Arendt, among the many ideas that run throughout people’s minds about the reports, the major lesson of the Papers is centered on deception, as she says:

The Pentagon Papers...tell different stories, teach different lessons to different readers...But most readers have now agreed that the basic issue raised by the Papers is deception...The quicksand of lying statements of all sorts, deceptions as well as

⁵⁸⁹ H. ARENDT, *Between Past and Future: Eight Exercises in Political Thought*, pp.233-234.

⁵⁹⁰ C. CARUTH, “Lying and History” in *Thinking in Dark Times: Hannah Arendt on Ethics and Politics*, R. BERKOWITZ-J. KATZ-T. KEENAN (eds.), Fordham University Press, 2010, p. 61. “The role of action in the political is conundrum to the grasping of the momentous use of lie in politics.” Lies, Arendt says, distinguish themselves from other forms of epistemological mishaps by the fact that they are intended and willed. A person lies when despite the fact that he knows the fact, wilfully rejects or denies it. Despite the fact that the phenomenon of lies-telling is not of recent, Arendt however, points out new forms of deception which arise out the events of totalitarianism.

⁵⁹¹ H. ARENDT, *Between Past and Future: Eight Exercises in Political Thought*, p.247.

⁵⁹² *Ibid.* p.248.

⁵⁹³ R. BERKOWITZ ETJ. KATZ-T. KEENAN (eds.), *Thinking in Dark Times: Hannah Arendt on Ethics and Politics*, p.82.

⁵⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, pp.28-83. By this the modern lie inflicts violence on the entire framework of factuality by “substituting the action of destroying the facts of reality for the action of beginning, replacing a history of beginning with a history of their total erasure.”

*self-deceptions, is apt to engulf any reader who wishes to probe this material, which, unhappily, he must recognize as the infrastructure of nearly a decade of United States foreign and domestic policy.*⁵⁹⁵

Thus for her, on reading the *Pentagon Papers*, one cannot but realize the aspect of deception and self-deception: how an abyss has been drawn between the public version and the political version of the stories or problems in Vietnam. This new art of deception and self-deception involves two⁵⁹⁶ categories of people: the *public-relation managers* and the *problem-solvers*. The first set of people is concerned with advertising, selling opinions and political views: Public relation is a variety of advertising; hence, this practice has its origin in the consumer society, with its inordinate appetite for goods to be distributed through market economy.⁵⁹⁷ Hence, as Cathy Caruth explains, Arendt's point foresightedly touches the role of the media in the description of the war, and political decision-making process.⁵⁹⁸ The second and more interesting group however, is not just concerned with creating images to sell the war but fight for a lasting victory against the whole texture of factuality.⁵⁹⁹ People in Arendt's words are

*...professional "problem-solvers," and they were drawn into government from the universities and the various think tanks, some of them equipped with game theories and systems analyses, thus prepared to solve all the "problems" of foreign policy... the problem-solvers have been characterized as men of great confidence...but these moral qualities, which deserve admiration, clearly did not prevent them from participating for many years in the game of deceptions and falsehoods.*⁶⁰⁰

Arendt's description of the problem-solvers in the text shows what they had in common with the public-relation managers: namely their contribution in the process of the war. But as the first group deals only with the distortion of facts, the second goes as far as to its destruction and erasure, thus creating a history and process of the image itself. This is what Arendt calls "defactualization" or the establishment of a "Lying World Order."⁶⁰¹ Each individual forms

⁵⁹⁵ H. ARENDT, "Lying in Politics: A Reflection on the Pentagon Papers", in *The Crises of the Republic*, Harcourt Brace & Company, 1969, pp.3-4. "a fundamental factor in the decision-making process shaping the development of the war"

⁵⁹⁶ She considers deception and self-deception, in other words lying, in the reports, to have taken the place of politics as the driving force behind policy-making. This process of deception in the war is understood in Arendt as the more recent form of lies-telling which she refers to as *image-making*. Arendt dates the history of this more recent form of deception from the dropping of the atomic bomb and the ideologies that preceded the Second World War.

⁵⁹⁷ H. ARENDT, *Crises of the Republic*, pp.7-8. For Arendt those people believe that "half of politics is "image-making" and the other half the art of making people believe in the imagery."

⁵⁹⁸ R. BERKOWITZ-J. KATZ-T. KEENAN (eds.), *Thinking in Dark Times: Hannah Arendt on Ethics and Politics*, p.84.

⁵⁹⁹ P. BIRMINGHAM, "Political Deception and the Threat of Totalitarianism" in *Thinking in Dark Times: Hannah Arendt on Ethics and Politics*, p.73.

⁶⁰⁰ H. ARENDT, *Crises of Republic*, pp.9-10.

⁶⁰¹ P. BIRMINGHAM, "Political Deception and the Threat of Totalitarianism" in *Thinking in Dark Times: Hannah Arendt on Ethics and Politics*, p.73.

opinion considering all the others who are confronted with the same problem. She uses his imagination and find solitude space is still habited by the crowd.⁶⁰²

It is in this connection that she will talk of the aim of her article as a look at politics from outside.⁶⁰³ In other words, for Arendt it still remains an illusion for the politician to relegate philosophical truth to the background as long as human beings that constitute the *polis* are still thinking.⁶⁰⁴ Arendt's analysis of the Pentagon Papers in *Lying in Politics*, carries one into the understanding of the involvement of mass media in the art of political deception.⁶⁰⁵ However, the leaking of this paper by one of the members of the group itself, represents for Arendt man's incapacity for total defactualization.⁶⁰⁶ Thus, the question in these Arendt's articles is for man or the politician to recognize their limit.⁶⁰⁷

6.2.4. The concept of Social constructionism and Trust as social foundations in liquid modernity

In this era, morality and truth do not exist objectively. This is the heart of the post-modernist worldview. Truth and its attendant concept of meaning of morality are constructed by society.⁶⁰⁸ Everything centres around stories created by the society to establish what is valid. Thus what is truth for one group is not necessarily truth for another group.⁶⁰⁹ The objectivity of truth disappears. Such a thing as human nature, human behaviour and psychology are socially determined or constructed.⁶¹⁰ Constructionist view knowledge and truth as created and not discovered by the mind.⁶¹¹ According to Tom Andrews, being a constructionist is inconsistent with being a realist. To him, there could exist a belief of a social constructionist concept which is corresponding to something real in the world. He adds with the view of Berger and Luckman based on the fact that reality is socially constructed, but refers to subjective experience of everyday life. What is known and learned is concerned with the sense of what it is to humans as

⁶⁰² H. ARENDT, *Between Past and Future: Eight Exercises in Political Thought*, pp.237-238. Thus, opinion being not self-evident because of the discursive nature of the mind in the process, finds itself sharing the same realm with facts which "have no conclusive reason whatever for being what they are." In other words, facts as well as any statement of truth, in addition to its opacity, are subordinated to opinion-holders, testimony, and dependence on majority. Furthermore, this distinction is emphasized by the fact that truth has been considered as a resistant element to political action.

⁶⁰³ *Ibid.*

⁶⁰⁴ H. ARENDT, *Between Past and Future: Eight Exercises in Political Thought*, p.256.

⁶⁰⁵ H. ARENDT, *Crises of the Republic*, p.44.

⁶⁰⁶ *Ibid.*

⁶⁰⁷ H. ARENDT, *Between Past and Future: Eight Exercises in Political Thought*, p.256.

⁶⁰⁸ D. KELLNER, *Postmodern Truth*, Oxford University Press, Melbourne, 1997, p.87.

⁶⁰⁹ D HARVEY, *The Condition of Postmodernism*, p.65.

⁶¹⁰ JHAB HASSAN, *The Postmodern Turn*, Oxford University PresS, 1990,p. 69.

⁶¹¹ T. ANDREWS, *The Grounded Theory Review*, 2012, pp.40-41.

opposed to scientific knowledge. Individuals or groups of individuals define or construct reality. Socialization is done through a significant other that mediates the subjective reality meanwhile giving it meaning and internalized by individuals. This is possible through the medium of language. Also within social construction, language makes thoughts possible by constructing concepts. Therefore, to the constructionist, it is language that makes it possible for concepts and thoughts. Concepts and thoughts can exist but without the use of language to construct them, they are not concepts or thoughts according to the constructionist. Tom Andrew distinguishes between radical and social constructionism. To him, radical constructionism is concerned with the idea that knowledge does not correspond to the world.⁶¹² Followed by the view that the world can only be known in relation to people of the world and not independent of the world. We also have context and strict constructionism. The former recognizes objective reality and its influence. The later holds a relative position of the post-modern views, beliefs of multiple realities, all valid and meaningful. Constructionism is the process by which reality is created by the observer. A person constructs reality by giving meaning to what is observed. Reality is constructed through a person's active experience, routines which later become habits. In the discussion of the construction of reality, there is the concept of everyday life, social interaction, language and signs and many others that would be discussed briefly for a better understanding of the social construction of reality.

Berger and Luckman employ the phenomenological method to examine the reality of everyday life. To them, everyday life presents itself as a reality interpreted by men and subjectively meaningful to them as coherent world.⁶¹³ This reality is marked by consciousness either internally or externally. Multiple realities present themselves to us, amounts this; the reality of everyday life is of the highest level. The consciousness of everyday life is taken by me to be normal and self-evident; it constitutes my nature. The reality of everyday life is organized around the here and now. The reality of everyday life presents itself to me as an intersubjective world, a world I share with others. Intersubjective world differentiates the reality of everyday life from other realities. I exist in everyday life by continuous interaction and communication with others.

⁶¹² T. ANDREWS, *The Grounded Theory Review*, Volume 11, Issue 1, What Is Social Constructionism? University College Cork, 2012, pp.40-41.

⁶¹³ L. BERGER - T. LUCKMANN, *The Social Construction of Reality*, Penguin Group, 1966, pp.33-34. The problem of the sociologist is not to give answers to the questions of these societies. But to analyze them with the aid of his logical knowledge and view how the reality could be maintained or how it could be lost in the future within individuals in the society. The basic problem of social construction which in turn is the problem of the sociologist is that the sociology of knowledge is concerned with the analysis of the social construction of reality.

The world of everyday life is structure spatially and temporally. It is the case where by the reality of everyday life is shared with others.⁶¹⁴ Also, there is a question of how others themselves experienced in everyday life. It is also possible to distinguish between several modes of such experiences. The most important experience of others takes place in the face-to-face situation which is the prototypical case of social interaction. According to Berger and Luckman, knowledge is created by the interaction of individuals within the society. To them, the division of labour gives rise to experts' knowledge in the society. For an individual is given the chance to focus on a particular path. Language has its origin from everyday life. Language according to Berger and Luckman is a system of vocal signs.⁶¹⁵ The most prominent capacity of language is the fact that it transcends the here and now, bridges different zones within the reality of everyday life and integrates them into meaningful a whole.⁶¹⁶ Language is capable of transcending reality of everyday life altogether. I therefore, encounter knowledge in everyday life as socially distributed.

One of the major issues is that social constructionism upholds the way we understand the world is a product of historical process of interaction and negotiations between the groups of people. And the question often asked, if the founders of history gotten it from space to know the world? The understanding of the world begins from⁶¹⁷ wanders and rationalism. The term 'epistemology' has been defined from different perspectives depending on the author's orientation. A social constructionist in 1985 defines *epistemology* as "a set of imminent rules used in thought by large groups of people to define reality" or "thinking about thinking" and goes on to say that it is the study or theory of the nature and grounds of knowledge. Keeney in 1983 argues that the term 'epistemology' indicates the basic premises underlying action and cognition. According to Benjamin (1983) no model of clinical intervention exists in a theoretical vacuum.⁶¹⁸

⁶¹⁴ L. BERGER - T. LUCKMANN, *The Social Construction of Reality*, Penguin Group, 1966, p.43.

⁶¹⁵ L. BERGER - T. LUCKMANN, *The Social Construction of Reality*, Penguin Group, 1966, pp.51-52. It is the most important sign system of the human society. Language has its origin for the face-to-face interaction but can be easily detached from it. Its detachment lies in the communication of meaning which is not direct in the here and now. Language represents the experience I have in the wide-awake consciousness. It makes real my subjectivity to me and to my partner. Men must talk about themselves until they know themselves.

⁶¹⁶ *Ibid.*

⁶¹⁷ D.T. SHECK, Implication of social constructionism to counseling and social work practice, University of Hong Kong, 2003, p.108.

⁶¹⁸ V. NIEKERK, *A Social Constructionist Epistemology*, University of Pretoria, 2005, p.51.

PARTIAL CONCLUSION

Authenticity also has a great impact on the study of philosophy for philosophizing is essentially original and personal; a questioning and replying of man himself. In this respect, William Luijpen declares:

*Philosophy is authentic philosophy only when the individual man himself philosophizes, when he himself raises questions, when he himself attempts to reply, when he himself endeavors to clear away the obstacles to insight.*⁶¹⁹

However, authenticity is neither a matter of being self-centred nor escaping from society. To exist inauthentically is to exist in a communal world in a way that the unique self is depersonalized and reduced to the status of a tool or an object which is simply present-at-hand. Authentic existence on the other hand does not destroy this communal aspect. *Dasein* possesses an indelible communal character. In society and in solitude, man is structurally a communal creature. Man is a *mitsein*; for he is always with others. *Dasein* cannot act without encountering others. For example, when one goes to the market to buy anything, whether one likes it or not, one must come in contact with others who are either buying or selling or doing other things. As the individual *Dasein* is in the world, so too are other *Daseins* in the world. However, authenticity remains a matter of the individual recognizing that he is a unique, free being who is responsible for the choices he makes as he lives his daily life. *Dasein* is characterized by a certain *mineness* and this is what is recognized in authenticity. From this perspective we have seen the importance of this study from the real of politics from the realm of science, philosophy and the other areas of study.

⁶¹⁹ W. LUIJPEN, *Existential Phenomenology*, Dusquene University Press, 1963, p.5.

GENERAL CONCLUSION

Our whole project was anchored on three parts in order to bring Heidegger's thought to a logically conclusion. We were able to bear in mind that more than ever, humanity remains in a constant longing for truth, certitude especially in a world of confusion and whose substance is relativity. In a society of flux where everything is seen as a standing reserve, convention is the meaning of reality. This search for knowledge is also found in man's need to live with others. It is only then that being can fully come to the knowledge of itself. The problem concerning the meaning of being and the question of being has rock the metaphysical tradition of philosophy for decades with extreme arguments. The change in thought across the board in metaphysic is what is understood as postmetaphysical thinking. Heidegger's conception of being was a turning point in philosophy where by the question on meaning of being was examined from an existentialist perspective.

We saw that in the 19th and 20th century, Martin Heidegger a German philosopher contributed to the historical problem of being by urging thinkers to avoid comparing ideas and contrasting between objectivity and subjectivity in the process of thinking about being. We also discovered that the philosophers of language in the contemporary society assert that being is found in language. However, after this assertion they contemplated being as a product of human agreement about reality. We also saw that the philosophers of language assert that being is a convention in contemporary thinkers, given their materialistic twist.

We understood from the research as presented in our work that contemporary conception of being has drawn more attention with a grave need to examined the question of being in contemporary times. The concept of being as seen above experienced criticism and rejection which paved the way for a need to give rational explanations to the problem and question of being in contemporary times. Thus, the problem and question of being is an old age problem that has existed for decades and discussed by many philosophers and thinkers who face this problems at different times and different situations in the history of thought as seen from the genealogy of the problem of being with pre-Socratic philosophers to post-Socratic philosophers till present times.

Also, concepts such as post-truth, postmodernism, transhumanism, alternative facts, social constructionism, antimetaphysics⁶²⁰ and many more are the main reasons for the devaluation of metaphysics in the contemporary society. For these new concepts that are the upshot of

⁶²⁰ This is the total and complete rejection of metaphysics by a philosopher or group or philosophers.

modernism and postmodernism want to destroy metaphysics by laying more emphasis on conventions. These new ways and philosophical schools of thought seek to contextually explain the nature and meaning of reality base on the changes that the society is experiencing and not based on objective principles and foundations. They pay no attention no respect to traditional methods and principles of interpretations.

We discovered from our discussion that the conception of being in our present era has been subjectified and personalised by the modern man. We also discovered that truth is been seen from many dimensions that are relative to the observer of a particular school of thought. Science has transferred human person into a raw material for scientific experiments with the advancement in technology and artificial intelligence in our work, we notice a shift of ethical principles and transfer of human values to machines. Philosophy as well is affected by the rapid changing nature of the culture with the experience of paradigm shift by which metaphysics is a valueless discipline in philosophical inquiry. The idea of postmetaphysics which involves the genealogy in the conception of being by thinkers of various epochs is a long and timeless historical problem. We also understood from our findings how the difference in the conception of being has led to the criticism and rejection of metaphysics historically.

We examined the criticism in the conception of reality by philosophers beginning from ancient period till date. We saw that Parmenides held that being was one and changeless, however, another philosopher Heraclitus held that being was not one and change is a reality. Plato on the other hand said being is was an idea that an individual conceives in the mind meanwhile his student Aristotle said being is was a combination of matter and form. These theories involves a sequential change in the conception of being as we saw by the rejection and disapproval of previous theories of being meanwhile proposing new theories that can answer to the demands of the times in a particular epoch in history. Heidegger thsu as seen in chapter three, criticized traditional metaphysical terminology in favors of an individual interpretation of the works of past thinkers and philosophers. Heidegger criticized traditional metaphysic by saying that traditional metaphysics had failed to explain the meaning of being. This means that traditional metaphysics had explain the ontology of God and the Theology of Being in their explanation of being.⁶²¹

⁶²¹ I Thomson, *Ontotheology? Understanding Heidegger's Destruktion of Metaphysics*, International Journal of Philosophical Studies Vol.8 (3), p. 299.

We saw in chapter three how Heidegger criticised traditional metaphysics for its failure to properly treat the meaning and question of being. We also observed a number of thinkers who have criticised metaphysics meanwhile some reject metaphysics and discard it as a discipline without value and necessity in the human quest for knowledge and truth in the conception of reality. We saw that Immanuel Kant had declared an end to metaphysics in his criticism of metaphysics. Also, David Hume had lunch a book burning campaign with the intentions to destroy everything metaphysics⁶²² There was the law of three stages of Comte and the rejection of metaphysics by Logical positivist. We discussed that the heightened level of Heidegger's critique lies in the Unconcealment of the weakness of traditional metaphysics to explain the meaning and question of being. After which he went further to propose a solution to the weakness he had found in the conception of metaphysics by traditional philosophers.

Our main concern in this work was to phenomenological examine the concept of being by Martin Heidegger. From our work, we discovered that martin Heidegger was an existentialist philosopher. The Existentialist Philosophers of the 19th and 20th centuries made the concrete individual central to their thought and philosophy. They sought to understand how man can achieve the richest and most fulfilling life in the modern world. Man, for the Existentialists, as we saw is a free being who acts freely and as such is responsible for his actions. The main problem that was been treated in our work is thus to question of the credibility of Heidegger's critique of traditional metaphysics. The problem we were tackling in this work was the question of the pertinence of Heidegger's critique of traditional metaphysics. We asked the question weather the critique of traditional metaphysics by Heidegger in our contemporary postmetaphysical society enables us to value or devalue metaphysics in a postmetaphysical era? We also asked ourselves if Heidegger's critique of metaphysics enable us value or reject metaphysics in our contemporary society with his existentialist analysis of Dasein? We saw puzzling questions like weather the phenomenology of Heidegger's *Dasein* can help us to improve our conception of the valuability or transvaluability of Metaphysics in a Liquid Modernity?

Our aim in this work was to take back metaphysics from the postmodernist thinkers in reiterating the true nature of metaphysical thinking. One major aim of this write up was to counter the attack on metaphysics by modern thinkers in our contemporary society. Another very

⁶²² S. NELSON, *The Value of Metaphysics in a Postmetaphysical Era*, IN *The International Journal of Humanitatis Theoreticus*. Vol. 4. (Issue: 2); December, 2020, p.1.

important focal point for this write up is on the value of metaphysics in a post-metaphysics era. Our focus on this work was to discuss the valuability of metaphysics in a postmetaphysical era where nearly all metaphysical realities are rejected. Thus, the work sought to revive metaphysics from the gigantic consumerism of postmodern and modern tradition of Philosophy.

This work also had as its aim to remind philosophers that an off root of metaphysics means an off root of Philosophy itself from the society. The destruction of metaphysics entails the destruction of philosophy as a discipline and way of thinking in the human society. The work sought to present the rejection of metaphysics, and the rejection of philosophy. It sought to outline the regressive altitude of modern man and postmodern thinkers on the question and problem of being, as going back to the 15th and 16th century with Edmund Husserl. During this period in history, philosophy was rejected and metaphysical destroyed by the advancement and development of science in Europe. The development of science came with the rejection of the spiritual dimension of reality and elevation of the physical aspects as experimental sciences presented proved the nature of physical reality at the time.⁶²³ The work also sought to present a blend between the classical culture of Philosophy and the present modern/postmodern culture of Philosophy. The nature of paradigm shifts in philosophical thinking (metaphysics) across history from ancient times till date. It presences a link between the classical thought pattern and the contemporary thought pattern which is previewed to help us understand our present status quo and provide solutions to the issues of our times. while leading us into a new age with a concept know as postmetaphysical thinking to metaphysically examine reality contextually in the modern and postmodern society by the contemporary intellectual and thinker. In our research, findings and examination of Martin Heidegger's conception of being in his analysis of *Dasein*, we were able assert if the criticism and rejection of metaphysics contribute to the rejection or added more meaning to the value of metaphysics in a postmetaphysical era. Thus, from this perspective determine the value and significance of metaphysics in our contemporary society. We also confirmed the value of metaphysic in a postmetaphysical era. We discovered the necessity of metaphysic in the quest for truth as Genuine Intellectual pursuit in our contemporary society.

The whole discussion and writing of this thesis was focused on responding to the aforementioned problems. The problems highlighted in the introduction concerning Martin Heidegger's critique of traditional metaphysics. We used the phenomenological and historical

⁶²³ Edmund Husserl, *The Crisis of European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology*, David Carr(Trans), Northwest University Press, Evanston, 1970, p.5.

methods, alongside the analytical/critical method to examine Heidegger's conception of being in order to provide a solution to the problems raised at the beginning of our work. The historical method enabled us to digest the genealogy of the problem of being. The historical method assisted us to gradually navigate the critique of metaphysics across the history of philosophy. It also helps us better our understanding of the roots of the criticism and rejection of metaphysics right up to this era. The phenomenological method that we used enabled us to examine Heidegger's existentialist analysis of Dasein. It helped us in the analysis of Dasein and understanding of Heidegger's deconstruction of western metaphysics by looking at the properties and structure of the being Heidegger calls Dasein. This method disclosed the phenomenological understanding of being by Martin Heidegger. It revealed to us the full meaning of Heidegger's critique and the proposed solution that Heidegger levied for his critique of traditional metaphysics.

The first part of our work consisted of the semantic and historical backgrounds of Heidegger's conception of metaphysics. From the point of semantics, we looked at the meaning of some key terms that enabled us to better digest the material in this work. We saw that metaphysics is a science of being as such. It is a science of reality what is seen and unseen. Being is anything that is thought of as existing either ontologically, logically, morally etc. be I thus anything that is there and aware of its being there according to Heidegger. We observed that postmetaphysics was a philosophical school of thought that laid emphasis on the rejection of previous conceptions of metaphysics by proposing new conceptions of reality based on the changes that the society is experiencing. They propose new methods and ways of thinking in contrary to the traditional way of thinking other to counter the difficulties faced by the society. After which we examined the genealogy of postmetaphysics as a system of change in thinking across the history of metaphysics beginning from ancient times with the pre-Socratics up to the present moment. The second chapter of part one of our work consisted in discussing the thought of those philosophers who influenced Martin Heidegger to develop his concept of being. We examined the conception of being by Parmenides who held that being is one and unchanging. We examined how Parmenides ontology influenced Heidegger to develop his metaphysics. After a tour through the universal becoming of Heraclitus was done in order to have a clear genealogy of the conception of being from the ancient period of history. Later on the idealism of Plato while calumniating everything concerning the contribution of the ancient thinkers to Heidegger's conception of being with the Hylomorphism of Aristotle who talks about the existence of being

as a combination of matter and form. Aristotle was student of Plato who deviated from the Plato idealism and conception of the universe. There is also the Historicism of William Dilthey that contributed to Heidegger's development of his philosophy. And finally with the existentialism of Kierkegaard in which he discussed the dialectics of existence in three stages leading us to Fredrich Nietzsche who contributed enormously to the development of the philosophical school of thought called existentialism. The school of thought emerged from the blending of the French and German philosophy of existence and being. Nietzsche is a great contributor to the development of this school of thought pattern in the 19th and 20th centuries in the history of ideas. Finally we have the epistemological phenomenology of Edmund Husserl which contributed great to Heidegger's development of his philosophy. Edmund Husserl is the philosopher who greatly influences Heidegger in his philosophy more than any other thinker in the history of ideas. Husserl had criticized Rene Descartes cogito by saying to think is to think of something. He thus discussed the method of phenomenology to examine reality and the idea of bracketing our prejudices when looking at reality. Heidegger's phenomenology was developed base on the influence of Husserl's philosophy on him.

The second part of our work consisted of the problem of the pertinence of Heidegger's critique of metaphysics. In this section our whole journey was to examine the credibility of Heidegger's critique of metaphysic. In chapter three we did a proper discussion on Martin Heidegger's critique on western metaphysical traditional thinking and some contributions from other philosophers on the critique of western metaphysical thinking and the rejection of metaphysics. From time immemorial as seen above the critique of metaphysics has rock the ages. People always come in every epoch to criticise metaphysics. In chapter four, we explicitly talk about Martin Heidegger's philosophy of beings post metaphysically as response to the problem of being and a critique of traditional metaphysical thinking and the rejection of metaphysic by the contemporary thinker. We examined Heidegger's being of *Dasein* in which Heidegger labelled a number of properties for the being of Dasein. We also examine the analysis of *Dasein* looking a the features or structure of *Dasein*.

In part three, we based our discussion on a critical evaluation of heidegger's conception fo being. We looked at those who side with Heidegger and support his philosopher as well as those who negatively criticise Heidegger's explanations of what is being. Chapter five had critical versus appraisal look on Heidegger's conception of being. It also explored a critical evaluation of

Heidegger's philosophy of beings and postmetaphysics as a response to the rejection and attack of metaphysics in the postmodern and contemporary society. And lastly, the final chapter based on the various perspectives by other schools of thought on the topic of discussion. It involved the flourishing philosophical implications or significance and relevance of this thesis in our contemporary society, the value of metaphysical thinking in a postmetaphysical era or liquid modernity.

Heidegger writes in German, a language which I am not versed with, the language barrier encounter given that Heidegger is a philosopher that is very difficult to understand given his linguistic turn and style of philosophy by inventing and coining new terms that have meaning only in the context of his philosophy and writing. Heidegger uses terms that are not found in the dictionaries and can only be given proper understanding in his own context of writing. Furthermore, his *being and time, introduction to metaphysics and the fundamental question of metaphysics* used here are translations by different translators who might have omitted or failed to give proper meaning of a term as it is found in the original German Language, thus, these translators might not have translated with exactitude the thoughts of Heidegger or give proper meaning to them. I shall grapple with these problems by relying on German – English lexicons and on dictionaries dedicated to explaining key concepts in Heideggerian terms. Because the event of understanding “lets itself be addressed by tradition,” for “we stand always within tradition,”⁶²⁴ I shall depend on the growth of history that transmits Heidegger's writings and influences my present reception of them. Thus, Heidegger's works translated from German into English and commentaries, where applicable, shall be used. While rejecting pessimism in this academic endeavour, the existence of Left and Right Heideggerians, following different interpretations of the writings of Heidegger, is a reality one must admit before exposing this philosopher's foundation of being. To avoid the impact of these controversies in the elucidation, I shall rely more on the works of Heidegger himself.

We ask a question at the beginning of the work if metaphysical thinking still has value in our present modern/contemporary society given the criticism leveled on metaphysics. The postmetaphysical era presents metaphysics as not being useful to the present contemporary man. To the view that metaphysics is not valuable in the present society from what we discovered we

⁶²⁴H-G. GADAMER, *Truth and Method*, G. BARDEN – J. CUMMING (eds.), Sheed and Ward, London 1975, pp.250-251.

This Gadamerian conception of “understanding” is relied upon here because it is in harmony with Hegel's dialectical process in which new acquisition of knowledge is a mediation of the past within a new and expanded context, even if this is teleological for Hegel but non teleological according to Gadamer.

will say No. metaphysics according to Heidegger is very valuable. According to Shang Nelson metaphysics remains a valuable discipline in the field of thinking and research, he thus says to support this assertion:

In contemporary philosophical circles, there is a renewed interest in the old problem of the relationship between science and metaphysics and this renewed interest has been fuelled by the ongoing debate between naturalistic metaphysicians and non-naturalistic metaphysicians. Naturalistic metaphysicians, advocate for the use of the scientific . Non-naturalistic metaphysicians reject the use of the scientific method in metaphysics. Metaphysical speculations are not, therefore, a thing of the past. Ngimbi H.Nseka's Dieu A L'Horizon De L'Acte Philosophique (2002) and J. L. Schlegel's "Retours de Dieu à l'ère postmétaphysique" (2012) testify to the fact that metaphysical investigations of God are equally still being carried out in the 21st century, despite the institutionalization of secularism and atheism in the 20th century.⁶²⁵

From the above quotation, we realised that the critique and debate on the value of metaphysics continues as presented in the naturalistic metaphysician and non-naturalistic metaphysicians' argument. However, in modern times there has been a cordial relationship between metaphysical and science as a result of the debates concerning the use of a scientific method in metaphysics and refusal to use it as earlier indicated. One major thing that Shang Nelson notes here is that metaphysics remains valuable as he presents the works of Ngimbi and Schelgel pointing to the fact that even in modern times with the materialistic nature of the society, there are still metaphysical investigations of God being carried out. Thus, the critique of traditional metaphysics is pertinent in that it leads to the disclosure of the valuability of metaphysics in a postmetaphysical era. Thus we conclude by saying that despite the criticism on metaphysics, it remains an indispensable part of philosophy that cannot be tampered with and very valuable for every other area of study in philosophy. This is so because metaphysics is the only branch of philosophy that studies reality in its totality, what is seen and unseen in as much as they can be studied in their totality.

⁶²⁵ S. NELSON, *The Value of Metaphysics in a Postmetaphysical Era*, IN *The International Journal of Humanitatis Theoreticus*. Vol. 4. (Issue: 2); December, 2020, p.55.

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