

AFRICAN METAPHYSICAL OUTLOOK AND THE PROBLEM OF DEVELOPMENT IN AFRICA: THE WAY OUT

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Abstract

This paper situates the challenges of development in Africa within the province of metaphysics. It argues that the challenges of development in Africa are fundamentally metaphysical. The paper adopting analytical method in philosophy discovers that Traditional Africans' view of reality is mythological, superstitious and magical, and that such an approach to reality has influenced the contemporary Africans greatly and has in effect hampered the growth of philosophical and scientific knowledge which aids development. The way out of this unhealthy situation is a conscious effort by Africans to inculcate a metaphysical worldview that transcends the mythological world view. The paper concludes by suggesting a more critical approach and understanding of reality through Metaphysics that is characterized by critical, rational, logical, inquisitive, and analytical reasoning as a way to the problem of development in Africa.

Keywords: Development, Metaphysics, African Metaphysics.

Introduction

Africa is said to be backward in terms of development in the world rating. This is because Africa's current economic growth rate is far too low. Her industrial development is also not making an appreciable progress. Lives of most Africans are equally characterized by poverty, hunger, poor education, ill health, and violence. Every year more Africans live in urban slums. More disheartening is that Corruption that is endemic in the continent, coupled with imminent changes to the architecture of global trade will continue to disadvantage African countries¹. Factors responsible for this ugly condition

range from historical, political, economic to epistemological factor. But the contention of this paper is that the fundamental factor among these factors is the epistemological factor. This is because for Africa (and in fact any nation of the world) to initiate experience and sustain progress and advancement in all spheres of human existence there is the urgent need to liberate herself from the bondage of the mythological perception of reality. This perception and viewpoint of reality, before any other variable must give way to a more liberating, innovative, critical, empirical and rational world view. It is only such fundamental shift of worldview that will initiate the gradual process of liberating the people of Africa from the stronghold of backwardness and underdevelopment. It is believed that a more innovative, rational and analytical worldview will place Africans in a better position to understand, appreciate and identify the various endogenous and exogenous variables and issues that have constrained the continent to her present unenviable position. A simple way of saying this is that Africa needs a rebirth in her worldview. The African renaissance must be concretized in an aggressive, qualitative, comprehensive, multifaceted, penetrative and a well coordinated education and reorientation policy. The education programme which must be science base should be effective enough to penetrate the rural African setting where we have a large army of Africans still under the clutches of the mythological worldview.

The assumption is that the transformation of the individual is the starting point of societal advancement and progress. And his metaphysical outlook (or what we may refer to as worldview), is the foundation of this process. Thus, education and training programs are the primary systems by which the human capital of a nation is preserved and increased. This involves in improving our scientific consciousness² and metaphysical knowledge that is scientifically based which would help us to deal with our environment adequately. It is only through such encompassing education revolution that African can move from old ways of thinking of social and economic organization to new ones³.

The paper shall highlight some important characteristics of metaphysics as the fundamental tools for science and the basic tool of exploration. We shall thus try to explore Africans' basic understanding of reality under what we refer to as "Traditional African metaphysics" in this paper to see how rational and scientific (or irrational and unscientific) it is. We conclude by arguing that metaphysics has been the brain box and life wire behind the success and sustenance of science, and that the success of highly developed countries of the world is attributable to an adaptation of knowledge that is metaphysically rational and scientifically oriented. Hence such knowledge would equally help in the same manner towards African development if properly taught and practised in Africa.

Diagnosing the Developmental Problem of Africa

Development can be defined as a complex and multi-dimensional process involving major changes in social structure, popular attitudes and national institutions as well as acceleration of economic growth, the reduction of inequality, and the eradication of absolute poverty⁴. In its essence, it must represent the entire gamut of change by which an entire social system turned to the diverse social needs and desires of individuals and social groups within that system, and as well, moves away from condition of life regarded as materially and spiritually “bitter”⁵. J. C. A. Agbakoba puts this succinctly by defining development as “... self-actualization within the context of society”⁶. Metaphysically, development could mean continuous increase in the consciousness of a people about the ontological factors that either inhibit or promote their well being and their ability to control those factors so as to increase the standard of living⁷. Thus, for development to satisfy its basic principle, it must enrich life, promote life and as well, protect life.

However, it is a palpable fact that many African countries fall short of the above description of development, a clear indication that many African countries are underdeveloped. Scholars have many and divergent views with regard to factors responsible for this ugly situation: Anjov⁸ sees poor leadership as the major bane of Africa’s underdevelopment; while J. Diamond⁹ locates the major cause of African’s backwardness in biogeographical disadvantage which gave Europe and America for instance, an edge over Africa in terms of industrialization. J.O. Oguejiofor is of the view that “...psychological trauma which led to inferiority complex”¹⁰ as one of the hang-over of slave trade in Africa, is the root of African backwardness. Kwasi Wiredu locates the developmental problem of Africa in its poor ideology which according to him “...makes it difficult for Africans to strike the balance between nationalism and modernism”¹¹. Still commenting on poor ideology as the bane of African backwardness, Peter Bodunrin argues that unless Africa throws away her magico-religious assumptions of the world and embraces the sciento-technical rationality which is the base of every development, she cannot move ahead¹².

Moreover, while towing the line of these scholars, this paper adds that any distortion in the true knowledge especially of reality renders not just the psyche but also the entire system of a people useless. African understanding of reality for instance, has been limited in most part with the ancient mythological understanding of reality. This paper therefore contends that one of the proper ways of understanding the nature of reality is through metaphysics that is rationally based and scientifically oriented.

Metaphysics and its Characterizations

Metaphysics as a discipline is a philosophical study whose object is to determine the fundamental nature of things—to determine the meaning,

structure, and principles of whatever is insofar as it is.¹³ Although this study is popularly conceived as referring to anything excessively subtle and highly theoretical and although it has been subjected to many criticisms, it is presented by metaphysicians as the most fundamental and most comprehensive of inquiries, inasmuch as it is concerned with being as a whole¹⁴. The word *metaphysics* derives from the Greek *meta ta physika* (literally, "after the things of nature"), an expression Albritton¹⁵ said was used by Hellenistic and later commentators to refer to Aristotle's untitled group of texts that we still call the *Metaphysics*. According to W. D. Ross¹⁶ Aristotle himself called the subject of these texts first philosophy, theology, or sometimes wisdom. He maintains that the phrase *ta meta ta physika biblia* ("the books after the books on nature") is not used by Aristotle himself and that it was apparently introduced by the editors (traditionally by Andronicus of Rhodes in the first century BCE) who classified and cataloged his works¹⁷. Later, classical and medieval philosophers took this title to mean that the subjects discussed in the *Metaphysics* came "after the things of nature" because they were further removed from sense perception and, therefore, more difficult to understand; they used Aristotle's frequent contrast of things "prior and better known to us" with things "prior and better known in themselves" to explain why the treatises on first philosophy should come "after the books on physics."

J. Almog further avers that Descartes made a turn from what exists to knowledge of what exists. He changed the emphasis from a study of being to a study of the conditions of knowledge or epistemology¹⁸. For David Hume metaphysics includes the "primary" things beyond psychology and "secondary" sensory experiences. He denied that any knowledge was possible apart from experimental and mathematical reasoning. Hume thought the metaphysics of the Scholastics is sophistry and illusion¹⁹.

Immanuel Kant sees metaphysics as an a priori speculation on questions that cannot be answered by scientific observation and experiment²⁰. Popularly, metaphysics has meant anything abstruse and highly theoretical—a common eighteenth-century usage illustrated by David Hume's occasional use of metaphysical to mean "excessively subtle." The term has also been popularly associated with the spiritual, the religious, and even the occult. In modern philosophical usage metaphysics refers generally to the field of philosophy dealing with questions about realities and their modes of being. Its subject matter includes the concepts of existence, property, change, causation; and the nature of mind, matter, space, and time.

The notion that metaphysics transcends experience and the material world led the nineteenth-century Positivists like Auguste Comte and Ernst March²¹, and twentieth-century empiricists like Rudolf Carnap²² and Moritz Schlick, to deny the possibility of metaphysical knowledge. Carnap maintained that

metaphysical statements do not capture any concrete and verifiable facts hence are meaningless, since the role of philosophy according to him is the clarification of thought. The logical atomism and positivism claim that all valid knowledge is scientific knowledge,²³ though science is often criticized for reducing all phenomena to physical or chemical events. The logical positivists may have identified ontology not with the things themselves but what we can say – using concepts and language - about the things themselves²⁴.

Although in recent years metaphysics has become something of a catch-all category for unsolved problems in philosophy and physics, ontology has remained its central concern. Thus, metaphysicians should focus on the ontological status of material objects as "information structures" and the existential status of "immaterial information" about these structures and about information itself, as our basis for understanding reality.

Characterizations of metaphysics

It is necessary to examine, without particular historical references, some ways in which actual metaphysicians have attempted to characterize their enterprise. three views will be briefly considered; metaphysics is presented as: (1) an inquiry into what exists, or what really exists; (2) the science of reality, as opposed to appearance; (3) the study of the world as a whole; Reflection on what is said under the different heads will quickly establish that they are not sharply separate from one another, and, indeed, individual metaphysical writers sometimes invoke more than one of these phrases when asked to say what metaphysics is.

As an inquiry into what exists, metaphysics subjects common opinion to critical scrutiny and in so doing tries to determine what is truly real. As the science of ultimate reality, metaphysics may be said to conceive reality in at least three characteristic ways: One is that reality is genuine as opposed to deceptive. The ultimate realities that the metaphysician seeks to know are precisely things as they are—simple and not variegated, exempt from change and therefore stable objects of knowledge. Ultimate reality, whatever else it is, is genuine as opposed to sham. Second, reality is original in contrast to derivative, self-dependent rather than dependent on the existence of something else. Thus, when Aristotle sought to inquire into the most real of all things, or when medieval philosophers attempted to establish the characteristics of what they called the *ens realissimum* ("the most real being"), or the original and perfect being, they were looking for something that, in contrast to the everyday things of this world, was truly self-contained and could accordingly be looked upon as self-caused. Third, and perhaps most important, reality for the metaphysician is intelligible as opposed to opaque. Appearances are not only deceptive and derivative; they also make no sense when taken at their

own level. To arrive at what is ultimately real is to produce an account of the facts that does them full justice. The assumption is, of course, that one cannot explain things satisfactorily if one remains within the world of common sense, or even if one advances from that world to embrace the concepts of science. Practical reliability of this kind, however, is very different from theoretical satisfaction; the task of the metaphysician is to challenge all assumptions and finally arrive at an account of the nature of things that is fully coherent and fully thought-out.

As the science of the world as a whole, metaphysics coordinates the results of the special sciences. There is clearly a need for the coordination of scientific results because scientific research has become increasingly specialized and departmentalized; individual scientific workers need to be made aware of what is going on in other fields, sometimes because these fields impinge on their own, sometimes because results obtained there have wider implications of which they need to take account. It might then be supposed that their concern with the world as a whole is to be interpreted as a summing up and synthesizing of the results of the particular sciences. Plato spoke of the philosopher as taking a synoptic view, and there is often talk about the need to see things in the round and avoid the narrowness of the average specialist, who, it is said, knows more and more about less and less.

This conception of metaphysics as offering an account of the world or, as is more often said, of experience as a whole, accords more obviously with the position of those who see ultimate reality as immanent, or inherent in what is immediately known, than of those who take it to be transcendent, or beyond the limits of ordinary experience. It is possible, in fact, to subscribe to the legitimacy of metaphysics as so understood without postulating the existence of any special entities known only to the metaphysician—a claim that plain men have often taken to connect metaphysics with the occult. This is not to say, of course, that metaphysical problems admit of easy solutions when understood along these lines. It rather means that metaphysical knowledge can be assessed by any person who makes conscious effort especially by following its method.

Worthy of note also is that metaphysics as presented above can be, and has been found in virtually all human races; though has been in patches form in some societies, while more manifest in another place.

African Metaphysics, its Nature and Contents

African metaphysics can be defined as the African way of perceiving, interpreting and making meaning out of interactions, among beings, and reality in general²⁵. It is the totality of the African's perception of reality. African metaphysics will therefore include systematization of African perspective as it relates to being and existence. This will embrace the holistic

conception of reality with its appurtenance of relations, qualities, characterizations, being and its subtleties universals, particular, ideas, minds, culture, logic, moral, theories and presuppositions.

Ontologically, Africans, as noted by Esen think in hierarchical categories²⁶. Ozumba observes that beings do exist but in hierarchical structure, where the Supreme Being is at the apex as the creator²⁷. So, the Supreme Being unlike other beings in the hierarchy of beings is transcendental in nature and pure spirit, therefore distant from the people. Access to him is through intermediaries like the ancestors and the localized deities who are approached through rituals and sacrifices. Ozumba notes further that, "it is the unfettered nature of the ancestors that provide the ontological basis for the African's idea of re-incarnation since, the ancestors through projection could naturally be re-born while still existing in the spirit world"²⁸.

Socially, traditional Africans are believed to be deeply communalistic. The individual according to L. Roux is said to be born out of and in to the community, therefore will always be part of the community. The community and belonging to a community is part of the essence of traditional African life.²⁹

However, the notion of communalism has been criticized by some scholars as an idealization of traditional life in African communities. The most fervent criticism is formulated by V.G. Simiyu, a Kenyan political scientist. He speaks of 'the democratic myth in the African traditional societies'. He makes clear that hate and struggle were not unknown in these societies. Simiyu refers to the book of the British cultural anthropologists M. Fortes and E. Evans-Pritchard, which shows that *African political systems* are diverse, ranging from highly authoritarian types of government in the old kingdom of Congo to strictly egalitarian societies with the Gikuyu in Central Kenya.³⁰

What remains true of the communalist ideas is that among the members of the extended families and villages in traditional African societies mutual help was and is a widespread trait of social life. It could be formulated best in a positive way, namely that a member of a family or a village who is in great existential difficulties will not be left alone. Somebody will be there to help or to show a way out of the predicament. And with regard to the different forms of government it can be said that all of them are measured in terms of whether they function for the well-being of the people in the long run. In this sense a democratic intention can be found in them. In other words, what is advocated in this paper is that that spirit of oneness, togetherness and mutual caring which existed in patches and particularistic form in the traditional African community, should be expanded to include all human race and not limited just in clan or kindred.

The nature of the localized deities is not very clear, but Ozumba is of the view that as gods, they are regarded as spiritual in nature but localized in trees, rivers, hills, etc³¹. That contradicts one of the characteristics of spirit which is

non localizable. He notes also that there is virtually a deity for everything of existential importance to the Africans like thunder, war, fertility, agriculture, fishing, family, etc³²; which are approached for help in moments of unexpected events within the area of their jurisdiction.

The localized deities are ambivalent in nature hence, can be manipulated by men to do well or harm to the purported enemy. Their ambivalent nature makes them susceptible to manipulations by men, analogous to the Greek gods and goddesses that were repudiated by ancient philosophers like Plato, who despised them as too anthropomorphic to be regarded as gods³³. It is not very clear whether they are created by Supreme Being but as deities they are assumed by Africans to be immortal. Their relevance and reverence is determined by the existential role they play among the community.

The next in the hierarchy of beings in African world view is Man. Though Africans differ as regards the constituents of man, that man has a mortal body and an immortal soul is not debatable in African metaphysics. The relationship between the body and the soul is problematic in African philosophy just as it is in the Western philosophy. Reacting to this African conception of man, Ojong (1996) writes:

The immediate philosophical problem arising from this belief is that of the body and a rarefied spiritual entity that can be likened to Gilbert Ryle's concept of "the ghost in the machine", or what could be referred to as the substance view of the soul. The implication is the bifurcation between the soul and the body with the soul as an imaginable entity with its own characterization and capable of independent existence from the human body³⁴.

Man plays a vital role within the community of beings either as an intermediary cause (who exploits and manipulates the gods and nature to his advantage), or as the receiver of the causal effect. As mortal, man is checkmated by space and time, but this limitation can be overcome according to African traditional belief by people with special power like witches and wizards.

Plants and animal, which constitute the terrestrial plane also, have a place in the hierarchical conception of beings. They are believed to be created and imbued with the spiritual dimension. Not all plants and animals are of equal importance and reverence according to Traditional African metaphysicians. Some are believed to possess extra-ordinary powers that can be manipulated to man's advantage or disadvantage.

To properly understand the relationship among the various kinds of beings, the notion of force as the fundamental causal and uniting factor is very

important. It is the permeation of force or spirit in all things that is responsible for whatever exist. Force is here understood as life, energy, power, dynamism, strength, or what P. Tempels technically referred to as vital force³⁵ in his *Bantu Philosophy*.

In the hierarchical structure of beings, man appears the dominant spirit among the created visible spirits. God is the source and the highest vital force followed by the divinities and ancestors (the living dead,) in the invisible realm. However, this African conception of reality gives privacy to the spirit, but not in the exclusive nature of Descartes' dualism. The Africans also give room to the physical but only as a secondary consequence. No being, however, exist in isolation but ontologically in connection and interaction with other beings (both animate and inanimate). An African therefore realizes himself only in the midst of hierarchy of beings, some acting above and others below, outside of which human beings have no existence³⁶. This interaction is called "communal spiritualism" by Momoh³⁷, which is the culture of harnessing the spirit of the whole community for the benefit of the individuals and vice versa.

The Africans, therefore, abhors extremities since this will upset the balance necessary for proper functioning of nature and society. Despite the desire for balancing and harmony, conflicts and contradictions abound. These contradictions and disharmony sometime reveal the uncertainty that characterizes existence without which life would become boring.

In any case, events do not just occur by chance to upset the harmony in nature in African world view. Every event is traceable to a cause, which has to be identified if the harmony is to be restored or event is to be properly understood and handled successfully. But the problem with Traditional African metaphysics is that rituals and sacrifices are often employed as means of maintaining, and sometimes restoring the much cherished and needed harmony; which in most cases do not offer a fundamental, rational and lasting solution.

On the basis of African metaphysics as highlighted above, personal questions concerning the end of life, the things most central for meaningful existence take a peculiar form. Here individuals in the words of Asouzu "...survive to live and take their consolation on the fragmentary answers provided by the moment because they believe that their lives are based on destiny that continuously unfolds"³⁸. The need for fundamental, radical and lasting solutions takes this fragmented nature since the constitution of reality as ultimately dependent on forces beyond the control of the individual is accepted as a fact.

That African metaphysics has in this manner concentrated more in providing answers to the practical question of life is highly laudable but not sufficient

enough. Its method according to Asouzu "...has failed in giving satisfactory answers in such areas as prediction and control of diseases, hunger, natural catastrophes, climatic and cosmic changes"³⁹. So, as long as the approach to questions posed in these areas is enclosed within a casual framework explicable mostly by recourse to the activities of mythological magical forces, there would hardly be any appreciable progress towards understanding, mastering and giving satisfactory and adequate solutions to them. The same could be said of attempts at understanding and explaining human destiny which is fundamental to socio-economic welfare of the individual and community.

Mythological based metaphysics sees these areas largely as something that is beyond the control of man. Group dynamics is hardly understandable and explicable on the basis of rules governing organizations and peoples, or rules derivable from interpersonal relations within a society. On the contrary, elements of mythological and non-rational nature are postulated as the principles governing actions and intentions of people in groups and societies. It is not uncommon therefore to make recourse to charms, magical and occult manipulative means as substitute for explanations based on clear cut scientific insight. In this attempt at extolling the end, magical and occult manipulative means are substituted for real scientific insight. The idea of magical manipulation of people in decision making process, for example, defies the fundamental principles of group dynamics that is won through testable and tested models and principles relating to group activities.

Traditional African metaphysics has hardly revolved systematically around the potentialities of the individual to give lasting solutions and answers to problems. Such answers refer not only to those areas considered purely metaphysical but also to those areas unassumingly metaphysical in constitution. These are those areas where metaphysical questions are unintentionally posed as physical questions. Here we are confronted with questions relating to the pure and applied sciences of atoms, of micro electronics, of digital technology, of neuro-physiology etc. Due to their micro characteristic and constitution and their often non empirical out-look these areas of knowledge share much in common with metaphysical ideas of supersensibility. Within the ambient of African metaphysical thinking these areas would readily fall within the area of the mysterious, magical, occult, and hence empirically and humanly unattainable. In this way possibilities to break new grounds are compromised because metaphysics is wrongly conceived as serving merely an incomplete supersensible function. In essence, the courage to break new grounds without appearing mythological or magical is one of the hall marks of metaphysics, but unfortunately it happens to be one the areas African metaphysics is found wanting.

Furthermore, within the African set-up metaphysics remained and still remains relevant yet in a manner that contrasts with the understanding of

metaphysics as a tool for science motivated explanation of reality. Here metaphysics in most cases takes the form of a set or body of belief and practices in relation to the ultimate reality. This is the mythological model. In this form the dynamic constitution of nature, whose self explanatory force is fundamental for scientific growth, is replaced by belief in a dynamic force in the form of a personal god, spirit or other agencies responsible for explanation of the reality of things. This model of metaphysics concentrates primarily in grasping the nature of the being responsible for the existence of the world, it is comfortable with taking stock of the very attribute of this personal being, his relationship with man, nature etc. Relevant literature on African world views can confirm this observation and a few examples suffice to illustrate this point. For Anyanwu "Africans have their own popular metaphysics, namely, mythology⁴⁰". Going further Anyanwu very succinctly narrates the harmonious interdependence between the self and the world:

The African has the feeling of dependence: on family, community, friends and groups. He realizes that his dependence on them is incomplete or embodies some uncertainties because none of these dependent forces can satisfy all the expectations of the individual. Only through faith in God or dependence on Him can he be free of disappointment. Living in a community, the African believes that there are mysterious forces surrounding him⁴¹.

Omeregbe highlights an important dimension of African traditional metaphysics as it relates to the explanation of the ultimate nature of things by asserting that within African context:

There are mystical or supernatural forces which defy any scientific analysis or explanation; ... (and which) surpass and sometimes counteract physical forces. They can be manipulated by man and employed for both good and evil purposes, such as protection, prevention of calamities, cure of diseases, procreation and bringing about sickness, death, and other kinds of misfortune to people⁴².

African traditional metaphysics exhibits the character of lack of conscious separation of religion and myth from scientific research. Such mythological metaphysical approach could be a serious hindrance to scientific progress if it is not consciously checked and systematically reversed in attempts to give account of the ultimate foundation of reality. There is need therefore, for de-construction, re-construction, construction and structuring of African metaphysics by philosophers so as to establish African metaphysics on a sound and logical footing. On this rest the future of better understanding and appreciation of African metaphysics for development in Africa.

Metaphysics as a Way out to Developmental Problem of Africa

One of the important constituents of our historical consciousness according to Asouzu is "...its metaphysical preconditioning which is expressible in diverse ways". The metaphysical preconditioning of our consciousness disposes us to approach the data of our remote and immediate world in peculiar ways and even influences our formulation of problems and problem solving methods and techniques. Such metaphysical preconditioning is archetype taken for granted and is the conditions of possibility of meaningful community life. It is important to highlight that although they precondition us, they do not always offer the best methods and techniques of approaching issues. They could subjectively offer correct solutions to problems. In so far as they dogmatically dominate our consciousness their engaging us in persistently doing the "wrong" thing in good faith could be resistant to transformation or change. Metaphysical preconditioning makes a lot of difference with regard to theoretical and practical formulations of questions and is as such a very crucial factor in determining the rate of changes within a society - technologically or otherwise. A metaphysics grounded in myths and systematically unfolded as such is very likely to raise questions and answers founded in myths. But the question in the words of Asouzu is "...to what extent such answers are relevant to tackling, adequately issues that deserve attention". Surely not every answer regarded as adequate is in the true sense of the word so. Thus, there were times when people relied on means not fully accountable rationally for the attainment of certain ends. In this way people relied on charms, the medicine man and other occult and obscure practices as means towards attaining certain ends. These manners of approach were understandable and explainable within the historical circumstances of their usage. In a modern science oriented milieu such obscure practices would hardly qualify as means of positive knowledge or as viable means of addressing issues if the reasons underlying them are buried in inexplicable myth. What makes such methods difficult to accept is the inherent contradiction and obscurity often associated with them. This is most evident in the use of very contradictory and unethical methods to arrive at practical certain solutions. Thus there is a wide spread belief, even today, that on the basis of concoctions derived from human parts like the head and sexual organs one can quickly amass wealth instead of relying on methods based on tested economic principles. This phenomenon falls within the realm of the abhorrent practices still obtainable in Africa under the concept of "ritual killing" for material upliftment. This phenomenon captures vividly the disaster a mythological oriented metaphysics can cause to a society not only within the African context but also elsewhere. One wonders to what extent such approaches are in a position to guide the inquiring mind accurately to giving lasting answers to important issues of our existence.

It could therefore be said that the developments recorded within the last one hundred years within Africa have been so fragmented and unsystematic as to

maintain a continuous growth as is visible elsewhere. This issue is not only verifiable within the area of the pure natural sciences but more so even at the level of the socio-economic and political arena. Most of the political, social and economic systems being practiced within the African set-up are often mutilated and functional forms of models, obtainable elsewhere, without corresponding metaphysical insight. Visible functionality of models is no measure of realization of the metaphysical hindsight behind what it is a model of. To go beyond the model demonstrates the urge towards the dictates of our metaphysical reason to provide adequate answers. Success in this model can be achieved only if the model is subjected to thorough critical examination. In this case the mythical metaphysical reason cannot mix well with what it is a model of if it does not take time to critically know itself and its limits.

It is therefore important to state that the level of development within a given system is relative to the level of commitment brought by a strong proportion of those who have the metaphysical insight towards the necessary conditions on which such a system is founded. Such necessary conditions transcend the contractual bonds existing among members of the community; they are founded on compelling imperatives ingrained in the notion of these bonds themselves. Wherever such compelling imperatives are not consciously and explicitly relevant in the actions of people, the system tends to be muddled up in confusion, disorientation and stagnation. The attempt at realizing the most fundamental and compelling spirit that keeps history in place is something metaphysical. This imperative is basic to the spirit of all forms of progress and in fact, development in all its ramifications.

Conclusion

We conclude our discussion with a reaffirmation of our point in this paper that lack of metaphysical insight makes it impossible to understand the fundamental issues concerning the need to solve one's problems with one's resources and that this has contributed much in the underdevelopment of Africa. In other words, as long as one believes that solutions can come by chance, from outside, through the application of a magical wand or through uncoordinated attempt at understanding what makes a good life and in where such a good life subsists, what makes a good government, why a good government is necessary, why there is need to improve one's conditions and the need for concerted efforts to tackle such problems, African's backwardness shall persist. Thus, in order for African to transcend from her present piteous condition to a better one, she need to embrace more, a metaphysics that is characterized by critical, rational, and analytical method in its investigation of reality. This type of metaphysics would help Africans to be critical as they dabble into mythological matters shrouded as it were in their world view; it would also help them to be very careful in identifying the ontological worth

of existent realities, and as well, help them to take nature seriously as an important and dependable source of explanation of things.

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