

METAPHYSICAL REFLECTIONS ON IDENTITY AND GOVERNANCE: A PHILOSOPHICAL INSIGHT TO NATION BUILDING

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Abstract

This study investigates the profound implications of metaphysical reflections on the complex facets of identity and governance within the realm of nation-building. The central problem addressed is the intricate relationship between metaphysical insights and their practical application in shaping a nation's identity and governance structures. The objective is to explore how metaphysical philosophy influences the understanding of national identity and informs the formulation of effective governance strategies, while providing recommendations for their harmonious integration. Through analytic method, metaphysical doctrines and historical cases, this research uncovers the challenge of translating metaphysical ideals into actionable policies. The findings demonstrate that metaphysical reflections contribute to a more profound understanding of national identity, grounding it in timeless values and universal human experiences. Moreover, these insights guide the establishment of governance frameworks that reflect ethical principles and address societal needs. To address the challenge of practical implementation, this study recommends an interdisciplinary approach that involves collaboration between philosophers, policymakers, and cultural experts. Furthermore, the incorporation of metaphysical philosophy into educational curricula is proposed to foster a citizenry that appreciates the philosophical foundations of their nation. By navigating the complexities of integrating metaphysical insights into governance structures while considering diverse perspectives, nations can harness the transformative potential of metaphysics to enrich the processes of identity formation and governance in the art of nation-building.

Keywords: Metaphysical, Philosophical, Nation-Building, Identity, Experience, Governance.

Introduction

In the nature of nation-building, where identity and governance intertwine to shape the destiny of societies, the lens of metaphysical philosophy offers a profound and illuminating perspective. Metaphysical reflections on identity and governance provide a unique vantage point for understanding the deeper philosophical underpinnings that influence the formation of a nation's collective identity and the establishment of its governance structures. As nations navigate the complexities of the modern world, the integration of metaphysical insights into the fabric of their foundations becomes not only a philosophical endeavor but a transformative force that resonates across cultural, political, and societal dimensions. Metaphysics, traditionally defined as the branch of philosophy that explores the fundamental nature of reality, existence, and the relationship between mind and matter, ventures into the realm of identity with a balanced inquiry. Scholars have explored the metaphysical dimensions of identity, questioning the nature of individual existence and the interconnectedness that binds communities together. Heidegger's existential philosophy, for instance, delves into the notion of "Dasein" or being-there, emphasizing the temporal and spatial aspects of human existence as integral to one's identity (Heidegger, 1927). Moreover, phenomenological perspectives, as articulated by Husserl, provide a framework for understanding identity as an intentional act of consciousness, highlighting the subjectivity inherent in the construction of one's selfhood (Husserl, 1913).

Turning towards governance, the metaphysical inquiry extends to the very foundations of political order and the ethical principles that guide the actions of states. In the philosophical tradition, political theorists have contemplated the metaphysical underpinnings of governance, invoking concepts such as natural law and cosmic justice. Aquinas, drawing from Aristotle, explored the idea of natural law as an inherent and immutable order guiding human conduct, providing a metaphysical basis for ethical governance (Aquinas, 1265-1274). Similarly, the social contract theories of Hobbes, Locke, and Rousseau, while often secular in nature, inherently engage with metaphysical questions regarding the origins of political authority and the natural state of humanity (Hobbes, 1651; Locke, 1689; Rousseau, 1762).

Moreover, in the context of nation-building, the amalgamation of metaphysical reflections on identity and governance takes center stage. Nations, as imagined communities, embark on a metaphysical endeavor to define their essence, elucidate their purpose, and establish the principles that govern their collective life. Benedict Anderson, in his seminal work titled: *Imagined Communities*, emphasizes the role of shared beliefs, symbols, and myths in creating a sense of belonging among citizens (Anderson, 1983). This imagined aspect of nationhood opens the door to metaphysical considerations, inviting a reflection on the cosmic dimensions that underlie the national narrative. The integration of metaphysical insights into the practical realities of governance poses both challenges and opportunities. How does a nation balance the ethereal dimensions of metaphysical philosophy with the pragmatic necessities of administration and policy-making? This question resonates with the broader discourse on the relationship between philosophy and governance. Plato's allegory of the philosopher-king, while often considered an idealistic proposition, encapsulates the notion that a leader informed by metaphysical insights can guide a nation towards a more just and harmonious existence (Plato, ~380 BCE).

As this research embarks on the exploration of metaphysical reflections on identity and governance in the context of nation-building, it is essential to recognize the dynamic nexus between timeless philosophical insights and the evolving narratives of contemporary societies.

This inquiry invites us to traverse the intellectual landscapes shaped by thinkers from various traditions, engaging in a dialogue that seeks to uncover the metaphysical threads woven into the fabric of nations. Hence in the subsequent sections of this discourse, this research will delve into specific metaphysical concepts that bear relevance to identity and governance, exploring their implications for nation-building. Through an interdisciplinary lens, drawing from philosophy, political theory, and cultural studies, to unravel the layers of meaning embedded in the metaphysical reflections that guide the destinies of nations.

Metaphysical Foundations of Identity

It is generally opined by many people that metaphysics do not “bake bread”, nor build roads, nor give medical care; that is why metaphysics should not be a discipline that is relied on when talking about nation building. But to say that, is an aberration; because metaphysics is that branch of philosophy that studies the totality of being, it studies the nature and structure of reality as a whole. Collins dictionary posits that it is concerned with understanding reality and developing theories about what exists and how we know it exist. Metaphysics in essence, studies **being** and “being”, is all things that exists; animate and inanimate.

For Plato, what we think is the real world is not the real world, the real world lies beyond the physical – it is the world of forms or the world of ideas. For him, only a philosopher king, who is curious and seeks knowledge, can access the “real world”. Metaphysics is that discipline that can give one an insight into this “real world”. Now, this is not to affirm or to reject Plato’s position, but the world is more than just the material – physical things we see, the world is spiritual (metaphysical) too. Metaphysics provides insights into these spiritual aspects of the world and since nations contains “beings”, and in order to build a nation, a being or beings are needed, metaphysics which is that discipline that studies being and all metaphysical concept is important.

Personal Identity on the other hand, literally refers to the unique characteristics and traits that differentiate one individual from another. These characteristics may be physical, physiological or even metaphysical. Similarly, collective identity is that unique trait that a particular group or nation is known for that unique trait that can be used to differentiate a particular group from another. It also plays a crucial role in the development of a person’s personal identity. In philosophy, especially in the area of philosophy of mind, the problem of personal identity is a perennial one. What makes a person a person, in such a way that he can be distinguished from other persons, or that he can be recognized as the same person over time, despite the physical, psychological and experiential changes? For instance:

- A man who is presently being punished for a past crime, is he the same person who committed the crime, is the punishment meted out to him unjust?
- Am I bound by a promise I made in the past, am I obligated to fulfil the promise in the present, am I the same person that made the promise? Maybe I made a promise that I would forever remain a virgin or become a priest, when I was still young and naïve, am I obligated to fulfill such promise now that I have grown and experienced some things, am I the same person?

What is that thing that makes you the same person as the child you remember? Or for those that believe in re-incarnation, what makes you recognize the “reincarnated person”, as the re-

incarnation of the person you know before. In other words, the problem of personal identity is concerned with the problem of how do we continue to exist over time?

There have been various theories that seek to address this problem, and one of them is the bodily continuity theory of personal identity or the physical criteria. This bodily continuity theory is similar to the materialist theory, where everything is reduced to matter. The proponents of this theory, do not deny the existence of the mental state of a person, but insists that what makes a person the same person overtime, is the body/bodily organs. Personal identity is found in the unchanging-permanence of the body. For example, when a person loses an arm or a leg, he is still the same person but when there is a total replacement of the original body of that person, he loses his identity. (Swinburne,1984). Thomas Reid too subscribes to this physical criterion but only when judging the identity of others. The identity of others is judged by their similarities of appearance. Though, this is not the perfect way, as it leaves room for doubt as appearance can be deceptive or changing. Yet this is the easiest way judge the identity of others. (Reid, 1785).

Some other supporters of this bodily criterion, improves on it and brings out the “brain criterion”. This criterion is similar to the physicalism theory of the mind-body problem, where mental states are reduced to brain states; it is the brain that controls every thing in the body. A scenario when there is a brain treatment between P_1 with the body B_1 and P_2 with the body B_2 ; if mistakenly, P_1 's brain is transplanted to B_2 and P_2 brain is transplanted to B_1 . In this brain criterion or theory, B_2 no longer belongs to P_2 as P_1 is now the owner of the body B_2 and vice versa; since for these theorists, a person's identity is in his brain, which contains the person's memories, consciousness and other mental-psychological states. (Swinburne,1984). Therefore, in this improved bodily continuity theory, a person's identity is not just the body, but the brain which is the core of the body.

The bodily continuity theory does not provide enough ground to determine personal identity. Though the physical body, may be one direct means by which we can recognize a person, it is not enough to characterize a person's unique identity based on his body. A blind person can recognize his friends based on their voices. How can we explain the scenario of a mother recognizing her long lost son which she has not seen for a long time, the last time she saw him was when he was a baby, and this son has undergone so many physical changes that makes him look different from how he was formerly. Sometimes we would hear something like: “I know this is my child, there is something that drew me to him”. Even without the need for a DNA test, some mothers still recognize their children. In this era where plastic surgery is at advanced level, where a person can be modified to have my body and facial characteristics and my voice. Can you call that person me? In shapeshifter movies, the shapeshifter can pretend to be someone but at the end, he is eventually caught; mostly not because of his physical appearance, but because he does not have the memory of the original person, he has turned himself into. This then would bring us to the metaphysical perspectives for the personal identity criteria which include: memory, consciousness and soul.

Descartes based his view of identity on the soul. For him, the soul is immaterial and invisible, indivisible and incorruptible. It is distinct and can exist without the body. The soul is fully responsible for thoughts, actions and feelings; he equates the soul to the mind. According to Barber, 1994, Descartes in his work titled: *Meditations on the first Philosophy*, posited the; “cogito ergo sum” (I think, therefore I am), as the foundation of his philosophy. For him,

since he can doubt the existence of other things, but cannot doubt the fact that he is the one doing the doubting, i.e., he is the one thinking, the thinking self; the soul is where identity lies. However, this theory begs the questions what is a person? Are persons equated with the soul, does persons have bodies? If persons have bodies, how then does the soul or mind influence the bodies, since the mind is immaterial and exists separately from the body? How can we tell that it is the same soul that is in Mr. K's body now that was in Mr. K's body two years ago? since we cannot see the soul. The problem of verification is the main problem that affects the soul theory; what provides evidence for identity? It is this problem that brings us to the memory criterion.

John Locke bases personal identity on memory (or consciousness as he often calls it). For him, as far back as this consciousness can be extended backwards to any past action or thought, so far reaches the identity of that person. A person at time 1 is the same person at time 2, if he remembers what he did at time 1. Locke's theory despite the similarities with Descartes soul-identity theory (Similarities being that one's identity is different from the body, and despite the losses the body may face, it does not affect the identity of a person.) challenges it positing that identity should not be based on any substance (body or soul), so far there is a continuity of consciousness or memory, a person's identity is not challenged; the soul can undergo a transition or it can switch bodies, but if a person loses his memories, he is no longer the same person. He illustrates this with the example of a prince and a cobbler; the soul of a prince enters into the body of a cobbler and the soul of the cobbler enters into the body of a prince, the prince while in the body of the cobbler retains his memory of his princely ways, and the cobbler the same. The prince even in the body of the cobbler would still be considered the same person (the prince). Memory therefore is the key criterion for personal identity and even when the soul undergoes transition, so far one can remember his past experiences, his memories remain intact. (Locke, 1975).

However, one problem with this as Perry pointed out is that if this theory is taken literally, the condition for personal identity is too stringent (Perry, 1975). Can someone remember all his experiences; does it mean that if he does not remember a particular time in his life, he is not the same person at that time? Thomas Reid gives an example; suppose a middle-aged officer remembers his time as a child when he stole apples from his neighbor's orchard, and as an old retired general, he remembers his time as a middle-aged officer, having to steal the enemy's standard, but no longer remembers stealing apples. Does it mean that the old general is not the same person as the child? (Reid, 1785). Another problem is how we can deal with the issue of fake memories, or memories that we have, without even being there.

The problems of the soul and memory criterion, made Hume and Parfit to posit that there is nothing like personal identity, and that a person is no more than a bundle of properties (the bundle theory). For Parfit, there is no real difference whether you exist in the future or whether someone like you exists in the future; there is no real difference between you arriving on Mars and a replica of you arriving there, whether teletransporter, transports you or the information of your properties, there is no real difference between you and the replica made from the information of your properties. He states:

You do not merely want there to be psychological continuity between you and some future person. You want to be this future person. On the Bundle

Theory, there is no such special further fact. What you fear, will not happen, in this imagined case, never happens. (Parfit, 1984).

As we have explored the problem of personal identity and the metaphysical perspectives of it, we would do the same for collective identity. Though the problem of collective identity is not discussed too much in philosophy, it is still a relevant subject of discourse. A group or a nation is known by something, and it is that unique trait that we can use to identify a group over – time e.g. Language, shared history, dressing, etc. Should collective identity therefore be based on material – empirical basis like: languages or dressing, etc., or should it be based on other metaphysical perspectives. If one should base collective identity on things like dressing or language, what if two groups have similar dressing and languages and sometimes history; does it mean that these two groups are one and the same groups? For example, if I dress like an Hausa man, and speak the Hausa language, does that make me an Hausa man? Is there not something else that is lacking in me that makes it possible that I am not an Hausa man. Though the material – empirical basis is the easiest way to identify a group, but it is not enough to form a basis for a group's collective identity. This then brings us to the metaphysical basis for collective identity which is what Hegel, calls the “Geist”. Anthony King explains that the “Geist”, refers to the broad “consciousness of a people of itself and the world in which they lived... the distinctive lifestyles which various human groups have historically adopted and to the shared understandings which underpin them”. (Mark Murphy, 2013). Hegel's “Geist”, presupposes shared beliefs, values and consciousness. This is therefore very essential and should also form a basis for collective identity. If for example, Barcelona is a recognized team for playing “Tiki-taka”. If Man-city begins to play tiki-taka, do we say that Man-city is Barcelona? Do Man-city; share the same beliefs, values and consciousness with Barcelona? Therefore, collective and personal identity should not only be based on material-empirical basis, because the world is not only material, there are other metaphysical principles the world is based on too, so metaphysical basis are also equally important.

Herder, also goes further to talk about the “*Volksgeist*” (the spirit of the people or national spirit), the “*Volksgeist*”, refers to sets of mental, intellectual and cultural state, that defines a particular group. Herder believes that the “*Volksgeist*”, is a unique spirit that forms the culture and identity of a nation; he states that it is preserved in myths, songs and legends. (The politics shed, 2022), highlighting the relationship between the material – empirical perspectives for collective identity and the metaphysical perspectives. Continuing in the same metaphysical vein, Hegel's talked about the “*Weltgeist*” (the universal spirit). For Hegel, this “universal spirit”, guides the development of nations and cultures to a higher rational and ethical order. Nation's have their own unique cultures, but it is this “universal spirit” that guides and directs these nations, though they retain their unique cultures and history. (Hegel, 1837) it is more or less like what God did for the people of Israel in the Bible.

Since the world is not just a material-empirical world, metaphysical insights influence the conceptualization of a nation's identity. National Identity refers to that unique characteristics a nation is defined or that which a nation can be recognized for overtime. It also refers to a person's sense of belonging to a particular state or nation. In psychological terms, it is viewed as an “awareness of difference”, a feeling and recognition of the “we” and “they” (Yoonmi, 2012). For Rupert Emerson, national identity is a body of people who feel that they are a

nation (Emerson, 1960). Metaphysical insights/ concepts, like: “Geist”, “National soul or spirit”, “*Weltgeist*”; could influence the conceptualization of national identity because with them, national identity could be conceptualized as “national consciousness”. A rise in national consciousness is the first step towards the creation of a nation. National consciousness, presupposes shared sense of purpose, values and identity. How then is national consciousness formed? (Gadamer, 1960), argues that our understanding of the world is shaped by our cultural and historical horizons. Therefore, if people’s understanding of the world is shaped by cultural and historical horizons, having shared cultural and historical horizons can form collective consciousness (national consciousness). Halbwach, believes that memories can bring together a group of people. People who share the same memories relate with themselves easily, and it is these collective or shared memories that are pivotal in forming a nation (Halbwach, 1992). By implication, national consciousness is formed by memories (collective or shared memories).

Renan, continues; first by tackling material-empirical conceptualizations of national identity; language, geographical locations. For him, we cannot base national identity on language, because anybody can speak the language but that does not mean that they share in a nation’s national identity. Geographical location too, cannot serve as a basis for national identity; there are many nations that still exist, despite the huge geographical gap between them. In his words; “mountains do not know how to carve out countries”. For example, the Jewish nation; despite the huge geographical divide between Jews in Israel, Jews in Russia, Jews in Nigeria, still exists. For Renan therefore:

National identity is a soul, a spiritual principle. Two things which, properly speaking, are really one and the same constitute this soul, this spiritual principle. One is the past; the other is the present. One is the possession in common of a rich legacy of memories; the other is present consent, the desire to live together, the desire to continue to invest in the heritage that we have jointly received. Messieurs, man does not improvise. The nation, like the individual, is the outcome of a long past of efforts, sacrifices, and devotions. Of all cults, that of the ancestors is the most legitimate: our ancestors have made us what we are. A heroic past with great men and glory (I mean true glory) is the social capital upon which the national idea rests. These are the essential conditions of being a people: having common glories in the past and a will to continue them in the present; having made great things together and wishing to make them again. One loves in proportion to the sacrifices that one has committed and the troubles that one has suffered. One loves the house that one has built and that one passes on. *The Spartan chant, "We are what you were; we will be what you are", is, in its simplicity, the abridged hymn of every fatherland*". (Renan, 1882).

National identity therefore rests on shared-collective memories of past glories and the shared will and ambition for more glories and achievements in the future. The underlying conceptualization of national identity, influenced by these metaphysical insights and concepts are; shared beliefs, memories, ideas, cultures and consciousness. Material-empirical concepts

are not enough to identify a nation; as we have seen from the shortcomings. Metaphysical concepts too should join the fray when talking about a nation's identity, so as to make for a holistic view of a nation's identity.

Ethical Governance and Cosmic Justice

The metaphysical insights for the conceptualization of a national identity, would give rise to other metaphysical concepts like: Justice, Moral order and cosmic harmony. These concepts shape the development of a nation. Here, few concepts will be called to mind to ascertain how they shape ethical governance and societal justice.

- **The Concept of Justice**

Justice literally refers to the quality of being upright and fair in giving judgements.

For Plato, "justice is the life and conduct of the state; it is possible, only if it first resides in the hearts and souls of the citizens". (Republic, 441c - 442d) Plato's theory of justice is seen in his work: *The Republic*, there he started with Socrates view (the discussion Socrates had with some people), then he pointed out his own view, all the while, agreeing with Socrates. Plato, in accordance with Socrates rejected all the previous notions of justice, given by the philosophers who were in a dialogue with him (Socrates). Cephalus, posited that "justice consists in speaking the truth and paying one's debt". Socrates pointed out that it would not be justice to return a weapon lent to me by a friend, who has gone mad, as he could use it to hurt himself and other people. He also pointed out that most times, speaking the truth and being honest may do more harm than good and that it is better to conceal the truth in this case. (Republic 328c - 336b).

Cephalus' son Polemarchus, improved on Cephalus' theory, positing that; "justice is giving everyone his due". For him, it meant doing good to friends and bad to enemies. Socrates points out again the shortcomings of this definition. He stated that, helping your friends may involve some immoral acts like stealing or telling lies. Also, one can misjudge who his friends and enemies, may - be. Therefore, doing good to friends and harm to enemies, should not be a definition of justice – and doing harm to anyone (enemies included), does not imply excellence, while justice implies excellence. This view of justice is known as the "traditional view". Another view of justice, known as the "Radical view", was given by Thrasymachus; "justice is the interest of the stronger". For him, 'might is right', thereby implying that whoever is stronger, is right. Socrates, however points out the shortcomings of this definition, he says that even the strong and powerful, makes mistakes and may end up making laws that harm themselves and other people. He opines that: "a just man is stronger because justice unites him with his fellow beings, wiser because he knows the principle of limit and happier, because happiness lies in doing one's own duty" (Republic 338c - 339b).

Another view of justice known as the 'Pragmatic theory', posited by Glaucon, states that: "justice is the interest of the weaker". For him, justice is a child of fear, in the sense that justice comes to protect the weak. In line the social contract theory of Thomas Hobbes, people come together to agree not to do injustice to other people, due to the rampant injustice in the society. Justice is more or less like a compromise, and people act justly under compulsion. Glaucon view of justice makes it seem as though justice is artificial and external. However, Socrates points out that justice is not an external – artificial virtue that could come from a contract, rather, justice is internal and it is an innate quality of the soul.

However, Plato's theory has been criticized to be abstract and idealistic in nature; that it is not easily practiced, it gives absolute power to the Philosopher-king, which can then degenerate to absolutism and dictatorship. It can be argued that if the Philosopher-king, degenerates into dictatorship, then there is no more virtue in him and he is no longer worthy to be called a Philosopher-king because, the harmony between parts of the soul and state is what justice is. The Philosopher-king, turning into a dictator means he has deviated from the rational part, and is now meddling with the appetitive part, causing him to have irrational desires that would make him a dictator, thereby destroying the harmony between these parts and being no longer just. So, the criticism that Plato's theory gives absolute power to the Philosopher-king, and has a potentiality of degenerating into dictatorship is not valid, as if the 'Philosopher-king', maintains the harmony between the parts of the soul, then there should be no cause for alarm. But if he does not, then he is no longer a Philosopher-king, and if he is no longer a 'Philosopher-king', then it is no longer Plato's theory. The criticism that Plato's view is idealistic and it is going to be difficult to practice is true; because humans are not perfect beings. However, should we discard the theory because humans are not perfect and the theory is difficult to practice? No. Rather, we should strive to be philosopher-kings, guided by reason, having knowledge of the good and doing it, and maintaining the delicate balance of our soul's three parts (as Plato described). This would in fact, go a long way in building a good and functional society.

John Rawls also made his own position about justice. For Rawls, justice is fairness and that every human being should be treated equally and fairly. He then introduced an artificial device called the 'original position', where members of a given group can come to a contractual agreement to distribute resources equally without one party being disadvantaged from the rest. He also posited that this contract would work, if only the participants hide behind the 'veil of ignorance'. This 'veil', is a metaphysical veil; something that blinds people to personal characteristics, ethnicity, sex, religions, and all things that seem to make one favor one person over another. It is when people are blinded by this veil, can true justice take place. (Peterdy, 2020).

Justice should not be based on material-empirical basis, because there is more to justice than material.

• The Concept of Moral Order

Moral order, refers to a system of unwritten ethical principles, values and norms that govern human behaviors within a society or community. It goes a long way to helping them distinguish between right and wrong. Douglas saw moral order as a system of obligations that organize relations among individuals. He regarded moral order as a central aspect of a society's culture. (Douglas, 1999). Harré, however, developed a systematic theory of moral order, when he tried to describe how the rights and duties of people can differ in one context and in another context. Harré posited that a moral order is "an organized system of rights, obligations and duties obtaining in society, together with the criteria by which people and their activities are valued". (Harré, 2002). By this, I think he means that moral order is an organized system that is obtained by the society (made by the society), that provides criteria to judge people's activities. Harré, further posits that some moral norms, can be universal in a given society, or it can be particular, as a result of different understanding of it, relative to culture and upbringing. (Harré, 1987).

Moral orders are also said to be invisible (Kurr, 2005), for they operate as contexts to judge individual actions and interactions. It is a set of rules that shape what people should do in certain situations. For example, the rule that one should not kill another human being is invisible and comes from within. However, written laws make these invisible laws visible, and when written down, it is enforced. Moral orders includes: the categorical imperative of Immanuel Kant, the utilitarian theory of Jeremy Bentham and J. S. Mill, Egoism, Altruism, Aristotle's Eudaimonia, and other ethical principles.

- **Concept of Cosmic Harmony**

Cosmic harmony literally refers to peace and unity with the and in the cosmos (universe). It is heavily associated with the Eastern philosophies. In other philosophies, attaining cosmic harmony, means attaining enlightenment. In the Elizabeth world picture, there is a great chain of being that links all creatures. From God to the least of all creatures; every creature has its place in the chain. Everything in the world, animate and inanimate, must be in balance, for the world to function properly. (Raymo, 2022).

Taoism, teaches that all living beings, ought to live in a state of harmony with the universe. The energy found in the universe, is described as the "chi" or "qi", by meditation, engaging in Tai-chi, practicing acts such as moderation, humility, compassion, kindness, love, modesty, etc. When one is in union with the "Tao" (the source of all things in the world), one can comprehend constant change of nature and does not fear what would happen in life or death, one would just go with the flow naturally. Taoism also talks about the "yin and yang". The "yin and yang" are opposite forces in the universe and maintaining the balance of these forces, constitutes a working universe. (Yi Tang, 1985)

The concept of cosmic harmony encourages moral- ethical behaviors that can lead to peace and harmony between people of the world. It also calls for moderation, balance and the practice of moral virtues. These metaphysical notions that have been explored; justice, moral order and cosmic harmony, can shape ethical governance and build a just society. Having a virtue such as justice, could bring about an all-inclusive governance; a governance that would be fair, granting equal rights to the citizens of their state. Also, for the citizens, if they could cover all their ethnic, religious, gender and personal biases, with the "veil of ignorance", a society that would be growing and peaceful, would be formed. Also, adhering to moral principles like doing things out of "goodwill"; having a right or good intention to accompany an action that is performed, would bring about a society where everyone cares for each other. A kind of community spirit that is seen in J. S. Mbiti's concept of *Ubuntu*, where the pain of my neighbor's I my pain, and the joy of my neighbor is my joy. Doing ethical-moral acts, could also lead to growth and peace in the society. Therefore, the idea of cosmic harmony, teaches individuals to do things in balance, moderation and humility. It also encourages right act and communal living; so as to achieve harmony with the cosmos. Leaders are also encouraged to have virtues like: Justice, love, kindness, etc. Also, doing moral acts so as to have a good energy that would spread towards the state he governs, thereby bringing out a prosperous state or nation.

Transcendent Values and Policy Formulation

From Hegel's thought, Metaphysical ideas could shape a nation's core ideals or priorities; for example, the concept of 'The Geist' (national soul or spirit), could bring about communal

living in a nation. Having people in a nation connect to a particular consciousness or memory could bring about a strong sense of patriotism and unity. For example, on the Nigerian coat of arms, there are symbols that represent strength (eagle), dignity (horses), fertile soil (black shield and the colorful wreath above the shield) and the motto of unity and faith, peace and progress. These symbols and their representation are the value(s) system of the nation Nigeria; the metaphysical concept of the 'national soul' or shared memories and consciousness, could be what shaped this value system. The purpose of the value system is to "inspire the nation to be united faithful, live in peace and grow, become wiser and stronger". Having a shared national consciousness could encourage 'unity', one of the nation's motto's, which would then bring about faith, peace, progress and fertility. Over the years, metaphysical concepts have also shaped the value systems of many nations. Concepts like: 'social contract', 'veil of ignorance', 'goodwill', 'rationalism', have shaped the western political, epistemological and ethical thoughts and value systems.

The concept of 'social contract' for instance, has aided in the political area. Lesley Chapel in study.com opines that: the social contract theory of Thomas Hobbes, is not a physical contract *persé*, it is more like an invisible contract, where men agree to abide by civil laws, by choosing to give up some natural instincts and rights, for the benefit of the society. For example, man can give up the natural instinct and right to yell as loud as they want, or whenever they want, in return for a well ordered, noiseless and peaceful society. The concept of 'social contract', has paved way for civilization; it also paves way for democracy and the abolishing of an authoritarian rule. Many governments of the world today, not just the western world, has adopted democracy; a people inclusive government, whereby the people are involved in the governance, bringing out checks and balances on the excesses of the government, leading to values of transparency and accountability.

In the Asian landscape, metaphysical concepts like: 'enlightenment', 'karma', 'harmony', 'piety' – has shaped the national values of many Asian countries. These concepts come from the teachings of Confucius, Taoism, Buddhism, Hinduism, etc. These teachings, provides guides to the ethical conducts for the people of the East Asian nations, emphasizing importance for good moral behaviors, respect for Authority and family values. Also the Buddhists teachings of the cycle of suffering and karma, has shaped the Asian values, by emphasizing compassion, non-attachment, meditation and mindfulness. The Taoist teachings also shape the values of balance and moderation. In the African landscape, concepts such as: 'reincarnation', 'ancestors', shape values of acting morally, for if an African desires to join the ancestors, he must act morally while alive, by doing good to his neighbors. The metaphysical concepts of 'heaven', 'hell', and 'eternal life', of the Christian religion, also play a role in shaping values. In Christianity, 'heaven', we portrayed as a place of enjoyment, where one can attain eternal happiness. While 'hell', is seen as a place of suffering and eternal damnation. One would only go to heaven if he keeps God's commandments and lives morally on earth, and would go to hell he disobeys the commandments and lives his life, devoid of morality. So, if one does not want to go to a place of suffering and damnation, he/she would cultivate good values like: love, kindness, compassion, etc.

In the modern-contemporary times, the importance of metaphysical concepts in shaping value systems has been diminished because of the advent of science and technology. Metaphysical concepts are not as important as it was in the medieval times, as it seems as though science has an explanation for everything. However, should we trust scientific explanations for

everything that happens in the world? Are there not possibilities that there is metaphysical cause to some situations? On October 13, 1917, something happened in Fatima, Portugal; something known as “the miracle of the sun” – on that day, it was said that the sun danced. Dr. Goncalo de Almedia Garrett, a professor of natural sciences in the university of Coimbra, gives his account on the miracle, (though it has been said that the account was actually given by his son, a lawyer; José Almedia Garrett) as reported by father John De Marchi, an Italian priest and researcher, he says that:

It must have been nearly two o'clock by the legal time, and about midday by the sun. The sun, a few moments before, had broken through the thick layer of clouds which hid it, and shone clearly and intensely. I veered to the magnet which seemed to be drawing all eyes, and saw it as a disc with a clean-cut rim, luminous and shining, but which did not hurt the eyes. I do not agree with the comparison which I have heard made in Fátima—that of a dull silver disc. It was a clearer, richer, brighter color, having something of the luster of a pearl. It did not in the least resemble the moon on a clear night because one saw it and felt it to be a living body. It was not spheric like the moon, nor did it have the same color, tone, or shading. It looked like a glazed wheel made of mother-of-pearl. It could not be confused, either, with the sun seen through fog (for there was no fog at the time), because it was not opaque, diffused or veiled. In Fátima it gave light and heat and appeared clear-cut with a well-defined rim”. (De Marchi, 1956).

He continued, saying that it giving a myriad of colors and he feared that he was suffering from an infection. He decided to block the light with his hands with his back turned from the sun, but when he removed it later, it was still showing these myriads of beautiful colors. He ended it up saying that: “all the phenomena which I have described were observed by me in a calm and serene state of mind, and without any emotional disturbance. It is for others to interpret and explain them”. (De Marchi, 1956). In the case of this phenomenon, can science explain it? Therefore, science cannot always provide us explanations for certain happenings in the world, and that one would need to delve deeply to the metaphysical nature of that thing to understand the cause.

Collective Purpose and Cosmic Perspective

In African metaphysics, a person is a communal being, people do not just exist individually, independent of other people (humans are contingent beings); but they are a part of a community, living in interrelationship and interdependence. The Africans, view the world as a web-like connection, where one is connected to another, starting from the highest being (God), to other spirits, to human beings and other inanimate beings. In African metaphysics, human beings are connected to their neighbors, kinsmen; alive or dead (ancestors). Though,

there is a great sense of interconnectedness which could lead to a collective purpose in the African metaphysical system, the individualism of individuals is not neglected. The system allows for free-speech, free-movement and free-action. (Ike and Edoziem, 2001). It is more like the Akan proverb that says: “the clan is like a cluster of trees, which when seen from afar, appears huddled together, but when approached more closely, you could see the trees standing individually”. However, one can actualize oneself through interpersonal relationships. (Anselem Jimoh), bringing forth the concept of Ubuntu, a South African concept, rooted in the Nguni language. It is an African word that describes the intrinsic connection between humanity and the ecosystem, in which communal responsibility sustains life. Therefore, whatever we do, affects the whole world. It is an African word that describes the intrinsic connection between humanity and the ecosystem, in which communal responsibility sustains life. Ubuntu entails:

Ubuntu, implies that our humanity is affirmed, by recognizing the humanity of others; we cannot separate ourselves from others, the pain of other people, must matter to us and we must do things collectively because other beings matter too. The beings that matter in this communal life, is not just human beings, but our dead kinsmen (ancestors), plants and animals too. That is why ancestors are deeply revered in the African system, and in most African communities, there are certain animals and plants that are revered, like: the *ogirisi*, *anunuebe*, python (*eke*), monkey (*enwe*), etc. There is also the concept of “vital force”, in the African thought system, Placide Tempels and Henrik Maurier, expressed their views on this concept. For them, all beings have vital forces, and that there is an interrelationship between these forces, man can tap into his own vital force or the vital forces of other beings, to enhance his own. That’s why there are concepts like witches, magicians, native doctors (*babalawo* or *dibia*); these people, tap into the vital force of the cosmos to enhance theirs, which why they perform different wonders.

Although there are so many beings in the world, these beings are interconnected and form the essence of reality. The African mind therefore, conceives reality as a continuum; reality never ends, it always continues. According to Asante, “there are several elements in the mind of Africa that govern how humans behave with regard to reality: the practicality of wholism, the prevalence of African poly-consciousness, the idea of inclusiveness, the unity of worlds, and the value of personal relationships”. (Asante, 2000). For the African, everything created is connected, this is what the western thought, calls; “unity in diversity”.

In the Asian metaphysical thought system, the concept of the ultimate reality, the ultimate consciousness, in which all other consciousness is connected to, explains their own metaphysical perspectives on collective purpose and interconnectedness. In Hinduism for instance, the Upanishad, teaches that reality is one and connected in the *Brahman*. The sacred presence of the Brahman, “*ishvara*” or “*avatar*”, is present in all things in the world. Everything in the world, shares in the nature of the ultimate reality, holding a deeper nature of being and consciousness. The Hindus, can honor or worship the entire universe, as part of their own higher self. In everything in the cosmos, there is a divine force, manifested. That is why just like in the African system, many plants, rivers, and animals are honored in many parts of India. The primary role of humans therefore is to maintain cosmic unity. Humans as beings with freewill may tend towards selfishness and other desires that may cause harm to the world – one has to practice s’dharma, to overcome this egocentric behavior. Sacrificing

self-interests for universal welfare is the attitude a true Hindu must show. Thus, humans must respect and care for not just his fellow humans, but for nature as well, since the absolute (Brahman), is in everything in the world. The Hindu's desire for peace and harmony in oneself and the world, is reflected in the Vedic hymns, being prayers for peace, for the earth, heaven, mountains, rivers, sun, moon and stars, for the entire universe. The Hindus says 'om Shanti Shanti shanti', which means 'peace' three times, before or after every prayer. The first Shanti means peace with nature, second means peace with society, and the third Shanti means peace within oneself. Therefore, universal peace, is what transcends all boundaries and identities, and it is what transcends all boundaries and identities, and it is what we must ascribe to for the universe to work. (Pattni Ramesh, bgci.org).

Standford encyclopedia of philosophy unravels the knowledge that in the western thought, there are absolute monists, who holds similar views to the African and Asian thoughts. These monists believe in a deeper connection between everything in the world; as all things in the world, seems to come from one source. For Spinoza, God is the ultimate reality, from which all things in nature, is part of his self expression. For him, "*Deus sive natura*" (which implies that God is nature). Everything is part of God's self-expression; God plays both an active role and a passive role in nature, being that he is '*Natura naturans*' (nurturing nature) and '*Natura naturata*' (nurtured nature). For Hegel, everything in the world, is a manifestation of the absolute. When one realizes himself and attains complete freedom, one could discover that the world may appear diverse, but in reality, it is connected. British neo-hegelians, holds this same view. For them, the multiplicity of the universe is only in appearance. Only metaphysics, can take one to the transcending world, in which one can find out the world is an unfragmented whole and it is a self expression of the absolute. This interconnected nature of the world, could engender a collective purpose and harmony in one's dealings.

Martin Buber in his 'ich-es' (i-it) and 'ich-du' (i-thou) philosophy, he proposes that man should live in community with each other, recognizing the needs of other beings in the community. This recognition of other beings, is not only limited to humans, but to plants and animals as well. Luciano Floridi, takes it further, pointing out the importance of treating information and informational objects well (infosphere). For him, anything that exists in the infosphere as an informational object has moral value, by the virtue of its ontological existence. Anything done to destroy that inherent value, a moral harm has been done to that object. Floridi, goes on in his philosophy, to give moral worth to insentient objects as well; for him, insentient objects should be held morally accountable not responsible (sentient beings, should be held responsible). For example, if a person uses a knife to murder someone, the knife did not move itself to commit the murder, but murder was committed with it. Therefore, the knife should be held accountable because of its contributive factor and it is "designed in purposive agency" (its inherent value). (Spence, 2008).

The fact that every being in the world, has a role to play in the ordering of the world, is enough reason for them to be respected and treated well. Every being, inanimate and animate, sentient and non-sentient, has its inherent values and values which it can add to the society and it is the duty of nations to protect them.

Leadership with Metaphysical Vision

Having examined the impact philosophy would have when it is being integrated into educational curricular, we can come to an agreement that a leader with Philosophical knowledge; a leader with critical, rational and logical reasoning, is necessary for national building. Unlike the traditional leadership, which is domineering, inherited and authoritative, Philosophical leadership, is a leadership that values Philosophical principles, ethical-moral and metaphysical principles. A Philosophical cum metaphysical leader, is critical, rational and values introspection and self-reflection; charismatic, courageous and fair. Plato makes it clear in his work: *The Republic*, that philosopher kings who work with rational reasoning, should be the ones who should rule. Because leaders with Philosophical knowledge, would be able to take logical, rational and critical decisions that would be ordinarily influenced by emotive-desires. With ethical teachings that come from philosophy can shape a leader morally, in such a way that he avoids immoral acts prevalent in leadership positions. Immoral acts like: corruption, bribery, cheating, etc. These immoral acts, as Plato explains it, come from irrational desires. Philosophy would help in such a way that leaders would allow reason, to be in control and in such a way, avoid irrational desires that would lead them to performing irrational acts.

Metaphysical study has had impacts on the governance of many nations or groups, especially in their struggles for freedom and independence. An example is former South-African president; Nelson Mandela who led South-Africa, between 1994-1999. His courage, compassion, and the recognition of other people, points to his Philosophical-metaphysical - leadership qualities. He once said that that: ‘people are empowered by other people, and that we become our best selves, through unselfish interaction with others’. He was also charismatic laying out his vision for a democratic and free society in which all persons live together in harmony and with equal opportunities.

Another is Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi, popularly called Mahatma Gandhi (Mahatma, meaning great soul). He is officially honored in India as the father of the nation, as it was under his leadership and guidance that the freedom movement in India gained momentum, ultimately, leading to India’s independence. Gandhi, believed in truth, non-violence, non-cooperation and peaceful resistance, rather than using violent means. He also made many sacrifices, leading a simple life, acquiring few material possessions, getting beaten and jailed several times. His followers trusted and believed in him, due to the fact that he was not motivated to free India for personal interest, but for the betterment and well-being of the people. He once said that: “you must be the change you want others to see”, highlighting his internalism and a leader that leads by example. (James Alderton, 2022).

Self-reflection, contemplation, and the achieving of enlightenment, are topics in philosophy (especially in metaphysics). At one point in a leader’s career, when he faces a serious challenge, dilemma or crisis, a leader can engage in self reflection and contemplation, posing philosophical questions to him and when he is able to answer such questions, he has attained enlightenment; just as Buddhists and Hindu philosophy posits. Confucius metaphysical teachings of a leader’s energy affecting the world around him; the nation or any place, a leader leads, would be affected by the leader’s energy. Therefore, these teachings encourage a leader to develop strong moral and ethical values, so as to bring good tidings to the places they govern. A leader informed with the metaphysical study on the nature of beings, would develop such leader, in such a way that he would understand that all beings are valuable and has a role to play in the productivity of both his area of jurisprudence and the world at large.

Thereby, bringing about leaders that would respect beings in his area of jurisprudence; from the least to the highest, that would not owe salaries, and would not discriminate and everyone equally.

Metaphysical study could also bring about leaders, who would have respect for nature, by proposing environmental laws; laws that would protect animals from poachers and manage wastes properly, and the establishment of game reserves. It could also bring about laws that enforce and enlighten people about the need for recycling of objects, instead of just destroying or throwing them away. The importance of having Philosophical-metaphysical leaders, in every aspect of life, is unequivocal – their ability to integrate philosophical-metaphysical principles, set them apart as guiding stars of ethical leadership. Metaphysical philosophy, with its focus on the nature of reality, existence, provides inspiration for these leaders, providing them with moral-intellectual grounds important for purposeful governance.

Global Citizenship and Cosmic Responsibility

Metaphysical insights and its importance in different sectors of a nation have been discussed in this work so far. However, on this sub-topic, we are going to focus on how it can foster a sense of global citizenship. No man is an island, man as Heidegger described, is a “*Dasien*”; a being thrown into the world. And as beings thrown into the world, without our consent, we must try every means possible to survive. In trying to survive, one cannot depend on oneself only, but also on other beings in the world, as they have a role to play in one’s survival. As a being in the world, we do not have to just exist, but we need to also participate in existence; we need to live. And one way to participate in existence is to become a “global citizen”. The global citizenship concept is based on the idea that one is not just connected with just one country, but with a broader global community, that one can develop, by positively contributing to it. Global citizens, do not need to have special passports or any official title, nor do they need to travel to other countries or speak different languages. It is all about understanding how the world works, tolerating and valuing the differences in other persons and cultures, and working together with others to find solutions to problems, too big for one nation. Being a global citizen, also involves, letting go of personal, ethnical, religious, political, and geographic biases, and embracing a shared responsibility for the well-being of the world and all its inhabitants.

Metaphysical insights, such as: interconnectedness, cosmic harmony, oneness, love, etc. can foster a great sense of global citizenship. Having these insights, can help one understand that the pain of others is also his own pain, understanding that beings are connected and that it is essential to love and help one another to bring about harmony in the world. Ethical-metaphysical insights, such as: the veil of ignorance, goodwill, can help people understand the importance of putting aside personal, religious, ethical and political biases, so as to contribute to the development of the world and also knowing that the intention towards an act matters a lot. The concept of Karma, can also help people watch out for the actions they take, taking note of the fact that there are consequences, and that “whatever you sow, you will reap”. Bringing about people who care and work towards social justice, advocating for the rights and wellbeing of the marginalized and disadvantaged in the world; eliminating discrimination, inequality and unfairness, giving birth to various human right groups, like: International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH), Amnesty international, in Nigeria, there is National Agency for the Prohibition of Trafficking in Persons (NAPTIP).

Metaphysical concepts about the interconnectedness of lives, and the importance of all beings (sentient and non-sentient), can inspire global citizens to take responsibility and care for the environment, reducing all sorts of pollution, that may bring about natural disasters. These global citizens may feel a deep sense of connection to the planet and the future generations, encouraging and promoting the sustainability of ecological life, with different Animal rights and environmental rights groups springing up.

However, metaphysical insights, offer deep perspectives on the nature of existences, and the principles of oneness and interconnectedness, that aligns with the very principles of global citizenship. The moral-ethical, environmental, and peaceful-oriented areas of metaphysical study, can contribute to the fostering of a sense of global citizenship, such that individuals recognize themselves and their shared responsibilities, towards all the inhabitants of the world.

Conclusion

From the discourse on metaphysical reflections, identity construction, and the governance structures of nation-building, we find a profound synthesis of philosophy and practicality, of the ethereal and the tangible. The exploration of metaphysical insights within this context unveils not only the enduring relevance of philosophical discourse but also its transformative potential in shaping the destiny of nations. As we conclude this journey through the metaphysical landscape of identity and governance, it becomes pertinent to reflect on several key reflections highlighting the significance of philosophical insights in the intricate art of nation-building.

It was discussed that the pursuit of metaphysical reflections in the realm of nation-building necessitates a delicate balance between ethereal ideals and the pragmatic demands of governance. The challenge lies in translating lofty philosophical principles into actionable policies that resonate with the diverse realities of a nation. Plato's challenge of integrating philosophy and governance echoes through the ages, prompting leaders to navigate the complexities of administration while remaining attuned to the metaphysical ideals that guide the nation (Plato, ~380 BCE). Striking this balance requires thoughtful leadership that recognizes the symbiotic relationship between the metaphysical and the practical. In an era marked by cultural diversity and pluralism, the integration of metaphysical reflections into nation-building demands an inclusive approach. Charles Taylor's insights into the politics of recognition become increasingly relevant, emphasizing the need to acknowledge and respect the multiplicity of identities within a nation (Taylor, 1992). Metaphysical unity does not negate diversity; rather, it invites a collective recognition of the interconnectedness that transcends superficial differences. Nations must foster an environment where diverse metaphysical perspectives coexist, contributing to a rich tapestry of identity without compromising the overarching metaphysical unity that binds citizens together.

Therefore, metaphysical reflections on identity and governance in the context of nation-building open a vast intellectual landscape for exploration. This discourse serves as an invitation to scholars, leaders, and citizens alike to engage in a thoughtful examination of the metaphysical foundations that underpin their collective existence. The journey does not end here; rather, it propels us into a continual dialogue where philosophy and nation-building converge, creating a space for deeper understanding, ethical governance, and the harmonization of the metaphysical with the practical. As nations navigate the complexities of

the 21st century, the integration of metaphysical philosophy into their foundations stands as a testament to the enduring relevance of philosophy in shaping the destinies of societies. Through this harmonization, nations can craft identities and governance structures that resonate with metaphysical ideals while remaining attuned to the nuanced realities of the contemporary world.

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