

RE-INTERROGATING THE CALCULATIVE NATURE OF HUMAN RATIONALITY AND THE CHALLENGE OF SOCIAL STABILITY

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Abstract

Philosophy encompasses thinking, which is why a philosopher is sometimes called a thinker. In view of this, philosophy may be understood as the thinking of a thinker. This implies that, whenever philosophical discourse begins to make thinking a subject, philosophy then assumes a different form, that is, thinking about thinking. This is another way of saying that a genuine phenomenology of thinking entails philosophy of philosophy. This paper establishes that there are two conventional modes through which human thinking finds expression. The first is calculative rationality and the second is meditative thinking. Each of these modes of thinking is value-laden with implications on how human beings view and treat the world. Scholars from Heideggerian persuasion seem to agree that human rationality assumes calculative when it proceeds with the intention to dominate and objectify experience with a view to having a controlled outcome. This is in sharp contrast to meditative mode of thinking which allows reality to negotiate for meaning in a non-compelling manner that enthrones respect and reciprocal solidarity. In contemporary phenomenology of thinking, a call is being made to man to return to the meditative mode of being so as to enable him preserve the world and sustain human civilization. It is line with this objective that this study seeks to re-examine the calculative approach to human rationality with the aim of canvassing restraint in man's exercise of reason as *ratio*. It argues that calculative dimension to human thinking is a recipe for conflict and instability because it has the tendency of always wanting to decree other perspectives to thinking out of relevance and as such, creates tension and strife in human society. As a theoretical engagement between philosophy and security thinking, the paper provides a new direction to philosophy of conflict and peace studies.

Keywords: Calculative Rationality, Phenomenology, Social Stability

Introduction

Calculative rationality is that form of human reasoning that tends to subsume everything to numbers, measurement, precision and repetition. "It computes ever new, ever more promising and at the same time, more economical possibilities. Calculative thinking races from one prospect to the next. Calculative thinking never stops, never collects itself" (Heidegger, 1966, p. 46). It is a form of thinking that is oriented in science and the desire to have controlled outcome of experience. Simply put, calculative reasoning is an instrumental rationality. This type of rationality is borne out of the drive to institute human *subjectivity* as the arbiter of experience. Most often, it only reckons with the ends and gives little or no thought to the means. This is why it is called instrumental rationality (Dahlin and Majorek, 2008). Calculative rationality sometimes leaves man with the false impression that there is always a quick-fix to every problem. According to Unah (1997), it wishes to know nothing about nothing and preoccupies itself only with the material utility. As such, it in turn gives

rise to the machine age, the endless planning and calculation which threaten the very essence of man...Heidegger's signal service to humanity is to call for essential thinking which thinks the nothing of Being as the only way of..overcoming nihilism and mellow down the threat of global disaster (Unah, 1997, p.234).

This calculative tendency of man can be seen in virtually everything he does. With calculative mindset in healthcare delivery for instance, a physician may put first the affordability of medical bills before admitting or rejecting a patient, thereby jettisoning the idea of the value of human life and the sworn obligation which the physician owes to his profession (Malloy, Martin, Hadjistavropoulos, Liu, McCarthy, Park, Shalani, Murakami and Paholpak, 2014). In politics, it subsumes everything to pragmatics and winner takes all mentality. In religion, man is seen reducing the totality of experience to one supreme source outside which nothing else makes sense. In its economic dimension, the primary aim is profit maximization and sometimes, even at the risk of exploitation. For instance, an industrialist of calculative persuasion does not see human condition but profit situation which is one of the reasons global warming has become a common enemy of the human society. In the same way that a commercial transporter does not see human beings but numbers in relation to gains which is why when a commercial bus driver gets to a bus stop and sees many commuters awaiting the next bus, he does not see stranded human beings in need of help to get to their destinations but sees an opportunity to hike the fare to the ridiculous. Again, in cultural and social structures, calculative reasoning thrives in racism/racialism and in all forms of social prejudices. In matters of assigning meanings, it ends up decreeing the non-appealing out of recognition.

All of these, Heidegger says, is a manifestation of human flight from genuine thinking and “thrusts man into the danger of the surrender of his free essence” (Heidegger, 1977b, p. 32). This he says in respect to human relationship with the technical world (technology). He further warns that we overcome such tendencies of human nature for man to truly live a fulfilled life. By this, he appears to be saying that a rationality that allows human beings to destroy themselves on a large scale should be abandoned. This is exactly his concern in his critique of technology (ibid). He does not intend that we should do away with technology in its entirety but that we should approach it with comportment, that is, using technology and at the same time not allowing it to use us. The point of emphasis is that if man who is the exponent of technology now allows himself to also be the victim, then something has definitely gone wrong with human rationality, hence, calls for serious concern. Therefore, this study discusses different forms which calculative rationality manifests in different phases of the human civilization and the implications for social stability.

The Trajectory of Modernity and Thinking

As captured by Pezze (2006, p.106), “the traditional concept of thinking intends thinking as a ‘representing’, and therefore as belonging to the context of ‘will’. In the same vein, ‘representing’, Heidegger says, is a form of traditional thinking which “places before us what is typical of a tree, of a pitcher, of a bowl, of a stone, of plants, and animals as that view into which we look when one thing confuses us in the appearance of a tree, another thing in the appearance of a pitcher...” (Heidegger, 1966, p.63). This could be seen in the correspondence theory of truth as pioneered by Plato wherein he argues “that something is true according to and by comparison with a pre-established idea or category” (Eckartsberg and Valle, 1981, p.292). On the other hand, in the scholastics era, the search became that of absolute faith. Augustine in particular, approached his theory of reason with the aim of using it to defend the existence of God. “He wrote a dialogue with himself in which the two characters are named Augustine and Reason. Reason asks Augustine what he wishes to know. ‘I want to know God and the soul,’ Augustine replies. ‘Nothing more?’ ‘Nothing at all’” (Kenny, 2005, p.1). This is what is regarded as the old controlling humanity which modern thinkers sought to rescue and in the process created another monster in form of human subjectivity.

Consequent upon the foregoing, Peperzak believes that “modern philosophy owes its origin to a rebellion against religious and theological dominance. It wanted to free itself from all authorities except the undeniable authority of self-observed givenness and demonstrative thought” (Peperzak, 2006, p.1). Modernity and thinking reveals man making frantic effort to ground reality and truth on human subjectivity. This was a shift away from the revealed knowledge or divine injunction. The essence of the modern age, as explicated by Heidegger, is man’s freedom from the old controlling humanity. In the modern age, man becomes the subject. By man as a subject in the modern period, Heidegger means man as the *ground*. It means that man has become that being upon which reality is “grounded as regards the manner of its Being and its truth. Man becomes the rational center of that which is as such” (Heidegger, 1966, p.128). Thinking, by so doing, assumes an individual activity that is grounded in ‘I’ as the *cogitto*. Man gradually takes over as the carrier of universal wisdom. The ego becomes magnified and placed above the world as the master. “Being responsible for the universal truth, the ‘I-who-thinks’ is eager to experience all that is given outside and inside the philosophical ego... Its experiences must be real, neither fictive nor transformed by the imagination of poetically gifted or “speculative” observers” (Peperzak, 2006, p.3).

To be precise, thinking in both the early modern and later modern period can be divided into two competing movements; empiricism and rationalism. While the former was the offshoot of Aristotelian realism, the latter could be argued to be an advanced form of the Platonic Idealism. Empiricism argues that what should pass as reality is that which is empirically gotten, tested and could be generalized. On the other hand, rationalism insists that only that which is innately driven that is real. This view is very prominent in Descartes’ thought. As the father of modern philosophy, he pursued the “I” objective to a very ridiculous conclusion in that it is in his philosophy that thinking became an exercise in human subjectivity. That is, subjectivity became the ground of being and humanity. Adequately captured by Eckartsberg and Valle (1981), Descartes rendered the world as:

res extensa, an object for the calculative view-arid thinking of the rational ego-consciousness of the subject. We have fallen into an understanding of reality as an objective world subjected to the will of man, into a conquest mentality of Promethean scope nurtured by the projection of self-world distance, the subject-object split (p.290).

As observed by Okoro (2008), Descartes “in the first stage of his methodic doubt certified the *cogito* as the absolute ground of all thinking processes. Having ascertained the indubitability of the *cogito*, Descartes proceeded to assert his own existence” (Okoro, 2008, p.17). Descartes, could be argued, over shot his emphasis on reason to the point where his critics often say will lead to “nihilism”. By so doing, he denigrated the physical as substandard.

I am therefore, precisely speaking, only a thing which thinks, that is to say, a mind, understanding, or reason, terms whose significance was hitherto unknown to me. I am, however, a real thing, and really existing;

but what thing? I have already said it: a thing which thinks (Descartes, 1968, p.105).

In essence, the modern age is the age of mastering and domination. In retrospect, it is the dawn of a new era, the reign of the notion of indubitable truth and absolute reality. The modern thinkers shifted away from the natural/supernatural argument which characterized the ancient and scholastics periods. But on the other hand, they introduced the mind-body problem and the problem of theory and praxis. All of these were the same traditions being expressed in different forms at different stages. For Heidegger, the greatest achievement of the modern age was the conquest of the world as picture, that is, as structured image or representation. Man's main objective here was to position himself as that being who measures and determines what counts as truth. (Heidegger, 1977, p.134). And because the set out objective was confrontational to the essential state of things, this activity gradually heralded what Heidegger calls man's "unlimited power for the calculating, planning, and molding of all things" (ibid, p.135). Calculative mode of being is a reductionist form of thinking. It reduces reality to this or to that, and compels or wishes that every other thinker or seeker of truth must pay obeisance to it or else it is not thinking at all. For instance, when a rationalist begins to make assertion that the mental is the only cognitive property of man and other aspects of man must be subjugated under it.

Such procedural attitude to thinking gave reality a fixated outlook. This is done to the extent that reality is subsumed to man's will and desire. By so doing, in the view of Heidegger, "everything will present itself only in the unconcealedness of standing reserve" (ibid, p.33) and in partial disclosure of truth. As such, he warns that this portends a looming danger to humanity (ibid, pp.33-34). The torpedo of the human subjectivity over nature, he says, constitutes a great danger to the contemporary society. This is as a result of over-reliance on thinking as *ratio*, a form of thinking that treats "nature and humans as means to an end" (Harvey, 2008, p. 12). Accordingly, Heidegger notes that we need to savage the world from impending disaster that is occasioned by human over-reliance on reason as tools. This he says will be attained when we jettison the use of reason as calculation, and embrace the use of reason as *letting-be*, that form of thinking which grants reality the freedom of self-manifestation.

The Implication of One-Dimensional Narrative to Human Thinking

Giving that calculative approach to human thinking is guided by the rules of logic, science, the urgency to maintain standards; in a way, it become the albatross in blurring the truth of Being since it does not grant all perspectives to reality equal opportunity for disclosure. This is what Ngozi Adichie calls "The Danger of a single story" (2009). Heidegger (1977, p.32), equally describes it as that single way of revealing which results in ordering, and which erodes the essences and truth. Single story in Adichie's interpretation cuts across all attempts to render truth, the history of a people and the world in a straight jacketed narrative, in such a way as to deliberately demonstrate power and superiority contest or to foreclose other possible accounts. As a consequence, to insist only on empirical-scientific validity is to repudiate many other perspectives to truth.

Such action distorts reality and mystifies object of experience. Its existential implication is that it continues to blur the clarity of the true nature of reality and in the end, leaves us with self-fashioned delusion and societal dissonance. Such inability to recognize that there are more than one sides to access the world, Adichie, describes in her speech as "The Danger of a Single Story" (2009). The problem with single story, which also happens to be a fallout from the calculative interpretation of experience, is not for its wrongness but its arbitrariness. In other words, it is a half truth about human thinking if at any moment we try to reduce all perspectives about truth to calculative. Put differently, calculative thinking is not a problem in itself; rather, the actual problem is when we attempt to ground the totality of being on calculation and on the *will*. If such is a crime, then Arthur Schopenhauer and Fredrick Nietzsche are most culpable.

This is because; Schopenhauer while commenting on the relationship between the human subject and the external world has this to say:

Nos habitat, non tartara, sed nec sidera coeli: Spiritus, in nobis qui viget,
illa facit. [It dwells in us, not in the underworld, nor in the heavenly stars:
All this is brought to pass by the living spirit in us] (Schopenhauer, 2010,
p.119).

Thus, he made an attempt to reduce the totality of experience to human will. Such form of thinking was also amplified in Nietzsche as will to power. This view was influenced by traditional metaphysical mind-set which we had earlier described as that which sought to enthrone human subjectivity. Along this line, Schopenhauer's cogitation of the world as will is what we depict here as the dawn of ego-consciousness. Ego-consciousness, describes a situation whereby the self versus the world interaction assumes that of intentionality or an interdependent situation in which the world depends on the perceiving subject for it to make meaning. According to Eckartsberg and Valle (1981, p.290), it was Descartes' attempt to place consciousness in opposition to nature that led to the split between man and world. It is a way of representing the self and objectivity as belonging to nature (Brown, 1955, p.20). This form of consciousness versus nature split could also be seen in Husserlian

phenomenology whereby according to Harvey (2008, p.20), sets up the dichotomy of subject over and against object. For Unah and Osegenwune (2010, p.5), “phenomenology takes consciousness, the cogito, as the absolute starting point”. It is this attempt to make consciousness as the measuring standard of objectivity that we understand as the reduction of thinking to willing.

Like perception every intentional experience-and this is indeed the fundamental mark of all intentionality-has its “internal object”...its objective meaning. Or to repeat the same in other words: to have meaning, or to have a something in mind, is the cardinal feature of all consciousness, that on account of which it is not only experience generally but meaningful... (Husserl, 1969, pp.261-262)

What is instructive from the Husserlian rendition is that nothing makes meaning a priori. It is another way of saying that every meaning is one conferred by the encounter of human consciousness with the outside world. This of course, resembles the old western metaphysical temperament which sought to validate truth through the human categories. In reaction to Husserl’s thought, Beistegui accuses him of postulating another dualism in the order of Descartes whereby the self is elevated over and above the object. Thus, he writes:

Husserl still believed in consciousness [...] as the originary site of our encounter with the world and its myriad of phenomena. Inevitably, and as a corollary, he could not quite move away from a certain dualism of subject and object. So long as we think of ourselves primarily in terms of consciousness, we are positing ourselves against a world that is ontologically different from us (Beistegui, 2005, p. 188).

As mentioned above, two of the post-Kantian thinkers who practically reduced the totality of reality to human subjectivity are Schopenhauer (1788-1860) and Nietzsche (1844-1869). In respect to Schopenhauer, if for instance, in place where Hegel talks about the whole universe as the manifestation of the absolute reason, Schopenhauer would insist that the whole world is mere representation, subject to the whims and caprice of human definition.

To Schopenhauer therefore, there is no distinction between an act of the body and that of the mind. In actual, he subsumed everything to human will. There is no division between the world and self. The *will* he says, overcomes it all. In Omoregbe’s words (1996, p.191), “the conflict we find among things in the world is due to the fact that the will, the ultimate reality is a restless urge, an incessant impulse striving for existence-struggling for life in various ways and among various things”. This cosmic principle (will) manifests itself according to Schopenhauer through each human person in the form of sexual drive and the will to life. With the human mind, the world is represented. In other words, there is no a priori meaning underlying experience other than from the perspective of the perceiving consciousness. This, of course, is in furtherance of Immanuel Kant’s human imposition of categories in the quest for truth. All the physical things Schopenhauer reduces to *objectified will*. “The will is a *a priori* cognition of the body, and the body is a *a posteriori* cognition of the will” (Schopenhauer, 2010, p.125).The will shows itself in everything, both in the power to alter the physical things and in the process of this alteration. Aptly noted by Warburton (1998):

For Schopenhauer, it is not just human beings who are manifestations of will: ultimately everything is an expression of will...a lumpy of rock, for instance is an expression of will. The will he describes is not an intelligence; it is a blind directionless striving which condemns most human beings to lives of suffering (p.125)

To be precise, the *will* in Schopenhauer’s understanding is a blind, ceaselessly striving irrational force which constitutes the dynamics of reality. Nietzsche added his voice to this discourse by further asserting that the whole of man’s action is dictated and driven by *will to power*. This will to power, he says, is neither good nor bad. As a matter of fact, it is the basic driven force of all human actions. All that enhances the feeling of power is good and all that heightens the feeling of weakness is bad. In other words, happiness to Nietzsche is a function of the feeling that one’s power is on the increase, that is, the feeling that subjugation is accomplished. Accordingly, in his work-*The Antichrist* verse 2, he writes:

What is good? — Everything that heightens the feeling of power, the will to power, power itself in man. What is bad? — Everything that stems from weakness. What is happiness? — The feeling that power is increasing — that a resistance is overcome. Not contentment, but more power; not peace at all, but war; not virtue but proficiency...The weak and the misfits shall perish: first tenet of our love of man. And we should even help them to do so (Nietzsche, 2004, p.104).

In the same vein, for a scientist for instance, the will to power is the will to truth. For an artist, the will to create is his will to power. For one who has taken a career in the academics, the will to power is becoming a professor (Nietzsche, 1989, p. 309). What Schopenhauer had called the will to life, and a bad thing, Nietzsche calls the will to power, and a virtuous thing. Things like hurting others or falsehood, Nietzsche approves, in so far as it leads to the feeling of increase of power and dominance (Nietzsche, 1974, p.86). Since the idea of God as Nietzsche posited, emanated from the feeling of the will to survive which characterized the morality of the slaves, he says that it was necessary to kill God in order to institute a new form of morality, that is, master morality-the will to power. This will to power is what is epitomized in his concept of the superman, a man trained to hate passion, and to dislike all forms of morality that is geared at making humans humane because it ends up making man live a life of servitude (Nietzsche, 1982). Thus, virtues like tolerance, peace at all cost and cowardly compromise are disliked by Nietzsche. "Virtues are as dangerous as vices, in so far as they are allowed to rule over one as authorities and laws coming from outside, and not as qualities one develops one's self"(Nietzsche, 1965, p.96).

No doubt, the age and circumstance that produced these thinkers contributed greatly to the way they perceived man and the world. Man left under the mercies of Christian ethics, had his conditions pitiable yet he was helpless. Instead, he continuously looked up above for salvation from an Almighty Being who sits in silence. Under this condition, Nietzsche says that it was necessary that a new form of value orientation that would spur man into taking charge of his world be instituted. Such form of value orientation must be one that is birthed in freedom. This was the basis for the enthronement of the will as postulated by Schopenhauer and Nietzsche respectively. Although, noble as their intention could be, its content cannot be sustained without contradiction. The implications of such iconoclastic position against the supersensory realm of reality which these scholars sought to destroy are that they ended up in:

The vanished authority of God and of the teaching office of the church steps the authority of conscience, obtrudes the authority of reason. Against these, the social instinct rises up. The flight from the world into supersensory is replaced by historical progress. The other worldly goal of everlasting bliss is transformed into the earthly happiness of the greatest number..creativity, previously the unique property of the biblical god, becomes the distinctive mark of human activity. Human creativity finally passes over into business enterprise (Heidegger, 1977, p.64).

It was for this reason that Nietzsche's doctrine was often accused of leading to nihilism.

The will only, cannot be the utmost arbiter of experience. What about emotion, feeling, reason and the spiritual? The human tendency of trying to subsume everything to the will is what Heidegger says constitutes the danger of our age. This danger is everywhere and is nowhere. In his words, "it has no place as something other than itself. It is itself the placeless dwelling place of all presencing. The danger is the epoch of Being coming to presence as enframing"(ibid, p.43). An Enframing mindset is one begotten in subjective view of the world. Heidegger repeatedly says that such state of affair beclouds the shining forth of truth because it is one dimensional.

Thinking becomes one-dimensional when it does not take account of the multi-facet perspectives to reality. For Unah, the cognition of reality as will to power has led the world into all forms of terrorist activities. Terrorism he describes as "a manifest reaction to the will to power, the will to dominate and dictate the pace of events in world affairs, and the will to decide the annulment of whatever does not fit into the scheme of global gladiators' (Unah, 2006, p.11). In its place, Heidegger proposes non-willing. Non-willing is both a negation of willing and that which is beyond willing. It is a process of releasement in search of the essences which is not a function of one's will but a function of a negotiation between thinking and being. To be able to embark on this form of thinking, Heidegger says, man needs to wean himself of the urge to will which leads to instrumental use of human rationality.

Instrumental Rationality as Threat to Man's Humanity

From the forgoing discussion, it could be said that it was the fallout of the drive to institute human *will* as the arbiter of experience that birthed a new form of rationality known as calculative rationality. This is what we wish to discuss under this section as the instrumental use of rationality or what Heidegger calls *present at hand*. Differently captured by Dahlin and Majorek, brain research seems to increase the tendency to turn thinking into a phenomenon conceived within objectivist (or instrumentalist) frames of understanding (Dahlin and Majorek, 2008, p.3). Instrumental reason is the essence of calculative rationality which thrives in modern science. It manifests in all forms of mental processes and tends to reduce reality to means at the service of human subjectivity. Some scholars view it as the foundation of modern technology. Its proceeds from the epistemological assumption that there is a world out there, and that the world is not only knowable but also, can be transformed by the perceiving subject. Its metaphysical construction asserts that the world out there is that of things (material), that is, it conceives matter as what is primordially real. It is this material primevality that makes manipulative thinking a stock in trade of instrumental rationality. Using thinking as a tool for the accomplishment of a certain material task by deliberately disregarding other esoteric values of thinking, properly captures what we mean by

instrumental thinking. It makes thinking mere tools which stands in readiness to serve the directives of the thinker. Little wonder, Heidegger (1977, p.17) posits that it appears we are engaged in the transformation of the world and ourselves into standing reserves raw materials waiting to be used up in the process. This idea is further captured in Stenstad (2006) thus:

The planning-calculating makes a being always more re-presentable, accessible in every possible explanatory respect, to such an extent that for their part these controllables come together and . . . in the moment when planning and calculation have become gigantic, a being in the whole begins to shrink. The “world” becomes smaller and smaller, not only in the quantitative but also in the metaphysical sense: a being as being, i.e., as an object, is in the end so dissolved into controllability that the being-character of a being disappears, as it were, and the abandonment of beings by being is completed (p.21).

In instrumental reason, we are only interested in getting our results, irrespective of how and at what cost. But, according to Robbins (2014, p.14),” instrumental rationality remains oblivious of and thoughtless in regard to what it is calculating about”. It only keeps calculating, roving like the barber’s chair ad infinitum. By this, humans are losing their humanity.

Instrumental thinking can also manifest in the way we plan, organize or relate to our fellow human beings (i.e social interaction). In other words, social interaction becomes instrumental at the moment we approach social relation with calculative human categories. This happens when human essences are repudiated in obeisance for material exigencies. When this happens, we fall into what Kant calls hypothetical imperatives (using the human other as means to an end) or what Confucius in Chinese philosophy calls *Li* (acting based on profit motive). This is why Heidegger is critical of this kind of manipulative rationality. Often time, this type of rationality are perpetrated under the maxim that “whatever is best administered is the best” (pragmatism).

To be sure, the history of instrumental thinking or manipulative rationality can be traced to that point when man began to rationally engage the world. In other words, it was an attempt to break-free from the bondage of a cruel nature and its mythological explanations that marked the beginning of using reason as tools for the conquering of the world. In its modern manifestation, it happens in form of over-emphasis on plans, controls, precision and objectivity. It is guided by the rules of logic and science. It is this type of thinking that Brand and Markowitch (2010, p. 148), say “allows an individual to deal with a complex world in accordance with his or her personal desire, plans, goals and beliefs”.

As we observed earlier, in human relation, instrumental rationality reduces humanity to an object, which, like every other object, is merely a utensil or tools to be used and dumped. This mindset dovetails into man’s economic activity. The resultant effects are exploitation, alienation, profit maximization and commitment to efficiency (See Marx and Engels, 1848, 1867; 1976 and Ogundowole, 2004). On the other hand, instrumental rationality also gives impetus to conquering of territories, search for new markets and political domination. All of these are manifestations of man’s urge to have a universal truth or reality. As a consequence, the more instrumental man’s thinking assumes in addressing the challenges of the society, the more meaning-making and meditative capacity of man is further relegated into obscurity. The danger in allowing this form of rationality (i.e instrumental) to prevail is that it results in objectification and in turn conceals another form of thinking which Heidegger identifies as meditative thinking which makes man the shepherd of being.

Objectified Thinking as Recipe for Instability

In Descartes’ understanding, thought means anything that is defined or marked by awareness or consciousness. In this category, mental states such as: imagining, sensing, willing, believing, doubting, hoping, dreaming and other mental models all belong to thinking. For this reason, whenever the goal of any thinking is isolated and grounded on a fixated conceptual category, such exercise becomes nothing other than objectification of thought. This is exactly the problem that Heidegger diagnosed of the modern world in the ways we carry our daily activities. To him, it remains an objectified thinking whether such thinking happens in the activities of a psychologist, scientist, theologian or social theorist; in as much as its aim is to have a unified story. This desire to objectify experience and to subjugate the object of thought has become an epidemic which the contemporary man must be cured of, if indeed the world is serious in the desire to arrest instability. Unah,(1997, p.345), describes objectified thinking as a nihilistic metaphysical thinking, which is predicated on the assumption that outside what we know and can understand, there is total nothing. In the same vein, Heidegger classifies it as *enframing*, and this according to him, inhibits the clarity of the disclosure of Being. Again, not only does it obscure the clemency of truth, but also institutes a regime of stereotyping or what Soyinka (1991), calls “structural ignorance” or what Unah (2006, p.19), calls *tribal mindset* which manifests intolerance and misconception. Thus, Heidegger further elucidates that “enframing means the gathering together of that setting-upon which sets upon man, i.e., challenges him fort, to reveal the real in the mode of ordering, as standing-reserve” (Heidegger, 1977, p.20). He goes further to describe

scientific thinking which is a product of enframing, as that which “entraps nature as calculable coherence of forces” (ibid, p.21).

For that reason, he says there should not be any attempt to force object on philosophy. According to Heidegger, thought has no object. Rather, it is “a happening that must at all times work out Being for itself...only in this happening does philosophical truth open up” (Heidegger, 2000, p.90). To be sure, it must be stated that the problem with objectification of thought is really not that thinking has an object but strictly that object is forced on thinking. Accordingly, forcing object on thought, “keeps existence in exile from events of beings, the adjudication of these rules and principles as the definitive function of thought turns thought away from its events” (Vallega, 2003, p.6). In furtherance to this, it makes thinking straight-jacketed. As a consequence, this kind of confusion leads to other problems such as: objectification of reality which in turn creates a world of inflexible things, ideas and people. By extension, inflexible world becomes a fertile ground for all forms of contest and conquest (Unah, 2006, p.9). In addition, Heidegger notes that:

In the history of Western thinking, indeed continually from the beginning, what is, is thought in reference to Being; yet the truth of Being remains unthought, and not only is that truth denied to thinking as a possible experience, but western thinking itself, and in the form of metaphysics, expressly, but nevertheless unknowingly, veils the happening of that denial (Heidegger, 1977, p.56).

It is in this order that this study is convinced that the ultimate threat to world peace today, stems from objectification of thought.

This happens by way of insistence on certain conceptual category as the measure of truth to which all other perspectives must bow. With respect to objectification, thought becomes objectified when one begins to privilege or elevate one system, race, religion, or method over the other, and goes further to consign contradictions or other perspectives into oblivion. Conflict, primarily ensues most often because; (i) either a concerned party insists that his viewing lens in an issue is the most lucid and as such, other parties must be given this same prescription, (ii) or that another party who feels that his human essence is being forced to align with a prescribed category, and as such, refuses to bow to domination. Obviously, this metaphysical standpoint is largely the root of several social conflicts. In the views of Unah, the implication of objectified thinking is that, that which is objectified or trampled upon, in turn, struggles to avenge itself (Unah, 1997). This of course, is a manifestation that certain kind of thinking although may be useful for the advancement of man’s material goals (as evidenced in science and technological thinking), it is deficient for the attainment of a peaceful world order where being is allowed to disclose itself in its uniqueness. Therefore, what is socially instructive from the foregoing is that, for as long as human beings in their social relations continue to be treated as object to be used and dispensed off, the needed solidarity and inclusivity for societal harmony would forever elude humankind. Therefore, it is for this reason that this paper calls for the humanization of thinking in order to attain social stability, solidarity and national security.

Conclusion

The thrust of the discussion in this study has been that rationality, which is accepted as a distinguishing marker of human beings, needs to be well-guided against derailing into straight jacket thinking. The reason being that straight jacket thinking does not properly midwife truth and the essence of man. Instead, it leads to objectification, single story and strife. Any form of thinking that does not enhance man’s role as the shepherd of the cosmos, is inimical to social harmony and threatens collective suicide. Our discussion reveals that man is the direction which provides the way for Being disclosure and as such, must continuously strive to wean himself of the urge to stifle truth for a particular advantage. The study presented meditative thinking as a fundamental structure belonging to man by which he is elevated by nature as the tender of Being and subsequently argued that man appears to be derailing from such task and has gone so high in a kind of complicated web (like the spider’s web that is created for itself), necessitating our call for a return to a mode of thinking that is more simple, essential and stable through which we can recapture our humanity and institute stability.

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