

**A REVIEW OF BEING AS BELONGINGNESS: EXPANDING THE  
HERMENEUTICS OF AFRICAN METAPHYSICS 'TO BE' BY DR. JUDE  
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A cursory glance at the metaphysical problems in philosophy reveals that they are perennial ones, which cannot be solved dogmatically. To this category belongs the question of, it is not surprising that the question of the nature of being. It has bordered the minds of philosophers from the ancient era to the present epoch. This enquiry was first set in an articulated motion by Parmenides when he argued that whatever is, is being. He further said that being is one, eternal and unchanging, meaning that whatever changes is not being. This notwithstanding, Heraclitus of Ephesus was chiefly famous in antiquity for his doctrine that everything is in a state of flux, as such, being is characterized by flux. Plato, while disagreeing with Heraclitus on his doctrine of flux, agrees with Parmenides that reality is eternal and unchanging, however, differs from Parmenides in arguing that being is multiple rather than one; and these are the forms in the Platonic World of Forms. Aristotle who defines Metaphysics as the study of 'being qua being' identifies being with God; it is therefore not surprising that in Aristotle, Metaphysics becomes theology. He defines being as the foundation and unity of all things. His definition of being leads to identification of being with God. This was a view that Aquinas would adopt in the Medieval Ages, and which Dons Scotus and William of Ockham would, however, oppose. Through the present work under review, Dr Jude Ifeanyi Onebunne adds his voice to the perennial discourse on the problem of being.

The work, *Being as Belongingness: Expanding the hermeneutics of African metaphysics to be*, is a piece published in 2018 by Fab Educational Books. It is a book of 291 pages and ten chapters. The author presented the problem of being as it has developed in the different epochs of the history of philosophy, and emphasized the metaphysics is the search for the nature of being. He proceeded to discourse being as the foundation of belongingness, however, asserting that being is belongingness. He further discussed being as belongingness in contemporary African society, belongingness and time, and belongingness in relation to major African communalistic metaphysical concepts like Igwebuike, Ibuanyidanda,

Ohazurume, Umunna, etc. In these connections, Jude presents belongingness as the foundation for being in African ontology and the basis for interpreting the present African order for the restoration of the continent's fading glory and reestablishment of its identity. While the earliest definitions of being within Western philosophy, from the ancient philosophers, through the scholastics to Descartes and Kant as *that which exist*, present a concept of being that is abstract and unsubstantive. Although they have answered the question of what is being, they are yet to answer the question of what being is substantively. Dr Jude's perspective in this work, while answering the question of what being is, gives the concept of being a more operative status as something concrete and substantive.

While the discourse on being continues within the parameters of African philosophy, Dr Jude's *Being as Belongingness: Hermeneutics of African Metaphysics 'To Be'* resounds the perspective of a grand African thinker, Prof. P. Iroegbu. This work is one of the greatest achievements of our time by a quiet but industrious academic bee; a scholar whose inner peace, transparent honesty, self-effacing demeanor, yet joyous sense of humor have fascinated colleagues. The chapters are not merely presentations of perspectives on being as belongingness, Dr Onebunne adopts a hermeneutic style that presents the thoughts of an African thinker in a way that puts into consideration the available circumstances of his contemporary readers.