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**EXAMINING THE NATURE AND STRUCTURE OF THE MIND, LEANING ON
KANT'S ANALYSIS AND THE CONCEPT OF "INTENTIONALITY" IN
HUSSERL'S PHENOMENOLOGY**

1. Introduction

The mind is a critical component in the examination and analysis of phenomenon, especially in the constitution and epistemic grasp of reality. Though it is somehow argued in the ancient era that the mind has little or nothing to contribute in the grasp of reality, this view has been sufficiently discarded. In fact the mind serves a vital role in cognizing reality and apprehending experience. The imperative to understand the nature and the structure of the mind cannot be over-emphasized. It is germane to assert the importance of the mind as the nitty-gritty or bedrock in the determination of the epistemic certainty. To attempt or embark on the nature and structure of the mind is like asking what constitute the stuff of the universe. To put differently, what is the nature of reality? Just as it is not easy to pin-down or decipher reality in one fell-swoop, so also is the determination of the nature of the mind.

The study of philosophy and by extension the study of the mind is not only to demarcate what reality really is from what is not but also to enable philosophers exert and query the cognitive element which is often the tool of epistemic enquiry. Thales, who is often, refers as the father of western philosophy engaged the mind in the determination of what the primary stuff, the constitutive element of the universe is. The contrasting views about the nature of the cosmic by the foremost or earliest philosophizing physicists account for the fluid nature of reality and by extension the fluid nature of the mind. The various speculations about

the nature of reality as reflected by the history of philosophy in the different epochs demonstrate that the nature of the mind may be indeterminate. Protagoras' assertion that "man is the measure of all things" clearly portrays the variations in man's inclination or intuition and mental configuration.

The study of the mind's configuration, *strictu sensu* belongs to the realm of psychology. Psychology itself was once an aspect, if not part and parcel of philosophy. History has it that psychology was the first discipline to "gain freedom" from philosophy as an academic and intellectual discipline. Plato, properly speaking may be referred to as one of the earliest psychologists in his division of the soul or mind into three distinctive parts—the spirited, the vegetative and the rational. It is from this basis he developed his political philosophy and laid the structure of political society. The tripartite structures of society according to Plato are the guardians, the soldiers and the artisans. These correspond to the tripartite nature of the soul. To understand the workings of the mind or soul is to understand the relation of these elements in the society.

Ever since Plato's psychology, different accounts of the mind and society have emerged or surfaced. Though this is not our focus in this paper, it is however important to lay or give a brief background to the history and development of the theory of the mind. It is also on record that though Plato was not properly the first philosopher to reflect or talk about the mind, (see Anaxagoras' doctrine of the *Nous*) his account was more vivid and plausible. As Alfred North Whitehead affirms, "all philosophies after Plato are nothing but footnotes".

In this essay, we shall focus on the nature and structure of the mind, leaning on Kant's analysis and Husserl's doctrine of intentionality. The goal is to determine and delineate the interpretations that have been ascribed to the mind from two unique perspectives— Kant's tradition which reflects the rationalist (though arguable) and Husserl's account which reflects the phenomenologist. This essay comprises five parts; introduction, statement of the problem, Kant's analysis of the mind; its inadequacies and merits, Husserl's doctrine of intentionality; its inadequacies and merits and finally conclusion.

2. Statement of Problem

What exactly prompted Kant enquiry? Kant was dissatisfied or put precisely awoken from his dogmatic slumber by the empiricists view of reality which was wholly restricted to

the realm of the senses or experience. Since experience alone cannot guarantee indubitable knowledge of reality, Kant therefore undertook the task to investigate the nature of reality. Many philosophers from ancient period have speculated about the nature of reality with little or no recourse to the role of the mind. The question that follows then is; is the mind static or a changing/dynamic entity? Also, the nature or structure of the mind has not been clearly articulated or conceptualized until Kant.

It is germane to note that phenomenology, especially from Husserl's tradition/view is hinged on the doctrine of intentionality. Howbeit, phenomenology is the attempt to comprehend and describe phenomena as they are in themselves, that is, in contradiction to a description of phenomenon as they appear to us. It should be recalled that there is a sharp divide or distinction between 'things merely as we perceive them' and 'things as they are in themselves'. Given this scenario, how do we eliminate the influence of perception to arrive at things as they are in themselves? More so, whichever way we look at these two positions (things as they appear to us and things as they are in themselves), we are entrapped with a number of paradoxes; firstly, it is quite clear that from whatever position we take, the basic tools or instruments of our inquiry must be based on the use of the senses. Secondly, the mind and interpretation therefore play a cardinal role with respect to the use of the senses. Thirdly, then the question arises as to how the same mind and the same senses can be organized in one instance to perceive phenomena from our own perspective or, on the other hand, in such a way as to conceive of things as they are in themselves. Fourthly, it is well argued that a perception of things as they are in themselves constitute the ultimate epistemological paradigm, i.e. there is no metaphysical gap between "what is described" and "what is". But then, how do we know we attain the limiting point of "what is" when we start our voyage from "what is described"?

Irrespective of these aforementioned problems or paradoxes, there is no disputing the fact that phenomenology aims at arriving at immutable knowledge, incorrigible knowledge and absolute knowledge. From the foregoing, it is crystal clear that the mind is central in all phenomenological considerations.

3. Kant's Analysis of the Human Mind

In this sub-section, we shall be examining Kant's conception of the human mind. Since the mind is fundamental to innovation, creation and inventions; which are all indices of societal development. It is on this basis we shall examine the mind's operations and make-up, so as to determine, *inter alia*, whether it is possible to reach certainty in the mind. Secondly, whether it is possible for the mind to exert influence on the outer world or environment i.e., the social milieu and thirdly, whether the mind possesses intrinsic feature (s) that makes it possible for it (mind) to transcend empirical existence.

Kant's critical philosophy which culminated in his "synthetic a-priori" nature of the human knowledge was instigated by Hume radical denouncement of any form of rational and scientific knowledge. In other words, Kant asserted that he was woken up from his "dogmatic slumber" by Hume's skepticism on the possibility of indubitable foundation of scientific and metaphysical knowledge. This argument is captured by S.E. Stumpf thus:

"I openly confess," he said, "that the suggestion of David Hume was the very thing which many years ago first interrupted my dogmatic slumber and gave my investigations in the field of speculative philosophy quite a new direction." But Kant said, "I was far from following (Hume) in the conclusions at which he arrived." Kant rejected Hume's final skepticism.¹

Kant's mission to refute Hume's position was therefore necessitated by two apparent phenomena as seen in his statement: "two things fill the mind with ever new and increasing admiration and awe... the starry heavens above and the moral law within."² The latter suggests "determinism" and the former "freedom". This evincing and distinct occurrence of two incompatible qualities in the sphere of human existence, informed Kant's research and logical construction of a reconciliation between the two seeming diametrically opposed theories—empiricism and rationalism.

With a view to establishing a firm conclusion on the apparent ambivalence between the theories above, Kant thought it necessary to embark on the analysis of the human mind. First, he had to meticulously study the meaning, interpretation and function which his predecessors gave to the operations of the mind, particularly the rationalist and the empiricist

¹ Samuel Enoch Stumpf, *Elements of Philosophy: An introduction*, Third Edition, (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1993), p.298.

² See Samuel Enoch Stumpf, *Philosophy: History and Problems*, Fifth Edition, (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1994), p.300.

philosopher, before making his submission. In both views, he discovered that the mind was treated as a passive element, incapable of affecting the natural world but merely serving as a receptor of sense impressions.

Kant was not impressed by this interpretation and function that was accorded the nature of the mind. Because, by it, there was no way the form of “synthetic a-priori” knowledge would be possible. He therefore went beyond this flaccid and passive conception of the mind to the real operations of the human mind and came out with a laudable analysis in the form of a revolution. Before commencing this revolution enacted by Kant, it is pertinent to ask, “If there is any relationship between the mind and nature itself.” It is with a bid to answer this question that we would turn to Kant’s Copernican revolution.

Antecedent to Kant, the mind was held to be passive. The relationship between the mind and nature was miscounted. Jacob Needleman appropriately captured it thus:

Until now, Kant says, man has completely misunderstood this relationship, until now he was believed that true knowledge, true ideas, involved a sort of mental mirroring of the order of nature—the mind forming concepts that accurately reflect external reality. At the deepest level Kant says this cannot be true. On the contrary, the opposite is true. The order of nature conforms to the structure of the mind...reason itself³.

Prior to Kant, the mind was viewed as an inactive principle, but Kant has stated categorically that reason (mind) is the active principle and that nature is the passive principle. He did in philosophy, exactly what Copernicus did in the sciences. Just as Copernicus had shown that the motions of the heavens are determined by the motion of the earth, so Kant demonstrated that the laws of nature are put into nature by the mind, not merely discovered there is something existing independently of the mind.⁴

Relating this perspective of the motions of the heavens vis-à-vis the earth to epistemology, Kant asserted that the only way we can be sure of certainty about the basic laws of nature, such as the law of causation, is to set aside our erroneous knowledge, “that it is things that impress their nature on the mind”. Whereas the right position is that, it is actually the mind that impresses its form on things. This view is clearly articulated by the quotation below:

³ See Jacob Needleman, *The Heart of Philosophy*, (London, Melbourne: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1983), pp 172-173.

⁴ *Ibid*; p.173

Hitherto it has been assumed that all our knowledge must conform to objects” writes Kant in his preface to the “Critique of Pure Reason”, the single most influential work of modern philosophy. But, Kant goes on; this assumption must be set aside as regards our knowledge of the fundamental order of nature. If knowledge must always conform to objects, we could never have absolute certainty about the basic laws of nature, such as the law of causation. We do have such certainty-a universe that does not obey such laws is simply inconceivable-even though we have no direct, sensory experience of these laws.⁵

Kant, in his assessment of the nature of the human mind pointed out that the mind is endowed naturally and structured to exert influence on objects. He got to this conclusion because it was possible to have knowledge of objects *a priori* as well as revise the order of relationship between the mind and nature, as seen in Nicholas Copernicus’ revolution in astronomy, as Kant himself affirms in the *Critique*:

We must therefore make trial whether we may not have more success in the tasks of metaphysics, if we suppose that objects must conform to our knowledge. This would agree better with what is desired, namely, that it should be possible to have knowledge of objects *a priori*, determining something in regard to them prior to their being given. We should then be proceeding precisely on the lines of Copernicus’ primary hypothesis. Failing of satisfactory progress in explaining the movements of the heavenly bodies on the supposition that they all revolved around the spectator, he tried whether he must not have better success if he made the spectator to revolve and the stars to remain at rest.⁶

Hence the nature of the mind in Kant’s view is that it has its own form for which objects in the empirical or experiential world must conform willy-nilly. We shall now turn to the next phase of Kant’s conception of the human mind.

4. Kant’s Ontology

Kant’s ontology here ultimately comprises what constitute the nature of the human mind as well as the possibility of the mind to conceive and grasp knowledge *a-priori*. If the mind is able to grasp and conceive objects in the external world, it presupposes that events and activities in the external world are structured and controlled by the mind. In other words, the mind becomes the spring board from which all activities in the external world take their

⁵ Loc Cit.

⁶ Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, transl. by Norman Kemp Smith, (London; Macmillan and Co., Ltd., 1953), p.22.

root. Before looking at Kant's ontology, what precisely is the meaning of ontology? There is need to clarify and conceptualize this term for the sake of our readers.

The term, "ontology" was coined by scholastic writers in the 17th century. Rudolf Goclenius, who mentioned the word in 1636, may have been the first user but the term was such a national Latin coinage and began to appear so regularly that disputes about priority are pointless.⁷ Many writers such as Abraham Calovisu used it interchangeably with *metaphysica* while others used it as the name of subdivision of metaphysics, the other subdivisions being cosmology and psychology. "Thus, ontologia as a philosophical term of art was already in existence when it was finally canonized by Christian Wolf (1679-1754) and Alexander Gottlieb Baumgarten (1714-1762)."⁸

For the series of lectures given from 1765 to 1766, Kant treated ontology as a subdivision of metaphysics that included rational psychology but distinguished it from empirical psychology, cosmology, and what he called the "Science of God and the world". He refers to it as the more general properties of things and also as the difference between spiritual and material beings.⁹ He eventually settled matter with it after he came out with the *Critique of Pure Reason*. Michael Kelvin presented a perspective on the purpose of Kant's ontology which is quite succinct and instructive:

Kant's ontology aims at demonstrating that finite human reason transcends the boundaries of scientific categorizing that occur in physics and mathematics which both depend on the ability of the mind to distinguish between appearance and reality. Kant however was not just concerned with the possibility of mathematics and physics, but with a possibility of science in general is possible due to the possibility of metaphysics itself which is ingrained in man and which depicts the autonomy of human thought to metaphysics and hence, to as well scientificize. It is for this reasons that Kant dubbed his brand of philosophy transcendental idealism. But this transcendental perspective accommodates epistemological inquires and forms the ground of human freedom and responsibility.¹⁰

For a more lucid view of the term, a definition offers by the Chamber's Twentieth Century Dictionary will suffice here. It defines ontology as:

⁷ Paul Edwards (ed.), *The Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, Vol. 3 and 4, (New York: Macmillan Publishing Co., Inc., and the Free Press, 1967), p.542

⁸ Loc Cit.

⁹ Loc Cit.

¹⁰ Michael Kelvin, *A Commentary on Heidegger's Being and Time*, (New York: Evanston: Harper and Row, 1970), pp. 5-6 Quoted from C. Okoro's unpublished Doctoral Dissertation, pp. 144-145, C. Okoro is a lecturer in the Department of Philosophy, University of Lagos, He teaches Metaphysics, Phenomenology, Ontology, and Developmental Studies.

The science that treats of the principles of metaphysics... the nature and essence of things: Ontology is a central part of metaphysics. It borders on questions like: Does anything exist necessarily? Is it necessary that something no matter what, should exist? It is concerned with the existence of material objects, minds, persons, universals, numbers and facts and so on.¹¹

The mind which is the focus here is not an empirical or sensual substance but a metaphysical one. Its functions cannot be precisely experimented or explained scientifically. It remains the most influential elements in Kant's ontology. It is not only the seat of intellectual activity but also the citadel of moral flurry as well as creativity and innovations.

In order to capture explicitly Kant's conception of the mind, we shall simply delineate this sub-section into two parts; starting with the intuition of space and time cum the categories of understanding and secondly transcendental apperception of the mind. At the end of this section we will be able to decipher the nature and the workings or operations of the human mind.

5. The Categories of Thought and Forms of Intuition

With Kant, a new outlook to the real nature¹² and forms of the human mind came into limelight, following the reversal or revolution that occurred in the order of the relationship between the human mind and objects of nature. The mind has specific features and forms which constitute the whole faculty with which it shapes objects in nature. This faculty contributes immensely to the activity of understanding.

A meticulous look at Kant's theory of transcendence justifies the claim that his metaphysics (ontology) consists in a certain way philosophical epistemology; one which transcends the bounds of experience. As Findlay points out:

Kant's theory of knowledge accepts the reality of a transcendental subject, and transcendental acts which exist beyond experience and knowledge, and are constitutive of it. It also accepts the reality of many transcendental objects which affect our subjectivity and which have characters and relations not given

¹¹ See Maduabuchi F. Dukor, *Theistic Humanism: Philosophy of Science Africanism*, (Lagos: Chimah & Sons Productions, 1994), p.19

¹² We shall assume that prior to Kant the real nature of the human mind was not rightly conceived. That Kant shed light on this owing to his curiosity to reconcile the empirical world with the spiritual sphere represented respectively by science and metaphysics. Hence Kant brought anew a way of conceiving reality with his reviser of the order of the mind's function prior to his time. Thus, it is not out of place to infer that hitherto since this new order has not been refuted, it can be taken as the real or true nature of the human mind.

to the latter and at best corresponding to phenomenal characters and relations.¹³

His analysis of knowledge can be summed up as the analysis of judgment and reasoning. He dwells on the four principal elements of human knowledge: (1) perception, (2) concept formation, (3) judgment, and (4) reasoning. And his major question was: how are judgments of a certain type possible? Kant already had a theory of the origin of concepts, which reinforced his theory of the nature of judgments and based on his acceptance of the Cartesian psychology of perception, he claimed that man thinks only thoughts and perceives only perceptions; and that the mind is aware only of itself its own states.¹⁴ Thus, in the second *Critique of Pure Reason*, he says:

Hitherto it has been assumed that all our knowledge must conform to objects. But all attempts (for instance, to account for the possibility of objective knowledge) have on this assumption, ended in failure. We must therefore make trial whether we may not have more success in the tasks of metaphysics, if we suppose that objects conform to our knowledge.¹⁵

As stated earlier, for Kant, this change in his metaphysical perspective is his “Copernican Revolution”¹⁶ in epistemology cum metaphysics, resulting in his transcendental idealism. For Kant, the rational structure of the mind reflected the rational structure of the world. This is made possible because the mind possess certain qualities and forms that makes it possible to configure and shapes objects in the existential world. The first of these inherent qualities of the human mind is the intuition of time and space.

¹³ J.N. Findlay, *Kant and the Transcendental Object: A Hermeneutic Study*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1981), p.x.

¹⁴ Cornelius Ryan and Henry Tibier, *Epistemology*, (Milwaukee: The Bruce Publishing Company, 1967), p.147.

¹⁵ See Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, 1929, BXVI.

¹⁶ “Copernicus, a sixteenth-century astronomer, pointed out that the apparent motion of the sun and stars had hitherto been assumed to be real motion: it was claimed that the reason Sun appears to rise in the east, travel across the sky, and set in the west, is simply that it really is moving round a stationary earth. Copernicus, however, argued that precisely the same appearances would result if, instead, the Sun were in fact stationary and the earth were spinning on its axis. Copernicus replaced the naïve, which took the apparent motion of the Sun to be real motion, with a theory according to which the apparent motion of the Sun is in effect a product of the real motion of the observer: it is because we are spinning that the Sun seems to move across the sky. Kant’s so-called Copernican revolution is analogous. It had hitherto been assumed that there appear to be spatio-temporal objects that exist independently of us because there really are such things. Kant replaced this naïve realism with a theory according to which the apparent nature and independence of the objective world is a product of our perceptions, concepts and judgments: in the last analysis, it is because we perceive and think as we do that the world seems to be the way it is. “See Nicholas Bunnin and E.P. Tsui-James, (Eds), *The Blackwell Companion to Philosophy*, 2nd Edition, (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing Company, 2003), p.728

6. Space and Time: The Forms of Intuition

Everything in the *spatio*-temporal world is not in a vacuum or void. Scientific knowledge deals with objects that are in space and time. Objects in the cosmos are capable of being conceived, measured, quantified, referred or appropriately described because they occupy a particular space and at a particular time. Nothing can be articulated outside the realm of space and time. Things are known and cognized owing to these features of space and time. For ideas in the mind to go through transformation into concrete forms and have meaningful impact on the existential world, it must obey the “laws” or dictates of space and time. But what precisely is space and time?

Space and time are *a-priori* forms of intuition, Kant, in his analysis of these terms gave us a detail meaning of the concept of space before turning to the concept of time. Kant seeks to clarify the logical features of space via a four-point analysis. The four points are as followed (1) space is not an empirical concept derived from external experience. (2) Space is a necessary, *a priori* representation that underlies all outer intuitions. (3) Space is not a discursive concept but a pure (i.e. *a-priori*) intuition and (4) space is not a concept but an *a priori* intuition.¹⁷

With respect to time, Kant held that “all appearances are in time: in it alone, as substratum (as permanent form of inner intuition) can either co-existence or succession be represented”... But time itself cannot be perceived.”¹⁸ Like space, he treated time also in four-point analysis; that time is not an empirical concept, but a necessary idea, not a discursive concept but an *a priori* intuition.¹⁹ Kant made a distinction between space and time. While he called the former the form of outer sense, in that it structures the experience of objects external to us, he called the latter the form of inner sense, because mental states necessarily occur to us in a temporal succession.²⁰ Time is not a determination of outer phenomena; it has to do neither with shape nor position but with the relations, that is, the interplay of ideas in our mind or consciousness.

¹⁷ See full details in Justus Hartnack, *Kant's Theory of Knowledge*, transl. by M. Holmes Hartshorne, (London: Macmillan Publishing Co., 1968), pp.18-20.

¹⁸ See *Kant's Critique of Pure Reason*, (B224/A182) & (B225), cited in B.E. Oguah, “Transcendentalism, Kant's First Analogy and Time”, in J.O. Sodipo (ed.), *An African Journal of Philosophy*, Vol. VI, No. 1, (Ile-Ife: University of Ife Press, 1977), pp.4-5.

¹⁹ Justus Hartnack, *Kant's Theory of Knowledge*, *op.cit.*, pp.22-24.

²⁰ See William F. Lawhead, *The Voyage of Discovery: A Historical Invitation to Philosophy*, 2nd Edition, *op.cit.*, p.331.

“Space and time are not things perceived but modes of perception, ways of putting sense into sensation; space and time are organs of perception. They are *a-priori*, because all ordered experiences involve and presuppose them. Without them, sensations could never grow into perception.”²¹ Space and time are real; they are neither things nor entities in the corporeal world. They are objective and infinite intuitions. To treat time and space as independent, absolute realities, real and objective prosperities of things is to engage in antinomies. In its logical or coherent function, the mind simply organizes the data of sense intuition (feed to it by the senses); and we then have the empirical concepts of experiences.

Furthermore, the empirical reality of time which Kant sought to maintain in the *Aesthetic* is defined as ‘objective validity in respect of all objects which allow of every being given to our senses’ and that of space is defined similarly, i.e. space and time are called objectively real because they are universal application within experience.²² In all, Kant sums up his doctrine in the phrase that “space and time are empirically real but transcendently ideal.”²³ They are the forms of which it is able to apprehend and cognize things in the physical world. Since they are known *a-priori*, they must be subjective in origin, and therefore the sensible appearances of which they are the form must be partly determined by the nature of the mind.²⁴

7. The Categories of Understanding

Kant asserted that the human mind possesses a faculty of understanding. This faculty made it possible for the mind to exert or impose its forms on objects in nature. It is this exertion that made it possible for things to be cognized. These “forms” are *a-priori* concepts like that of space and time. Basically, these categories according to Kant are quality, quantity, relation and modality. Russell, reflecting on Kant’s analysis of them, articulated them distinctively thus:

There are however, a priori concepts, these are the twelve “categories,” which Kant derives from the forms of the syllogism. The twelve categories are divided into four sets of three: (1) of quantity; unity, plurality, totality; (2) of quality; reality, negation, limitation; (3) of relation: substance-and-accident,

²¹ Will Durant, *The Story of Philosophy: The Lives and Opinions of the Greater Philosophers*, (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1953) p.204.

²² See footnote in A.C. Ewing, *Idealism: A Critical Survey*, (London: Methuen & Co. Ltd., 1974), p.94.

²³ H.J. Paton, *Kant’s Metaphysics of Experience: A Commentary on the First Half of the Kritik Der Reinen Vernunft*, Vol. 1, (London: George Allen and Unwin Ltd., 1965), p.143.

²⁴ *Ibid*; p.135.

cause-and-effect, reciprocity; (4) of modality; possibility, existence, necessity. These are subjective in the same sense in which space and time are that is, to say, our mental construction is such that they are applicable to whatever we experience.²⁵

Kant went further to describe these categories as “original pure concepts of synthesis, which belong to the understanding, for it is by them alone that it can understand something in the manifold of intuition, that is, think an object in it.”²⁶ These categories are intrinsic and innate. Kant refers to them as spectacles or lenses through which the mind visualizes and configures things in nature. Beyond these forms, intellectual knowledge of the empirical cosmos is impossible. To this end, Kant has shown that a wrong application of the categories of human understanding *inevitably* breeds philosophical confusion.²⁷ In all, the faculty of understanding (mind) is the seat of intellectual cognition, the source of ideas, the podium of concepts creation and platform for innovations and pro-activeness.

8. Transcendental Apperception of the Mind

In the *Critique of Pure Reason*, Kant talked about transcendental deduction of the categories.²⁸ He elucidated the meaning of transcendental apperception of the mind. It is this action of the mind that makes it possible to have a unified grasp of the world around us. The mind according to Kant is capable of transforming raw data given to our senses into a coherent and organized form. “But this leads Kant to say that the unity of our experience must imply a unity of the self, for unless there was a unity between the several operations of the mind, there could be no knowledge of experience.”²⁹ These several operations of the mind include *inter-alia*; sensation, imagination, remembering, memorizing, synthesizing etc.

Thus, it must be the same self that at once sense an object, remembers its characteristics, and imposes upon it the forms of space and time and the category of cause and effect. All these activities must occur in some single subject; otherwise knowledge would be impossible. And more so, if one subject had only sensations, another only memory, and so on,

²⁵ Bertrand Russell, *A History of Western Philosophy*, (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1945), p.708.

²⁶ Richard H. Poplin & Avrum Stroll, *Philosophy Made Simple*, (New York: W.H. Allen & Co. Ltd, 1969),p.136.

²⁷ J.I. Unah, “The Object of Philosophy is the Logical Clarification of Thoughts-Wittgenstein”, in J. I. Omoregbe edited, *The Nigerian Journal of Philosophy*, Vol. 16, Nos. 1&2, (Lagos: Z. Darlington and Sons, 1997/98), p.25.

²⁸ Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, op.cit.; pp.85-130A, 117-169B.

²⁹ Samuel Enoch Stumpf, *Philosophy: History and Problems*, op.cit., p.309.

sensible manifold could never be unified.³⁰ Kant called it the “transcendental unity of apperception”, what is also referred to as the “self”. Furthermore, when ideas are accepted into consciousness, they are said to be admitted into the whole of our consciousness. By this process, ideas are said to be apperceived, and the indication of such apperception is the affixing to the idea of the phrase ‘I think’. T.D. Weldon elaborated on this view when he said this of Kant’s transcendental deduction of the categories:

It will be granted that every idea which can conceivably occur to me must be capable of conscious apprehension. It must admit of being accepted into that whole which I call my consciousness. To be thus admitted is to be apperceived, and the sign of such apperception is the prefixing to the idea of the phrase ‘I think’. No idea, then, can be entertained by me which is not capable of being apperception. But the whole of the ideas which I entertain constitute together a unity which is my conscious self, and this unity is not a mere aggregate, for if it were, I should have a self as variegated and diverse as the ideas of which I am conscious. Rather it must be a synthetic or connected unity, intellectual and not sensuous in character.³¹

The unity of apperception is not precisely something produced by understanding, it is simply the understanding itself. It is also equated to the faculty of knowledge since understanding is the faculty of knowledge. The faculty of knowledge is the pivot of cognition or reflection, thus “to think is to unite ideas by receiving them into synthetic unity of apperception.”³²

9. Kant’s Phenomenal and the Noumena World

Having done justice to Kant’s ontology above with respect to the role and functions of the mind vis-à-vis objects in the existential world, it becomes imperative though briefly to throw light on the limit of what the mind can grasp or know. The mind, in Kant’s analysis, cannot cognized or come to the knowledge of realities in the *noumena* world which he called “thing in itself; or ‘intelligible object,³³ but only of things in the existential or corporeal world which he called the “phenomenal” world.

By implication, it can be said that Kant created a duality between what the mind can know and what it cannot known. Hence Kant splits reality into two: the phenomenal and the *noumena* spheres. The former which is knowable by the mind or reason and the latter which is

³⁰ Loc Cit.

³¹ T.D. Weldon, *Kant’s Critique of Pure Reason*, Second Edition, (London: Oxford University Press, 1958), p. 150.

³² Ibid; p.151.

³³ Graham Bird, *Kant’s Theory of knowledge*, (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1962), p.19.

unknowable by the mind, as I.M. Bochenski puts it: “so reality is split into two worlds, the one empirical and phenomenal which is invariably subject to the laws of mechanics, and the other a world of things-in-themselves, of “noumena” to which reason cannot attain.”³⁴

Hence the whole function of the mind is reduced to the phenomenal world while the world beyond this sphere cannot be conceived by the mind. However, this is not to deny the mind’s intelligibility or penetrability into realities in the ontological sphere, the inner world of the mind, where ideas are formed and configured.

10. Husserl’s Phenomenology and Analysis of the Mind: The Doctrine of Intentionality

What is intentionality? It is a philosophical concept and is defined by the *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* as "the power of minds to be about, to represent, or to stand for, things, properties and states of affairs."³⁵ It has its origin in medieval scholastic philosophy, precisely St. Anselm’s ontological argument for the existence of God and with his tenets distinguishing between objects that exist in the understanding and objects that exist in reality.³⁶ It was reintroduced into philosophy by Franz Brentano during the nineteenth century. Etymologically, the word intentionality is derived from the Latin *intentio* and from the English word *intendere*, meaning directed towards something (material or immaterial)—persons, events, situation, objects etc. Brentano described intentionality as a characteristic of all acts of consciousness that are thus "psychical" or "mental" phenomena, by which they may be set apart from "physical" or "natural" phenomena.³⁷

Every mental phenomenon is characterized by what the Scholastics of the Middle Ages called the intentional (or mental) inexistence of an object, and what we might call, though not wholly unambiguously, reference to a content, direction towards an object (which is not to be understood here as meaning a thing), or immanent objectivity. Every mental phenomenon includes something as object within itself, although they do not all do so in the same way. In presentation something is presented, in judgement something is affirmed or

³⁴ I.M. Bochenski, *Contemporary European Philosophy*, transl. from the German by Donald Nicholl and Karl Aschenbrenner, op.cit, p.5

³⁵ See Jacob P. (31 August, 2012), “Intentionality”, *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, retrieved 16th November, 2016.

³⁶ See Chisholm, Roderick M., “Intentionality”, in *The Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, Vol. 4, 1967, p. 201.

³⁷ See the doctrine of intentionality, retrieved from https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Intentionality#cite_note-1, 16th November, 2016

denied, in love loved, in hate hated, in desire desired and so on. This intentional in-existence is characteristic exclusively of mental phenomena. No physical phenomenon exhibits anything like it. We could, therefore, define mental phenomena by saying that they are those phenomena which contain an object intentionally within themselves.³⁸

Husserl followed Brentano on the theory of intentionality and gave the concept a widespread attention, both in continental and analytic philosophy.³⁹ Prior to Husserl, there existed two major doctrines of the mind—the **receptacle theory of the mind** which is also known as the “bucket theory” and **the active theory**. It is from these two major theories of the mind, the intentionality doctrine came into being; eliciting the positive elements in both. A brief discussion of both theories will suffice here.

11. Receptacle Theory of the Mind

Under this theory, the followings are the characteristics of the mind— passivity, inactivity and transparency. The essential structure (of the mind) is content in the bucket. In other words, the mind is likened to a transparent container where objects in the external world impress themselves on it. The mind is passive, inert and inactive. Objects, sensation, judgment, imaginations, thoughts thrust themselves on the mind. The mind is seen as a mere recorder or storage space.

This raise a number of questions; (1) apart from say objects and sensation, how does imagination, thought which are thrust on the mind come about? Under this theory, it is difficult if not impossible to give a good metaphysical epistemic account of judgment and imagination. The Bucket theory is unable to account for those entities. (2) Another constraint is in relation to pedagogy. If we are to adhere strictly to this doctrine, pedagogy would comprise nothing more than transferring item of knowledge from teacher to learner, such item get stored in the student’s receptacle, for them to scoop out during examination. There would be no room for analysis, synthesis, criticism, imagination, and so on. Based on these inherent difficulties and more, Brentano rejected this classical 19th century thesis of the mind.

³⁸ Franz Brentano, *Psychology from an Empirical Standpoint*, Edited by Linda L. McAlister, London: Routledge, 1995, pp. 88-89.

³⁹ Smith, David Woodruff, *Husserl*, New York: Routledge, 2006, p. 10.

12. The Active (Mind) Theory Model

Under this doctrine, the mind is not just dynamic, it is hyperactive. It creates, it builds, it formulates, analyzes, synthesizes, orders, ascribes meaning to objects. The essential structure of this theory is that it consists of activities. Everything we are acquainted with is the construct or creation of the mind. This second model or doctrine of the mind is associated with Immanuel Kant as David Bell puts it:

The second model, on the other hand, associated particularly with Kant, assigns a dynamic, indeed a creative role to the human mind: through such activities as synthesis, interpretation, inference, judgment, even perception itself, the mind imposes its own order and meaning on what Kant called ‘the raw material of sensible impressions.’⁴⁰

The overall consequence is to create hegemony for idealism. This doctrine was however without some problems: (1) for example, under this doctrine, how do we account for sensation, i.e., our use of the senses or sense impressions? (2) Can we really dispense entirely the external world? (3) Even more importantly, for phenomenology, how can we account for the very existence of the phenomena? (4) If the Kantian doctrine is taking to the logical conclusion whereby material things do not exist on their own account, how can the mind itself exist?

Due to the inherent difficulties in both theories, Brentano rejected the receptacle doctrine of the mind and the active theory and came to the middle; which thus gave birth to the doctrine of intentionality—the doctrine that combines **Content** and **Activity** of the mind. Intentionality as doctrine of the mind deals with mental acts and their contents. There are two types: **Primary intentionality** and **Secondary intentionality**.

In Primary Intentionality, every mental phenomenon contains an act and content. An act could be seeing, touching, smelling, etc. contents are objects such as horse, trees, pen, etc. In primary intentionality or consciousness, the act and the content are separated, i.e. they are not the same. The act *a* must intend something, content *c* outside itself, i.e. $a \neq c$. Here,

⁴⁰ David Bell, *Husserl*, London: Routledge, 1993, p. 7.

objects come to exist in the mind— mental in-existence, intentional in-existence, immanent objectivity and existence immanently.

Secondary intentionality is a situation or when an act has itself as its content or it is intended along with the primary object. As Brentano himself observes: “there are undoubtedly occasions where we are conscious of a mental phenomenon while it is present in us; for example, while we are having the presentation of a sound, we are conscious of having it.”⁴¹ Under this kind of intentionality, though the content is there, the primary object of the act is itself. The act, unlike primary intentionality, is not separated from the primary object.

Husserl’s doctrine of intentionality is not completely different from Brentano’s theory. In his analysis of phenomena, ‘outer perception’ and ‘inner perception’ of mental acts possess ‘immanent contents’ and ‘reflective awareness’ respectively. In fact, as David stated: “The ‘phenomena’ to which Husserl here refers, and to which his descriptive psychology restricts itself, are the immanent contents of so-called ‘outer’ perception, along with the reflective awareness which we have in inner perception of our own mental acts”⁴². In the *Philosophy of Arithmetic*, Husserl made a distinction between two different kinds of concept: ‘abstract’ and ‘general concept’. He went further to explicate general concept as species of presentation, and consist of a mental act or state which possesses an immanent, intentionally in-existence content. “Abstract concept or phenomenon, that is, is one which is intrinsically and inescapably partial, which can only be presented as a dependent part or aspect of some more encompassing whole.”⁴³

13. Evaluation of Husserl’s Phenomenology

There are some inherent inadequacies or demerits in Husserl’s theory. Husserl no doubt was a great scholar and broad minded. His phenomenology which had root in Brentanian intentionality was profound not only for his inventiveness but also that it is capable of influencing contemporary philosophy. However, some philosophers were critical about his thought, especially 20th-century philosophers such as Gilbert Ryle and A.J. Ayer, who were critical of Husserl’s concept of intentionality and his many layers of

⁴¹ Ibid., p. 10.

⁴² Ibid., p. 34.

⁴³ Ibid., p. 39.

consciousness.⁴⁴ For example, Ryle insisted that perceiving is not a process,⁴⁵ and Ayer that describing one's knowledge is not to describe mental processes.⁴⁶ The effect of these positions is that consciousness is so fully intentional that the mental act has been emptied of all content, and that the idea of pure consciousness is that it is nothing.⁴⁷ Sartre also referred to "consciousness" as "nothing", when he asserted that "essential description of consciousness is simply that consciousness is always consciousness of something, but by itself is nothing. Without something to be conscious of, consciousness cannot exist. Thus, consciousness is nothing."⁴⁸

14. Conclusion

So far, I have been able to establish the meaning and conceptualization of the nature of the mind and the doctrine of intentionality in Kant's and Husserl's philosophy respectively. Both shed lights on the nature of the mind in profound ways. In fact, after Kant's work, other theories of the mind that came thereafter seem to allude to or draw inspiration from it. Kant's analysis of the mind remains germane as far as philosophy of the mind and phenomenology are concerned.

However, that is not to say, all have been said or articulated about the nature of the mind. Many more theories have explained the mind in unique ways, especially in the area of psychology. The whole aim is to strived or arrived at epistemic certainty. Naturalism or naïve empiricism may have its own merits, especially if we take into consideration independent views or perceptions of reality but in terms of cognizing and intuiting the inner conception of nature or reality in a non-prejudicial and pre-suppositionless way, recourse must be made to phenomenology which appears to become contemporary philosophy.

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⁴⁴ Ayer, A. J. *More of my Life*, New York: Harper Collins, 1984, p. 26

⁴⁵ Locke, Don, *Perception: And Our Knowledge of External World*, Vol. 3, London: Routledge, 2002, p.28.

⁴⁶ Macdonald, Graham, "Alfred Jules Ayer", *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (SEP), Metaphysics Research Lab, CSLI, Stanford University, retrieved 28 Dec. 2012.

⁴⁷ Siewert, Charles, "Consciousness and Intentionality", *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (SEP), Metaphysics Research Lab, CSLI, Stanford University, retrieved 28 Dec. 2012.

⁴⁸ Franchi, Leo, "Sartre and Freedom" (PDF), *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (SEP), Metaphysics Research Lab, CSLI, Stanford University, retrieved 28 Dec. 2012.

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