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QUINE ON THE ANALYTIC/SYNTHETIC DISTINCTION

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Introduction

Before Quine, the most comprehensive and systematic treatment of the analytic/synthetic distinction in philosophical literature is probably the exposition by Immanuel Kant. In his *The Critique of Pure Reason,* Kant distinguishes between analytic and synthetic judgments. Before Kant, Hume, and Leibniz had drawn similar distinctions, *albeit,* under different labels. Leibniz's distinction is between what he call "truth of reason" and "truth of facts". For Hume, the distinction is between "relations of ideas" and "matters of facts".

Simply put, the characteristics of an analytic statement (or judgment a la Kant) are supposed to be the following: (1) The concept of the predicate is already contained in that of the subject. It follows, on this Kantain formulation, that the determination of the analyticity of a statement is a matter of attending to the meaning of its component terms. Let us note, in passing, the referential conception of meaning (which identifies meaning with reference) implicit in this account of analytic/synthetic distinction would draw

heavily on his rejection of the referential theory of meaning, in favour of his science or epistemological holism. (2) Being necessarily true, the denial of an analytic statement involves a self-contradiction. Thus, to say that a statement is analytic is to say its negation, ~s, is a self-contradiction.

According to Quine, one thing that strikes us immediately in this purported explication of analyticity is how it merely transfers the focus of our inquiries from one concept, analyticity, to another concept, self-contradiction. This definition of analyticity does not allay our problem, for, just as we are entitled to ask for an explanation of what it is for ~s to be analytic, so also are we entitled to demand an explanation of what it is for ~s to be a self-contradiction. In other words, the concept of self-contradiction is no less in need of an explanation justification than the concept of analyticity. In fact, Quine's claim, as will become clear in the course of this discussion, is that all the attempts to explicate the concept of analyticity commit this infelicity of elucidating analyticity by means of another concept, which invariable along with analyticity itself, belong to a family of interdefinable concepts. Thus, such concepts, in terms of which analyticity has usually been explicated, are invariably in need of clarification themselves.

For a synthetic statement (judgment, in Kant's terminology) on the other hand, (1) the concept of the predicate is supposed to be independent of that of the subject; (2) the truth of a synthetic statement, being contingent on factual experience, the denial of its claim, although possibly false, does not involve a self-contradiction.

These then are some of the questions that could be posed, stemming from the discussion so far. What does it mean for a statement to be necessarily true, or, the corollary, what does it mean to say that the denial of a statement is self-contradictory? How justified is the claim that analytic truths are true in all possible worlds? What is the nature of the supposed distinction between analytic and synthetic statements? Is the distinction an absolute one, decreed by certain immutable laws of nature, or is it merely relative to particular epistemic frameworks? In other words, is the distinction something we humans build into our system of knowledge and meaning? In other words, is the analytic/synthetic distinction something that is and will be, irrespective of what men do or wish, or is it another product of "social conspiracies", is it a product of our linguistic conventions and theoretical system building? Or, is the distinction altogether a myth?

In the remaining parts of this paper, I will examine Quine's answers to these and related questions. There are two dimensions to Quine's treatment of the problem of the analytic/synthetic distinction. The negative or critical aspect of Quine's reflections on the problem consists in his critical evaluation, and subsequent rejection of some of the major traditional answers to these problems. These traditional answers have always ended up endorsing the view that the distinction is real. For his party, Quine considers that position dogmatic; the analytic/synthetic distinction, and reductionism, are, in Quine's view, the two dogmas of empiricism. The positive aspect of Quine's argument consists in his defense of a new criterion of meaning, and a radically pragmatic approach to the question of truth.

The rest of this paper will be in three parts. In part 1, I will provide an exposition of Quine's arguments (both dimensions) for the rejection of the analytic/synthetic distinction. In part 2, I will examine some objections to Quine's arguments, for example, objections pressed by H. P. Grice and P. F. Strawson, in their essay, "In Defense of a Dogma". I end the discussion in part 3, with a brief summary, and some concluding reflections of my own on the debate.

Quine's Rejection of the Analytic/Synthetic Distinction

Quine distinguishes between two types of analytic statements.[1] The first consists of logical truths. These are statements that are true under all reinterpretations of their components with the exception of the logical particles. An example of a logically true statement is, "no married man is unmarried." Let us look at this statement. The claim here is that we could change the components, "man", "married" into, say, "plant", and "flowering", without thereby undermining the truth of the resultant statement, i.e., "no flowering plant is non-flowering"- we may call this S1- so long as the logical particles, "no", "un/non", are left unaltered. (2) The second type of analytic statements, according to Quine, consists of statements that can be turned into logical truths, "by putting synonyms for synonyms."[2] An example is this, "no married man is a bachelor." Call this S2. The claim here is that S2 could be turned into a logically true statement, i.e., by substituting "unmarried man" for its synonym "bachelor".

Quine claims that, "...the *major difficulty* [with analyticity] lies in [this] second type of analytic statements, not in the logical truths."[3] It is with this second class of analytic statements that the problem with analyticity arises and then spreads to the concept of analyticity generally.[4] Precisely, the problem is that the notion of synonymy, in terms of which this class of analytic statements is meant to be explained, is itself in dire need of clarification. What exactly does it mean for two expressions to be synonymous? Just what are the criteria of synonymy?[5] Quine's point is that these questions and related ones that arise in connection with the notion of synonymy have to be answered satisfactorily, before we can proceed to use the notion of synonymy to elucidate the concept of analyticity. Quine's claim is that no adequate explanation of synonymy, which does not incorporate, or trade upon the concept of analyticity is forthcoming.[6] Of course, to explicate synonymy with analyticity and then to turn around to define analyticity in terms of synonymy is to provide an explanation that comes dangerously close to being circular.[7] "What we need," says Quine, "is an account of cognitive synonymy not presupposing analyticity if we are to explain analyticity conversely with help of cognitive synonymy ...."[8] But, as I have reported above, Quine is convinced that there can be no adequate explanation of synonymy, which would not incorporate, directly or indirectly, the notion of analyticity.[9] How Quine arrives at this conclusion, we shall see in a moment.

Meanwhile, let us turn to Quine's discussion of a purported alternative way of reducing analytic statements of the second category to those of the first, i.e., to logical truths, namely, by definition. The claim could be made, for example, that

"unmarried man" is the definition whose definiedum is "bachelor". Quine is of the view that this recourse to the notion of definition to reduce analytic statements of the second category to the first is fraught with serious problems. In the first place, how do we determine the authenticity of a definition? It would not avail to take the lexicographer's word for it; that would be tantamount to putting that cart before the horse. The lexicographer's listing of "unmarried man" as the definiens of "bachelor" is predicated upon his subsuming the relationship of synonymy to exist between these two terms.

In other words, lexical definitions are nothing more than the records of observed usages of synonymies in linguistic behaviour. That presupposed synonymy in a lexical definition cannot then be taken as the justificatory grounds for the concept of synonymy.[10] In the same vein, an explicative definition would presuppose a subsuming relationship of synonymy between terms to the extent that, "...each of the favored contexts of the definiedum, taken as a whole in its antecedent usage [is presupposed] to be synonymous with corresponding context of the definiens."[11]

According to Quine, it is only in the cases of openly stipulative definitions that we have a "...transparent case of synonymy created by definition..."[12] But then to say that we understand the process whereby synonym is created by conventional definition is not to say that such transparent cases of created synonymy help us to understand the supposed relations of cognitive synonymy help to resolve the riddle of analyticity, as some philosophers, e.g., Grice and Strawson,[13] seem to believe. For, if stipulative

definitions are all that we have, it would follow that every term and every expression could be made synonymous with every other term or expression, by the mere fiat of stipulation. And in that situation, the notion of cognitive synonymy must loose all its significance.

I return now to the discussion of how Quine concludes that no adequate explication of cognitive synonymy, which does not incorporate the concept of analyticity, is possible. One suggested explanation of the relationship of synonymy between words or expressions is in terms of such words or expressions being interchangeable without change in the truth value of the resultant statements, an all possible contexts, i.e., interchangeability *salva veritate*.[14] Quine contends, however, that "interchangeability *salva veritate* is meaningless until relativised to a language whose extent is specified in relevant respects."[15] This is so, because as Quine rightly points out, it is easy enough to construct truths which become false under substitution say, of "unmarried man" for "bachelor", for example, with the aid of phrases like "bachelor of arts", etc., and with the aid of single quotes to mention (rather than use) either of both of such pairs of words or expressions, e.g., 'bachelor' has four letters.[16]

By specifying an extensional language with one, and many place predicates, truth functions, and quantification as its primitives, we could, according to Quine, obtain interchangeability *salva varitate*.[17] But then the best that interchangeability *salva veritate* in such an extensional language can guarantee for us is the truth of the resultant statements, not their analyticity. In other words, it would not guarantee the necessity of their truths, because all that

interchangeability *salva veritate* entails in such a language is extensional isomorphism. And, as Quine is quick to point out, mere extensional agreement "falls short of cognitive synonymy."[18]

On the other hand, language that contains intensional adverbs like "necessarily" ("or other particles to the same effect"), could deliver interchangeability *salva varitate* sufficiently strong to guarantee cognitive synonymy. However, the interchangeability in such a language presupposes the understanding of the concept of analyticity.[19] So, we are back to where we started.

Nor again, does it help to try to resolve the problem of analyticity by the specification of semantical rules. That is, by the adoption of the rules of an artificial language. Quine's argument here is that "[since] the notion of analyticity about which we are worrying is a purported relation between statements and languages, the gravity of the problem is not perceptibly less for artificial languages than for natural ones."[20] The hopeless of trying to derive analyticity by the specification of semantical rules is parallel to the hopeless of trying to derive cognitive synonymy from stipulative definitions. As Quine puts it, the whole exercise is a *"a feu follet par excellence."*[21]

Finally, Quine examines the attempt to explain analyticity by drawing on the resources of the verification theory of meaning. On this theory, two *statements* would, supposedly, be held synonymous if they are susceptible to identical mode of empirical confirmation or information.[22]

If that supposition is true, then it seems that the notion of analyticity "is saved after all." For then we could explicate the notion of analyticity in terms of "...synonymy of statement together with logical truths.[23] but Quine holds that the verification principle is fundamentally wrong; its supposed validity, says Quine, rests on a defective conception of meaning which regards individual statement as independent or primary units of meaning. Quine submits that it is this defective conception of meaning which in turn produces the two pernicious results, which he identifies as the two dogmas of empiricism. These are (1) reductionism - the belief by classical empiricists that empirically significant statements are reducible to sense-datum terms or language; (2) the claim that statements that are confirmed or informed, "...vacuously *ipso facto*, come what may..." are analytic, as contrasted with synthetic statements which require recourse to empirical experience for their confirmation or information,[24] in other words, the analytic/synthetic distinction.[25]

Having investigated the ways, suggested in the literature, of explicating the concept of analyticity and on each occasion coming up with negative results, and being perfectly convinced that the supposed cleavage between analytic and synthetic statements drawn by classical empiricists is predicated on a faulty theory of meaning, Quine declares the analytic/synthetic distinction, "an unempirical dogma of empiricist, a metaphysical article of faith."[26]

Quine's Scientific Holism

Having rejected the analytic/synthetic distinction, what does

Quine put in its place? The constructive aspect of Quine's theory could be summarised in five propositions.

> (1) "Taken collectively, science has its double dependence upon language and experience; [though] ...this duality is not significantly traceable into the statement of science taken one by one."[27]
>
> (2) "[our] statements about the external world face the tribunal of sense experience, not individually but only as a corporate body."[28]
>
> (3) thus, "the unit of empirical significance is the whole of science."[29]
>
> (4) Consequently, "any statement can be held true come what may, if we make drastic enough adjustment elsewhere in the system.."[30]
>
> (5) And, "conversely, by the same token, no statement is immune to revision."[31]

Taken together, these five propositions constitute the core of Quine's scientific holism, which entails some form of epistemological holism, all predicated on a new theory of meaning is not the individual word, nor the individual statement, but science as a whole.

Critique of Quine on the Analytic/synthetic Distinction

Two lines of criticism are immediately discernible in

Quine's treatment of the analytic/synthetic distinction. The first line of criticism draws on the inconclusiveness of Quine's argument here involves an inductive leap. Quine himself confesses that "not all the explanations of analyticity known to Carnap and his readers have been covered in the above consideration..."

But even if Quine had actually gone over all the explanations of analyticity known to Carnap and his readers, it is still the fact that it would be logically impossible for Quine to consider all possible explanations of analyticity. And it seems to me not to be as evident that, as Quine claims, the extension of his arguments to other possible forms of such explanation, "is not hard to see." If this is true, how justified is Quine in declaring the analytic/synthetic distinction a "dogma", or "an article of faith", with such grim finality, as if he was merely reciting some God-revealed truth? And if the conclusion of the critical aspect of his case against the analytic/synthetic distinction is so fundamentally questionable, how justified is his leap from that critical phase to the constructive dimension of his argument?

Could it be that Quine's scientific holism represents no more than the substitution of a new dogma for an old one; could it be that Quine has just replaced one metaphysical article of faith with another? Perhaps the answer to the question is "yes". Perhaps, too, Quine would agree that it is (ultimately) so. But if he does agree, would he not have to tell us why his own dogma should be preferred to others, i.e. why scientific holism is a sounder concept of reality and our knowledge of it, more useful than the ancient referential theory of meaning?[32]

In their essay, "In Defense of a Dogma", H. P. Grice and P. F. Strawson raise objections to Quine's rejection of the traditional distinction between analytic and synthetic statements, along the lines I have been alluding to in the queries I raised in the last paragraph. In the first place, Strawson and Grice complain that the conditions Quine demands as necessary for the adequate explanation of the concept of analyticity are too strong and "...hard to come by."[33] To be sure, Grice and Strawson, at different points in their paper, allege that what Quine asks for is a necessary and sufficient condition.[36] Of course, each of these claims has different consequences for Quine's argument. For, whether or not Quine's demand is for a necessary condition for the explanation of analyticity, or a sufficient condition, or a necessary and sufficient condition, makes all the difference between the possibility of Quine's argument being an unsound variant of the *modus tolens*, or an outright fallacy of denying the antecedent, or yet, a non-valid bi-conditional.

In any case, Grice and Strawson's conclusion is that Quine's rejection of the analytic/synthetic distinction is not justified by his criticism of the distinction.[37] They claim, therefore, that the distinction may still hold, and in fact, holds, despite the fact that it may be impossible to produce the type of explanation of analyticity that would satisfy Quine's formal standards. According to Grice and Strawson, the question of how, and whether such a formalistic explanation can be provided for certain expressions which belong to a circle of inter-definable terms (in this case, analyticity, synthetic, definition, semantical rule, logical impossibility, or self-

contradition, etc.), "is quite irrelevant to the question of whether or not the expressions which are members of the circle have an intelligible use and genuine distinction."[38]

To prove their point, Grice and Strawson proceed to produce an explication of 'logical impossibility' (which incidentally belongs in the circle of inter-definable concepts that Quine wants explained). Grice and Strawson seek to do this by considering two types of statements. The first, an empirical impossibility is this: "my neighbour's three-year-old child understands Russell's theory of type." The second, a logical impossibility, is this: "my neighbour's three-year-old child is an adult." Ultimately, the distinction between such statements, Grice and Strawson claim, is the distinction between not believing something, and not understanding something. In other words, the distinction is between lack of belief and lack of understanding.

While we do not believe the first statement, that is, the empirical impossibility, we do not understand the second - the logical impossibility. Grice and Strawson contend that though this explanation of 'logical impossibility' in terms of lack of understanding, may fall short of Quine's formalistic requirements, the explanation nonetheless, satisfies another of Quine's criteria of adequate explanation, namely, that a term or an expression may not be explicated by means of another, when the two are inter-definable. Grice and Strawson's claim, in other words, is that 'logical impossibility' and 'incomprehensible' are not inter-definable.

But is that realy the case? The question is: what makes Strawson and Grice think that "lack of understanding" is the

correct explanation of 'logical impossibility'? And, just what is it that we do not understand in their second statement (the logical impossibility so called) anyway, while we understand the first? What feature of the "logical impossibility" renders it incomprehensible? Is whatever renders the statement incomprehensible intrinsic to its structure, such that it is doomed to non-comprehension, or is it something extraneous to the structure of the statement?

My contention is that in declaring their "logical impossibility" incomprehensible, Strawson and Grice are taking the individual statement as constituting a meaningful unit in itself. The corollary of their claim is that the statement "no three-year-old child is an adult" is necessarily true, and immune to revision. But on the adoption of Quine's scientific holism, according to which primary unit of meaning is the whole of science or a chunk therefore, the statement, "no three-year-old child is an adult" loses its immunity from revision, because it would not be deemed a necessary truth to being with. Conversely, Grice and Strawson's "logical impossibility" may become perfectly understandable, on the model of Quinean holism.

Another line of criticism tracks on Quine's recognition of two distinct classes of analytic statements, coupled with his claim, as I report above, that the problem of analyticity "lies not in the first class of analytic statements, the logical truths, but rather in the second class, which depends on the notion of synonymy."[39] If this is, indeed, the case, why reject the whole of the analytic/synthetic distinction because of the presumed semantic infirmity of the second category of analytic statements? Why in other words, not reject the

trouble category of analytic statements, while preserving the distinction on the strength of the logical truths? Why throw the baby out with the bath water? It may well be the case that, if all we have as analytic statements are the logical truths, then analytic statements would be essentially trivial, being mere truisms. But to claim that analytic statements are epistemically trivial is one thing, to claim that there are no analytic statements at all, as an altogether different claim.

Quine might respond to this criticism by pointing out that his rejection of the notion analyticity and his subsequent repudiation of the analytic/synthetic distinction is not based solely on the inexplicability of the second class of analytic statements. He might claim that this rejection of analyticity and the traditional distinction is also independently derivable from his new conception of meaning. If it is true that the unit of empirical significance is the whole of science, then it makes no sense to isolate certain statements, as constituting on their own, immutable logical truths. On that holistic model, what counts as "logical truth" and what does not, is relative to the conceptual framework. In other words, to claim that certain statements are analytic because they are logical truths, and that such statements are necessarily true, presupposes a theory of meaning which regards individual statements as independent units of meaning. Quine, as we have seen, rejects that account of meaning.

But Quine actually meets the objection that tracts on the so called logical truths in another, more direct, way. This he does by trying to show that logical truths could be rendered as a matter of convention, by the "circumscription of our logical primitives in point of meaning, through conventional

assignment of truth to various of their contexts.."[40] This move is fraught with problems. In order to be of any explanatory use, a convention needs to be "deliberately and explicitly" adopted. Thus adopted, however, logic as a matter of linguistic convention leads us into an infinite regress, because, as Quine himself puts it, "... if logic is to proceed mediately from conventions, logic is needed for inferring logic from the conventions."[41]

How Quine gets around this problem, I have yet to figure out. My point here is that, if he is able to resolve the problem satisfactorily, then it seems that his rejection of the analytic/synthetic distinction stands independently of his theory of meaning. If the truths of logic are a matter of convention, and if no satisfactory explanation of the concept of synonymy is forthcoming, then Quine's repudiation of the traditional distinction, as an unempirical dogma, would be justified - subject to the fundamental limitations characteristic of inductive inferences in general - quite independently of the soundness or otherwise of his scientific holism.

Conclusion

Depending on one's answers to the questions we posed at the beginning of the paper, there are three main positions one could adopt with respect to the traditional analytic/synthetic distinction. The first position is the one that takes the distinction to hold, no matter what. Presupposing analytic truths to be eternal verities, this position conceives the analytic/synthetic distinction as a cosmic phenomenon, over which men have no control. For

ease of reference, we may label this position "absolute distinction." Another position is the other extreme thesis, namely, that the distinction never holds, since conceptual frameworks are always amenable to deliberation. Let us call this position "the absolute no distinction." In between these extremes, is the thesis we may designate as "relative or conventional analytic/synthetic distinction."

While recognizing the other positions, the third position nonetheless, holds that within frameworks, the distinction is "real"; real in the sense in which all other social institutions fashioned by human beings are real. This is the position I endorse. I would not know what to make of the distinction outside the contexts of all human conventions and linguistic practices. On the other hand, I believe that, so long as we desire a world organized into coherent systems and frameworks, a world that lends itself to linguistic access and predictability, a limited or relative version of the distinction itself is possible. I am inclined to expect that this is the position Quine would end up adopting, not withstanding his rhetoric in rejecting the absolute form of the distinction. The endorsement of epistemological holism as an absolute principle would do too much to our long-evolved linguistic habits.

Notes And References

1. W. V. O. Quine, "Two Dogmas of Empiricism," in *From A Logical Point of View,* (Cambridge, Massachusetts, Harvard University Press, 1980), pp. 22 - 23.

2. Ibid.
3. Ibid. I emphasize "major difficulty" in the quotation, in anticipation of Quine's subsequent independent treatment of the analyticity in logical truths, among other places, in his essays, "Truth by Convention," "Carnap and Logical Truth", and "Necessary Truth." Contrary to what he may seem to be suggesting here, Quine's claim is not that the second category is to be held solely responsible for all the problem of analyticity.
4. Ibid. p. 23.
5. The need to resolve the issues raised by these questions become all the more urgent in view of Nelson Goodman's conclusions on the concept of synonymy. On this, see Nelson Goodman, "On Likeness of Meaning", in *Problems and Projects.*
6. Quine, W. V. O. *From a Logical Point of View* p.30.
7. Ibid. p.29.
8. Ibid.
9. Ibid. p.41.
10. Ibid. p.24.
11. Ibid. p.25.
12. Ibid. p.26.
13. H. P. Grice and P. F. Strawson, "In Defense of a Dogma," in Jay Rosenberg and Charles Travis (eds.), *Readings in Philosophy of Language* (Prentice Hall, 1971), p.90.
14. Quine, *From a Logical Point of View,* op.cit. p30.
15. Ibid.

16. Ibid. p.28
17. Ibid. p.30.
18. Ibid. p.31.
19. Ibid.
20. Ibid. p.33.
21. Ibid. p.36. The French expression could be translated as "stupid or illusory little smokes."
22. Ibid. p.37.
23. Ibid. p.38. my emphasis. Note that the talk of synonymy is no longer in terms of words or expressions, but in terms of statements.
24. For a classic statement of this position, see C. I. Lewis, "The Modes of Meaning", in Jay F. Rosenberg and Charles Travis (eds.), *Readings in the Philosophy of Language.* (Prentice Hall, 1971), p.16.
25. It seems to me that another consequence of this theory of meaning, and the implied theory of synonymy, is that since the synonymy of statements is to be determined by their having identical mode of empirical verification, and since the truths of all analytic statements are synonymous: or, if one chooses to emphasize the clause, "method of empirical verification", and then claim that the principle does not apply to analytic statements, which ex-hypothesis, are devoid of empirical contents, one would then have to concede that there is no way of deciding which analytic statement is synonymous with which, on the basis of the verification theory of meaning.

26. Quine, *From a Logical Point of View,* op. cit. p.37.
27. Ibid. p.42.
28. Ibid. p.41. This is the so-called Duhem/Quine holism thesis.
29. Ibid. p.43.
30. Ibid. p.43. See also, the concluding paragraph of Quine's essay, "Necessary Truths", in his book, *The Ways of Paradox and other Essays,* (Cambridge, MAS.: Harvard University Press, 1976), p.76.
31. Ibid. p.36.
32. I appreciate the fact that the determination of Quine's resolution of these issues takes us far afield from our present concern with the analytic/synthetic distinction. It would take us deep into the labyrinth of Quine's philosophy. Nor, am I suggesting that Quine has no answers to these questions: of course, he does. Although whether or not his answers would be considered satisfactory is another matter. The point of these questions is to indicate that Quine's rejection of the analytic/synthetic distinction is just the beginning, not the end; that his suggested new theory of meaning in general, his scientific and epistemological holism provoke a wave of new questions, which he must now address.
33. H. P. Grice and P. F. Strawson, "In Defense of a Dogma," op.cit. see note (13) above, p.86.
34. Ibid. p.87.
35. Ibid.

36. Ibid. p.89
37. Ibid. p.81.
38. Ibid. p.89.
39. Quine, *From a Logical Point of View,* op.cit. P.24.
40. Quine, W.V.O. "Truths by Convention", in *The Ways of Paradox and Other Essays,* op.cit. P.98. Similar efforts are made in "Carnap and Logical Truths," supra, pp.107 - 132.
41. Ibid., p.104, and p.106.

INTERLOCKING CONCEPTS IN SARTRE'S ONTOLOGY OF HUMAN FREEDOM

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Abstract

In a way, Jean-Paul Sartre can be regarded as a transcendentalist of the phenomenological persuasion. Central to his existential ontology and theory of phenomenology is the question of human consciousness. Sartre's analysis of the concepts of Being, Nothingness, Negation, Freedom and the Phenomenon, is closely connected to his theory of consciousness. Nevertheless, this consciousness is neither a container nor is it self-contained. Rather, by the act of intentionality, consciousness is forever reaching out to the world as facticity.

It is consciousness that marks the boundary between "being-in-itself" and "being-for-itself". It is consciousness that manifests as nothingness in man and also projects into nothingness as the absolute foundation of things. It is consciousness that rejects a state of affair and this rejection amounts to a state of negation. Yet, these self-manifesting

attributes of consciousness demonstrate how consciousness manifests its vital possibilities as ecstatic freedom. The bottom line of Sartre's existential ontology therefore, is that the whole talk about Being, Nothingness, Negation, Phenomenon etc, amplifies the fact that the ultimate significance of consciousness to human existence is that, it constitutes the basis of human freedom. Invariably, without consciousness, man would not know if he is free or not as he would not be able to categorize things in the universe.

Accordingly, this paper examines Sartre's conception of freedom within his analysis of Being and Nothingness, all of which have their basis in human consciousness. It shows how consciousness determines what constitutes Being, non-Being, Negation, Phenomenon and Freedom. On the whole, it shows that Sartre's phenomenological and ontological analysis of Being and Nothingness is intended to argue the point that consciousness determines what manifests as Being or as Nothingness. How human consciousness authentically does this, constitutes the realm of freedom for Sartre.

Sartre's Ontology

The philosophy of Jean-Paul Sartre is rooted in his concept of 'Being and Nothingness'. For a full appreciation of his philosophy, it is necessary to understand his concepts of

Being and Nothingness and their relevance to man's freedom. His approach to man' s freedom is illuminated by his clarification of the complex features of human beings. In essence, Sartre's treatment of Being and Nothingness centres on the evaluation of the nature and life of concrete human beings. This underscores the importance of Being and Nothingness in his concepts of man's freedom.

(i) Being-in-Themselves and Being-for-Themselves

There are, according to Sartre, two types of Being in existence. They are 'Being-in-themselves which are non-conscious things that possess essences with independent existence, and constitute all the things in the world. "Being-for-themselves, on the other hand, are conscious beings whose consciousness renders them entirely different from other things, in their relation both to themselves and to one another and to those other things" (Sartre, 1969).

Sartre probes into the relationship between these two kinds of being in compliance with the tradition of existentialism which investigates and analyses the concept of Being-in-the-world. In the existentialist tradition, the evaluation of the world is not in the light of knowledge or perception, but in the light of an examination of the relationship of beings in

the world. The issue as to how we come to the knowledge of the world, or the reality of its existence is not a subject of interest to Existentialism. Instead, the Existentialists start all their reflection from the standpoint of a consciousness already engaged in an external world of 'impure' consciousness, modified in all kinds of different ways by its presence in a world of things, such that an impersonal or wholly scientific account of the world in terms of regularities and casual connexions (seem to them inadequate to the richness of the world as it is actually experienced (Sartre, p. ix).

To differentiate between these two opposing kinds of being, Sartre makes reference to particular features of the world which he describes in concrete detail, to the extent that we appreciate it as the world to which we all belong. In essence, Sartre adopts two interchangeable and overlapping systems of illustration in the treatment on Being and Nothingness. In the two, we observes features for illustrative purposes in addition to being essential element in the argument.

A good instance of Sartre's style is his treatment of Bad faith. He states here that people have potentials for Bad faith to the most important general characteristics of

consciousness itself. That is, its being separated from the world of things by a gap or nothingness. It is the experience of this gap which reveals itself to us, first and foremost, by our ability to negate propositions, to deny the truth, and to describe things, not only truly, but also falsely, that makes us conscious of ourselves as different and distinguishable from the world which surrounds us (Sartre, p. x).

We become conscious of the world by the consciousness in Being. And consciousness, imagination and freedom which are virtually synonymous with emptiness or nothingness lie at the heart of Being for themselves. Sartre has the reputation of revealing his points through vivid images of life. He adopts this method in order to enable us understand the nature of a phenomenon. Thus, we understand the nature of the phenomenon by accepting the truthfulness of the story, in the way that we may be completely convinced by truth of the representation of life in a film or novels, and having thus been induced to believe that this is a way in which people behave, we are then led to accept the rest of the transcendental argument (Sartre, p. xi).

It is consciousness that makes bad faiths possible, consciousness cannot be regarded just as an ordinary things, like a stone or a pond. It is essentially intentionally;

it is always directed onto something, and means that thing" (Warnock, 1971, 36). Sartre uses the terms 'Being for itself' and 'Being for others' to illustrate the place of consciousness in life. He illustrates this with real life story of a man that is moved by curiosity and looks through a keyhole and listens at a door. He is meanwhile completely absorbed in what he is doing. But suddenly he becomes aware of a footstep behind him. As a result of this incident, his existence is reconstituted in a wholly new way.

He suddenly exists, not just as a series of aims and actions, but as person eavesdropping. He realizes that he would be described by the other man as 'caught in the act", bent down to peer through the 'keyhole' ... and these descriptions do not seem alien to him. He accepts them as belonging properly to him.

He immediately springs into existence as an object that could be looked at from outside, an object that can bear descriptive labels, a things which can be truly or falsely described. This description of himself he accepts in shame. The implication of this is that for one to e ashamed of something, one must be conscious of the existence of others. There is no way a sharp distinction could be drawn between knowing and acting on one's knowledge, just as

there cannot be a difference in perceiving and feeling. Man occupies a unique place in nature a dynamic creature among the inanimate and his dynamism springs from the fact that he is able to see everything around him as relative to his needs, his aversion and his fears (Sartre, 1969, xii).

Sartre's view of Being is basically on human position, that is, human existence. It is from understanding of Being that a distinction between Man and other beings can be drawn. What makes a man is his consciousness and "is distinguished as a Being-for-itself from unconscious objects, which are Being-in-themselves" (Warnock, p. 93). A human being finds himself/herself in the world surrounded by a lot of significant things and meaningful objects. He perceives qualities that point beyond themselves to the most general features of the world as a whole.

As conceded by a number of existentialists and psycho-analysts, there is the possibility of human beings reacting differently to a given situation. Even at that, there are basic features inborn in beings. Sartre, through his approach to Being and "Nothingness", perceives freedom as an existentially established fact by deduction from the nature of man, as a conscious being, who has a vacuum in himself

which he must be free to fill in any way conceivable by him. Based on this fact, we can appreciate how human beings give value to things.

(ii) **The Phenomenon of Being**

There is no justification for the dualism of being and appearance in philosophy. Man's belief in noumenal realities has made him to project appearance as pure negative. To overcome this problem, Sartre thinks we should free ourselves from what Nietzsche calls the illusion of the world behind the scene. With this, we will be able to reject the Being behind the illusion of the world behind the scene. With this, we will be able to reject the being behind the appearance. By so doing, appearance becomes full possibility, the essence of which is appearing, that is not opposed to being but rather the measure of it. The Being of an existent is nothing more than what it appears to be.

The above problem is also observable in the Aristotelian doctrine of act and potency in reality, there is no potency 'hexus' nor virtue behind the act. When we talk of a genius, what we have at the back of our mind is nothing more than works which are manifestations of the person in question. What it does is to reveal it. " The essence of an existent is no longer a property sunk in the cavity of this existent, it is the manifest 'law which presides over the succession of its

appearances; it is the principle of the series" (Sartre, p. xxvi).

Essence cannot mean anything other than the concretization of appearance. The Phenomenal Being manifests itself; it brings out its essence in addition to its existence, and it is nothing but the well-connected series of its manifestations., the only support appearance has is its own being. What is meant first in ontological inquiry is the being of appearance. It is, however, helpful to ascertain that the being that appears to me is of the same nature of the being of existence which equally appears to me. An object does not hide not reveal Being, it is futile to attempt to push aside certain qualities of the existent so as to find the being behind it. "The existent is a phenomenon; this means that it designates itself, and not its being. Being is simply the condition of all revelations. It is Being for revealing and not revealed Being"
(p. xxv).

If we take Being as an appearance which is conceptually determinable, we have to understand first of all, that knowledge cannot by itself, give an account of Being - that is, the Being of phenomenon cannot be reduced to the phenomenon of Being. The determination of the Being of

appearance is the fact that it appears. And the restriction of reality to phenomenon implies that phenomenon is as it appears.

(iii) **Consciousness**

If every metaphysics pre-supposes a theory of knowledge, then, every theory of knowledge in turn presupposes metaphysics. This means that an idealism intent on reducing Being to the knowledge we have of it should above all, give some kind of the being of knowledge. Consciousness is not a mode of a particular knowledge, which may be called an inner meaning or self-knowledge. Rather, it is the dimension of transphenomenal being in the subject. Consciousness can know and does know itself. But, it is in itself something more than a knowledge turned back upon itself.

Edmund Husserl states that consciousness is consciousness of something. There is no consciousness that lacks content. All consciousness is positional, for, it transcends itself in order to reach an object, and it is exhaustible in this same position. The total intention in my actual consciousness is directed towards outside, to an object. All my judgements, practical activities, all my present inclinations go beyond themselves - they aim at, and are absorbed in something.

"Not all consciousness is knowledge, but all-knowing consciousness can be knowledge only of its subject." (Sartre, p. xxvii)

A necessary prerequisite for a knowing consciousness to be knowledge of its object, is that it be consciousness of itself as the knowledge of that object. In the absence of this condition, my consciousness would be consciousness; for instance, a table without the consciousness of being so. This would be a consciousness which is ignorant of itself, which would be an absurd situation. When reflecting on my consciousness, I pass judgement on the consciousness reflected upon. I could be proud or ashamed of it. I could will it or deny it. After perception, the imediate consciousness I have does not allow me ether to judge, to will or to be ashamed of it. All that there is of intention in my real consciousness is projected to the outside world.

An extended object is forced to exist according to three dimensions, so does intention, pleasure or grief exist, only as immediate self-consciousness. It is impossible to distinguish pleasure to exist before consciousness, not even in the form of potentiality. A potential pleasure can exist only as consciousness of being potential.

Consciousness is in the centre of Being. It creates and supports its essence. "Freedom and consciousness are the very same thing. Only the free consciousness can imagine a world different from that in which it finds itself, and therefore, it alone can form plans to change that world" (Warnock, p. 113). Consciousness should not be viewed as a process of becoming. To do so would mean to enter into the dangerous assumption that consciousness is prior to its own existence. "Conscience is a plenum of existence, and this determination of itself by itself is an essential characteristic" (Sartre, p. xxxi). Consciousness is derived from consciousness itself. This is, however, not the same as saying that it is derived from nothingness. There cannot be nothingness before consciousness. Consciousness exists before nothingness. It emanates from Being.

It is not possible to have a passive existence. That is existence which perpetuates itself and lacks the force either to produce or preserve itself. This view of Sartre negates the principle of inertia. There is no substantial thing in consciousness. It is just an appearance in the sense that it exists only to the extent to which it appears. The fact that consciousness is pure appearance, a total emptiness (for the entire world is outside it) makes it to be seen as the absolute.

Intentions are the essence of man's existence. While I am conscious, I am always imagining and contriving that things should be other than they are. I am always pursuing possibilities. My nature and character, at any moment, are identical with the plans that I am freely pursuing; I have no real nature apart from my own renewed choices of what I am to be (Hamsphire, 1971, 59). I take full responsibility for every facet of my consciousness, my emotion inclusive. "Emotions are a form of arrested action, a kind of magical behaviour to which I resort when practical manipulations are unavailing (p. 60).

My active intention makes me to be conscious of myself as distinct from other things. The idea I have about my existence as a Being within the world involves the idea that there might be other free and conscious beings that obscure me. Self-consciousness defines existence and human reality. Things are, but incapable of existing. The relationship between consciousness and its object might be compared to that between a mirror and the objects which are reflected in it.

The mirror is devoid of contents of its own, containing merely reflections of objects before it, yet it always separates and never merges with the object. "Human

consciousness, nothingness and being for itself are equivalent terms" (Greene, 1901, 17). Sartre was critical of Sigmund Freud for holding tight to a simple deterministic idea of the mind, as being like machine governed by natural forces, and at the same time admitting the motives and intentions behind unconscious behavior. In pursuance of his agreement, Sartre dismisses the subconscious mind as an impossible hybrid. An existentialist knows that he always has a plan to find for himself a definite character of role by his actions in the world. He knows that only when he is dead, and the story of his efforts is told, will his nature be known, and that even then the story cannot be told without alien meanings being imposed on it. (Hampshire, p.61)

Our consciousness is always directed to some objects which it should be aware or preserving. It is either that the object of the awareness might be something in the world, or the self. Whichever is the case, it will always be accompanied by an awareness of being aware. The view that consciousness always is, or can be conscious of itself poses a strong opposition of Freudianism. "For it, consciousness is defined as that which is aware of itself, the notion of the unconscious can have no possible place in psychology" (Warnock, 1965, 18).

Another substantial feature of consciousness is noticeable in Sartre's version of Cartesianism: that "the gap between the thought and its object actually consists in the power which consciousness has of affirming or denying; of accepting what is true of its object, and also of inventing and of thinking what is false or of rejecting it" (p. 43)

Freedom is rooted in this ability to accept or deny. And this freedom invariably turns out to be that which forms the gap between thoughts and object which consists of the essence of consciousness. "Consciousness belongs to the domain of human reality. For itself, conscious self, mind, existence, and human reality are all virtually synonyms. Self-consciousness defines existence and human reality, for only man 'exists' or better put, makes himself exist" (Jolivet, 1967, 24). As regards the nature of consciousness, Sartre says it signifies two things, namely, consciousness of self and consciousness of something. Consciousness-in-itself can be seen as empty Being, a nothingness at the heart of Being. It is purely transparent, and it cannot be grasped. The capacity to be the other makes consciousness become consciousness of self, either as a reflect, that is subconscious or a reflective consciousness that it is consciousness that returns to itself. "Consciousness is negation. It is ... that by which nothingness comes into being" (p. 26).

A full understanding of consciousness would enable us to avoid any recourse to that 'inner life' of classical psychology that Sartre has always regarded with suspicion. The non-conscious Being which constitutes the object of consciousness on pre-reflective level is immediate, spontaneous and lived" (Dominick, 1978, 24). It always goes beyond whichever situation it is conscious of.

I must be in good faith at least to the extent that I am conscious of my self-deception. It is impossible for me to deliberately and cynically lie to myself. "That which affects itself with self-deception must be conscious of its self-deception ... since the Being of consciousness is consciousness of Being" (Kaufman, 1959, 244). The others that we meet with, make possible the existence of others that have similar consciousness as myself. To grow up in complete isolation will result in non-development of human mind "and our existence would remain veiled to us in unconsciousness, that is, it would be unknown" (Roubiczek, 1966, 120).

The contention that consciousness is consciousness of something can be evaluated from two angles. It is either seen that consciousness in its innermost nature is a relation to a transcendent Being or concrete Being. The first

interpretation given is self-destructive. Being conscious of something implies being confronted by concrete and full presence which is not consciousness. It is possible also to be conscious to absence. This absence appears necessarily as a pre-condition of presence. Consciousness is a real subjectivity and the impression is a subjective plenitude.

Consciousness of something entails that transcendence is the constitutive structure of consciousness. This means that consciousness is born and gets its support from being other than itself. What could be seen as subjectivity is consciousness of consciousness. This consciousness of being conscious can be seen as revealing intuition or it is nothing. A revealing intuition means something revealed.

Absolute subjectivity can only be established in the face of something revealed; immanence is also definable only within the apprehension of the transcendent. "To say that consciousness is consciousness of something is to say that it must produce itself as a revealed revelation of a Being which is not it and which gives itself as already existing when transphenomenal Being of phenomena and not a noumenal Being that is hidden behind them. It is being of the world which is implied by consciousness.

(iv) **Being- In-itself**

Consciousness can be seen as the revealed revelation of existents and existents appear before consciousness on the foundation of their being. Being constitutes the background and foundation of existents. Consciousness can pass beyond the existent, not toward its Being, but the meaning of this Being. The meaning of the Being of the existent in as much as it reveals itself to consciousness is the phenomenon of Being. There is a being in this meaning on the basis of which it manifest itself. "If Being exists as over against God, it is its own support; it does not preserve the least trace of divine creation. In a word, even if it had been created, Being-in-itself would be in explicated; for it assumes its Being beyond the created" (p. xi).

This is like saying that Being is uncreated. Being cannot be *causa sui* in the manner of consciousness. Being is itself. This means that it is neither passivity nor activity. Both of these notion are human and designate human conduct or the instruments of human conduct (p. xi).

Activity takes place at a time that a conscious Being uses means with an end view. Man is active but the means he applies are passive. To view these concepts as absolutes will result in a loss of meaning. Being cannot be said to be

either active or passive. The self-consistent nature of Being goes beyond both activity and passivity. Similarly, being transcends negation as well as affirmation. It will be wrong too, to perceive being as a connection with itself. Being is itself, an immanence incapable of realizing itself. It is also an affirmation that cannot affirm itself, an activity incapable of acting, for Being is fixed to itself.

Granted that Being is itself, it follows that it does not refer to itself as self-consciousness does. It is this self. It is itself wholly, that the constant reflection which constitutes the self is dissolved in an identity. Being, in essence, can be seen to be 'what it is'. Being-in-itself is devoid of within that contradicts a without, and which is analogous to a judgement, a law, a consciousness of itself. This in itself has nothing secret, it is solid. In a sense, we can designate it as a synthesis. But it is the most indissoluble of all: the synthesis of itself with itself (p. xlii).

The implication is that Being is isolated in its being and that it does not enter into any connection with what is not itself. Being transcends becoming, for it is the being of becoming. Being is what it is, it cannot be what it is not neither can it encircles negation. Being implies full positivity. It supports no connection with the other, it is itself indefinitely, and

exhausts itself in Being. It "is, for it is devoid of any relationships, either interior or exterior. It is also listless that it cannot stop itself from being" (Jolivet, p. 24).

The difference between Being-in-itself and Being-for-itself is that being-in-itself is and being-for-itself is not. "The region of Being which is composed of the objects of consciousness is termed Being-in-itself because unlike being-for-itself, it is as it appears" (Greene, p. 19).

Being can neither be derived from the possible nor reduced to the necessary. The possible is a structure of the Being-for-itself, that is, it belongs to other region of Being. Being-in-itself is never either possible or impossible. It is. "Man wants to escape the responsibility of Being-for-itself ad still remain superior to Being-in-itself. He wants to be an in-itself-for-itself... Man cherishes this wishes he actually maintains a belief in an individualist God or not" (Barnes, 1967, 106).

(v) **Negation**

Concreteness is a totality which can exist by itself alone. An example of the concrete is a spatial-temporal thing with all its determination. Based on ontological source in the region of the in-itself, and conversely the phenomenon is likewise

an abstraction since it must appear to consciousness.

Nothingness originated from negative judgments. Negation would be at the end of the act of judgment without, however, being 'in' being. Non-being, from evidence, appears within the limits of a human expectation. It is because a physicist expects a certain verification of his hypothesis that nature can refuse to yield results. "It would be in vain to deny that negation appears on the original basis of a relation of man to the world. The world does not disclose its non-beings to one who has not first posited them as possibilities" (Sartre, p. 7).

Negation is not only a quality of judgment. It is also a pre-judicative attitude. My question can be in form of a look or gesture. In this, I stand facing being in a certain way and this relation to being is a relation of being, the judgment constitutes one optional expression of it. The expectation for the disclosure of being means to be prepared at the same time, for the even tual disclosure of a non-Being. It is itself a relation of Being with non-Being on the basis of a relation of both with Being.

Destruction can only be accomplished through man. What a geological upset or storm does, is the modification of the distribution of masses of Beings. It is incapable of

destroying directly. What we have after the storm is the same prior to it. Destruction can only be recorded if there is a relation of man to Being. Within the confines of this relation, it is essential that man apprehends one Being as destructible.

Fragility is a certain probability of non-Being. A Being is fragile if it carries in its being a definite possibility of non-Being. It is from man that fragility comes into being, for the individualizing limitation is the condition of fragility. "The relation of individualizing limitation which man enters into with one Being on the original basis of his relation to Being causes fragility to enter into this Being as the appearance of a permanent possibility of non-Being" (p.8).

The existential possibility of destruction depends on man. Thus man destroys cities which he sees fragile, or adopts protective measures i.e. in a situation in which he sees the cities as precious. The original meaning and aim of war are contained in the smallest building of man. There is the need to realize that destruction is essentially a human phenomenon. It is either that man destroys his cities directly or through an agent such as earthquake.

Destruction presupposes a prejudicative appreciation of

nothingness as such, and a conduct in the face of nothingness. That destruction comes through man in an objective fact not a thought. "Through an analysis of patterns of conduct, including the attitude of interrogation, the concept of destruction, and negative judgement, Sartre attempts to demonstrate that consciousness acts by Negation" (Greene, p. 16).

Negation represents an abrupt break in continuity which cannot in any case result from prior affirmation. It is an original and irreducible event. Similarly, consciousness cannot produce a negation except in the form of consciousness of negation. Sartre finds in the power of negation the basic relation between conscious beings and the world. "Thinking of how things are not is the indispensable to describing them, categorizing them, seeing them as desirable or hateful, and therefore, to trying to change them" (Warnock, p.22).

(vi) **Nothingness**

The relationship between Being and the essence is like the one between immediate and the mediate description which is designed to assign to human beings their place in the universe, their characteristic mode of behaviour in the face of the world and cross check one another is ultimately based

upon this fact that they, alone, bring nothingness into Being and capable of conceiving what is not so (Warnock, p. 30).

Being presupposes essence, and essence appears in relation to Being as mediate. Nevertheless, it is not the true origin. Hegel reduces Being to a signification of existent. Being is encompassed by essence, which constitutes its foundation and origin. Everything in heaven or earth contains in itself both Being and Nothingness. "To oppose Being to Nothingness, as thesis and antithesis as Hegel does, is to suppose that they are logically contemporary. Thus, simultaneously, two opposites arise as the two limiting terms of a logical series" (Sartre, 1977, 96).

The implication of this is that logically speaking, Nothingness is subsequent to Being. Therefore, Being and non-Being presupposes an irreducible mental act. Negation is incapable of touching the nucleus of the being of Being, which aims at this nucleus of absolute density. Being is prior to Nothingness and establishes the ground for it. Which is to say that it is not only that Being has a logical precedence over Nothingness but also that it is from Being that Nothingness derives concretely, its efficacy. This is exactly the same as saying that Nothingness haunts Being. Being does not need Nothingness to be conceived. The

ideals of Being can be thoroughly examined without having to come across any trace of Nothingness.

Nothingness, that is, not, can have a borrowed existence, gets it's being from Being. Non-Being exists only on the surface of Being. Human reality can make Being appear as organized totality in the world, only by surpassing Being. The appearance of the self, beyond the world; that is, beyond the totality of the real, is an emergence of human reality in Nothingness that Being can be surpassed. Also, it is from the point of view of beyond-the-world that being is organized into the world; which means, on the one hand, that the world is suspended in Nothingness. Anguish is the discovery of this double perpetual nihilation (Sartre, p. 18).

The question as to where human reality gets its power to conceive non-Being, Sartre's answer is that this power derives from consciousness or freedom which has its foundation in Nothingness. The provision of a ground for negation by Nothingness is due to the fact that Nothingness itself implies negation as its essential structure. That Nothingness is capable of negative judgement is because it is itself negation.

It will be admitted, in consonance with Heidegger that

human reality is far from itself. It rises in the world as that which creates distances and at the same time, which is responsible for their removal. "Nothingness if it is supported by Being, vanishes qua nothingness, and we fall back upon Being. Nothingness can be nihilated only on the foundation of Being (p. 21). Nothingness can neither be before nor after Being if it is given, and it cannot either be outside Being. It lies in the heart of Being.

My consciousness means that I am capable of imagining and planning that things should be other that they are. I am constantly in pursuit of possibilities. The plans I am pursuing freely are identical with my nature and character at any given time. "I have no real nature apart from my own renewed choices of what I am to be. I am in this sense empty, and my actions are perpetual flight from this Nothingness inside me" (Hampshire).

(vii) **Source of Nothingness**

The existence of negation in the world requires that nothingness be given, at the heart of Being, if we must be in a position to appreciate that particular kind of realities called 'negatives'. "The Being by which Nothingness arrives in the world is a being such that in its Being, the Nothingness of its Being is in question. The Being by which

Nothingness comes to the world must be its own Nothingness (Sartre, p. 23). It is through man that the of being Nothingness comes to the world. Being can only be generated through Being, and if man is encircled in this process of generation, then, only Being will come out of him. The ability of man to modify being is his relation with Being. The putting out of a particular existent. Given this situation, he is not subject to it, it can no longer act on him, for he has retired above Nothingness.

The precedent of freedom in man makes his existence possible, and the essence of the human being hangs on his freedom. It is difficult to differentiate between the being of man and his freedom. There is basically no difference between the Being of man and his freedom. This is so because man does not exist first so as to be free. Freedom entails human being placing his past out of play by secreting his own Nothingness. The Nothingness of original necessity of Being does not belong to consciousness intermittently and on the occasion of particular negation. "Consciousness continuously experiences itself as the nihilation of its past Being" (p. 28).

If freedom Being is the Being of consciousness, then consciousness ought to exist as a consciousness of freedom.

In freedom, a human being constitutes both his past and future in the form of nihilation. Man gets the consciousness of his freedom in anguish. Freedom is located in anguish. Anguish differs from fears. Fear means fear of being in the world whereas anguish is anguish before myself. If my life is threatened from outside, fear could be provoked. On the contrary, it is my being that provokes anguish to the extent that I no longer trust myself and my own reactions in given situation.

There is no reflection in fear. In it, there is apprehension of the transcendent. There is reflection in anguish, and the apprehension is that of self. Anguish could be seen in the light of my consciousness of my being, my own future in the mode of not-being. Anguish, precisely is the consciousness of freedom. Consciousness confronts its past and future as facing a self which it is in the mode of not-being.

It is worth noting that freedom, which is seen through anguish, is a feature of the constant renewal of obligation to remake the self which designates the free being. Anguish, which is the manifestation of freedom in the face of self, implies that man is always separated by a nothingness from his essence. Essence stands for what has been. It is

everything in human being which we can represent by the words 'that is'. Man unceasingly carries with him a prejudicative comprehension of his essence, as a result of which he is separated from it by possibility; that is, it is constituted when consciousness sees itself cut from its essence by nothingness or separated from the future by its very freedom" (p. 35). Man's consciousness while carrying out an action is non-reflective consciousness.

Ethical anguish is when I consider myself in my original relations to value. The Being of values comes from its exigency and not the reverse. It does not deliver itself to a contemplative intuition which would apprehend it as being value and thereby would remove from its right over freedom. In contrast, it can be revealed on to an active freedom which makes it exist as value by the sole fact of recognizing it as such.

It follows therefore, that my freedom constitutes the unique foundation of values. There is nothing again that justifies me in adopting any value. I am a Being through whom value exists. It is for this reason that I am anguished, that I am the foundation of values. I am submerged in a world of value to spring up.

I do not have recourse to any value against the fact that it is I

who sustain values in Being. Nothing can ensure me against myself, having been cut off from the world and from my essence by this Nothingness which I am. I have realize the meaning of the world and of my essence, I make my decision concerning them within justification and without excuse (p. 39).

Anguish can be seen, therefore, as the reflective apprehension of freedom by itself. It is opposed to the mind of the serious man, who sees values in the light of the world and who resides in the reassuring materialistic substantiation of values my obligation is constituted in the meaning my freedom has given to the world. In anguish, i realized the extent of my freedom, and that I am unable to appreciate the meaning of the world, expect the one that comes from myself. Individuals are not under the domination of a predetermined 'character' as the source of their acts... the principle of their existence lies in a profound and completely free option by which they choose themselves absolutely (Jolivet, p. 20)

To be able to see myself as the original source of my possibility is what we call consciousness of freedom. The proponents of freewill have the image of this structure of consciousness in mind when they speak of the intuition of the inner sense. To escape from anguish is not only an effort at distraction before the future, it tends also to disarm the past of its threat. The freedom of my act is rooted in the fact that is capable of reflecting my essence.

Psychological determinism denies that transcendence of human reality which makes it emerge in anguish beyond its own essence. At the same time, by reducing us to never being anything, but what we are, it reintroduces in us the absolute positivity of Being-itself and thereby reinstates us at the heart of Being (Sartre, p. 40)

However, this determinism, a reflective defence against anguish is intuition of our freedom has nothing original. It is an existing process patterned to hide from us our anguish and freedom. It is, however, difficult for us to overcome anguish for that constitutes part of existence. It is, therefore, obvious that anguish can neither be hidden nor avoided.

It is impossible to flee from anguish and be anguished at the same time. We cannot remove anguish from our consciousness nor of constituting it in an unconscious psychic phenomenon; very simply, I can make myself guilty of bad faith while apprehending the anguish which I am, and this bad faith intended to fill up the nothingness which I am, in my relation to myself, precisely implies the nothingness which it suppresses (p.44).

Conclusion

We have taken time to do a detailed analysis of Satre's existential ontology. This existential analysis of man is both ontological and phenomenological, yet it is transcendental. The theme of ontology Being. The discussion of Being is central to Sartre's ontology and this can be seen in his analysis of "Being-in-itself", "Being-for-itself", "Phenomenon", and "Nothingness." In the Husserlian

tradition, phenomenology is an egological process of the mind. It is an ontologico-epistemic system of analysis by which the mind moves from the descriptive to transcendental reduction only to sft the true essences of things. In the Heideggerian tradition, phenomenology is no longer a system of thought, but a method of technical analysis intended to put us in the state-of-mind of openness to let Being reveal itself.

For Sartre, phenomenology depicts the transcendence of the human ego, which, in its encounter with the world, imaginatively pictures things to us in accordance with our circumstances. Phenomenology in the Sartrean tradition, is the intentional operation of human consciousness, its reaching out to the objects of the world. This intentional operation of consciousness shows the transcendent ability of the human mind to vividly present things, exactly the way they are.

By and large, Sartre's phenomenological and ontological analysis of human consciousness is also existential in nature, because it is through human existence that the whole transcendental processes of the mind take place. Sartre, in contrast with Heidegger, chooses to focus on the existential and ontological analysis of man as opposed to Being. It is this detailed ontologico-existential analysis of man that maps out Sartre's existential ontology as the most lucid and simplest analysis of human existence. This takes us to the issue of freedom.

Freedom is the central thesis of Sartre's existential ontology. In fact, in the history of Western Philosophy, no other

philosopher makes freedom the centrepoint of his philosophy than Sartre. Sartre brought the notion of a universally free man into philosophy.

Nevertheless, Sartre's notion of freedom cannot be understood outside his analysis of "Being" "Nothingness" and "Consciousness". Needless to say, that his conception of freedom determines what constitutes authentic acts or bad faith. Thus, human authentic existential affirmation or rejection of his state of Being determines the realm of human freedom.

However, it is to be noted that even though "man is the architect of his own fortunes, he is not the ultimate initiator, he is not the overlord" (Unah, p. 179). Thus it is not every time that man tries to assert himself and demonstrate his independent will, take responsibility for his actions, which is a reflection of freedom of choice in spite of the circumstances. Unpreparedness to accept responsibility for our actions is the bane of leadership in the modern world, especially in the developing world. Authentic existence and avoidance of bad faith offer solution to this problem.

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ONTOLOGICAL EVALUATION OF AFRICAN CONCEPT OF TIME: RELEVANCE TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF CONTEMPORARY AFRICA

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Introduction

We begin by stating that time is a universal concept in the humanly mind. Granted that out knowledge of time is gathered from the events, activities and experiences around us, our idea of time goes beyond the empirical. Hence, time is not an empirical concept, but a metaphysical notion that derives from the human rational power of transcendence and cognition (Kant, 1970, 74-75). Since time is a metaphysical concept that derives from man's power of rationality, transcendence and cognition, we say that it is a concept in the human mind. This is exactly what we mean by "the ontological evaluation of the concept of time".

But what exactly do we mean by the expression "time is a universal concept?" To answer this question, we begin by reminding ourselves that time exists nowhere else but in our minds. What this means is that there is no Mister or Missis time out there or here. The notion or concept of time exists in

me, in you, in us. That is, the idea of time is, first and foremost, subjective before it is objective. There is no universal chart of time with which everybody must always comply. Therefore, when we say that the concept of time is universal, we simply mean that every entity (i.e., peoples and cultures) has the ontological (metaphysical) capacity to conceive and conceptualize time in its own way. In other words, time as a concept that exists in the minds of all human beings is universal, but since time cannot be separated from activities, it is left for every people of the world to concretize time by acculturating or developing their own concept of time which should be woven round every societal or communal event.

This essay aims at examining the concept of time from an African perspective. To do this, we shall look at the Igbo society in the South-east Nigeria, and from time to time, we shall also make references to the Akan of Ghana. This is to present a thorough evaluation of African concept of time and to facilitate our assertion that, given that it is ontological, time cannot be separated from human physical activities. However, our task will be incomplete if we to highlight terms such as transcendence and cognition, and show how they relate to time. Simply put, transcendence is the human capacity or power for creativity, invention and

discovery. It is the native ability latent in man for going beyond physical experience into pure mental constructions, which results into the transformation of our environment. Thus, transcendence is human capacity for development. Cognition on the other hand, is the rational power to decipher and to distinguish this state of affair, fact from fiction, good from bad etc. Therefore, cognition is man's mental capacity for self-awareness and accurate judgment. These human abilities for transcendence and cognition, incidentally, constitute the sources of human wisdom. The wisdom to introspect upon the past, reflect about the present and to project into the future. The power for hindsight and foresight, to decode the riddle of life, detect danger and proffer solutions to problems; all constitute the human capacity for wisdom. The up shot of all these, is that in practical terms, time cannot be separated from progress and development.

Igbo Ontology And Cosmology

In philosophy, ontology is the study of Being or reality in its broad general outlook, while cosmology is the study of the structure (i.e. the laws that govern and the elements that make up) the universe. Sometimes ontology is used to depict the human transcendent power for rationality and cognition and ability for invention, discovery, judgment and

development. Hence, to speak of Igbo ontology and cosmology is to make examination of Igbo cultural worldview, which forms the basis of Igbo concept of time.

Igbo ontology and cosmology is cultural. For the Igbo, time is not an abstract concept but a series of activities and lived experiences. The Igbo thought process and world outlook is dualistic in character. This dualism is depicted by the reciprocity between the ontological and cosmological worlds. The ontological represents the spirit realm while the cosmological represents the physical world. However, there is no divide between the spirit realm and the physical world. In fact, it is unthinkable to talk of a dichotomy between the spirit and material worlds because the Igbo worldview abhors absolutism. According to K. C. Anyanwu, "the Igbo world view cannot condone regimentations because there is a continuous intermingling and interdependence between spirits (forces) and the material world" (1981-87). Chieke Ifemessia captures this better when he states as follows:

> *In Igbo cosmology, nothing is absolute. Everything, everybody, however apparently independent, depends upon something, upon somebody else... interdependence... exhibited now as duality or reciprocity, now as ambivalence or complementarity's... has always been the fundamental principle of the Igbo philosophy of life (pp. 67, 68).*

Chinweizu makes a further illustration of the duality of Igbo cosmology or what he (Chinweizu) describes as the "concentric circles" of the Igbo world. "Beginning with the household, the domestic family consists of *Ndi nwem na Ndi m nwe* (i.e. those who own me and those who 'I own), the Kith and Kin *Ikwu n'ibe* (i.e. relatives and companions), the polity consists of *Oha n 'Eze* (i.e. the public and the King)" (Chineweizu, 1993, 2), while ones total lineage consists of *Umu nna la Umunne* (i.e. patrilineage and matrilineage).

Igbo cosmology is hierarchical in structure. There are the worlds of the spirits (i.e. gods, divinities, ancestors and unborn children), the world of man, and the world of animals and inanimate things. Man is at the centre of this triad, playing the link between the spirit world and the world of things. This way, the umbilical cord between the spirit world and the material world of things remains unsevered. This may explain why the Igbo society is patrilineal. Each family struggles to get male siblings to ensure that the relationship between the living and the dead continues. This way, "the dead continue in their lineage, they are organized in lineages with patrilineal emphasis just as are those on earth. The principle of seniority makes the ancestors the head of the lineage and this gives the lineage its stability and

continuity"(Uchendu, 1965,12).

Further, the hierarchical triad of the worlds of spirit, man, animals inanimate things which form the basis of Igbo cosmology also constitute the foundation for Igbo concept of time. The first thing to note is that this hierarchical triad is cyclical in nature. This cycle or triad consists of the world of the ancestors which represent, the past, the world of human beings which represents the present, and the world of spirits or unborn children which depicts the future in that order. Again, there is no dichotomy or hitch between these three levels of world as they are nearly rolled into one strap or weaned. The ancestral world does not precede the spiritual world, neither do these other two supersede the world of mortals. Ancestors reincarnate as children, children grow to human beings (mortals) acting as the passage way or the interlinks between the world of ancestor and unborn children.

This cycle, as Placid Temples says, can be compared with the network system of the spider's web, in which everything is interconnected and this interconnectivity must not be broken or else a great imbalance will erupt within the cosmos or polity. So is the triad between the past, the present and the future. The past and the future

exist in our minds, in our memories. Therefore, the present is the passage way, or the interlink into the future. To rupture this cycle or triad is to cause great disharmony or imbalance in human social activities.

Anyanwu, an Igbo, in evaluating the African concept of space and time, states that: "Space and time in African culture are forces and do not exist independently of the force in them. Rather they interact with forces. These are lived facts, intuitively grasped experiences not mathematically defined and measured. They are multi-dimensional. The future can be long and short and so also is the past. But the past and the future find unity in the now; that is, the present, living experience... the community embodies the totality of the lived and the living experiences, of the past and the future. The African speaks of and seeks the personal connection between the past and the future, between him and God, divinities, ancestors, spirit, the living dead, the future generation and the present communities. So, he speaks of initiation of spiritual passage form one level of existence to another" (Anyanwu, p. 97).

Frankly speaking, Anyanwu's description of African notion of space and time is not different from that of the Igbo. For the Igbo, space and time are not pure abstract concepts but

existential concepts lived culturally and captured in our daily activities as witnessed in the mystical life-cycle or rites of passages such as the Age-grade system. M. A. Onweujeogwu, evaluating the Nri (Igbo) sub-culture states as follows:

> *Age-grade is seen as a movement of the future through the present in the past. the future is transferred into the present by various ritual initiation ceremonies; the present transformed into the past by retirement and mortuary rites; and the past transformed into the future by reincarnation (1997, 11 - 56)*

We are now set to examine the Igbo conception of time.

Time as Conceived by the Igbo

Igbo traditional conception of time is anthropological or cultural. Time is captured in the sequence of days, weeks, months and years which are expressed as follows:

Ubosi or *Ubochi*	-	Day
Anyasi (*Anyasu*)	-	Night
Izu	-	week
Onwa	-	Month
Aho, or *Aro*, or *Afo*	-	Year

A day is known as *Ofu Ubochi*, two days is *Ubochi Abua*, three days is *Ubochi Ato*, etc. A week is *Ofu Izu*, two weeks is *Izu Abua*, three weeks is *Izu Ato* etc. The same applies to months (*Onwa*) and years (*Aho* or *Aro*).

Time, in Igbo, is known as *Oge*, which is used in representing various lengths of time as follows:

Oge	-	Time
Oge mbu	-	First time
Oge Ikpeazu	-	The last time
Oge na Oge	-	From time to time
Oge a	-	This time
Ofu oge	-	Once upon a time
Oge Obula	-	Everytime

Time as a triad of past, present an future is depicted as follows:

Oge Garaaga	-	In the past
Ugbua or Kita	-	Present
Taata	-	Today
Oge Odinihu	-	In the future

Other expressions used in depicting the sequence or passage of time include:

Na mbu	-	In the past

Ugbu Ugbau
or *kita kita*
(sometimes also
expressed as-
Udunu Udunu) - This moment

All of the above listed belong to what is called "indefinite time" (Onwuejeogwu p. 112). Onwuejeogwu further explains that there is "another aspect of indefinite time" (p.112) which is the period outside human memories. This notion of time prevails in the form of myths. It is in sense that the Igbo will use the expression *Nisimbido* meaning "in the beginning of time" or "from the beginning of time."

Cultures or people have created mythological stories to explain away the primeval days, which were not experienced by man. Such is the case with the stories about Adam and Eve, the Garden of Eden, the Fall, the Tower of Babel, etc., which cover the first eleven chapters of the Bible. Among the Igbo, the primeval days of man are represented in folktales and allegories as depicted by animals such as the "tortoise" which symbolizes wisdom and the affinity between the spirit world (i.e heaven) and the physical world of human beings until desecration (by a woman) forced God to retreat from humans.

In all, Igbo conception of time can be classified under two major headings which include: "Short Periods" and "Long Periods" (Onwuejeogwu pp. 112, 115). We now examine these types of periods.

Short Periods

These consist of U*bochi* or U*bosi* (day), *Izu* (week), O*nwa* (month) and *Oha* or A*ro*, or A*fo* (year). Each of the aforementioned has its own structure, which is premised on the structure of time itself. Igbo structure of time is expressed as follows:

Ntabianya	-	seconds
Nkeji	-	minutes
Elekere	-	hours

All of these combined in twenty-four hours make an *Ubochi* or *Ubosi* which itself is structured as follows:

Ututu	-	morning or the period of sun rising
Ehihie or Efifie	-	noon or the period when the sun is high
Mgbede	-	evening or the period of sun falling
Anyasi (Anyasu)	-	nightfall
Uchichi	-	the period of complete darkness
Ndaeri or N'ime Anyasi (Anyasu)	-	dead of night or mid night

Sometimes days (*ubochi* or *ubosi*) are used to represent the past, present and future in the immediate or not so distant period. For instance:

Ubochi or Ubosi taata	-	today
Unyaahu or echi	-	yesterday
Nwanne unyaahu or Echi garaaga	-	two days ago
Tu·toro (nwanne) unyaahu or echi echi	-	three days ago
Garaaga	-	four days ago etc.
Echi	-	tomorrow
Nwanne echi or echi na-abia	-	in two days time
Tuntoro (nwanne) echi or Echi echi na abia	-	in three days time
Tuntoro toro (nwanne) echi	-	in four days time, etc.

The Igbo *Izu* or week is made up of four days, which include O*rie* or O*ye, Aho* or *Afo*, E*ke* and N*kwo*. These incidentally form the Igbo market days and also backgrounds from which Igbo name their children. For example, one born on *Orie* or *Oye* is known as *Okorie* or *Okoye*; one born on *Afo* is *Okoroaho* or *Okoroafo* one born on *Nkwo* is *Okonkwo,* etc.

In the same way, the Igbo *Onwa* (month) consists of seven (7) *Izu* or weeks as follows:

Ofu izu	-	1st four-day	=	4 days
Izu naabo	-	2nd four-day	=	8days
Izu ato	-	3rd four-day	=	12days
Izu ano	-	4th four-day	=	16days
Izu ise	-	5th four- day	=	20days
Izu isii	-	6th four- day	=	24days
Izu asaa	-	7th four-day	=	28days

For the Igbo, twenty-eight (28) days make one month (*Onwa*), and thirteen (13) lunar or moon months make a year. Illustrating the significance of the *aho* or *aro* using the Nri sub-culture, Onwuejeogwu explains that *aro*, like the four market days, depicts the name of a "supernatural deity that controls all the activities of the year and all epidemic diseases that occur within that year. Besides, it is the sole prerogative of the Eze Nri, within the Nri Kingdom, to declare the close of an old year and announce the opening of a new year in a ceremony called *Igu aro*" (p. 114). Therefore, for the Nri and the Igbo people in general, all the cultural and economic activities are tied around the various seasons of the year. Adjustments are made where necessary. The same applies to the farming cycle. January and February are the months of preparation when the bushes are cleared, burnt and consultations made.

Between March and April, cultivation begins and when the first rains come latest by May, planting had begun. Between May and June, the rains are full. Weeding and tendering of the farms commerce in earnest. By June, planting (of yam) is completed. June to July is the period for harvesting corn. It is during this period that children gather round their parents, roasting and eating corn and pears, as they ward off the cold

winds of the rainy season. July to August is the season of yam harvest (Igbo King of all crops) signifying the season of new yams or yam festival (the *Ihejioku* or *Ifejioku*). Latest, by October, the final harvests are done (Uchendu, p. 25) and from November, when the harmattan returns in full force, the land is left to fallow in readiness for the next season's farming activities. The Igbo farming circle is well represented by Nnabuihe in the form of a calendar entitled *Omenala Igbo* 1997.

Long Periods

Using the Nri as example, Onwuejeogwu explains that the Nri have three notions of the "long period" of time and this include i*ma atu*, age grade and n*dudugandu*. The first refers to the remembrance of important events in a relative order of occurrence - e.g, the period of cowry currency, the period when cassava was first introduced into Nri land. The second, depicts the rights of passage through infancy to maturity and old age until one passes away into the world of the ancestors and reincarnates to repeat the same cycle. *Ndudugandu* depicts genealogical structures by which the Nri and the Igbo in general, record the history of the various generations that make up the totality of the Nri or Igbo community as represented in the endless cycles of time (Onwuejeogwu, p.115).

Time as Futuristic

There are practices and sayings among the Igbo of Nigeria

and the Akan of Ghana which show that traditional Africans also made planned for the future. This is seen in the practice of divination and in certain aphorisms or proverbs of the Igbo and Akan. Kwame Gyekye defines divination as 'the attempt to discover future events by some extraordinary or supernatural means" (1975, 90). Onwuejeogwu on his part explains that the act of divination stems from the ontological and cosmological structure of African culture in which unhindered rapport exists between the spiritual and the physical worlds.

This ontological background also forms the basis for African epistemological conception of the world which in the first place makes divination understandable. Since a close affinity exists between the supernatural and natural world, it follows that knowledge about the biography of an individual or the historical data of a society can be gathered through divination. Just as man is the interlink between the supernatural and the natural, so is the *dibia afa* or diviner, the midwife between a spirit deity and fortune seeker. The *dibia* takes care of the knowledge gathered from the spirit world by the methods of interpretation and explanation (Onwuejeogwu, p. 112).

Divination is done for various purposes. Sometimes, it is done to know the cause of a present mishap. At some other times, it is done with the intention of projecting into the future. To project into the future or to be futuristic is to seek to know about possible future occurrences and to make adequate plans or preparation for them. Yet, at some other times, divinations are done with the intention of having

fore-knowledge of an ancestor that is about to reincarnate. This is often done when a woman is pregnant; and the purpose is to enable the family prepare adequately for the coming stranger; and to equally prepare the new infant for the actualization of the infant's destiny. As Gyekye puts it, Africans indulge in the act of divination because they believe in the knowledge that" time is associated with change, process and events" (1996.171).

Besides, there are also Igbo and Akan proverbs and dirges that depict hope and plan for the future. Let us examine some of these aphorisms and dirges.

A. Some Akan proverbs and dirges depicting time as change, process and sequence of events as outlined by Kwame Gyekye.

Proverbs

(i) Time is like a bird; if you do not catch it and it *flies*, you do not see it again.

(ii) **Akan**
Bere di adannan
Time changes.

(iii) **Akan**
Bere akonnwa yenni nka so
No one reigns forever on the throne of time.

Dirge

(i) **Akan**

Bere wo n'ehyee; yenni nira

Time has its boundary; we do not traverse it; man is but mortal; however hard he struggles he will depart (this world).

(B) Some Akan and Igbo Proverbs depicting time as future and hope:

Akan

(i) ***Amankue se: onim se okom nti na okuturuu okoro.***

The rhinoceros beetle says he knew that famine would come which is why he scraped the young raffia palm leaves to store.

(ii) The vulture says he is learning to walk in the royal manner for someday (***dabi***) a day unknown to him, when he might be made a king.

Igbo

(i) ***Udele si na ya nwere olileanya***
n' ime nwunye ya di n'ihi na o
muo nwoke, o buru okpera udele,
o muo nwaanyi, o buru ada udele
o mukwanu ozu nwa,
o buru nri diri udele. O nweghi nke
daputara ga-agho ya ahia

The vulture hopes concerning his

wife's pregnancy, should it be a male, it will become the vulture's son, should it be a female, it will become the vulture's daughter, and should it be a still birth, then, there will be food for the vulture. Whichever way it happens , it is not going to be a loss for the vulture.

(ii) ***Nwamkpi si gbawara ya afa***
ndu hapu nke uto maka na onye
di ndu aghaghi ito eto

Billy-goat requests for life divination instead of growth divination; for, whoever lives, has hope (of growth).

(iii) ***Aguu nwere nchekube anaghi egbu egbu***
One with hope (for the future) does not despair.

(iv) ***Ogadimma***
It will be well.

(C) Some Igbo proverbs depicting plan for the future.

(i) ***Omengwangwa na-ato n'uzo.***
Slow and steady wins the race.

(ii) ***Omengwangwa na-emeghara odachi.***
A stitch in time saves nine.

(iii) ***Mgbe e mere, mgbe e mere, na-akpo ekwo***

aja

Procrastination is the thief of time.

Going by the above account, we can proceed to argue that John Mbiti's assertion that Africans have no notion of indefinite future time is spurious. In the book, African Religious and Philosophy, Mbiti argues that African notion of time is two dimensional. He maintains that African concept of time consists of a huge past a(*Zamani*) and the present (*sasa*). *Zammani* is like the huge or inexhaustible chasm into which the present continually rolls. *sasa* as the present, fades into the depth of *Zamani* which is the consuming time. The idea of a future is completely missing. If there is a future, it occurs as part of the present or *sasa*. Projections into the future, according to Mbiti, does not go beyond six(6) months or two (2) years, at most. Mbiti then concludes that for the African, time elapses into an indefinite past and that the implication, is that Africans do not deliberately plan towards the future, except, within the confines of the present or *sasa*.

Kwame Gyekye totally disagrees with Mbiti. He posits that Mbiti's position can be true for the African peoples of East Africa, but to extend the same position to include all Africans, amounts to over generalization. From our analysis and illustration of Igbo conception of time, and from our reference to Akan aphorisms and dirge about time, it is quite obvious that the tripartite dimension or approach to time is not at all alien to the African continent. For, it is absolutely impossible to locate a group of *Homo sapiens* who lack anticipation and who have no desires and ambitions to achieve.

Conclusion

We end exactly how we started. We began by stating that the idea of time cannot be separated from progress and development. This is to say time is plain, time is design, time is action. No doubt, the source of time derives from the human powers of transcendence and cognition. The only way to de nonstrate these powers is through the concrete actualisation of our dreams in our day-to-day activities. This is why the concept of time is further connected to other concepts such as finitude, causality, teleology and intentionality.

Finitude refers to the human life span or the inability to live forever. Causality is the ability to link or connect one event to another. It also depicts the sequence or succession of events. Teleology represents the power to project and plan towards the future, while intentionality depicts man's power of transcendence and cognition to always identify his purpose and object off interest for effective planning and co-ordination of his daily transactions.

All the four concepts (finitude, causality, teleology and internationality) remind us that we are finite or mortal beings. Nevertheless, our powers of planning and judgement, and the ability to identify our purpose should alert us to the fact that we have the capacity to set our goals and achieve our desires and ambitions. Consequently, time refers to progress and development, prediction and the resoluteness to remain committed, dogged, and disciplined in accomplishing the plans, goals and tasks we have set for ourselves. Time as development is the ability to be tenacious

and consistently dogged towards achieving our set objectives. To demonstrate these abilities constitutes wisdom and to do otherwise, amounts to foolishness. The difference between contemporary Africans and their ancestors is that, whereas the ancestors demonstrated great strides of originality and wisdom, today's Africans seem to have signed a pact with foolishness and backwardness. To be time conscious is to be in charge of one's destiny. It means that one is in control of one's activities. To be time conscious is to show one's strength or power in the mastery of one's environment and to be wise or ingenious in the management of resources. These are the lessons we stand to gain by making an ontological evaluation of African concept of time.

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THE MIND AND TRANSCENDENCE AS *DASEIN*'S ESSENTIAL NATURE

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Introduction

The matter of the mind has been a perplexing one since the beginning of philosophy as a human endeavour. It started as a dualistic dilemma commonly referred to as the mind-body problem. In the post-modern era, this dualism thinned out into some kind of monism in which we are perplexed by the very ordinary question: where is the mind? At the higher intellectual level, we are troubled by the controversial capacity of the mind to create meaning, and in this bafflement, many critical questions beg for answers.

Questions such as: Is the mind at the centre of the Being talk? Does the mind mean much to human life in the face of brazen reality before man? Is it structurally designed to make meaning? What type of meaning, if at all it does make meaning? Is it man that gives meaning to the mind or the mind that gives meaning to man? In short, what is the meaning of meaning where the mind is the issue? Where is the place of ontology in the scheme of the

mind? Is Martin Heidegger's *Dasein* the best philosophical parameter for interpreting and giving meaning to man's mind? Specifically, what role does transcendence play in the ontology, which Martin Heidegger posited? Do we have any relationship with Heidegger's *Dasein*? These are the questions that come to the fore. They are central to the focus of this paper.

In pursuing this endeavour therefore, the paper argues that Heidegger's transcendental ontology is a radicalization of the infinite capacity of the mind to create meaning. We set out to open up the ramifications of meaning; and we attempt to weigh and reconstruct traditional ontology in the mould of a fundamental option, showing the role played by the factor of transcendence in this ontology, on the basis of which we analyze the nature and notion of *Dasein*.

By so doing, we will show how this *Dasein* affects our daily existence as appendages of the Being that Heidegger sought to redirect our attention to. The arguments that we put forward are rooted in Heidegger's proposition that, it is only through phenomenology that we can best understand or grasp the meaning of ontology.

The Meanings of Meaning

The problem of meaning is said to be within the ambit of

philosophy of language. It is presented in this question: what do we mean when we say what we say? Do we always mean what we say? Do we always say what we mean? With the word 'say,' we have no problem, or at least it is not within our purview. But we have problem with the word 'mean', more so when it is central to the endeavour of this paper.

A. C. Ewing says when we have a problem such as this in philosophy, the first thing we should do is to seek wisdom in meaning.[1] It is for this reason that we find it imperative to painstakingly find out the various meanings of meaning.

We cannot but look for meaning. We will always, as a matter of fact, search for the meaning of things. Even the attempt to prove that something is meaningless is a search for meaning. An example is the intention of empiricists to use the notion of verifiability to assert the meaninglessness of metaphysics. According to Ewing, every attempt to withdraw the meaning of meaning from metaphysics ends up restoring what is purportedly withdrawn. Where meaning is denied, meaning is given.[2]

Meaning, according to William Alston, is referential, ideational and behavioral.[3] The referential theory is the most common and simple approach to the treatment of meaning. It says meaning must subscribe to something other than itself. The ideational

theory says that meaning must mark out an idea: the use of words "is to be sensible marks of ideas; and the ideas they stand for are their proper and immediate signification".[4] The behavioral theory says that meaning must be open to public understanding and generate response. In this regard, meaning is the situation in which the speaker utters something and gets the response he expected from the hearer.[5]

In his own analysis of meaning, J. Royce says, that an idea, apart from being a fragment of absolute experience, has both internal and external meanings.[6] The purpose, which an idea fulfills, is the internal meaning, while the external meaning is that which is outside the idea, but which the idea refers to. Internal meaning is, therefore, purpose-motivated while external meaning is pictorially or existentially referential. What we get from Royce is that meaning cannot be established without the background or foundation of an idea. In other words, idea is an ontological property of meaning.

John Yolton says that in dealing with the issue of meaning, we cannot avoid the idea of reference, and that meaning also deals with the matter of truth which is itself contained in the claim of truth. Therefore, reference and truth are two ontologies of meaning:

The recognition of the dependence of meaning

upon reference is especially important when dealing with metaphysical assertions. Metaphysical statements certainly those of a dualist nature must, if they are to have their metaphysical force, have more meaning than would be disclosed by attention to their use in their context. Attention to the context of utterance is important in metaphysics as well as in all other forms of utterance. But we must realize at the same time, that those statements mean more than is revealed by their interconnection to a system; they claim to make extra-linguistic reference. This reference is an inseparable part of meaning. Thus, a long range value of a re-examination of meaning and reference lies in an explication of metaphysics.[7]

Yolton's explication of meaning joins issues with Ludwig Wittgenstein and the Neo-Wittgensteinians (such as Ryle and Strawson) who say that meaning is within itself and that it bears no allegiance to reference. For them, meaning and reference are distinct because tying meaning to reference is walking back into infinite regress and is, indeed, a retrogressive activation of the mind. Meaning should not be conceived or explained in terms of what it refers to:

To give the meaning of any expression, then, I must give you the rules for the use of that expression. These rules are the meaning. This must mean an utterance like 'the dog is running', means something like the following: if there is a four-legged animal with tail and bark, which is running, then this sentence may appropriately be uttered. If we ask for the meaning of the terms in this utterance, for example, of 'four-legged', 'bark', 'running', you would have to give me a similar set of rules for their use, for example, when you hear a sound of the following sort (you then bark or arrange to have a dog bark), you may use the term 'bark', etc. Some set of rules, fiats, conventions... expressions and sentences are meaningful even in the absence of referents; hence their meaning cannot be referents.[8]

In A. De Morgan's book, *Formal Logic*, it is written that an idea is meaning in itself; it is not an extension of meaning, and it is not an external property of meaning. An idea is an 'is.' This is-ness is the meaning of an idea. In other words, meaning is idea and idea is meaning.[9] John Passmore says De Morgan's assertion is in consonance with the proposition of meaning given by Bradley, that "...ideas never 'float', are never complete in themselves but always appear as somehow attached to a reality which they

qualify, as a characterizing ingredients in a judgment. The idea, that is, has no existence except as meaning."[10]

Meaning is articulated in C. S. Peirce's semiotics or theory of signs. In it, Peirce says that signs give meaning to all human thoughts. Signs mean something to consciousness and they must refer to something other than themselves. Apart from the sign-related interpretation of ordinary meaning, we also get from Peirce an exposition of what is referred to as conceptual meaning or meaning built on concepts; or the activity of conceptualization that takes place in the mind.

> *The conceptual meaning has not only the general value of the pure concept but also a conditional or terminal aspect. Its conditional aspect resides in the fact that it induces a mental attitude, which is a disposition to action. The conceptual meaning of the object and sign tend to dispose the man to act in a certain general way when certain general circumstances present themselves to him. Its terminal aspect resides in the fact that, being a principle of action, this meaning does not need further interpretation.*[11]

What we get here is that meaning can be found in action; action referring to the activation of the mind. In other words, meaning is an ontological property of the mind. The activation of the mind

gives meaning to the mind itself and by the same token, the mind ascribes meaning to the concepts, which it produces or creates. The mind conceives and delivers from itself, concepts, the conception of action and the motivation of the same action. This way, the mind really has no choice but to create meaning. This is what Caponigri calls "pragmatistic"[12] meaning.

On his part, Brand Blanshard contends that it is wrong to see meaning in terms of the physical, the semiotic, and the publicly verifiable. He decries the philosophical endeavour which attempts to make the study of meaning scientific, instead of ontological. He said that discussions on meaning "have often been conducted carefully in such a way as to avoid any suggestion that, in meaning something, we never think of it, since to think is to be conscious and consciousness is not 'publicly verifiable.'[13] Even if we argue that the body impacts on the consciousness, Blanshard says, it is important to treat meaning in a way that it is beneficial to our understanding of the ontology of man. Against this background, Blanshard locates the power to make meaning in the mind:

> *There is no reason why we should not think and speak meaningfully of the self, of other minds, and, whether or not it exists, of a divine mind. We can freely think of non-sensible relations of implication, of likeness and difference, of time, of causality; we can reflect upon whether causality*

involves implication and whether the world is therefore a necessary system. We can discuss responsibly the new world of science with its unsensed waves and particles, and its imperceptible laws. We can talk of numbers, finite and infinite, and of existing things that no one has ever perceived or even though of. We need not dismiss freedom as a matter of words, or rule out immortality as unthinkable and we may be able to follow Plato and Aquinas with some understanding as they speculate about creation. We can still debate the meaning of goodness without fear that they will be ruled out as senseless.[14]

All the above treatments of meaning can be summed up in two meanings of meaning presented by John Dewey. These are Essential meaning and Existential meaning.[15] Essential meaning is based on the notion of essence. It is that which is ascribed to a thing holistically and unitarily. Thus, the thing has no capacity to acquire any further meaning. Meaning here deals exclusively with the essence of the thing, the sense in which it presents itself and nothing else. Meaning here is completely metaphysical, singular and therefore does not have infinite potentials. That is why Dewey says that: essence is but a pronounced instance of

meaning... for the meaning seized upon as essence may designate extensive and recurrent consequences... Since the consequences, which are liked have an emphatic quality, it is not surprising that many consequences, even though recognized to be inevitable, are regarded as if they were accidental and alien. Thus the very essence of a thing is identified with those consummatory consequences, which the thing has when conditions are felicitous. Thus, the essence, the one, immutable and constitutive, which makes the thing what it is, is the meaning of the thing.[16] This is unlike what we have under existential meaning.

Existential meaning is that which a particular existent possesses by virtue of its being or existence. But having several properties to its existence, each property has its own meaning. All these converge in the overall existential meaning of the existent. Dewey gives an example of an existent identified as 'paper', which has the uppermost meaning of 'something to be written on'. The same paper has many other explicit meanings: "Since possibilities of conjunctions are endless and since the consequences of any of them may at some time be significant, its potential meanings are endless.[17]

We accept the potentiality in meaning and say that meaning can only occur where there is an existent. Only an existent can give

meaning to meaning. This means that meaning is ontologically existential. Meaning from this perspective, is infinite. It continues to bring about new things, which we may hitherto not have seen. Secondly, we accept that meaning, whether actually or potentially, can be traced to the workings of the mind. For an existent to give meaning to a thing, such an existent must have a mind. Without mind, not only do we lack consciousness, not only do we lack existence, we principally cannot give meaning to things. Thus, giving meaning, creating meaning is ontologically, a function of the mind and a proof of existence.

The Meaning of Ontology

Generally, ontology is defined as "the branch of philosophy that deals with Being".[18] Ontology is defined by Aristotle as the study of "Being qua Being and the properties inherent in it in virtue of its own nature"[19] Immanuel Kant refers to ontology as "the more general properties of things, the difference between spiritual and material beings".[20] Robert Caponigri identified three types of ontology: fundamental ontology, general ontology and transcendental ontology.[21] Fundamental ontology, he says, is the analysis of existence, the duty of constituting inquiry into the true meaning of Being. General ontology is the metaphysical meaning of Being as an absolute, universal conception; an idea of a Being which overshadows and controls all things in the universe. Transcendental ontology is the analytical inquiry into the existence of man and those things, which present themselves

to man, that is, the being of man and other beings in man's purview.

Ontology, according to Stephan Korner, is about the nature of the primary thing. That is, the Being on which all other things depend. It is not about the secondary or that which takes its very existence from another thing. It is not about Being *generalis* or being in general. It is about Being *specificia* or Being specifically or that which gives meaning or existence to others. Ontology concerns itself with the first principle, the first cause, the fundamental, the seed, the ultimate. Stephan Korner says that although 'Being' is used in many senses, (e.g. as that Being of substances, of the modification of substances, of the process directed towards the emergence of substances, of the destruction or privations of substances), the fundamental Being is the being of substances on which all other senses of 'Being' depend.[22]

Jim Unah says that research into ontology is a necessity. For us to secure the truth of Being, we must apply ourselves to essential thought, to ontological research. It is by so doing that "ontological research can dwell in the neighbourhood of Being".[23] It is based on this conviction that Unah affirms that ontology is "the study of being precisely as being. It means the study of pure being".[24] In order to aid our understanding of ontology, he presents to us six types of ontology namely: regional ontology[25], pure ontology[26],

applied ontology[27] fundamental ontology[28], traditional ontology[29], and phenomenological ontology[30]

Regional ontology is the study of particular spheres of reality while pure ontology is the study of broad, general, undiluted reality. Fundamental ontology is the study of man who is the seat of finite transcendence or the source of objectivity. Applied ontology is the phenomenological study of the world as an ontological scene requiring mitigation, organization, conflict resolution, tolerance, provision of leadership and the creation of the opportunity for world citizenship.

Under his exposition of the traditional treatment of ontology, Unah directs our attention to the categorical statement made by Parmenides to the effect that "Being, the One, is and that becoming, change is illusion. For if anything comes to be, then it comes either out of being or out of not-being. If the former, then it already is, in which case it does not come to be, if the latter, then it is nothing, since out of nothing comes nothing".[31]

According to Unah, though Parmenides pioneered the thought on Being, the ancient Greek philosopher, however, created the first real problem through the emphasis on what is, at the expense of what is not. In other words, Parmenides negated and annihilated nothing or the potentiality in nothingness. It is on this basis that

Unah questions the sense in the Parmenidian conjecture, which is the springboard of traditional ontology.[32] Traditional ontology sought to destroy the being which was constructed and deny the infinite potentiality of reality. Traditional ontology is problematic if we are to use it to interpret Being into a more profound meaning. That is that being could be an idea. It means that every idea or meaning has always existed and that the mind lacks the potency to produce new ideas or meanings that hitherto did not exist. Our analysis of meaning, particularly existential meaning, indicates that this is not true. That is why Unah says that the consequences of traditional ontology are metaphysical and terroristic in character and therefore grievous for mankind.

> *This is because the conception of being has been confused, distorted and perverted by the tradition of Western philosophy. The tradition of Western ontology is a tradition that identifies a principle of being, insists that the identified principle is the only 'true story' about reality and struggles to trample upon whatever does not fit into its universe of meaning. What is trampled upon in time, re-emerges to assert itself and avenge itself of the violence done to it by its repudiator or trampler. This pattern goes on and on until it reaches a point where global disaster or collective suicide is imminent.*[33]

Having explicated the danger and unacceptability of traditional ontology, Unah takes us through the phenomenological treatment of ontology, which is basically Heidegger's ontology.

Concerning Heidegger's ontology, three main questions are asked: what is being? what do we discover through being? and to whom do we put the question concerning being? Heidegger's answers to these questions are very clear:

> *What is being asked is being itself; what should be achieved through the demand is the determination of the meaning of being (Sinn des Seins). The crucial point is: to whom can the question rightly be put? Obviously, the question can be meaningfully addressed only to a being, i.e. a principle or subject actually exercising the act of being, for being is always the property of some principle. The objects of nature cannot be questioned on this point; they do not possess the knowledge of the meaning of being, or if they possess it, they are silent. With man, the case is different. He alone among all identifiable and describable 'beings' can become the interlocutor, the interrogated (Befgrates), in this inquiry...Man is not only the interrogated; he is also the interrogator. He alone can put the question of the*

meaning of being just as he alone can respond to it.[34]

Having stated that phenomenology is all about finding out the meaning of things, Unah reechoes the Heideggerian instruction that if we want to grasp the true meaning of Being, achieve the transparent understanding of ontology, we need the instrument of phenomenology to do so without any fear of being stifled, cowed or led astray. Phenomenology begins with a discussion of how things manifest, display or show themselves. A thing has the ontological capacity to show itself "in many different ways. Primarily, however, there are two ways in which a thing can show itself. It can either show itself as it is or it can show itself as it is not. When a thing shows itself precisely as it is in itself, the mode of showing is called *manifest*. But when a thing shows itself as something which in itself it is not, then the showing becomes *semblance*, that is when a thing 'merely seem like' something which in itself it is not".[35]

The implication of the phenomenological treatment of ontology is that the Being, which we study, must be seen as having infinite capacity, which includes the ability to distort things, mystify things, or twist reality. This is why Being must be approached with the phenomenological attitude, an attitude which unburdens us with obscuring misconceptions;[36] an attitude which helps us to remove prejudices, authenticate truth and separate that which is

real from that which is unreal. It is with this attitude that we can receive a phenomenon both as it is and as it is not. The idea that only a being as it is, would be accepted for investigation, while non-being would be rejected, is not the demand of phenomenological orientation in ontology.[37] That disposition and discipline is a thing of the mind and we want to know whether the mind is strong enough to undergo the rigorous training required through phenomenological and ontological inquiries.

The Nature and Characteristics of the Mind

A dictionary definition says that mind is "the faculty of the intellect as distinguished from emotion or will."[38] Another says that the mind is "human consciousness."[39] But John Dewey tells us that mind is more than consciousness.[40]

The *American Heritage Dictionary* explains in details, what the mind is and what it is not. It reminds us that we often make the mistake of equating the mind (at the same time) with intellect, intelligence, mentality, brain, wits, sense and reason. These should not be confused with the mind. Intellect denotes capacity for knowing and thinking, intelligence applies to adaptive behaviour, (solving problems, learning from experience and reasoning abstractly); mentality is used most often in the sense of intellect, brain is said of intellect, often with intent of emphasis; wits pertains to intelligence and stresses quickness or facility of

comprehension. Sense involves natural power of understanding, reasonableness, and capacity for sound judgment. Reason, is the capacity for logical and analytic thought.[41]

John Dewey cautions against the overtly technical use of the term 'mind'. He says the non-technical use of the word must not escape our understanding of what mind stands for, especially in its infinitude, all-inclusiveness and all-pervasiveness. [42] While this point is taken, it is pertinent to disclose at this juncture that our endeavour concerning mind is philosophical and not ordinary. Here, we are dealing with the phenomena of the mental, which "consists in a person's awareness of something 'awareness' not being further analyzable. The objects of his awareness may be either propositions, as in the case of knowledge or doubt, or else non-propositional as in the case of desire.."[43]

The mind is always in the activity of thinking, which is really its function at the barest minimum. Thinking is reflecting, and when this activity is put under intense focus of analysis, it brings about some philosophic understanding. It is at this point that we have the consciousness of qualities.[44] This is why it is argued that nothing can be known, except through the mind, because everything ultimately, is an idea in the mind of the thinker.[45] This is the celebrated primacy of the mind over and above all things.[46]

First, the mind provides internal picture or images of what the

senses brings forward. The mind is in the business of investigating or analyzing, or inspecting what is sensed. Images from the senses are deposited in the mind. Second, the mind has affective cognitive and conative properties which are correlated and mutually involving. By the affective side of the mind "is meant the feeling side, by the cognitive side, the side is concerned with knowing, believing, reasoning, perceiving; by the conative side it is concerned with acting, willing, striving, desiring...".[47] Third, the mind has dispositional properties or the element of capacitation, either on the long term or short term. That is, the tendency to agree or disagree with other minds. The mind can assess what came out of another mind, agree with it, or disagree with it or hold it tentatively or undecidedly. At least a mind can hold brief for another mind.[48] Fourth, the mind can be consciously unconscious. The consciousness of the mind does not necessarily entail an awareness of all the principles that govern that consciousness."[49] Fifth, the mind is the residence of self-identity. The self is the substantiation of the mind and it is this substantiation that the mind in turn classifies as self-identity. To know oneself is the definition of self-identity. Only a thinking mind knows the thought in the mind. Also only a thinking mind can go beyond its present level of thought into new levels of thinking. Thoughts are events in the mind and it is the summation of these events in their holistic recurrence and consistent valuation that provides the self-identity that the mind produces.

In his treatise "The Decay and Possibilities of the Mind",[50] Karl Jaspers states that the possibilities of the mind are expressed through man's labour, occupation and all forms of mental creation. Even when these are denied man, man still goes back to his mind.[51]

The value of the mind is in the fact that it provides the accommodation for reason, which by virtue of that abode, is able to provide faith in what we do and gives us the confidence to offer postulates and concepts to humanity. When we put this assertion side by side all the various definitions and characterizations of the mind, one thing becomes clear: the mind is not only existential, it is also transcendental.

The Nature and Value of Transcendence

The idea of transcendence is traceable to Immanuel Kant's theory of knowledge. In this theory, transcendence is used to designate knowledge that is beyond the limits of experience; something that is above and independent of the material universe. Transcendence has come to mean "to pass beyond human limit",[52] To be transcendental therefore, is to be "concerned with a priori basis for knowledge; minimizing the importance or denying the reality of sense experience; asserting a fundamental irrationality or supernatural element in experience; rising above common thought or ideas."[53]

Transcendence is the "passing beyond all possibility of experience,"[54] "projection"[55] and the act of going beyond what is given to get that which is not given in order to enrich the given.[56]

Martin Heidegger says that man naturally transcends. Man must reason beyond his present predicament in order to put such dilemma behind him. Man would think of what he will do tomorrow when tomorrow in yet to come. Human beings would think about old age while young. Man would think about building a bridge across a river, where there is no concrete means of crossing the river. Man's ontological desire to transcend the capability of the bird in the sky gave rise to the airplane. That is why Heidegger holds that transcendence is an ontological property of being, specifically the being of man.

Man's transcendence is accentuated by the need to solve the riddles before him concerning the universe, the need to provide answers to certain questions which the status quo cannot make available, the desire for perfection in things and action, the quest to determine the unknown since the fact that something is not known does not mean that it does not exist. Man expresses the natural attribute of transcending in order to provide what seems impossible or improbable, to reorganize, reorientate, rearrange reality in order to better mankind and establish accountable

progress for humanity.

Without doubt, transcendence is an activity of the mind, a process through which the mind gives meaning to being, a process through which the mind shows itself as being-in-itself. Through transcendence, we see the power of the mind in action because "...all systems of truth, all systems of meaning... are fundamentally contrivances of man's mental powers".[57]

Characterizing Heidegger's Transcendental Ontology of *Dasein*

All we have said so far inevitably find convergence in the transcendental ontology of *Dasein*, which is the central element in the phenomenology of Martin Heidegger. In this phenomenology, *Dasein* is an existential entity capable of making existential meaning from reality, which contains both man, and others which merely are. Other things exist in so far as *Dasein* exists.

In his quest to first of all establish a being as the starting point of his ontology, Heidegger had a problem. He was not accommodative of the Christian God. He rejected the Absolute Being in the Aristotelian and Thomistic tradition, the *Ens Causa Sui*, the Essential *Nous*, the Ultimate Super Ego of the universe. Thereafter, Heidegger searches for the best possible way to

conduct his quest for the Being of beings. The Being, which Heidegger puts before us is the investigator, the examiner, the interrogator, the inquirer of beings which is man himself. This man Heidegger calls *Dasein*.[58]

It is in the process of asking this question that *Dasein* transcends. Also by attempting to answer the question, *Dasein* once again transcends. Therefore, transcendence is the principal ontological property of *Dasein*, the Being of beings, the Man. The designation of the word 'man' with *Dasein* is meant to show some capacity without the shortcomings that may be ascribed to man as mere human being. By doing this, Heidegger avoids the contentious mind-body problem, having made irrelevant the question whether *Dasein* has a mind of its own.

Of course, *Dasein* is complete with a mind of its own, yet it is unnecessary to raise questions about this mind. In the same vein, the object-subject vacuum, which had existed in past philosophies was removed. In *Dasein*, we see the subject and the object in such a way that raising questions about them is merely diversionary. It is against this background that the issue of essence even in itself becomes self-annihilating when it comes to *Dasein*.

Heidegger uses the technical term *Dasein* to designate man for obvious reasons. The word man is barely categorical (a class

name) and therefore grossly inadequate for describing the entity whose mode of being is not only radically different from that of other entities, but which possesses a native capacity for self-creation, self-orientation and self-detachment."[59] Man ontologically has the existential accountability to transcend himself, come out of himself to ask questions about himself and in the same token provide answers to the questions he has asked about himself. In order to do this, man must transcend himself for the sake of understanding himself.

The same ontological accountability holds where other beings such as tree, animals, sunshine, rainfall, present themselves for inspection. Since these beings appear or present themselves and therefore do not and cannot interrogate themselves, inspect themselves, present an understanding of themselves, the onus falls on man to perform these roles. Thus, man, having already transcended these beings, by virtue of the fact that these things depend on his own existence in order to be, must now inspect, interrogate and present an existential understanding of these other beings. These are the daily transcendental exercises that man must perform. These transcendental activities are, objectively or subjectively, the ontological properties of man. Man cannot do without them. At that point, man becomes *Dasein*.[60]

The 'world' is derived from and is dependent upon *Dasein*: "The world realizes the existent in this world's own terms, according to its limits. Thus, the existent both projects the world (in the sense that without this projection, there would be no world) and is 'flung down' into the world (in the sense that the project is realized according to the limits and conditions of the world). Thus being in the world is both an act of liberty on the part of the existent and a submission to necessity. This tension is fundamental to *Dasein*"[61]

Dasein operates to create or bring about possibilities through thought.[62] *Dasein* comes before all things. *Dasein* is prior, yet it appears only as itself on the stage of existence. This is one of the immense powers of *Dasein:* "if to interpret the meaning of Being becomes our task, *Dasein* is not only the primary entity to be interrogated, it is also that entity which already comports itself in its being, towards what we are asking about when we ask this question. But in that case, the question of Being is nothing other than the radicalization of an essential tendencyof-Being which belongs to *Dasein* itself"[63]

Concluding on Dasein and Us: The Fundamental Relationship

To many analysts of Heidegger's work, *Being and Time*, it is really difficult to understand the true meaning of *Dasein* since the word is hard to translate into English language and still retain its essential German meaning. To other analysts, *Dasein* simply

means Human Being, since what Heidegger ultimately talks about, is man. Against the background of controversy surrounding the meaning of *Dasein*, we submit that since man is the central concern of Heidegger, we could not have driven far from the truth if we claim that we, the mankind are *Dasein*. *Dasein* can therefore be taken as man, or man's mind who and which interrogates, inspects; which is answerable for himself and even answers for others around him.

Ontologically therefore, we are *Dasein* and *Dasein* is us. If perchance it is argued that *Dasein* is not us, it still cannot be denied that *Dasein* has everything to do with us. What we may not be able to do simply because we are not *Dasein*, the same thing we may be able to do by virtue of *Dasein*'s influence over us. If *Dasein* is not us, then *Dasein* at the minimum, is in our mind. So that the worst-case scenario is that man's mind is designed like *Dasein*. We therefore need not repeat what *Dasein* admonishes us to do or that which we need to do as *Dasein*. The fact is that what we need to do, we must do, either as *Dasein* or as a mind designed like *Dasein*.

Dasein confers on our minds, the responsibility of asking all the questions, which will help us understand ourselves and other things in and around us. Mankind is man's limitless responsibility. The task, we must not forget, includes finding

answers to the endless questions that daily agitate man's mind. Our answers must not only provide insights, they must be progressive or developmental. In this endeavour, man will continue to create words and meanings; meaning of things and meanings of ideas; meaning in language and meaning through language. Man will create meaning in national life and authentic nationhood; meaning of leadership, culture, tolerance, creative statesmanship, social stability, intellectual coherence, global politics.[64]

Using his mind, man will strive towards creating opportunities for world citizenship. Man will demand from himself, high-level of transcendental thinking that breaks barriers. Man will create meaning in his own ideas; ideas that build bridges, produce automobiles, provide food, water and shelter, improve the quality of life and strive towards perfection. Man will continuously activate his own mind and thereby transcend present ideas in order to bring forth new ideas, ideas hitherto unknown and thought to be some kind of impossibility. With Man's mind, the *Dasein*, there is no end to possibilities.

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57. Jim Unah, Op. Cit.,2 p. 109.
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63. Martin Heidegger, *Being And Time*, trans. by J. Macquarie and E. Robinson (Oxford: Basil Blackwell), 1967, pp. 26 27.

64. These are practical examples of how to create meaning using transcendental ontology. These and more will be found in Jim Unah, *Essays in Philosophy*, (Lagos: PANAF), 1995 pp. 23 - 139.

PROBLEMS WITH PHYSICALIST THEORIES OF THE MIND

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Introduction

I take the central problem in the philosophy of mind to consist in the relationship between **mental** phenomena and **physical** phenomena. Specifically, philosophy of mind is concerned with answering the question: What is the relation between the reality of subjective experience as we have it in our conscious life, and physical reality as we claim to know it in our daily encounter with our environment and in science? In answering this question, the idealists, broadly speaking, posit, as their fundamental entity, consciousness (idea, mind, or experience), and take the physical world to be something logically created by the mind through the use of the data of human sense-experience. The physicalists, on their part, take the physical world as locally independent of consciousness and metaphysically fundamental. If therefore there is consciousness, then, that is either a higher-order physical state or some property of a physical state. In brief, whilst the idealists take consciousness to be metaphysically fundamental and reduce the physical world to a component of consciousness, the physicalists take the physical world as their fundamental postulate and reduce consciousness to a component of physical thing(s). This essay examines and rejects mainstream physicalist theories

of the mind.'

Mental Concepts

Before we proceed to examine the physicalist theories, let us make clear what we understand by the concept of the mind. We commonly use the term 'mind' and its adjective 'mental' to refer to a family of interrelated dispositions, occurrent experiences, acts, thoughts and intelligence. Broadly speaking, these constitute the mental realm. But these are plainly different categories. Dispositions, for example, are neither occurrent experiences, nor action, nor thought. Some mental states are occurrent; others are dispositional. Experiences are occurrent mental phenomena: they are actual happenings that possess intrinsic phenomenal qualities. For example, the moment that I see a patch of green grass, I am said to be having an occurrent experience and constituted of my awareness of a patch of green grass. This **is** an experience because it is **occurring** at the moment I am truly seeing. (Concerning **occurrent** experiences, we are talking about actual happenings, but we are not talking only about what is happening now. Occurrent states episodes are not confined to the present moment. Human sensory experience is distributed across time as well as space).

Furthermore, experiences are individuated in part by the phenomenal qualities intrinsic to them. Thus, when I see a patch of green grass, what my visual field appears to possess is to be characterised by an intrinsic quality such as the look of the green colour, the geometry of the phenomenal field, and other observable patterns of the patch grass. Dispositions, however, are potentialities (power of

liabilities), rather than actualities. Dispositions are individuated by reference to their (i) triggering conditions, (ii) the effect produced when the disposition is triggered, and (iii) the thing which has the disposition. Thus, when we characterize a state or object with a dispositional property, we imply by that characterization, that there are certain conditions to be fulfilled for the effects of the property to come into being. A very familiar example of a dispositional property in philosophy is brittleness.[2] Glassware is said to be brittle, **if** it is liable to shatter easily on impact with a hard object. The constituents of the *if*-clause specify the conditions under which the effects of being brittle will be realized.

The mind is not only individuated by reference to its occurrent properties such as its occurrent conscious states at the present, say, but also, by its dispositional properties, such as what it is capable of doing (e.g., reflecting about Einstein's theory of relativity), suffering and enjoying: even though at this moment in time, it is not reflecting, or suffering any pain or anguish, or enjoying any of the pleasures of life. It may well be that the mind in question at this moment is in a state of dreamless sleep. Being in a dreamless sleep means that the mind at the present, is not having any occurrent experience. But that is not to say that it is not capable of having the experiences we have just listed. On the contrary, we commonly take a mind in a dreamless sleep to possess the disposition, the ability to think about a difficult problem, to suffer pain and shock and to find joy in a piece of good news. Thus, arguably, experiences are manifestations of experiential powers of

disposition. These experiential dispositions, when they manifest themselves in the effect, constitute the experiential episodes, each of which is individuated by its intrinsic felt quality.

But the mind is not characterized by occurrent experiences and experiential dispositions alone. Besides these, we have a broad cluster of non-experiential dispositional properties that are attributable to the mind. Amongst these are proposition attitudes (so called because they can be construed as attitudes adopted toward a proposition), cognitive abilities (the ability to understand the meaning of a symbol or to solve a mathematical problem), memories (ability to store experiences), character traits (e.g., being quick-tempered or placid). Because these abilities can be deployed and thus, become manifest without the subject being conscious of the going-on, they can be regarded as non-experiential. Most of the time, our beliefs, hopes, fears, and wishes lie latent and unnoticed; but these mental states are largely responsible for how we behave. These states are usually referred to as **'psychological'** states because psychology is in the business of determining human behaviour from these mental dispositions. That is to say, if you knew my beliefs, hopes, fears, and wishes you would be able to predict how I am likely to behave, given certain circumstances in the environment. The prediction of my behaviour from my belief operates on the assumption that there is a causal connection between mental states and behaviour.

From this brief sketch, we can say that there are three broad categories of mental states/events: (1) occurrent experiential states that are individuated by their intrinsic felt

quality; (2) experiential dispositional states which refer to the power possessed by the mind to realise certain experiences which it is not currently having; and (3) non-experiential dispositional states. These states, according to the theory of psychology, inform a person's overt behaviour, but their existence is not dependent on the subject's awareness of them (even though it is possible for the subject to become conscious of them). As we proceed to discuss physicalism, it will become evident that physicalist theories would rather consider nonexperiential dispositional and functional properties and their relation to behaviour as the critical attributes of the mind, to the neglect of the phenomenal qualities of experience.

Physicalism and the Reduction of the Mental

The distinctive feature of physicalism is the view that the whole of reality is constituted ultimately by the entities, in the framework of a complete physics and its ancillary disciplines, such as biology and neurology. Now, physics deals with only physical objects, physical events and physical properties and their relations. Given this framework, one might ask, what is the place of mental concepts, mental states and mental events in physics? The divisions amongst reductive theories begin to show in the strategies adopted to answer this important question.

One common factor regarding the strategies adopted to nearly all the physicalist theories is to give a 'reductionist' account of the mind. In order to appreciate the role of the concept of reduction in physicalist account of the mind, we should examine the most common examples of reductionist

explanation in physics. Theoretical physics, as a rule, posits micro entities, such as nuclei, electrons, protons, quarks, leptons and gluons, and construct macro physical objects from these. Thus the wooden desk on which I am writing, according to physics, is constituted of a certain combination of the micro particles recognizable in physics. Since the concept of a wooden desk, does not figure directly in the language of physics, and yet physics has to take into account the fact that there are macro objects such as wooden desks, physics must adopt a strategy for explaining the existence of macro objects in its own terms.

What has become the conventional practice in physics is to 'break up' the macro object into its atomic and subatomic constituents that feature directly in the framework of physics. In so doing, physics is able to explain the emergence of the macro object in terms of the laws that make the combination of the relevant micro objects possible. This is what is known as the **reduction** of the macro objects into its micro constituents.

Broadly speaking, physics is committed to an ontological primacy of micro entities, such as protons and electrons. But it is also recognized that we have macro entities and that these are real. However, for physics, the existence of macro objects is derivative from the existence of their micro constituents. Thus, the existence of the macro entities is ontologically prior to the existence of the macro entities.

The account of reduction I have sketched is known as **'ontological** reduction' (other authors use **'metaphysical** reduction'). It says, the facts we record at the macro level

are wholly constituted by macro facts . Thus, the state of affairs that I refer to as the being of a wooden desk in wholly constituted by micro-physical facts that are recognisable in physics, and by nothing over and above these. Thus, the physicalist who is committed to ontological reduction claims that every macro and higher-level physical property (such as those properties that figure in the higher-order science (chemistry, biology and psychology) is dependent on, and explicable in terms of the interactions between the basic micro-physical properties, even though, there is no way of 'reducing' the concepts and laws of the higher-order sciences such as biology to those of physics.

But there is another form of reduction that is more radical than ontological reduction. This is known as '**conceptual** reduction' (also called, '**analytical**'). It is so called, because it represents higher-level entities as reducible to the basic micro entities at the level of concept and meaning. Conceptual reduction claims that the very content, or subject matter, of our ordinary statements about higher-level objects, turns out, on conceptual analysis, to be referring to micro entities. That is to say, the term, 'wooden desk', is meaningful only when it refers to the collection of the micro-physical entities that constitute the wooden desk. This contrasts with ontological reduction which concedes that the term, wooden desk, has its own distinctive meaning and cannot be re-expressed in, so to speak, micro-physical language. Ontological and conceptual reductions are, however, not always mutually exclusive. Our familiarity with the chemical composition of water, that water is H_2O, for example, is now so widespread that we commonly incorporate it into our understanding of the meaning of the

term 'water'. Thus, what initially was an ontological reduction has become a conceptual reduction, through the growth and popularization of knowledge.

These reductionist strategies seem to play a crucial role in the physicalist theories in dealing with what are commonly taken to be non-physical phenomena/entities, such as experiences and beliefs (or, mental facts). For, if you are a physicalist and wishes, at the same time, to adopt a realist stance with respect to mental concepts and mental facts, it is inevitable that these would have to be dependent on and explicable in terms of the entities and laws that feature in physics. The reduction of mental categories becomes necessary since the referents of mentalistic terms are not amongst the entities that figure directly in the ontology of physics. We thus need to take notice, before we proceed further, that all physicalist theories subscribe to some form of reduction of the mental. It is, broadly speaking, in terms of what type of reduction is a theorist's preference that marks out one physicalist theory from another. For lack of space, I will state in brief, the behaviourist and functionalist theories, but will dwell, at length, on the mind-brain identity theory canvassed especially by D. M. Armstrong.

Behaviourism

Behaviourism, as a philosophical theory of the mind, sprang from psychology. Behaviourism in psychology is a method for studying human behaviour. The motivation for postulation of a casual analysis of the mind sprang from behaviourism. For instance, B. F. Skinner,[5] the well known American psychologist, canvassed the view that all human behaviour can be explained as a set of responses to stimuli to

which a subject is exposed. A behaviourist theory rejects the view that the mind is a 'thing', be it a material thing or a spiritual thing. It asserts that a 'mental' description of Socrates is not a description of what some substantive part of Socrates - his mind - is like. Rather, such a description tells us of Socrates' **behaviour.** Thus, a behaviourist would typically not appeal to neurological facts any more than the contents of introspection to account for behaviour. Scientific behaviourists, such as Skinner, believe that they could attempt to predict and control human behaviour through the study of its environmental causes. On this view, the mind is not a thing related to the body; the relation of mind to the body is the relation of **activity** to agent. Mental terms get their meaning by reference to behaviour and its causes.

Behaviourists thus, tend to be skeptical about the reality of consciousness. This attitude shows itself in the manner they account for bodily sensations (pains, itches, etc.), visual experiences and intelligence. Pains, like afterimages, are not regarded as mental objects in their own rights. Rather, these are construed as bodily reactions (responses) to stimuli. The person is not so much **in** pain as that she is exhibiting typical pain-behaviour. Similarly, she is not so much experiencing an afterimage, such that she is behaving in a way typical of people who are experiencing an afterimage. In both cases, the behaviour **constitutes** the occurrence of the mental event.

Since mental objects have no place in behaviourism, descriptions of humans referring to pains and afterimages

are not relational descriptions linking us to pains and afterimages. On the contrary, these are complex descriptions our physical conditions - they refer to bodily events or processes, rather than relating one object to another. This account is applied to all mental states, events, including thoughts, emotions, and intellect - the class of mental entities that are commonly taken as inner, non-physical objects. Thus, to say, for example, that a person is intelligent is to say, among others, that she has a higher success rate in solving abstract and practical problems and that solutions come to her quicker and with less effort than the average person. In short, what it means to possess a mind is to exhibit appropriate responses to stimuli. There is no inner state that mentalist terms refer to, other than bodily events or behaviour. This theory is known as **scientific behaviourism**.

A sister theory is **logical behaviourism** which, in a sense, is an advanced form of scientific behaviourism. Logical behaviourism has room for dealing with the concept of dispositional properties. But perhaps the main distinction between the two forms of behaviourism is that, whilst the proponents of scientific behaviourism view their theory pre-eminently as a **methodological** thesis, for understanding human behaviour, logical behaviourists are primarily concerned with determining the status of mental concepts in our public language. Thus, logical behaviourism is a linguistic thesis that tries to explicate how sentences that contain mental terms, like 'thought', 'belief', 'perception', 'image' or 'memory', are to be translated into sentences about publicly observable behaviour.

Logical behaviourism is a reductionist thesis at the level of concept or language. This form of reductionism is stronger than ontological reductionism, because conceptual reduction implies ontological reduction but is not implied by ontological reduction. Logical behaviourism is not only claiming that mental **events**, like perceiving, thinking, believing, suffering, enjoying, etc., refer to behaving, or else, having a certain disposition to behave, but is further claiming that mental **concepts** have no distinctive meaning independently of the terms which we use in describing behaviour. Thus, the question whether a person can solve differential equations with ease, or can understand a joke better than the average person, etc. On this showing, 'intelligent' becomes a blanket term for a range of publicly observable performances that endow it with meaning.

Behaviourism has two enviable advantages over its rival theories. First, it demystifies the meaning of the term, mind; second, it solves the problem of the mind. In the first instance, the theory stipulates that mind does not lie behind behaviour, like some causal agent to an event (a ghost in the machine); rather, the mind is in the behaviour. It attacks common opinion for referring to behaviour as the **manifestation** of the mental state. Common opinion is mistaken in supposing that there are such ontically distinct 'inner' entities as mental events, processes, or states that play a causal role in producing behaviour. The postulation of inner states, the behaviourists contend, has no basis in reality because they are not observable or verifiable; for, the only observable referents of mental concepts are just the behaviour. But behaviour cannot be a causal agent of itself: for nothing is a cause of itself. So, a mental event, *qua*

behaviour, cannot be a cause of itself. Hence, a causal analysis of the mental is false.

Moreover, in conformity with the conditions under which all words derive their meanings, there ought to be **public criteria** from which mental descriptions get the meaning they have. If the criterial conditions for application of mental descriptions obtain then, so claim the behaviourists, they do not, and cannot, refer to private events but to tendencies for the occurrence of **public** and **physical** events. In the second instance, if mental descriptions do not advert to events that are antecedent to behaviour or dispositions to behave, but are just the descriptions of the behaviour, or behavioural patterns - the kind of events or processes that occur in the public domain - then, mental episodes are as publicly observable as are other physical episodes. Hence, the problem of other minds vanishes once it is recognized that mental episodes belong to the public domain.

However, there are two decisive objections against the theory: (1) a behaviourist account of the mind fails to capture the causal element in mental concepts; (2) at least some mental descriptions refer to events and processes which are neither behavioural nor dispositional, these are the qualitative content of experiences. I will say something about (1) now and defer the discussion of (2) to the section under identity theory.

In the first instance, we note that few philosophers would disagree with the behaviourist claim that, some mental terms, at least, derive their meaning by reference to publicly

observable events and processes. Our attribution of certain mental qualities, such as intelligence, quick-temper and timidity, to a person is dependent upon what the person's responses are when the appropriate circumstances arise. We say, e.g., that a person is intelligent because she performs intelligent acts: e.g., understanding complex arguments, finding her way through a labyrinth without much effort, etc. Similarly, a quick-tempered person has a greater propensity to demonstrate anger upon the least provocation than the average person; so is a timid person prone to take to flight in the face of the slightest danger than would a normal person. In short, many mental states are dispositional, hence, are differentiated by their effects. But to admit this, is to commit oneself to the claim that there is nothing that dispositional terms refer to, other than publicly observable events they describe.

Let us now try to show how the behaviourist account of dispositional properties went wrong. Gilbert Ryle thinks that it is a mistake to construe dispositional words as denoting actual categorical causes in the agent or substance that has the putative disposition. Rather, he urges that, when we say you possess a certain disposition, what this means is that certain **conditional** sentences ("if ... then ...") are true of you.[6] Now, what this account of disposition leaves out is **what** makes these conditionals true. A person's behaviour can be **explained** by reference to their mental states, e.g., desires and beliefs. For instance, my belief that it's raining **explains** why I pick my umbrella before I leave the house. If I am about to leave the house, and I believe that it's raining, then I'll pick my umbrella. It is because I have this belief about the weather that I act as I do under these

circumstances. In this example, my belief state constitutes the **categorical** basis for the truth of the conditional sentence: "if it is raining, then I will pick my umbrella before I go out." The belief state must exist in order to make the conditional sentence true.

But now consider what this comes to, on the Rylean view that dispositions as such, have no basis in reality. It would mean that my belief that it is raining consists in this being true of me that (i) if I'm about to go out, then I'll pick my umbrella, (ii) if I have clothes on the line outside, I will bring them inside, and so on. But this does not say what makes me act the way I act. It does not give an explanation as to **why** I do pick my umbrella. It is as if to say, the reason why I go to church is because I go to church and today is Sunday. This form of explanation of beliefs (and dispositions in general) is plainly vacuous. It certainly does not do justice to our ordinary intuitions that our states of mind are causally relevant to our behaviour, and that they explain our behaviour. If we are to offer an account of dispositions that is consistent with the common sense idea, that mental states are causally responsible for our actions, then, we must hold that mental states are enduring states, that dispositional states have categorical grounds, and these grounds have causal properties and causal roles.[7] This is what is left out of the logical positivist account.

Functionalism

In contrast with a purely behaviorist conception of mental states, functionalism construes mental states in terms of the **function** the relevant state, designated as mental, performs in the causal network between stimulus and behaviour of a

system, be it an organism or a machine. The standard thesis of functionalism reads as follows:

What it is about a given token mental state or occurrence that makes it a mental state or occurrence of a particular type viz. a pain, or belief that lightning is followed by thunder, or a desire for glory - is its occupying a particular causal role within a complex causal network of possible states which meditates, as a whole, in the c a u s a l relationship between sensory (and other) inputs and behavioural (and other) outputs.

Thus functionalism is individuating mental states by reference to their **causal relations** to input stimuli, to other mental states and to output behaviour. The thesis works in the following way: suppose I believe that black cobras are dangerous; and as I am walking in the bush I come across one snake, and trembling with fear, I take to my heels. According to functionalism, my belief that black cobras are dangerous was caused by prior perceptual input like seeing a cobra giving a chase to a rat, or by the lessons I received from my biology tutor about the behaviour of cobras, etc. Thus, coming across (i.e., perceiving) a cobra in the bush, together with the belief that cobras are dangerous, induces fear in me, which, in turn, causes me to run away (the last event being the output behaviour). Accordingly, my fear was caused by my perceiving the cobra plus my belief that cobras are dangerous; and these, together, cause me to run away (the output behaviour). This illustration captures the triadic relation that is held to exist between stimulus input, other mental states and output behaviour.

This triadic relation between stimuli, dispositional or

experiential states and behaviour, recognised in functionalism, is the dividing line between it and behaviourism. Recall that behaviourism does not show interest in what goes on in the human body. It regards a biological system as something that receives certain inputs from the environment, i.e., stimuli, and emits certain outputs, i.e., behavioural responses. Through the observation (over a period of time) of the correlation between stimuli and responses, we will be able to establish laws that would enable psychologists to predict how an animal would behave, given certain stimuli. Accordingly, mentalistic vocabulary was taken as an abstract way of talking about physical stimuli, behaviour and the relation between them. Functionalism parts company with behaviourism in underscoring the functional/causal role of mental properties in producing behaviour, as opposed to identifying the referents of mental concepts with behaviour.

Functionalism has two important advantages of over behaviourism. Unlike behaviourism, functionalism recognizes the causal relations between mental states as a necessary component for explaining behaviour. For instance, in the hypothetical case above, what caused me to run away was not just my seeing the cobra, but the perception **in combination with** my belief (e.g., other mental states) that cobras were dangerous. For, if my perception of the cobra were not attended by fear on account of my beliefs about cobra behaviour, there would have been no rational explanation for my action-running away. Functionalism, by recognizing the mediation of other mental states internal to the organism, in addition to sensory

stimuli, in determining behaviour, is plainly a step ahead of behaviourism.

Again, the crucial difference between functionalism and brain-identity theory seems to work to the advantage of the former. Since functionalism is, in a sense (to be explained shortly), not an ontological thesis, it does not carry the burden of specifying the kind of entity that uniquely realises mental states. By specifying mental states in terms of the causal relations internal to the total functioning of a system (be it an organism or a machine), functionalism avoids the problem of multiple realisability of mental states. For, on the theory talk of mental states is just talk of neutral set of causal relation; it is a thesis that has no preference about the kind of 'thing' that has the set of causal relations. It is therefore able to explain how it is that a patient suffering brain impairment is able to generate the same type of mental state on different neural pathways.

But functionalism, like behaviourism, is a reductionism theory because it is construes mental terms as theoretical terms whose meanings are definable functionally by reference to causal roles. From the behaviourists through materialists[8] to functionalists, it has become the custom to define all mental state in terms of **causal-functional roles.** Accordingly, it has become an orthodoxy to define a mental state (in the words of David Lewis) 'as the occupant of a certain causal role *R* that is, as the state, of whatever sort, that is causally connected in specified ways to sensory stimuli, motor responses, and other mental states'. On this view, mental state is definable primarily by reference to its **causal role** and so functionalism is **topic neutral** in respect

of the **occupant** of the purported role.

Functionalists share the belief that the distinction between **role** and **occupant** helps to alleviate the chauvinistic tendencies that Ned Block[9] exposed in the Type identity theory. For the functionalist, what is of interest in psychology is the interpretation, explanation, prediction and exploitation of a subject's **behaviour.** Thus, a mental state must be related to behaviour, through its causal/functional role or its input in releasing the behaviour. In this respect, the ontic nature of the mental is not crucial for individuating it. As William Lycan observes, it makes no difference whether that causal role is played by carbon-based neurons or silicon-based chip.[10]

Mind-Brain Identity Theory

Traditionally, mind-brain identity theories, being with a causal analysis of mental states, define state types in terms of the causal-role they play in being the effects of stimuli or being the cause of behaviour. Next, they try to determine which states of a physical system plays those causal roles; and then, by substituting their putative causal roles, they derive the identity of the mental state types with the physical state types. This, in a nutshell, is the Causal Theory of the Mind (CTM) proposed by D. M. Armstrong, and other physicalist theorists[11].

Now, there are obviously some common features that CTM shares with behaviourist and functionalist theories: viz., they all claim that it is possible to give an exhaustive account

of mental concepts in terms of their causal/functional properties. Thus, Armstrong's CTM shares with behaviourism and functionalism the topic-neutral approach to the determination of mental properties. From this perspective, it is urged that when we describe mental states in ostensibly mental terms, our descriptions are actually noncommittal about whether the properties they ascribe to those states are intrinsically mental properties or physical properties. Thus, at the level of conceptual analysis, there is no significant difference between functionalism and CTM. What follows is a brief exposition of CTM. Its success in dealing with the core categories of mind as outlined above, will be assessed next.

According to CTM., "the concept of a mental state essentially involves, and is exhausted by, the concept of a state that is **apt to be the cause of certain effects or apt to be the effect of certain causes**".[12] The dispositional character of mental concepts and its analogy with the dispositional description of the concepts of poison and brittleness are inherited from behaviourism. Armstrong, for example, takes on board the behaviourist analysis of dispositional properties when he observes that "the essential point about the concept of poison is that it is the concept of **that, whatever it is, which produces certain effects".** Here, poison is defined by reference to its **active** powers - those powers in virtue of which it is enabled to produce deleterious effects on animals. Other dispositional properties are defined in virtue of their **passive** powers. Brittle objects, for instance, are called brittle on account of the disposition they have to break and shatter easily on impact with other objects.

CTM recognises that (missing) the mind is a far more complex property than, say, a poison or a brittle object, to the extent that it possesses both active and passive dispositions, Hence, Armstrong's definition of mental state contains in it, the active and passive powers in terms of the effect mind is apt **to produce,** on the one hand, and terms of the effect that it is apt **to suffer,** on the other. For example, my desire to scratch my nose may be **the cause for** the movement of my finger to my nose, and my **having** the itchy sensation in my nose may be brought about by some itch-induced matter that rubs my nose. But the most important point to note about CTM is that, unlike behaviourism, it makes an ontological distinction between the mental entities themselves and their dispositional entity, and its relation with active power to have toxigenic effect on organisms.

For instance, it is urged that arsenic has toxigenic power because of its chemical composition. Similarly, a glass ware that is brittle is so called because of its atomic structure. There is thus, a fact of the matter in prison as in a brittle glass that endows them with the dispositional properties that they possess. In maintaining this distinction between the dispositional property vis a -vis the inner structure that underpins it, CTM comes to the rescue of popular opinion that holds that mind is an inner state that is logically independent of its dispositions powers. This distinction would be crucial for mind-brain identity thesis, since it would have to come to terms with the fact that the occupart of a putative mental role, say, a certain nervous system , would have other properties that are not mental.

Now, this conceptual thesis construes the mind as that,

which stands and operates in the causal chain between stimulus and response. What the causal analysis does not disclose is the ontic nature of this mind. As Armstrong rightly remarked, CTM "does not entail, but neither does it exclude, materialism".[14] This view is shared by David Lewis when he writes that the causal theory of the mind "is not a materialist principle, nor does it ascribe materialism to whoever speaks of experiences."[15]

Since the causal analysis of the mind is clearly not an ontological theory, it is neutral about what sort of real and efficacious things experienced are. But, at least, it allows experiences to be something real and so, to be the effects of their occasion and the causes of their manifestations, as popular opinion supposes them to be. However, this construal of mental states is compatible with the view that mental state are themselves of spiritual (non-physical) nature. It is the recognition of the compatibility of the causal analysis of the mind with dualism that underlines Armstrong's stance that the psychophysical identification of mental state and brain state is a **contingent** identity, namely, that is an identity sustained by empirical evidence and not by analytic necessity.[16] This remark, in my view, is very significant, given the popular supposition, articulated by Descartes, to the effect that the mental seems characteristically immaterial in nature. For, if the conceptual thesis of the mind, as spelt out by Armstrong, is acceptable within dualism, then, the assertion in mainstream dualism that the mind is as much an **empirical** (Armstrong uses 'scientific') speculation as the speculation that the mind is a material entity. On this showing, the ontic nature of the mind cannot be fleshed

out by conceptual analysis alone. Then the question to consider is: what empirical grounds (evidence) sustain the identification of talk about the mental with talk about brain?

David Lewis , in my view , gives the most succinct description of the causal thesis when he writes:

> *a mental state M (say, an experience) is definable as the occupant of a certain causal role R - that is, as the state of whatever sort that is causally connected in specified ways to sensory stimuli, motor responses, and behaviour, then the identification of mental state M with neural state N becomes, an identity relation that* ***has the force of logical necessity.*** *This, in a nutshell, is what has been dubbed as* ***central state materialism,*** *like thesis that every experience (mental state) type is identical with some physical state, specifically, with some neuro-chemical state type.*[18]

The two premises that make this psychophysical identity possible deserve careful consideration. The first premise, as we have seen, stipulates that the meanings of the names of mental states refer to those states that occupy certain **causal roles;** that they stand in specified causal relations to stimuli and (motor) responses, and to one another. This is a conceptual thesis because it defines the term 'mental', by reference to its causal role. It does not say what it is that occupies that causal role. For the second premise, David Lewis[19] invites us to consider a certain neural state that, upon scientific enquiry, turns out to play just **that** causal role that a given mental state is construed to play. If the scientific

discovery proves to be true and neural state N comes to be universally recognised as that which occupies a specified causal role between stimulus and response, then, it is urged, we have good reason for construing neural state N in terms of its functional/causal role.

In other words, the meaning of the term 'neural state N' could be specified by reference to its functional role. This is analogous to specifying the meaning of H_20 by reference to the surface and functional properties of water. For, before we learned from science, the chemical compositional properties of water, we construed the meaning of the term 'water' as that colourless, transparent liquid that quenches thirst, etc. This is a conceptual thesis analogous to the thesis that specifies the meanings of mental terms. It is when science provided hydrogen and oxygen atoms that we uniquely realised just those properties that common opinion supposes water to have, that the identification of H_2O with water became valid. The thesis that H_2O is that substance which uniquely realises the surface and functional properties of water is an **ontological** postulate; because it is specifying what it is that the ascriptions of water terms refer to. This compares with the second thesis that supports central state materialism to the effect that a certain neural state *N* uniquely realises that causal property *R* that common opinion construes mental state *M* to be.

What the second thesis asserts is that, the properties putatively ascribed to the mental term, as its defining characteristics, in the (first) conceptual thesis are, as a matter of fact, possessed by the neural state *N*. But as the

ontological thesis is not analytic in form, we must resist the temptation to say that neural-state-ascriptions have the same sense as mental-state-ascriptions. All that the second thesis asserts is that mental-state-ascriptions and neural-state-ascriptions have the same reference. Consequently, the identity relation that obtains between the mental state and the neural state asserts something more substantial than is conveyed by a mere tautology, because the concept of neural state does not imply, and is not implied by, the concept of the mental state. When a physicalist says, "a mental state *M* is identical with a neural state *N*", the significant thing she is asserting of the mental state is its **ontic** aspect, a piece of fact that does not figure in the conceptual analysis of the mental state.

The identity thesis, then, appears to be of the form analogous to a standard valid argument in that the truth of the premises guarantees the truth of the conclusion. Since the thesis is **formally** valid, as shown (below) in comparison with an uncontroversial instance of an argument of the same form, the source of the contentious nature of the identity thesis must lie with the claims of the premises themselves.

(i)

A bachelor is an unmarried male adult.
Plato is an unmarried male adult.
Therefore, Plato is a bachelor.

(ii)

Mental state M occupies causal role R
Neural state N occupies causal role R

Therefore, N = M

(Compare the non-contentious argument *(i)* with the contentious argument *(ii)*).

There are two reasons for raising a query about the identity theory. First, constructing mental state in terms of its causal role between stimulus and behaviour does not reveal, arguably, a salient characteristic of mental episodes: namely, their qualitative content. To be sure, common opinion recognizes that a pain sensation might be brought about by burning a finger; and this pain might induce me to move my hand, but that is not there is to my pain state. For, on the causal analysis, the subjective aspect of the experience of pain, otherwise known as the hurtfulness of pain, does not figure in the account. But felt quality of a pain state, one might argue, is as real as are the causal/dispositional properties associated with the state.

Second, it is part of our concept of bachelor, that the term refers to a concrete physical entity that we recognize as a person. On this showing, we have no problem in fixing the reference of the term bachelor. For there to be a bachelor, there must exist some person who fits that description. Moreover, that person to whom the predicate 'bachelor' happens to apply, would naturally have other properties intrinsic to himself: *viz.*, that he is composed of mind and body, has a history, etc. In other words, the notion of a person is implicit in the concept of bachelor, and hence, there is a well-defined class of entities to which the term, bachelor, applies. This, however, is not the case with the concept of the mental, especially when it is construed in terms of its causal role in behaviour.

On this construal, the term, mental, does not set a boundary with respect to the **kind** of entities that could conceivably occupy the relevant causal role, comparable with the limits set by the ascriptions of bachelor. For this reason, mental ascriptions are ontologically uninformative, and so, the thesis that a mental state is a neural state contains within it an explanatory gap, that is absent in the case of the identity of Plato with a bachelor. In other words, the term, bachelor, denotes the class of entities to which the predicate is applicable. In contrast, the causal analysis fails to denote the class of entities to which the predicate, mental, applies: it is **neutral** with respect to the class of entities to which it applies. There is no logical barrier to ascribing mental states to brainless, such as disembodied beings and inorganic material systems. All that these brainless entities must have as evidence that they possess mentality is to display the sort of behaviour whose causal relationship to stimuli are consistent with the causal analysis. In short, the causal analysis provides only a **functional** definition and is silent on the kind of entities that could perform that function.

This discovery that a certain neural state happens to play a given functional role that we stipulate as a specific mental state, does not show that every mental state would necessarily be a neural state. But we cannot conceive of a bachelor that is not a person (though he might not be Plato). In every case where a bachelor is instantiated, that bachelor must necessarily be a person. In contrast, in every case where a mental state is instantiated, the identity thesis cannot guarantee that it must be a neural state. Herein, lies the crucial disanalogy between the two identity theses. Thus, though central state materialism rests on an argument that

seems to be formally valid, it remains a contentious proposition because the major premise of the argument fails (1) to capture the qualitative aspect of mental episodes, and (2) to delimit the class of entities that should like to argue that any attempt to embark on the reduction of mental states to neural/physical states is bound to fail.

The Phenomenological Problem

As noted earlier, if physicalism is true, it should be able to give a scientific account of mental phenomena within the terms (i.e., language and theories) of physics. For example, the phenomenal character of sensory experience, if it is recognized for what it is, must figure in the predicates of physics. Thus, sensations of heats, pain, sourness, foul smell, etc. ought to be describable in the language of physics, if physicalism is true.

I will restrict the discussion to the treatment of experiences as I believe, along with Galen Strawson, that the hard core of the mind-body problem in philosophy is how to give an account of our sensations, given that matter is the ultimate reality.[20]

There are two options open to physicalist theorists in dealing with the problem of mental phenomena. First, they could argue the case that mental properties are higher-order properties of matter that are, in principle, reducible to their more basic physical constituents, the basic units, whose properties figure in the description of physics. A second strategy is for the physicalists to make a claim that those mental properties that cannot conceivably be reducible to

properties that figure in the predicates of physics, might in fact be illusions, roughly like the objects of our imagination. The distinction between the first and the second positions, rests on whether one is committed to total reduction of all mental properties, which is the position that reductionist identity theorists ought to hold, or one is committed to the reduction of those mental properties that are possible to reduce and the elimination of those properties that cannot be reduced. This latter position is held by the eliminative physicalists whose views are well articulated by Paul Churchland and Daniel Dannett[21].

Now, for central state materialism to be true, the theory should be able to explain in its own term, at least, those properties that are commonly regarded as characteristic of a given mental episode. That is, if what common opinion takes, e.g., pain to be is, on the identity thesis, **nothing other than** a neuronal event, then the characteristic properties of pain, those properties without which pain ceases to be pain, must figure in the predicates of the materialist theory. For, one powerful argument against behaviourism, it would be recalled, is that it could not give an account of the aspect of mental reality known as the **felt qualities of experience** (known in philosophic circle *as qualia)*. If, then, the physical identity thesis is to hold, there must be some **conceivable** (if not currently practicable) means of accounting in physicalistic terminology for the sensory qualities of mental states. This, I reckon with Galen Strawson,[22] is the ultimate test for physicalism.

Traditionally, physicalist identity theorists have been

committed to the option of reducing *qualia* to functional properties, as they are not prepared to deny altogether that sensory qualities exist. D. M. Armstrong writes:

> *Perception involves the experience of colour and of visual extension, tough of the whole obscure range of factual properties, including factual extension, hearing, taste and smell, the experience of sounds, tastes and smells. These phenomenal qualities, it may be argued, endow different perceptions with different qualities. The lack of transparency is even more obvious in the case of bodily sensations. Pains, inches, tickles and tingle are mental states, even if mental states of no very high-grade sort, and they each seem to involve their own peculiar qualities. Again, associated with different emotions, it is plausible to claim to discern special emotion qualities. If perception, bodily sensation and emotions involve qualities, then this seems to falsify a purely causal analysis of these mental states. They are mere 'that which is' known only by their causal role.*[23]

I have earlier raised the question concerning the inadequacy of the causal analysis in dealing with the phenomenal aspects of mental episodes. It is a mistake to think that the intrinsic features of experiences are irrelevant to the identity of experience. Rather, our view is that the phenomenal property of an experience is essential to it. It is therefore, difficult to see how we could accept Armstrong's contention that the purely mental properties of a state are exhausted by its functional properties.

But even discounting the failure of the causal theory to capture the properties of sensations, this problem becomes more acute for the physicalist, who proposes that mental states are brain states. It is to the credit of Armstrong, that he appreciates the challenge which phenomenal qualities pose to physicalism. He has this to say on the matter:

> *The qualities of colour, sound, heat and cold, taste and smell together with the qualities that appear to be involved in bodily sensations and those that may be involved in the case of emotions, are an embarrassment to the modern materialist. He seeks to give an account of the world and of man in terms of* ***physical*** *properties, that is to say in terms of the properties that the physicist appeals to in his explanations of phenomena. The materialist is not committed to the* ***current*** *set of properties to which the physicist in the end will appeal. It is clear that such properties as colour, sound, taste and smell, the so-called 'secondary qualities' will never be properties to which the physicist will appeal.* [24]

He proposes a response by appealing to the principle of correlation, as we discover that "associated with different secondary qualities are properties that are respectable from a physicist's point if view". What he has in mind is correlating (say) sensation of red with a certain length of light-wave, heat with mean kinetic energy of agitated molecules, a twinge with a certain length of light-wave, etc. The point is, since the purely phenomena of red, heat, and twinge are not the sort of properties that could possibly feature in the theory of physics, we should make an

identification by way of associating the occurrence of each sensation with that of a physical event that invariably coincides with it.

On the identity thesis, then, the claim is not merely that a certain length of light-waves emitted from an object **produces** in me the sensation of red, or that my feeling of heat is brought about by molecular motion, or that the twinge I am having is caused by a certain neuronal excitation, but that my red sensation **is just** the light waves, so is heat, a molecular motion, and twinge, a neuronal excitation. More precisely, it is argued that phenomenological properties are just the neuro-chemical properties that neurologists specify as their correlates. This claim amounts to saying that sensory properties involve nothing other than their causal properties. But it is precisely this claim that is in dispute.

Armstrong does not deny that experiential states **have** an intrinsic, non-functional character. On the contrary, he thinks that it is an advantage of his position that all mental states have some intrinsic nature. As it happens, our experiences are identical with neuronal events in the brain, and so we inherit the intrinsic features of these events/states. Armstrong thinks that it is enough to have a theory that yields the result that mental states have **some** intrinsic nature. But, this is quite wrong. First, the intrinsic nature of an experiential mental state is not a contingent feature of it. Secondly, the 'filling' that Armstrong proposes, is quite inadequate: the phenomenal properties of experience **can't** be intrinsic features of brain states **if** we subscribe to

physicalism, and hold that brain states only have the properties recognized by physics. The difficulty with Armstrong's position is that currently, physics does not employ any phenomenal properties in explaining the behaviour of matter, and it is impossible to suppose that any future developments of physics will, either. Again, insofar as **all** the concepts of physics are purely dispositional and topic-neutral, physical properties cannot be identified with phenomenal properties which are not dispositional , not topic-neutral. Consequently, the identity of mental states with brain states is false.

Conclusion

It is clear from our analysis of the behaviourist and causal functionalist accounts of mental concepts that their accounts fail to capture, in their own terms, what an experience is in itself. This failure, as we have seen, stems from analysing **all** mental concepts in topic- neutral terms. For, by construing mental states as a network of causally-related dispositions to stimuli and output responses, such an account leaves us none the wiser regarding what these states are, in themselves. The weakness of causal theories of mind lies, not in the fact that the felt qualities of experience are palpably so, unlike their supposed causal properties, features describable in public language; rather, it lies in the failure to make a conceptual distinction between the qualitative aspect vis-a-vis the functional aspect of the mental state; and to use that distinction to argue for the autonomy of the phenomenology of experience. Since not all mental concepts are describable in behaviourist or causal-functionalist terms, we are justified in rejecting the standard materialist accounts of the mind as recounted above.

Notes and References

1. I equally reject idealist accounts of the mind. Rather my sympathy lies with a materialist theory of the mind whose ontology is broader than that of physicalism. My position has been set out in details in my PhD thesis, *The Case for Agnostic Materialism*, University of Liverpool, 1997.
2. See, for instance, D. M. Armstrong, *A Materialist Theory of The Mind*, London: Routledge (Paperback), 1968/1993: 58.
3. For a more detailed analysis of the distinction between **dispositional** mental state and **current** mental states, see G. Ryle, *The Concept of Mind*, London, Penguin, 1949/1963: 112-147.
4. There are other more difficult cases where a phenomenalist, might claim that our ordinary talk about ordinary physical objects boils down, via analysis of meaning, to talk about patterns of sense-data. This is a difficult case because if we accept the phenomenalist interpretation, then, we have a conceptual reduction on our hands. But from the perspective of common sense realism, the phenomenalist interpretation constitutes a revision (an ontological reduction) of what we believe the nature of physical objects to consist in. (These overlapping cases, need not confuse the two distinct forms of reduction that play in this discussion.)
5. B. F. Skinner, *Science and Human Behaviour*, New York, Macmillan, 1953.
6. Cf. G. Ryle, *op.cit*: 115.
7. The Rylean explanation of dispositional states is

also vulnerable to the charge of circularity. Consider: I believe that it is raining, so, I pick my umbrella to protect myself when going out; but I act like this only when I don't want to get wet. How do we analyse my desire? My desiring not to get wet will dispose me to use my umbrella, if I'm going out, but only if I believe that is raining outside. We have circularity on our hands because we are not able to cash out talk of mental states in terms of talk about behaviour.

8. To be discussed later.
9. Cf. Ned Block, "Troubles with Functionalism," in W. G. Lycan, ed. *Mind and Cognition*, Oxford, Blackwell, 1990: 445-468.
10. W. G. Lycan, 'The Continuity Levels of Nature' in Lycan *op. cit*, 1990:78.
11. I have in mind, U. T. Place (1956: "Is Consciousness a Brain Process?" in Lycan, (1990: 29-36) and J. J. C. Smart (1962: "Sensations and Brain Processes" in V. C. Chappell, repr. in D. M. Rosenthal, *The Nature of Mind*, Oxford, OUP, 1991:169-78).
12. D. M. Armstrong, *The Nature of Mind*, Brighton, Sussex: Harvester Pr, 1981: 20 (**emphasis added**).
13. Cf. D. M. Armstrong, *op. cit.*, 1968/1993: 85-88; and David Lewis, *Philosophical Papers* vol.1, Oxford, OUP. 1983: ch. 7.
14. Armstrong, 1968/1993:91
15. *op cit.*p. 101
16. Armstrong, 1968/1993: 89-91
17. Lewis, "Psychophysical and Theoretical Identification", in Ned Block, ed. *Readings in*

Philosophy of Psychology. London, Methuen, 1980: 207-8

18. Keith Campbell captures central state materialism most succinctly in his *Body And Mind*. New York: Doubleday and Co., Inc., 1984: 77-89. 97-109.
19. D. Lewis, 1980, *ibid.*
20. G. Strawson, *Mental Reality*. Cambridge, MIT Press, 1994. D. J. Chalmers (1996) has also focused the debate about the mind on the phenomenology of experience; in fact, he dubbed phenomenology as the 'hard problem'. Another notable philosopher who has consistently argued for the irreducibility of *qualia* is Colin McGinn, as set out in his *The Mysterious Flame: Conscious Minds In A Material World*. New York, Basis Books, 1999.
21. Prominent amongst the Eliminative theorists are Paul Churchland, *Matter And Consciousness,* Cambridge, MIT Press, 1988; and Daniel Dannett (*Consciousness Explained*, London, Penguin, 1991: 369-411).
22. G. Strawson, 1994:217*f.*
23. Armstrong, 1981: 27-8
24. Armstrong, ibid: 29

BOOK REVIEW

Title: ***Nigerian Technology Since Independence***

Author: Ehiedu E. G. Iweriebor, PhD, Chair, Department of Africana & Puerto Rican/Latino Studies, Hunter College, City University of New York.

Publisher: Bookbuilders, Bodija, Ibadan, Nigeria.

Reviewer: Professor Jim I. Unah

Introduction

Nigerian Technology Development Since Independence is the fifth and the latest of the books published by the author, Professor Iweriebor. The book is made up of nine chapters with the key features of philosophical background, technical layout and detailed historical content.

Funded by the Ford Foundation (West Africa Office, base in Lagos) under the supervision of the Senior Program Officer, Dr. Tunde Ahonsi, the book derives its strength from several sources:

1. Official document provided by the agencies of the Federal Government of Nigeria particularly, agencies within the ambit of science and technology. In case anyone is wondering whether these government papers are reliable and authoritative, the author dispels such

fears by referring to United Nations publications in the course of his research. In case anyone, again, decides to question the fairness of United Nations publications on matters concerning Nigeria, the author strips his work of this prejudice and created a balance by consulting works written by Nigerian scholars and entrepreneurs in public and private sectors of the Nigerian economy.

2. The author then spiced his work with materials from media reports and commentaries on the progress, problems and prospects in the science and technology industry in Nigeria.
3. Fundamentally, the author's radical thoughts and personal historical reservoir on Nigeria's technological development are other major sources of strength for the book under review.

It is noteworthy that the author's historical thoughts as espoused in this book, are undoubtedly influenced by the mind-boggling nature of the Nigerian society. Having grown up in the country and experienced first hand, the problems confronting his fatherland, Professor Iweriebor is well positioned to proffer solutions. This clearly accounts for the tone of radical militancy, with which the author rendered the history of, and his thoughts on technological development simultaneously.

Nigerian Technology Development Since Independence is the product of a man's deep concern about the failure of economic and technological plans, which underscores the backwardness, which Nigeria, as a nation, that is feigning sovereignty, has experienced in the past. According to the author, the Nigerian condition requires a return to the

consciousness of liberation and development. To support this claim, the book presents to us, a philosophy of liberatory development.

Without statistical illustrations or diagrammatic representations, but with sufficient glossary of meanings, the author helps the reader to navigate the realm of development, as a historical necessity. He shows that any idea of development, which is induced by colonialism or imperial imperatives, is unacceptable. For him, development must not only be localized, it must also be authentic - an authenticity that is in itself, geared towards historical consciousness and consciousness-raising. Any form of developmental programme for Nigeria, which apes the West in theory and action, Iweriebor submits, lacks local locus and is doomed to fail. He argues that: liberation from the mentality of mimicry is the starting point of development, (how be it) technological development in Nigeria.

In order to adequately project the author's conviction and build a structure for what is yet to came, the book opens with 'the Philosophy of Liberatory Imperative" as an introduction, suggesting that any effort or action that is not built on any sound and pragmatic philosophy is likely to collapse. This intention of the author informs the totality of the packaging of his book.

Technicals

The book ***Nigerian Technology Development Since Independence*** is printed 9.5 inches long and 6.5 inches wide, in portrait position. It has a well-designed full-colour

cover and inner single colour pages. It is made up of 322 pages of main text and 13 pages of support text. The main text consists of an introduction, nine chapters, a bibliography, and a detailed index compartment; the support text is made up of a title page, the dedication, acknowledgment, as well as a list of acronyms and abbreviations. The publication has a full inch spine, which gives it an imposing bookshelf command and a high aesthetic presence.

What the Book is all About

The book, ***Nigerian Technology Development Since Independence*** is about Nigeria's tortuous journey through the path of development, and the need to rethink the country's direction. The book shows, from the position of the informed, an articulate blend of the elements of industrialization, transformation, ideology and praxis. The book celebrates the benefits of hindsight and the advantages of history. In doing this, it takes an in-depth look at:

1. The nature and the nurturing of development in post-independence Nigeria, within two periodic segments, namely, 1960-1990 and 1990 till date. Here, the author dared to be futuristic;
2. The faulty infrastructural back up for science and technology;
3. Sectoral demarcations of the economy and the necessity of technological input in the various sectors of the economy. In chapter 3, we see varying treatments of the issues of machine tools, steel, transportation, energy and equipment development. These are

lumped together as "Capital Goods."

4. Solid minerals sector which rests on the metallurgical and non-metallurgical inputs and its forward integration into the operation of petrochemical plants, nationwide.
5. The need for the creation and promotion of the culture of research in science and technology, in order to achieve the desired development in the "Capital Goods" and "Intermediate Goods" sectors of the industrial economy. "Promotion" here refers to funding, commercializing, and generally creating information gathering activities, which would jump-start industrialization.
6. Strengths and weaknesses surrounding technological development programmes, and the role of political attitude in the entire scenario of inertia and mediocre performance at every level of government.
7. The imperatives of transformation, in view of the inadequacies, which are visible but unacceptable within the status quo. Transformation is expressed as some action that must be all-embracing and which must not detract from touching all sectors identified in the book - from capital goods through intermediate goods to raw materials as well as Small and Medium Scale industries.
8. The long-term benefits of transformational development based on science and technology to both the Nigerian society and the Africa continent as a whole.

The book may be divided into two parts. The first part makes the case of the decisive impact, which the

technological capacity of any nation can have on its ability "to create and sustain a vigorous industrial production system and thereby guarantee sustainable national prosperity". This part of the book also sketches out the components or the ingredients of coherent or consistent national machinery industry of any society that has achieved sustainable industrialization and mass production of machines, tools, implements or artifacts generally.

The second part discusses the tortuous pattern which economic development has taken in Nigeria in last two decades; how this has impacted negatively on the industrial sector, the reactions that followed and the various strategies adopted and adapted by different forces in the economy. In particular, the point is made that during this period of crisis, the industrial manufacturing sector was almost brought down by strategically-flawed economic policies that successive Nigerian governments have operated in the last four decades. The book identifies these as the non- development-oriented, neo-colonial economic structures that did not make adequate provision for the growth and domestication of the industrial production system, which is normally the backbone of wealth and job creation in any society. Evidently, policy makers and policy implementers in the successive political administrations since the attainment of independence in 1960, sowed the wind of decay and backwardness.

The result is that the nation has been reaping the whirlwind, especially since the early 1980s when

economic recession set in. This was the period characterized by balance of payment deficits, inability to import skilled manpower, inability to provide components and spare parts to service industrial machineries, and the lack of capacity to make available, manufactured goods for commercial circulation and local consumption. The consequences are the evident decline in economic activities, underutilization of industrial capacities, as well as unsold stocks, leading to the closure of some manufacturing concerns. Rise in unemployment, a rapid decline in the purchasing power of the average worker and the impoverishment of the citizenry were some other consequences.

The concluding part of the book, which is chapter nine, reechoes all the submissions made above and takes the reader to a point where hope replaces despondency, failure gives way to success and liberation for development in places within reach. The book breaks the news, in a reassuring manner, that Nigeria is no longer technologically lacking anymore. As the author says, the ingredient of strategy of basic industrialization is for all to be "fully aware and appreciative of the fact that inspite of its basic industrial underdevelopment, Nigeria is not a technological, industrial, and *scientific tabula rasa"* (p. 49). This is so because " the early phase of a rudimentary capital goods industries sector and engineering infrastructure is clearly emergent" (p. 128).

However, the point to be made, which warrants the production of the book under review, is that development in the capital goods sector and the intermediate goods

sector have not yet attained the critical height required to "substantially relocate and demarcate the sources of industrial machinery and equipment within the country." This, in the author's view, necessitates a rethinking of the entire process of the country's journey towards industrial and technological development.

Critical Assessment

A number of issues can be raised with regards to what Professor Iweriebor said in his book under review. For want of space, we shall consider only two.

One is that some Nigerian leaders are the cause of Nigeria's techno.ogical backwardness. This is not difficult to substantiate because the author did not fight shy of mentioning the names of culpable regimes and those political leaders and technocrats who refused to take the right action in moving the country towards technological development.

Sample 1: page 168

"...the Shagari regime ... failed ..."

Sample 2: pages 41 - 42

"... at the national leadership, Chief Ernest Shonekan displayed a pathetic lack of historical significance of ...national transformation."

Sample 3: pages 42 - 43

"...Ministers like Professor Barth Nnaji... and Lazarus Unoagu... engaged in

> Reactionary and counter-productive activities intended to undermine... the country's technological development."

The second issue that was raised in the book, is that the will to transform, is the property of any people seeking development. This type of thought runs through the entire publication. The author makes the point on page 144 that, when a development project is pursued halfway (as it was the case with Nigeria in the past), and all of a sudden, abandoned because it is considered to be "too expensive" or "overproduced" or a "mega-project", then, what we have is a purposeless developmental plan. Such a plan lacks the needed will. The author implies that it is wrong to allow the world bank, etc, to give weak reasons to scrap what has been thoroughly considered as a necessary domestic development project. He states that the reasons usually given by these "faceless foreign critics" are self-serving and anti-developmental rationalizations of forces which are ideologically and politically committed to the maintenance of Nigeria as a backward and dependent appendage of multinational imperialism and a lucrative captive market for foreign suppliers" (pp 144-145). What the author is saying here, is that foreigners can never be as committed to Nigeria's technological development as Nigerians themselves. The will to develop technologically, belongs to the Nigerian and what should be done is to put that will into action.

The multiplicity of possible issues raised in the book attest to the vastness of the ideas expressed therein, as well the volume of the work itself. This is highly commendable.

However, a single thesis could have produced a tightly focused work as well as give rise to positive recommendations for realistic technological empowerment of the people. The role of leaders in the quest for development in Nigeria is well articulated in the book; but what of the involvement of the followers? Or do they not have a say in the matter? The book does not quite answer this question.

The attempt by the author to kick off on the platform of philosophy is highly commendable; more so, when he is coming from the background historicism. Not only has he added some new vocabularies to the ever-expanding dictionary of contemporary philosophy, he has presented a liberatory philosophy as the superstructure on which Nigeria's development should be anchored. In a way, he is saying that Nigerians should know themselves and that the only way to do this is by authentically freeing themselves from the vestiges of external dependence and its internal corollary; that, it is after this self-realization that positive technological development can take place.

However, professional philosophers will agree that the philosophizing that we read in this work (in spite of its Marxist colouration) is not sufficiently radical to guide the historical journey of the author to the promised land of touching the being of the people of Nigeria. That is why, after the first chapter, the ground of the philosophy breaks and a vacuum, a structural deficiency, is created. For the rest of the book, philosophy seems to disappear. It must be noted that the author's pedigree in Marxist scholarship readily equips him to deal with this vacuum decisively.

Everyone knows that words are impotent until willpower stands behind them. A philosophy of praxis which prescribes the sort of political administration that could deal with the incubus of neo-colonialist globalization agenda, with its pretentious liberal humanism, would have neatly polished the work. The work ought to be garnished with temporality (time consciousness) and political action. This would constitute the icing of the cake of technological capacity to power a radical transformation of industrial and economic development so passionately proposed in the book. That is why, in my view, the work under review begs for the inclusion of a tenth chapter.

Many people who know a little about the essence and value of history, believe that all it does, is to tell us about the past and after that, nothing else. But discerning intellectuals know that history does more than merely regurgitating the past and then going to sleep. It informs our today and builds a signpost that directs our march into tomorrow. Any action that would not take a cue from a relevant historical past ultimately heads for the abyss. That is why we demand, first of all, that history must tell us about the past in all its relevant ramifications; and secondly, it should tell us in clear terms, what steps we must take in order to learn from the past. Fortunately, in ***Nigerian Technology Development Since Independence,*** all of these have been accomplished because the author tells Nigerians what they should do specifically, individually and collectively, in order to achieve a mutually beneficial technological development (i.e. invest in Research and Development, promote technology and engineering science education,

produce goods with heavy local raw materials input, patronize made-in-Nigeria goods, etc). Other issues of critical importance that the author raised in his book are: that technology transfer is an illusion, and that copying, stealing, adaptation and invention of technology is the verdict of history.

In treating the issues raised in the book, the author adopted an uncommon technical approach of ending some of the chapters, in particular, 4 and 5, and with clearly marked out conclusions. This style is significant because it summarizes the submissions in the previous chapter, and at the same time, prepares firm epistemic grounds for the next. This style should have been used consistently throughout the book, with the exception of chapter nine which is evidently a grand conclusion. However, it must be noted that even those chapters without plainly marked out conclusions (chapters 1, 2, 3, 6, 7 & 8) also have in-built elements of conclusion, which ensured that the necessary flow from one chapter to the other is not sacrificed.

Again, I tried to look for faulty grammatical constructions in the work. I found none. I tried to look for spelling mistakes, a common phenomenon with authors and publishers. I only found one word **Hydraulic,** wrongly spelt as **"Hdraulic,"** in the support text (p. iv.). This shows the amount work done by the author and his publisher.

Conclusion

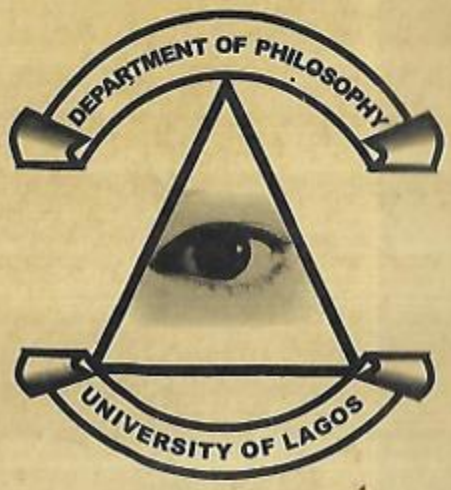
It is noteworthy, that the book under review paints the portrait of an author that is an adroit scholar, a passionate

nationalist, a rugged thinker and a firm believer in the unbounded possibilities of our nation. He has warmly expressed the benefits of a conscious, self-directed, sustained and well-focused national technological power in wealth-creation and job-creation. He has presented his ideas as an insurance for general economic well-being and prosperity of Nigerians.

This is a work that goes to the life-word to describe the state of affairs as it is. To that extent, the book is methodological, phenomenological and ontologically situated. The method which the author adopts is phenomenological because it describes the capital goods industry and its potentials as it is; and it is ontological because the prescriptions or blueprints, as the author calls them, are fundamental or basic to the very being of the contemporary Nigerian society.

Indeed, there is no doubt that the book is yet to have its rival in terms of its multi-disciplinary approach to Nigeria's problem of development. Crossing from the humanities to the technical and engineering sciences, the book weaved history and technology together, in a unique manner. The work has energy. The size, content and quality of the book are commendable. The book is recommended to the federal, state and local governments as well as their agencies because it possesses the secrets of policy generation and execution in the realm of technological foundation for radical transformation of society. It would also be a treasured possession every Nigerian family at home and in the Diaspora for touching the core of our

being, for its robustness and gusto, and for its activism and patriotism. The book's philosophical background also makes it valuable to students and researchers in philosophy and history.



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