

Mind and the Nature of Interpreted Thought
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Second Edition

Dedicated to the Kiwi Farms, to the workers in our community

A subject related to the discussion that I have been conducting, the nature of mind. There is great concern over who we are and what it means to be. None yet have the answers that I can provide. Here I will detail a new organization of ideas, and I will name the new categories created therein.

God, His Substance, and Natural Function

My only excuse is a consilience of related ideas and inspiration powered by a deep religious faith.

When asking ultimate questions about the universe, the simplest answer is that it is all one. Despite the great variety we can experience, all these are differences or deviations from the one true thing.

Reality is simply the fact of God and His being. Non real or unreal things is a discussion that I will save for some time later. God simply Is and nature is His expression.

I don't believe that creation is such a problem, it seems readily apparent to me that life is not created. When people talk about "making a baby" I think they are a little confused. It's not like a man and a woman come together and build the baby like a lego set, or even that the baby comes down the conveyor belt with the pieces bolted on like a Ford. No, the baby creates itself! The conditions for life are made available for its seizure by agential action. Once taken the agent finds itself in a real position, the hill itself being a nightmare of past history and still ongoing becoming. Fortunately, the height provides the perfect scene for the conduct of life: the actor on a stage for the world to see, an audience of those around and at a lesser position, and God high above. Life is the self expression of the agent, and requires no direct special creation or a random natural happenstance. You have always been responsible, all throughout your development. Nobody stepped in and commanded the very matter of reality to be; it's just that it is and you are, existing through nature by being, performing an act of self expression.

The nature of God's substance seems to readily bring about the self creation of life. Whatever this natural matter is, it is self directed, recapitulatory, recursive, autopoietic, hierarchical, structured in abstract general systems and spoken in the terms of semiotic language. God need not be responsible for the life his substance generates when it already is so for itself. God is free and has time for his own activities.

Each little piece of what God is, and all of it together, contribute to the natural life we see today. Peirce claims that the nonliving matter is just life that is yet to be, and I believe him. I tend to believe that all natural matter is alive.

Mind

I am here classifying the following ideas as in the same set: spirit, soul, mind, self, agency. These are highly abstract things and what exactly they are is outside the range of our discussion for now. We must be satisfied that these things are real.

Briefly, I should mention why physical nature stands out to us so strongly. A metaphor. The fisherman stands at the shore and claims to be catching fish with his net. The metaphysician stops and asks him, certainly there are fish that your net doesn't catch? The fisherman shrugs dismissively, and responds that the fish he catches with his net are the only he is concerned with. Man's sense organs are all physical in nature, being composed of the substance of and performing a function by physics, leaving him to feel that physical nature is the most immediate and consequential. The problem here is that nature can only return what you ask of it: asking a physical question is sure to receive a physical response.

Mind is a symbolic tool. For some reason, unknown to me and most likely not yet known by neuroscientists, physics has developed through an evolving matter into a highly complex organ capable of abstract symbolic thought. There is some kind of connection between the movement of sodium ions back and forth between neurons and its relations to abstract objects. This is all very confusing and this particular issue lies outside the study of my thought for the time being: this subject is known as cognition.

Symbolic Objects

Symbolic objects, like physical particles, have many properties that are instantly recognizable to us: they occupy a place in space and time, although where this is I do not know; they are organisable and thereby consumable. Symbolic objects live, breathe and die, they evolve and develop in an ecology of other ideas.

Symbolic objects come in a three part classification: Signs, Indexes, and Symbols. Signs are mysterious things, they are sublime and thereby unobservable. An index is a reference for the organization of symbols. Symbols are the abstract associations assigned to carried physical objects that man directly interacts with. Symbols are always (?) conveyed by physics: this is the purpose of physics, to conduct the transmission of meaning.

This three part classification closely aligns with the three part division of semiology, that of the sign, the signified and the signifier. Signs, indexes, and symbols are all signs. Physical particles are the signifieds, the carriers of the sign. The signifier is you, the agent. Notice also that the sign is related to the sign, the signified to the index, and the symbol to the signifier.

Symbols on their own have no meaning, they only represent the sign which itself cannot be observed. Man interprets the symbol, and thereby derives the meaning useful to him.

Man interacts with the objects of his mind in a similar way that he handles physical objects, just not with his hands. When imagining the mind, you may be tempted to localize it in the brain on account of your bodily senses. This is not necessarily so. Man exists in his being to his furthest reaches, his mind a part with others. This is most obvious in man's tools: when man needs the aid of a calculator for an operation that he would rather not perform in his head. To do the operation by hand is another example of the extended mind: if man's mind simply existed in his skull then there must be an explanation for the need of an external tool. Does the tool exist outside man's mind? Where exactly *is* man's mind? My explanation is that mind is a thing that exists at some place.

Place

Man's mind stands separate from physical nature. This has already been understood, but it has not been known why exactly this is, or what the interrelationship between mind and matter could be. My assertion is that physical nature is one part of three. The symbolic is another part of nature that is fully explorable by man and the most cunning members of his race.

Symbolic nature, like physical nature, has a place and exists in time. Thoughts, ideas, and signs all can be found at some location, though probably not here in the physical world.

When man thinks, he explores a symbolic nature of which only he knows the way. Signs, despite their abstract nature, are real things with individuals that live a life of the developing organism evolving in an ecology of other individuals. Symbolic interactions are localized in a space relative to all others.

I believe that when man explores his mind he is actually traveling in an abstract place that exists in relation to all other abstract places. Man, in his being, is in his mind a map of the places he has been and their relation to each other, and with this man decides how best to make the next decision.

This is very much like a city, where individuals find their lives tangled in a mesh of all other individuals, both local and distant. These interactions weave a patterned quilt that gives rise to emergent properties and higher levels of order. Abstract understanding is required to correctly identify and name this phenomena. This knowledge is obviously a highly personal, subjective knowledge.

Subjectivity

This is an intensely difficult nature. Deeply metaphysical problems originate here. The absolute whole, the many parts, and the individual. Each while being their own thing are also together a single thing. Picking boundaries here is impossible.

How is man or any organism to know the correct answer to any question, any judgment of character or choice of action? He can't. The whole would have the answer: if man had access to the objective than he may provide objective answers.

Caprice

The answer, for us, is provided here! There is no answer but one's own opinion, one's own arbitrary choice. Poor is the man who relies on others for his interpretation! (*laughter*)

The outsider imagines himself a reliable measure of nature, a thing that can be wielded as a weapon against the insider. How weak is his position! What are his values? Physical materialism, reductionism, dualism! Despite such claims they themselves always return to arbitration and merely cloak their position in a more favorable form.

Thought

This arbitrary self exploration of nature by nature through itself I call thought!

The smaller recapitulates the larger by derivation and complexification. What something is will be what it has been.

Interpretation

No information is ever contained in any signified! This is an impossible condition and a misunderstanding of nature! An example of this. As you read my text, you understand my words and the thought flashes in your mind. You already know everything that I tell you! You already knew all of this! Maybe the pieces had yet to be arranged, but how could you understand the name I give if you had yet to experience the thing that I describe? I am telling you nothing new! What you know has already been there all along: what I am doing is reminding you of what you already know! I am merely naming what it is that is already known!

Every organism must always interpret for itself its own meaning. The deciding agent is not allowed a privileged position in nature: while he comes from nature he is not the same as nature. If nature really were viewing itself, like some foolish cosmologists believe, then there would be no need for truth because the nature-agent is simply itself and would have no need for awareness as there would be nothing to be aware of. There is no mirror! Nature must be interpreted!

Interpretation is the action that agents perform. Beyond that I have no explanation and my search continues. Interpretation, like nature, is of three parts!

Transcription

Transcription is the first step of interpretation, the assignment of signified to sign. Here the message is converted from an abstract sign into a physical signified. The transcript is a message carrying physical object.

Translation

Translation is the second step of interpretation, the conversion from signified to signifier.

Expression

Expression is the final stage of interpretation, when the idea of the sign gains its concrete reality. It is when the agent decides on the representation that his meaning will take on. It is also the agent's final chance at having a say in interpretation. I will at some later time more fully describe representation. The real interest in expression is the conversion from a one dimensional string of signs into a three dimensional object. Obviously there are spacetime relativity concerns here: I will explore this in the future.

Codes

A code is a connection between two abstract things related by a signifier. The abstract things being related have no necessary reason for being compared, it is all arbitrary. The Signifier identifies and interprets the signified and understands the abstract concept being pointed too. A code can be composed of any two things and a relation between them.

Symbolic Ideologic

Nature plays a fantastic game of semiology. I am yet to have a name for this. Sometimes I call it seance. This is where I wish to make my home.

Symbolic Legitimacy

I would like here to make note of a disturbing trend that is being insisted upon by members of our society. Such foolish behavior as playing victim in an enemies game, to become a fatal accomplice in their criminal activity, this cannot be accepted! You should know better! There is no absolute, no rule set that must be followed! Nature is interpreted! If you wish to have your own place, your own way, then must perform your own interpretation! Do not let others describe to you your own history, do not let them tell you who you are!

To allow other such power is devastating, especially to a young organism. Can the thing not insist for itself its own legitimacy? Must it be sold out to those that offer the easiest answer? And what exactly is gained in this exchange? By playing their games what exactly is the goal? What is being suggested is really to surrender, to accept the enemies story at the expense of telling one's own! Foolish pathetic behavior! (*Cheering, applause*) Such weakness will never be

accepted by anybody, not on this local scene and neither abroad! (*The people are cheering*)
How can you expect recognition if you fail to order it yourself? (*Applause, standing ovation*)

Further Reading

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