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A REVIEW OF DREYFUS ON HEIDEGGER'S CRITIQUE OF HUSSERL'S INTENTIONALITY

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This essay primarily disputes Dreyfus's account of Heidegger's critique of Husserl's theory of intentionality. Specifically, it raises objections to the three central claims of such an account; namely: (1) that Searle's theory of intentional action can be used as a stand-in for Husserl's; (2) that Heidegger rejects the primordiality of the intentionality of consciousness; and (3) that Heidegger distinguishes between conscious and unconscious types of intentional actions and he privileges the latter over the former. I show the first to be unwarranted owing to a lack of fundamental parallelisms between Searle's and Husserl's theories of intentionality. I show the second to be mistaken for failing to take into account Heidegger's strategic handling of the concept of consciousness and for contradicting Heidegger's concept of care as the essential meaning of Dasein's being-in-the-world. Lastly, I show the third to be highly problematic for lacking in textual evidence and explanatory power.

INTRODUCTION

Martin Heidegger's *Being and time* (1962) is generally regarded, among others, as a critique of Edmund Husserl's phenomenology. But Heidegger, perhaps out of respect for Husserl as a former mentor, has never in such a work really stated his objections to Husserl's phenomenology in a straightforward fashion. For whenever he is said to be criticizing the views attributable to Husserl, or advancing the views that seem to contradict Husserl's, he never mentions Husserl's name nor the technical terms that Husserl uses like "transcendental ego," "noesis," "noema," "bracketing," and "intentionality of consciousness." As a result, the exact nature and range of his critique of Husserl's phenomenology have not been altogether clear, thereby lending itself to various interpretations. <85)

One controversial account that specifically focuses on Heidegger's critique of Husserl's theory of intentionality is put forward by Hubert Dreyfus, a leading Heideggerian scholar in the contemporary period. On Dreyfus's view, what such a critique primarily consists in is Heidegger's rejection of the Husserlian position that regards the intentionality of consciousness as the primordial form of intentionality.

Heidegger, according to Dreyfus, advances a contrary view in which the primordial form of intentionality does not involve consciousness or mental activity. Dreyfus, however, admits that the contrast between the views of Husserl and Heidegger on intentionality cannot be directly demonstrated owing to the fact that Heidegger does his analysis of the phenomenon of intentionality in the realm of actions whereas Husserl does his in the realm of consciousness. To deal with this difficulty, Dreyfus uses John Searle's theory of intentional action, which Dreyfus believes to be grounded in a general theory of intentionality that shares fundamental principles with Husserl's, as a substitute for Husserl's would-have-been theory of intentional action had Husserl extended his theory of intentionality to the realm of actions—just like what Searle did to his own theory of intentionality. And consequently, by showing how Heidegger's account of intentional actions contrasts with and refutes Searle's, Dreyfus hopes to show how Heidegger rejects Husserl's theory of intentionality.

I find such an account to be highly contentious; and in this paper, I intend to raise objections to its three central claims; namely: (1) that Searle's theory of intentional actions can be used as a stand-in for Husserl's, (2) that Heidegger rejects the primordiality of the intentionality of consciousness, and (3) that Heidegger distinguishes between conscious and unconscious types of intentional actions and he privileges the latter over the former. Consequently, my discussion is divided into three parts. The first examines the bases of Dreyfus's contention that Husserl's and Searle's theories of intentionality share fundamental principles. The second looks into how Heidegger regards the relationship among Dasein, consciousness, and intentionality. And the third evaluates the grounds and coherence of Dreyfus's claim that Heidegger subscribes to an unconscious form of intentional action.

HUSSERL'S AND SEARLE'S THEORIES OF INTENTIONALITY

The following passage outlines the strategy that Dreyfus adopts to demonstrate his own account of Heidegger's critique of Husserl's theory of intentionality:

> Since Heidegger focuses on action as the area in which it is easiest to see that our experience need not involve a mind/world split, I too will concentrate on action. But since Husserl never worked out a theory of action, I will turn to the work of John Searle who defends a detailed version of the intentionalist account of action Heidegger opposes.... (Dreyfus 1993, 3) <86)

Dreyfus believes that he is justified in doing so for he finds fundamental parallels between Searle's and Husserl's theories of intentionality. As he (1984a, 4) writes:

> An example of current philosophical research which has deep affinities with Husserl's early account, including strikingly Husserlian distinctions, is John Searle's work on the philosophy of language and on intentionality.

The idea is that if Searle's and Husserl's theories of intentionality share fundamental views or principles, then Husserl, in principle, would have explained the nature of intentional actions in the same way that Searle does. Among such deep affinities that Dreyfus attributes to Searle's and Husserl's theories of intentionality, I find the following to be the critical ones.

First, Dreyfus claims that both Searle and Husserl in their theories of intentionality subscribe to the Cartesian view of the mind-world split (or the subject-object dichotomy)—referring to Descartes's view that regards mind as existing independently of the world—that Heidegger rejects. As Dreyfus (1994, 5) writes:

> ... Descartes adds that in order for us to perceive, act, and, in general, relate to objects, there must be some content in our minds—some internal representation—that enables us to direct our minds toward each object. This "intentional content" of consciousness has been investigated in the first half of this century by Husserl and more recently by John Searle. Heidegger questions the view that experience is always and most basically a relation between a self-contained subject with mental content (the inner) and an independent object (the outer).

It is well established that Husserl subscribes to the Cartesian view of the mind-world split. Such view, to begin with, is what essentially makes Husserl's phenomenological reductions possible, for the bracketing of the various relations that consciousness may have had with the world is possible only under the assumption that consciousness exists independently of these relations. The same is true of Heidegger's rejection of such a view, for such rejection follows necessarily from his description of the fundamental being of Dasein as a *being-in-the-world*. Accordingly, Dasein's existence is inextricably tied up with its various relations with the world; and if this is true of Dasein as a whole, then it must also be true of its consciousness. But the contention that Searle also subscribes to the same Cartesian view is way off the mark; and this is for the following two reasons.

One is that Searle's own position on the issue on the ontological status of the mind, which he calls *Biological Naturalism*, is premised on the rejection of the Cartesian principle of the mutual exclusivity of the mental and the physical. As he (1999, 50-51) explains: <87)

> Both dualism and materialism rest on a series of false assumptions. The main false assumption is that if consciousness is really a subjective, qualitative phenomenon, then it cannot be part of the material, physical world….The way Descartes defined "mind" and "matter," they are mutually exclusive….I am suggesting that we must abandon not only these definitions but also the traditional categories of "mind," "consciousness," "matter," "mental," "physical," and all the rest as they are traditionally construed in our philosophical debates.

Needless to say, the rejection of such principle carries with it the rejection of the Cartesian mind-world split, for the physical and the mental can only be mutually exclusive if and only if each exists independently of the other. Consequently, Searle argues that consciousness is both physical and mental: it is physical in the sense that it is a higher-level biological property that is caused by some physical properties of the brain; while it is mental in the sense that it is not reducible to some physical properties of the brain.

The other is that Searle's theory of intentionality argues for the contextual nature of intentional mental states (hereafter, intentional states). According to Searle (1983, 19, 143), a particular intentional state can function only in the context of a *Network* of other intentional states, which in turn can function only given the context of a *Background* of non-intentional skills, abilities, and "know-how":

> An Intentional state only determines its conditions of satisfaction—and thus only is the state that it is—given its position in a *Network* of other Intentional states and against a *Background* of practices and preintentional assumptions that are neither themselves Intentional states nor are they parts of the conditions of satisfaction of Intentional states.

For the necessity of the Network, Searle (1983, 20) gives the following example. Supposing Jimmy Carter desires to run for the Presidency of the United States. This desire only makes sense or has the conditions of satisfaction that it has because of its position in a Network of other intentional states that Carter has, which presumably includes the following:

> … the belief that the United States is a republic, that it has a presidential system of government, that it has periodic elections, that these involve principally a contest between the candidates of two major parties, the Republicans and the Democrats, that these candidates are chosen at nominating conventions, and so on indefinitely (but not infinitely). (Searle 1983, 20) <88)

But in order for the Network itself to function, Searle (1994, 176) contends that it needs a *Background*:

> In addition to the Network, we need to postulate a Background of capacities that are not themselves part of that Network. Or rather, the whole Network stands in need of a Background, because the elements of the Network are not self-interpreting or self-applying.

Thus, suppose we have a desire to get some food from a refrigerator. In addition to a Network of other intentional states that we presumably have, such as the feeling of hunger, the desire to eat food, and the belief that by eating food we will satisfy our hunger, such desire is possible only against a Background of capacities (like the biological capacity to get up, walk towards a refrigerator, and use our hands in opening a refrigerator), practices (like the practice of storing food in refrigerators), and abilities or "know-how" (like knowing how to open a refrigerator). Searle (1983, 143-44) classifies the elements of the Background into two kinds: the *Deep Background*, which includes all the non-intentional contextual features that are common to all cultures, such as our biological capacities to walk upright and to eat by putting food in our mouths; and the *Local Background,* which includes all the non-intentional contextual features that vary from culture to culture, such as our local cultural practices. The necessity of the Network and Background for intentional states to function can only mean that such states do not exist independently of the world.

These two reasons also explain why Searle (1999, 2) himself reacted vehemently against Dreyfus's attribution of such a view—the Cartesian mind-world split—to him:

> An early example of Dreyfus's systematic misunderstanding is his claim that I think of intentionality as a relation between "a self-contained subject with mental content (the inner) and an independent object (the outer)." Dreyfus also calls this the "subject-object" conception of intentionality. It ought to worry him that I never use expression like "self-contained subject" (in fact, I am not quite sure what it means); nor do I characterize my own views as the "subject-object conception", and it ought to worry him further that I explicitly expressed objections to the metaphors of inner and outer….

Secondly, Dreyfus claims that Husserl's distinction between the *matter* and *quality* of mental acts is the same as Searle's between the (89) intentional/representative content and psychological mode of intentional states (or its counterpart in speech acts, between the propositional content and illocutionary force

of speech acts).[1] For Husserl, the quality of a mental act refers to its *type* or *psychological mode,* while its matter to its *content*:

> The two assertions '2 x 2 = 4' and 'Ibsen is the principal founder of modern dramatic realism' are both, *qua* assertions, of one kind; each is qualified as an assertion, and their common feature is their *judgment-quality*. The one, however, judges one content and the other another content. To distinguish such 'contents' from other notions of 'content' we shall speak here of the matter of judgments. We shall draw similar distinctions between *quality* and *matter* in the case of all acts. (Quoted in Sajama and Kamppinnen 1987, 68)

The distinction between the content and quality of intentional states, however, is something that is generally accepted in contemporary philosophy of mind, as evidenced by the widespread use of the term "propositional attitudes"—which are meant to highlight such distinction—to refer to intentional states. That being the case, it is actually the particular way in which one accounts for the nature and possibility of intentional states that philosophers of mind take issues with one another. Searle and Fodor (see Fodor 1993) for instance, may agree on the existence of propositional attitudes but they differ in their accounts on how such states function. Consequently, the mere fact that Searle and Husserl share the said distinction does not really establish much. And as a matter of fact, they actually hold some incompatible views about the nature of intentional states, foremost of which concerns the nature of the content. Accordingly, Husserl divides the content of mental acts into the *real* and the *ideal,* where the real is the content that is part of the mental act while the ideal (which Husserl eventually calls *noema*) is the abstract content that is not part of the mental act but which is responsible for directing the mental act to an object (see Sajama and Kamppinnen 1987, 64-69). This distinction of Husserl does not have a parallel in Searle's theory, for on Searle's view the content of an intentional state is just the representation of the intentional state's conditions of satisfaction. But more importantly, this distinction of Husserl cannot be accommodated in Searle's theory in light of Searle's rejection of the need for any transcendental explanation for how an intentional state acquires its conditions of satisfaction. For, as explained earlier, Searle believes that it is the contextual features of intentional states (the Network and ultimately the Background) that enable such states to function. And it is precisely for this reason that we find Searle, after agreeing with Frege on the concept of propositional sense as truth-conditions, rejects the abstract status that Frege attributes to sense (Searle 1983, 197-98). <90) The Fregean sense, incidentally, for a number of contemporary Husserlian scholars, is the basis or model of the Husserlian noema.[2]

Thirdly, Dreyfus (1984a, 5) claims that though both Husserl and Searle begin their investigation on the nature of intentionality with an analysis of language, both

actually believe that the intentionality of language is merely derived from the intentionality of consciousness. On the one hand, Husserl regards *linguistic sense* (the sense of linguistic expressions) simply as the linguistic or physical manifestation of *noematic sense (*the noema of mental states). As Smith and McIntyre (1984, 182) attest:

> Husserl's general view is that words used in speech acts, of whatever kind, express as *their* meanings the noematic Sinne of acts of consciousness: the meanings (Bedeutungen) expressed in words are themselves the meanings of acts, i.e., noematic Sinne.

Searle, on the other, regards the direction of fit of a particular speech act as derived from the direction of fit of the intentional state that serves as the sincerity condition of that particular speech act.[3] The reason that the direction of fit of an assertion, for instance, is word to world is that the direction of fit of its sincerity condition, which is a belief, is mind to world. Be it as it may, there is, however, a significant difference between these two accounts. For while Husserl's noematic and linguistic senses are not in need of any context[4]—for it is the noema *alone* that makes noematic and linguistic senses possible or that makes conscious states and linguistic expressions intentional, Searle, in contrast, regards intentional states as necessarily contextual—the need for the Network and Background. For this reason, this particular affinity between Searle's and Husserl's theories of intentionality, just like the one previously considered, turns out to be superficial as well.

And fourthly, Dreyfus (1984a, 5-8) claims that Searle and Husserl share some basic views about the conditions of satisfaction of intentional states. One of these alleged views is that one's knowledge of the conditions of satisfaction of mental states is self-evident:

> Searle points out that we do not need some special sort of evidence to find out what we mean, what would satisfy our intention, or in general what our intentional states represent....In exactly the same vein, Husserl takes it for granted that phenomenological reduction gives "apodictic evidence" to the intentional content of our current mental state. (Dreyfus 1984a, 6)

Another is that the representative content of a mental state represents its conditions of satisfaction independently of how such conditions are realized: <91)

> Searle...develops his theory of intentionality by generalizing an account of intentional content very close to the one Husserl held in *L. I.*, viz. that the representational content of a mental state is simply whatever conditions of

> satisfaction those mental states which pick out the same object in the same respect have in common.... Searle, like the early Husserl, contends that one can determine the logical properties of intentional states without taking a stand on how the representational content is realized. (Dreyfus 1984a, 8)

On closer inspection, it shall be observed, however, that Husserl and Searle subscribe to such views for different reasons. As stated by Dreyfus himself, in the case of Husserl, such views are the result of the phenomenological reductions. That is to say, the absolutely necessary knowledge that is supposed to result from the reductions is what makes one's knowledge of the conditions of satisfaction of an intentional state self-evident; and since these reductions dissociate intentional states from their relations to the external world, their conditions of satisfaction are therefore independent of how such conditions are realized in such world. Consequently, for Husserl, it is from their noemata that intentional states derive their conditions of satisfaction. In contrast, in the case of Searle, these views are the result of the contextual features of intentional states (the Network and Background); and it is precisely these features that make one's knowledge of the conditions of satisfaction of an intentional state self-evident and logically independent of its realization. In this consideration, these views about the conditions of satisfaction that Husserl and Searle share do not really constitute an affinity that can be regarded as fundamental. Just like the two previous ones, this similarity between Husserl and Searle is likewise superficial.

DASEIN, CONSCIOUSNESS, AND INTENTIONALITY

We shall now examine Dreyfus's contention that Heidegger rejects the primordial status of the intentionality of consciousness. To properly do this, we need to examine first how Dreyfus reads Heidegger with regard to the relationship among Dasein, consciousness, and intentionality, as this reading forms the basis of the said contention. For this purpose, let us use as our guide the following passages from Dreyfus's book, *Being-in-the-world: A commentary on Heidegger's* Being and time, *Division I* (1994):

> (1) Heidegger accepts intentional directedness as essential to human activity, but he denies that intentionality is mental, that is, as Husserl (following Brentano) claimed, the distinguishing characteristic of mental states. (Dreyfus 1994, 50) <92)
> (2) Heidegger...takes comportment or intentionality a characteristic not merely of acts of consciousness, but of human activity in general. Intentionality is attributed not to consciousness but to Dasein.(Dreyfus 1994, 51)

(3Heidegger holds that all relations of mental states to their objects presuppose a more basic form of being-with-things which does not involve mental activity. (Dreyfus 1994, 52)

Two claims need unpacking here: the first is that Heidegger attributes intentionality not to consciousness but to Dasein (passage 2), and the second is that Husserl subscribes to the view that regards intentionality as the defining feature of mental states (passage 1) (following Harney,[5] we shall henceforth refer to this view as *Brentano's psychological thesis)*. The first, on the one hand, serves as the basis for the contention that Heidegger regards intentionality as an essential feature of human activity but not of mental states (passage 1), which in turn serves as the basis for the central contention that Heidegger regards the more basic form of intentionality as something that does not involve mental activity (passage 3). The second, on the other, serves as the basis for the further contention that Heidegger's putative idea that the more basic form of intentionality does not involve mental activity constitutes a critique of Husserl's theory of intentionality.

The critical question concerning the first claim is: *When Heidegger attributes intentionality to Dasein, is it really the case that he does not attribute it to Dasein's consciousness or mental states?* This question requires an examination of how Heidegger handles the concept of consciousness in light of how he intends to deal with the question concerning the meaning of Being. Accordingly, Heidegger (1962, 72) includes the term "consciousness" among those that he intentionally avoids for strategic purposes:

> ...if we posit an "I" or subject as that which is proximally given, we shall completely miss the phenomenal content [*Bestand*] of Dasein.... The Thinghood itself which such reification implies must have its ontological origin demonstrated if we are to be in a position to ask what we are to understand positively when we think of the unreified Being of the subject, the soul, the consciousness, the spirit, the person. All these terms refer to definite phenomenal domains which can be 'given form' [*"ausformbare"*]: but they are never used without a notable failure to see the need for inquiring about the Being of the entities thus designated. So we are not being terminologically arbitrary when we avoid these terms—or such expressions as 'life' and 'man'—in designating those entities which we are ourselves. <93)

Heidegger tells us in these remarks that he avoids terms like "man," "consciousness," "life," "soul," "spirit," "I," and "person" because of the tendency to reify the meanings of such terms; that is to say, to regard the meanings of such

terms as the "things" or substances to which such terms must refer. Heidegger is aware that if he uses these terms, he will then be forced to deal with the philosophical issues attendant to such tendency; and this will just divert his investigations from his primary objective, which is to deal with the question concerning the meaning of Being through an existential analytic of Dasein—an analysis of Dasein not in terms of its "what" (or in terms of its "thinghood" or "substantiality") but in terms of its "who" (or in terms of its modes of being). As Heidegger (1962, 245) clarifies:

> Thereby the Being of what is proximally ready-to-hand gets passed over, and entities are first conceived as a context of Things (*res*) which are present-at-hand. *"Being"* acquires the meaning of *"Reality".* Substantiality becomes the basic characteristic of Being. Corresponding to this way in which the understanding of Being has been diverted, even the ontological understanding of Dasein moves into the horizon of this conception of Being. Like any other entity, Dasein too is *present-at-hand* as *Real.* In this way *"Being in general"* acquires the meaning of *"Reality".* Accordingly the concept of Reality has a peculiar priority in the ontological problematic. By this priority the route to a genuine existential analytic of Dasein gets diverted....

That being the case, Heidegger's avoidance of the said terms does not mean that he does not regard what they signify as essential to the being of Dasein. In avoiding terms like "man," "life," and "consciousness," Heidegger presumably does not mean that being a man and having a life and consciousness are not essential to the being of Dasein. In the case of consciousness, the significance that Heidegger attributes to Dasein's consciousness is evidenced by the various mental terms that he uses in describing the being of Dasein. Heidegger (1962, 172-88, 214-17, 228-35, 343, and 349), for instance, talks about Dasein's *moods* or *states of mind* such as *anxiety*—which he differentiates from *fear*, *curiosity*, *resoluteness*, and *anticipation* of one's own death.

Foremost of such mental terms is "care," which describes the essential character of Dasein's being-in-the-world:

> Because Being-in-the-world is essentially care, Being-alongside the ready-to-hand could be taken in our previous analyses as *concern*, and Being with the Dasein-with of others as we encounter it within-the-world could be taken as *solicitude*. (Heidegger 1962, 217) <94)

And as the essential characteristic or meaning of Dasein's being-in-the-world, there is thus nothing more fundamental or primordial than care as a description of Dasein's being-in-the-world. As Heidegger (1962, 247 and 249) states:

> Earlier than any presupposition which Dasein makes, or any of its ways of behaving, is the "a priori" character of its state of being as one whose kind of Being is care.
>
> The ontological elemental totality of the care-structure cannot be traced back to some ontical "primal element," just as Being certainly cannot be "explained" in terms of entities.

Consequently, to say that there is a form of being-in-the-world that does not involve consciousness is to mean either that there is a form of being-in-the-world that is not characterized by care, which is definitely not Heidegger's view; or that care is basically an unconscious phenomenon, which I find absurd, for how can one care for something or someone without being conscious in some way?

When Heidegger attributes intentionality to Dasein, it is therefore more logical to suppose that Heidegger attributes intentionality to the consciousness of Dasein. If Dasein's being-in-the-world is what makes Dasein intentional and this being-in-the-world is essentially characterized as care, then Dasein's intentionality is a feature of care, which in turn is a feature of its consciousness. What cares (or what has solicitude and concern) in Dasein's being is obviously its consciousness. It is simply inconceivable that the non-conscious activity of Dasein will have the feature of care. Furthermore, Heidegger's avoidance of the term "consciousness," as we have earlier shown, merely serves a strategic purpose—for Heidegger to keep his investigations on track—and not a denial of the reality of consciousness nor a downgrading of its value to the being of Dasein.

Turning now to the second claim, the critical question here is: *Does Husserl really subscribe to Brentano's psychological thesis?* It is well established that Brentano (1973, 88) regards intentionality as the defining feature of the mental, and the following are his classic remarks to this effect:

> Every mental phenomena is characterized by what the Scholastics of the Middle Ages called the intentional (or mental) inexistence of an object, and what we might call, though not wholly unambiguously, reference to a content, direction toward an object (which is not to be understood here as meaning a thing), or immanent objectivity. Every mental phenomena includes something as object within itself, although they do not all do so in the same way. In presentation something is presented, in judgment something is affirmed or denied, in love loved, in hate hated, in desire desired and so on.

But it is contentious whether Husserl follows Brentano's psychological thesis. It is true that Husserl makes certain remarks which seem to show <95) that he follows Brentano's psychological thesis. For instance, he writes in *Phenomenology and the crisis of philosophy* (1965, 90) that: "To the extent, however, that every consciousness is "consciousness-of," the essential study of consciousness includes also that of consciousness-meaning and consciousness-objectivity as such." However, he also has remarks wherein he qualifies that not all mental phenomena are intentional. Consider, for instance, the following that he makes in *Ideas* (1982, 199):

> Intentionality is an essential peculiarity of the sphere of mental process taken universally in so far as all mental processes in some manner or other share in it; nevertheless, we cannot say of *each* mental process that it has intentionality in the same sense as when we say, e. g., of each mental process...that it is a temporal [mental process].

One may well accuse Husserl of inconsistency, or at the very least, of ambivalence. But according to some scholars, the passage just quoted from his *Ideas* contains his definitive position. Sajama and Kamppinen (1987, 102), for instance, explain that Husserl, in the same passage, is saying that there are non-intentional mental phenomena that are somehow connected to the intentional ones; and they cite sensations as examples of these non-intentional phenomena. Smith and McIntyre (1984, 2) share this interpretation:

> Unlike Brentano, Husserl does not insist that every mental occurrence be characterized as intentional. In particular, he takes pure sensations (what he calls the "sensory material", or "hyle", of perception) to be non-intentional, though he suggests that they occur only as constituents of complex intentional phenomena, specifically perceptions (cf. *LI*, V, § 15; *Ideas*, § 36, 85). And he suggests that feelings and moods, of the sort mentioned above, are sometimes better classified with sensations than with the intentional (*LI*, V, § 15).

Smith and McIntyre (1984, 2-3) also share with Sajama and Kamppinnen (1987, 118-19) the observation that Husserl eventually fails to demonstrate the connection between non-intentional and intentional mental phenomena, thereby putting into question the universal validity of his phenomenology. Be it as it may, these considerations show that there are more reasons to believe that Heidegger's rejection of Brentano's psychological thesis does not necessarily amount to a rejection of Husserl's theory of intentionality.[6]

Still, that intentionality is not the defining feature of mental states does not imply that the intentionality of such states is not the primary kind of intentionality. Searle, for instance, categorically holds that intentionality <96) is not the defining feature of mental states—for Searle (1983, 1) believes that there are mental states such as certain forms of nervousness and undirected anxiety that are not intentional; and yet he (1999b, 93) believes that the intentionality of mental states is the intrinsic or primary kind from which the intentionality of other phenomena such as actions and language is derived. In like manner, Heidegger's rejection of Brentano's psychological thesis need not lead to a rejection of the view that the intentionality of consciousness is the primary kind of intentionality.

INTENTIONAL ACTION AND CONSCIOUSNESS

We now come to the examination of Dreyfus's contention that Heidegger distinguishes between conscious and unconscious types of intentional action and privileges the latter over the former. Speaking of Heidegger's phenomenology and referring to Heidegger's concept of intentional action as "comportment" and to the unconscious type of intentional action as "absorbed coping," Dreyfus ("The primacy of phenomenology over logical analysis," n.d., 8) writes: "Only phenomenology can reveal the two different types of comportment and that, of the two, absorbed coping is primordial." Dreyfus (1993, 6), however, admits that Heidegger is sketchy about absorbed or skillful coping—indirectly admitting the lack of textual basis for his contention—and for this reason turns to Merleau-Ponty's concept of skillful coping in order to explicate Heidegger's putative concept of the same:

> Heidegger's account of the phenomenology of everyday involved coping is rather sketchy but we can draw on Merleau-Ponty for a fuller description. According to Merleau-Ponty, in everyday absorbed coping, there is no experience of my causing my body to move. Rather acting is experienced as a steady flow of skillful activity in response to one's sense of environment....When everyday coping is going well we experience something like what athletes call flow, or playing out their heads. One's activity is completely geared into the demands of the situation. That is, one is absorbed in one's activity, and therefore one has no self-referential experience of oneself as causing the activity.

In accordance with Merleau-Ponty's description, Dreyfus (1993, 7) cites the following types of activity as examples of skillful coping: "*skillful activity,* like playing tennis; *habitual activity,* like driving to the office or brushing one's teeth; *casual unthinking activity,* like rolling over in bed or making gestures while one is

speaking; and *spontaneous activity,* such as fidgeting and drumming one's fingers during a dull lecture" (italics mine). <97)

Two questions need to be raised here. First, *can Merleau-Ponty's concept of skillful coping explicate Heidegger's putative notion of an unconscious form of intentional action?* And second, *is it really the case that skillful coping does not involve any mental activity?* The first question is similar to the one regarding Dreyfus's claim that Searle's theory of action can stand in for Husserl's. But unlike in the case of Searle and Husserl, here, Dreyfus does not show what legitimizes his use of Merleau-Ponty's concept of skillful coping as a substitute for Heidegger's. But whether or not Dreyfus is warranted in doing so, the mere fact that Heidegger is sketchy about the phenomenon of skillful coping when such phenomenon is supposed to be a critical component of his critique of Husserl's theory of intentionality is sufficient to cast doubt on the plausibility of Dreyfus's claim that Heidegger subscribes to an unconscious kind of intentional action.

The second one has actually been a point of contention between Dreyfus and Searle. Against Dreyfus's view, Searle strongly contends that skillful coping is very much a conscious activity. In the following, he (1999a, 8-9) argues for his case using Dreyfus's typical example for skillful coping—tennis playing:

> The problem with Dreyfus's example is not that it is false; rather it is beside the point, because it fails to capture the level at which tennis players (as well as basketball players, carpenters and philosophers) are consciously trying to do something when they engage in "skillful coping". The tennis player is above all trying to win, and he is trying to win by—for example—hitting harder serves and hitting his ground strokes closer to the base line. All this is intentional, all of it involves "beliefs, desires, intentions, etc.", and all of this is left out of Dreyfus's account....

Searle's reaction to Dreyfus's view can be explained by his views concerning the relation between consciousness and mentality and how such relation applies to intentions. Accordingly, while Searle (1999b, 40-41) considers consciousness as the defining feature of mentality, he (1999b, 86) however, also subscribes to the view that mental states can be unconscious:

> Even when unconscious, the unconscious mental state is the sort of thing that could be conscious. I have to say "in principle" because we need to recognize that there are all sorts of states that the person cannot bring to consciousness because of repression, brain injuries, and so on. But if a state is a genuine unconscious mental state, then it must be at least the sort of state that could be conscious. <98)

Searle differentiates unconscious states from nonconscious ones in that while it is in principle possible to bring unconscious states to consciousness it is not so in the case of nonconscious states. The possibility of bringing unconscious states to consciousness is real, for Searle, maintains consciousness as the defining feature of mentality; as such, unconscious states are still mental while nonconscious states are not. As examples of unconscious states, Searle cites our beliefs that we are not conscious of at the moment but which we can in principle bring to consciousness if we so desire. On the other hand, Searle cites the physical states of machines as examples of nonconscious states.

Regarding intentions, Searle (1983, 84-96) distinguishes between *prior intentions* (or intentions before the performance of actions) and *intentions in action* (or intentions simultaneous to the performance of actions). An intentional action, on Searle's account, necessarily has an intention in action but need not have a prior intention. More precisely, Searle believes that an intentional action necessarily consists of an intention in action and a physical movement that such intention causes. An intentional action, however, may or may not have a prior intention; and if it does have a prior intention, its prior intention is what causes the intention in action, which in turn causes the physical movement. Now, since intentions obviously are mental states, Searle also distinguishes between conscious and unconscious intentions. Searle, however, only speaks of such distinction in relation to intentions in actions, implying that prior intentions are always conscious. And with regard to conscious intentions in actions, Searle (1993, 90-91) also refers to them as *experiences of acting*:

> The Intentional content of the intention in action and the experience of acting are identical. Indeed, as far as Intentionality is concerned, the experience of acting is just the intention in action. Why then do we need both notions? Because the experience of acting is a conscious experience with an Intentional content, and the intention in action is just the Intentional component, regardless of whether it is contained in any conscious experience of acting.

Consequently, Searle regards our intentions in actions that we are not conscious of at the time that we are performing certain actions as states that we can in principle bring to our consciousness. A boxer, for instance, normally has a game plan before he goes to a boxing match. This game plan, we can say, consists of the boxer's prior intentions, which he presumably is very much conscious of. But while already in the boxing match, these prior intentions cause the boxer's intentions in actions which in turn cause his physical movements. Now it may happen that the boxer is not conscious of his intentions in actions while performing the physical movements caused by these

intentions, but this does not mean that he does <99) not have these intentions in action. For if interviewed later on, he may be able to describe the details of what he is trying to do in every round.

In contrast, in regarding skillful coping as a nonmental activity, Dreyfus seems to hold the view that the mere absence of consciousness already means the absence of mentality, such that if we perform an action without being conscious of any intention that causes it, then we perform such an action without any mental activity. Compared to the position of Searle, this view of Dreyfus lacks *explanatory power*. For one, how on this view could one account for the fact that the boxer, in our previous example, could perfectly describe what he was trying to do during the match though he was not conscious of his intentions while performing physical movements during the match? More importantly, how on this view could one distinguish intentional from non-intentional actions? If actions involved in skillful coping are not caused by intentions (for claiming that intentional actions can be performed without any mental activity amounts to claiming that such actions can be performed without intentions), how could such actions qualify as intentional in the first place? It seems that Dreyfus's notion of skillful coping blurs the difference between intentional and non-intentional actions.

CONCLUSION

Our investigations have shown that the account of Dreyfus account on Heidegger's critique of Husserl's intentionality theory —that what such a critique primarily consists in is Heidegger's rejection of the primordial status that Husserl accords to the intentionality of consciousness—is implausible for the following reasons. First, Dreyfus's strategy to use Searle's theory of action as a stand-in for Husserl's is unwarranted because the affinities that Dreyfus attributes to Searle's and Husserl's theories of intentionality are either not affinities at all, as in the case of the mind-world split, or are affinities that are not really fundamental, as in the cases of the content-quality distinction concerning mental states, the relationship between language and consciousness with regard to their intentionality, and the conditions of satisfaction of intentional states. Secondly, such an account conflicts with Heidegger's idea of care as the fundamental characteristic of Dasein's *being-in-the-world* and fails to take into account Heidegger's strategic handling of the term "consciousness." And thirdly, Dreyfus's strategy of using Merleau-Ponty's concept of skillful or absorbed coping to explicate Heidegger's putative notion of an unconscious kind of intentional action is highly problematic for lacking in textual evidence and explanatory power.

Given all this, what then constitutes Heidegger's critique of Husserl's theory of intentionality? I believe the answer lies in Heidegger's rejection of the Cartesian view

of the mind-world split. If we will recall, it is primarily because of Husserl's assumption of such a view that leads him to appeal to an abstract reality, the *noema,* to explain how it has become possible for consciousness, which is essentially independent of <100) the world, to be related to the world. In this light, when Heidegger rejects the said Cartesian view through his description of Dasein as fundamentally a being-in-the-world, he, in effect, likewise rejects the need for the Husserlian noema, or more generally, the need for any transcendental grounding of the possibility of intentionality. This I believe is what mainly constitutes Heidegger's critique of Husserl's theory of intentionality.[7]

NOTES

1. Dreyfus, in this regard, is actually just following the same observation earlier made by J. N. Mohanty (quoted in Dreyfus 1984a, 5): "Husserl's 'act-matter' may correspond to what Searle calls 'propositional content,' and Husserl's 'act-quality' to 'illocutionary force."

2. Many contemporary Husserlian scholars like Dagfinn Fœllesdal (1984a), Hubert Dreyfus (1984b), Maurita Harney (1984), Seppo Sajama and Matti Kamppinen (1987), Harrison Hall (1993), and David Woodruff Smith and Ronald McIntyre (1984), believe that Husserl's concept of noema and the role it plays in his theory of intentionality parallels Frege's concept of sense and the role it plays in the latter's theory of semantics.

3. Eventually, Searle (1983, 11) explains that the direction of fit of a speech act and that of its sincerity condition are basically the same: "Notice that the parallelism between illocutionary acts and their expressed Intentional sincerity conditions is remarkably close: In general, the direction of fit of the illocutionary act and that of the sincerity condition is the same…."

4. Incidentally, this differentiates the Husserlian linguistic sense from the Fregean sense (see Mabaquiao 2005).

5. According to Harney (1984, 15-16), Brentano lays down the two important theses that constitute his theory of intentionality: the psychological thesis which takes intentionality as the necessary and sufficient mark of the mental, and the ontological thesis which holds that the status of intentional objects is mental or that intentional objects are mental entities (or entities that are immanent in consciousness).

6. Consequently, it also does not constitute a critique of Searle's theory of intentionality; for while Searle (1983, 1) regards intentionality as an important feature of mentality, he, however, does not consider it as the defining feature of mentality.

7. Incidentally, our investigations have also shown that Heidegger and Searle are the ones who share fundamental views, not Husserl and Searle—as Dreyfus claims. Both Heidegger and Searle reject the Cartesian view of the mind-world split, and both do so for generally the same reason: that consciousness is necessarily contextual—for Heidegger, it is because of Dasein's being-in-the-world; while for Searle, it is because of the necessity of the Background for intentional states to function. In this regard, <101) Searle (1983, 153-54), in fact, likens his Background to Heidegger's equipmental world:

> One could argue, and I have seen it argued, that what I have been calling the Background is really social, a product of social interaction, or that it is primarily biological, or even that it consists of actual objects in the world such as chairs and tables, hammers and nails—'the referential totality of ready-to-hand equipment,' in the Heideggerian vein. I want to say there is at least an element of truth in all these conceptions but that does not detract from the crucial sense in which the Background consists of mental phenomena.

Moreover, both eventually reject any transcendental grounding of the possibility of intentionality, as Heidegger rejects the need for the Husserlian noema while Searle rejects the abstract status of the Fregean sense.

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