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Artificial Intelligence and Suppositum: A Critique of the Critique of the Notion of Selfhood

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Abstract: The objective of this paper is to posit a critique of the contemporary critique of the notion of selfhood in the philosophy of mind and cognitive neuroscience. The research in artificial intelligence (AI) as the science of intelligence *per se* and/or of cognition, in general, has been considered and employed as a formidable theoretical tool in sustaining philosophical arguments for the denial of the existence of the Self or selfhood in the human person. It has revitalized the philosophical problematics of the existence or otherwise, of consciousness, intelligence, and autonomy not only in biological systems but also in non-biological systems and the deepening of the body-soul and/or brain-mind problem in the philosophy of mind. This paper will give an exposition of the critique of selfhood in the human person, especially as expounded by Daniel Dennett. It will also posit a counter-critique of the critique of selfhood based on John Eccles's dualistic-interactionalist philosophy of neuroscience and Karol Wojtyła's philosophical anthropology based on the notion of *suppositum*. Hence, it shall defend the philosophical anthropology of the human person as a metaphysical *suppositum* possessing ontological subjectivity.

Keywords: artificial intelligence, *suppositum*, selfhood, philosophy of mind, philosophical anthropology.

Introduction

The Self or Selfhood may seem self-evident, but the history of Western philosophy says the contrary. One of the perennial problems in Western philosophy is the question of the Self, whether or not there exists a self-subsisting ontological substance in the human person (and, in fact, in all primary substances). For the most part, the Self has been affirmed, but in almost every epoch, there exists certain skeptics or outright deniers of the existence of the Self. During ancient times, Socratic-Plato, in their idealism, not only believed in the existence of the Self but identified things to their idea and of the human person to its soul or intellect. Aristotle believes everything has a formal principle, which he calls the soul (*psuche*) in living things and in humans, the intellectual or rational soul. The ancient atomists Democritus, Leucippus, and their followers deny the ontological existence of such a metaphysical abstraction. The Platonic idealism endured through the Hellenistic period, arguably championed by Plotinus in his articulation of the notion of the intellect (*intellectus*, *nous*). During this period, Epicurus and his followers adopted the atomistic natural philosophy of Democritus and Leucippus to articulate a materialistic philosophy that denies the existence of the Self as a spiritual or non-material substance. The notion of the Platonic *intellectus* and Aristotelian intellectual soul was employed by the Scholastics (Judaic, Islamic, and Christian) to articulate the religious belief in an immortal self-subsisting substance, the human soul. This period experienced no vociferous attack on and denial of the notion of the Self or the Soul. The dawn of modern Philosophy, especially with the mechanistic empiricists and phenomenalists ably represented by Hobbes and Hume, resumed the skepticism and denial of the Self after Descartes established the metaphysics of the mind, or what today is called philosophy of mind. The German Idealists articulated and established the Self or human Subjectivity as the nucleus of not just philosophy but human thought per se (this notion of Subjectivity endured in the phenomenological movement).

Unlike in the past, when the discourse on the Self remained within the realm of philosophical speculation and commonsensical analogical reasoning, in contemporary times, the advancement in neuroscience and AI has also brought an empirical perspective to the philosophizing of the Self. The reality of AI systems today, this essay argues, is rigorously problematizing the philosophy of the Self. This is because the fact that AI systems execute certain cognitive phenomena is a strong empirical counterargument for the existence of the Self. If one argues that an AI system does not have a self with its cognate mental phenomena, one will have to explain the possibilities of cognitive behaviors by the AI system of the same kind as human systems. It is no longer enough to say that AI systems are machines programmed to do what they do; the prevalent belief in evolutionary theory maintains that, like every biological system, humans are also programmed to do what they do. Thus, whether programmed by humans, by natural selection, or by God, the fact of AI systems and Human systems executing certain kinds of cognitive behavior needs to be explained if the possibility of these cognitive behaviors in humans is metaphysically reduced to the Self.

Daniel Dennett is one of the philosophers in contemporary times who has maintained a sustained critique of the notion of the Self, who is also versed in contemporary research in the brain sciences, cognitive sciences, and AI research. Examining his critique, this paper aims to posit a critique of the contemporary critique of the notion of selfhood in the philosophy of mind and cognitive neuroscience. The research in AI as the science of intelligence *per se* and/or cognition in general, has been considered and employed as a formidable theoretical tool in sustaining philosophical arguments for denying the existence of the Self or selfhood in the human person. It has revitalized the philosophical problematics of the existence or otherwise, of consciousness, intelligence, and autonomy not only in biological systems but also in non-biological systems; the possibility of non-biological life-kinds; and the deepening of the body-soul and/or brain-mind problem in the philosophy of mind. More so, the empirical evidence of the exceedingly complicated operations of intelligence and other cognitive actions in AI systems have strengthened the philosophical positions of materialist theories of the mind that,

among other things, question the existence of the Self in the human person. This paper will give an exposition of the critique of selfhood in the human person, especially as expounded by Dennett. It will also posit a counter-critique of the critique of selfhood based on John Eccles's dualistic-interactionalist philosophy of neuroscience and Karol Wojtyła's philosophical anthropology based on the notion of *suppositum*. Hence, it shall defend the philosophical anthropology of the human person as a metaphysical *suppositum* possessing ontological subjectivity.

1. AI and Daniel Dennett's Critique of Selfhood in the Human Person

Daniel Dennett initiates his critique of the notion of self by giving two quotations, one from Leibniz and the other from Hume, where both express skepticism or outright denial of the existence of the Self (Dennett 1991, 412). In Dennett's Leibniz's quote, the skepticism of the Self employs a mechanistic analogy of a machine that behavioristically could execute percepts or cognitive phenomena. Today, the Leibnizian analogy has become more than a mere analogy or thought experiment. It is now an empirical fact that there are AI systems that execute cognitive phenomena that are arguably not distinct from that of humans. We already have AI systems that execute virtual, auditory, motor cognition and execution, and even reasoning. No doubt, there are still a number of cognitive phenomena executed by humans that are (yet) not executed by AI systems. The camp is divided on whether it is a matter of time before AI systems are able to execute all human cognitive phenomena or whether AI systems will never be able to execute all human cognitive phenomena due to the specific ontological nature of the human person. Those in the latter camp, since they are not denying the empirical evidence of certain cognitive behaviors executed by some AI systems, one could say that they logically and metaphysically maintain the position of a distinction between being different and being diverse. Those in the former camp will logically and metaphysically maintain (in reference to cognitive behavior) that difference and diversity are identical.

According to Aristotle (Categories 6a13–14): "Things which are diverse are absolutely distinct, but things which are different differ by something." Thomas Aquinas (Summa Theological (ST), P.1, Q. 3, art. 8), referencing the above position of Aristotle, maintains: "Thus [hu]man and horse differ by their differences, rational and irrational; which differences, however, do not differ from each other by other differences. Hence, to be quite accurate, it is better to say that they are not different but diverse." The point in the distinction between being different and being diverse is that in diversity, there is a distinction in *quiddity*, or there is an essential distinction, but in difference, there is no essential distinction, but there are distinctions in predicables. This explanation is helpful in the discourse between AI systems and human systems with respect to executions of cognitive phenomena. The question is: Are the cognitive powers in AI systems the same as those of Human systems? If they are not the same, is it a case for the ontological existence of the Self in humans that explains the difference?

Dennett critiques predication of invisibility to the of the notion of "Self" as in the "Self" is "invisible under a microscope" and "invisible to introspection" (Dennett 1991, 412). What ontological claim should be given to such predicated as invisible? Is it a "nonphysical soul," "a ghost in the machine," "a figment of metaphysically fevered imaginations," or "a sort of abstraction?" For Dennett, the Self is conceived as a reality that exists in us humans; however, how it is described, is either an "empirical idiocy" or "metaphysical claptrap" (Dennett 1991, 413). He contends, it is merely a biological principle that organizes every living system, which he calls the "biological self" (Dennett 1991, 414). "The biological self," is not an ontological reality but an abstract biological principle due to evolutionary needs and selections (see Dennett 1991, 416). Hence, he ridicules what is referenced as soul or self as "homunculus" (Dennett 1991, 416).

Dennett maintains that human linguistic power gives rise to what is being conceived and signified as selfhood, but the selfhood is not what gives the substratum of human linguistic powers. In other words, by our evolutionary designed ability to use language, we construct a notion of the Self, but it is not the case that we have the linguistic ability for

language because there exists a self-subsisting substance, the Self (see Dennett 1991, 418). Thus, the notion of the Self is an ontological illusion for him. He posits Multiple Personality disorder (MPD) and the psychological phenomenon of Fractional Personality Disorder (FPD) as counterarguments for the belief in the existence of the Self (see Dennett 1991, 419–422).

In sum, Dennett uses the terms "self" and "selves," so his quarrel is not that the term should not be used. His critique is rather how, based on a naturalistic or physicalistic reductionistic philosophical and scientific framework, the term "self" should be understood. So, for him, there is no ontologically self-subsisting entity or religiously denoted immortal soul and philosophically denoted Self or Selfhood or Subjectivity that exists in or within the body of an individual human person. He argues that the self is the principle of biological abstraction in all biological systems, which are evolutionarily designed to give an organism a sense of boundary and organization, especially to humans, a needed "center of narrative gravity" (Dennett 1991, 426–30).

2. John Eccles' Dualistic-Interactionalist Philosophy of Neuroscience

This section explores the possibility of understanding the Self through the Neurosciences (NS). This is bearing in mind that the goal of neurosciences or neural sciences is "to formulate a theory that can in principle provide a complete explanation of all behaviour of animals and [hu]man, including [hu]man's verbal behaviour" (Popper and Eccles 1977, 358). So, it will be proper to assert that neurosciences do not directly study the Self. However, neural scientific investigations could be and, in fact, have been epistemic instruments for the affirming or denying of the existence of mental phenomena in general and self-consciousness in particular, considering the empirical connection between the functioning of the brain and the neurons and total existential behaviors of all animals, especially humans (cf. Erin I Smith 2021). In a general sense, while NS aims to understand the components and workings of the nervous systems as

they affect overt behaviors, AI aims to understand and replicate cognitive behaviors in parts or in general. So, one can also see an epistemic relation between both sciences—the knowledge grounded in the operations of cognitive systems. Both sciences, therefore, have become powerful contemporary intellectual disciplines employed in understanding the cognitive world in general and epistemic grounds to argue for or against traditional philosophical problems of the interior universe of the human person—intentionality, consciousness, self-consciousness or the Self, or Soul.

Eccles wrote several works to argue for and make the case for not just the dualistic-interactionalistic philosophy of the brain-mind problem; more so, he goes further to defend the existence of the Self. For Eccles, the "Self" signifies the "self-conscious mind," which affirms the existence of a mind that knows itself or, better put, a self that knows its mind. He holds that the brain is a machine, but not a special machine that has capacities to execute operations that transcend biological, chemical, and physical phenomena (see Popper and Eccles, 1977, 226). Eccles has employed as a philosophical framework the philosophical construction of Karl Popper that epistemologically separates human world experience into three worlds: the physical world, the mental world, and the world of the products of the human mind (see Popper and Eccles 1977, 36–50; Eccles 1980, 16–19; 1989). The brain and other parts of the nervous system are physical entities, so they exist in the physical world. While some philosophers (and some scientists) that are materialistic, such as Dennett, hold that only the neuronal machinery exists, so the talk of interaction does not exist since the world 2, the mental world-entities do not exist, Eccles, (and of course Popper), holds that the neuronal machinery which is of the physical world not only interact with the mental world it also interacts with the world 3, the world of the product of the human mind—all human cultures and civilizations. He asserts that this dualistic interaction "is a very strong dualism and raises the most severe scientific problems in relationship to the interface between the world of matter-energy, in the special instance of the liaison area of the brain, and the world of states of consciousness that is referred to as the self-conscious mind" (Popper and Eccles, 1977, 355).

What has given room to this dualistic outlook, is the experimental procedure—commissurotomy of patients with severe neural problems, such as epileptic seizures. Eccles' thesis on the Self, or self-conscious mind as he calls it, proposes "that the self-conscious mind exercises a superior interpretive and controlling role upon the neural events by virtue of a two-way interaction across the interface between World 1 and World 2" (Popper and Eccles 1977, 355–56). A reading of Eccles's thesis above will definitely call to mind Dennett's *homunculus*. Eccles argues that the brain or the neuronal system *per se* is not that which is behind the unity of conscious experience. The neuronal system is a necessary material or physical cause for consciousness or conscious experience, but it is not sufficient ground for the unity of conscious experience. Simply put, Eccles dismisses any reductionistic beliefs and/or methods in understanding or explaining mind or conscious experiences in general as merely physicalistic activities of the brain.

Eccles based on the neuroscientific investigations on commissurotomy patients, adduces the following points: The first point is that the self-conscious mind deals with the dominant hemisphere, which is the left hemisphere of the brain—the linguistic area, not the minor or right hemisphere (Popper and Eccles 1977, 357). It is also important to note that acts of volition (voluntary actions) also deal with the dominant hemisphere "by some willed action of the conscious self" (Popper and Eccles 1977, 312). More importantly, with respect to the dominant hemisphere is the term "liaison brain," which "denotes all those areas of the cerebral cortex that potentially are capable of being in direct liaison with the self-conscious mind" (Popper and Eccles 1977, 358). These areas of the brain account for the higher levels of conscious experiences, but Eccles argues that the reductionist stance cannot explain these higher-level conscious experiences or will fail if the reductionist strategy is employed. On the contrary, he maintains that a possible explanatory account will be the dualistic-interactionist position (see Popper and Eccles 1977, 358).

For Eccles, there are three levels of interaction in humans (and only uniquely to humans): brain-mind-cultural creation, represented in the Popperian three worlds. A map of Eccles's explanation of the three worlds of brain-mind-cultural creation interaction is described thus:

"World 1 ↔ World 2 and World 3 ↔ World 1 ↔ World 2, where World 2 → World 1 contains the problem of voluntary action and World 1 → World 2, the problem of conscious perception. However, when the self-conscious mind is engaged in creative thinking on problems or ideas, there would seem to be a direct interaction of World 2 and World 3" (Popper and Eccles 1977, 360). To interpret, there are always interactions between the activities of the neural machinery and the activities of the mind or consciousness and vice versa. There are direct interactions between the mind and human cultural creations via the brain, but no direct interactions between the brain and human cultural creations, which happen only in humans (see Popper and Eccles 1977, 360). Defending his dualistic-interactionalist hypothesis, Eccles maintains the following assumptions:

(i) "There is a unitary character about the experiences of the self-conscious mind."
(ii) "We can assume that the experiences of the self-conscious mind have a relationship with neural events in the liaison brain, there being a relationship of interaction giving a degree of correspondence, but not an identity."
(iii) "There can be a temporal discrepancy between neural events and the experiences of the self-conscious mind."
(iv) "There is the continual experience that the self-conscious mind can effectively act on the brain events" (Popper and Eccles, 1977, 361–362).

Based on these hypotheses, Eccles makes the case for an active self-conscious mind that constantly acts on the human brain (see Popper and Eccles 1977, 362). What he argues is that the self-conscious mind superintends over the brain by "exercis[ing] a superior interpretative and controlling role upon the neural events" (Popper and Eccles 1977, 362). By so doing, the self-conscious mind, not the neural machinery of liaison areas of the cerebral hemisphere, provides the unity of conscious experience in a human person and also it is that which explains personal identity. So, the unity of conscious experience is not a totality of specific neural events in the brain but a reality that is both by nature and by operation different from the neural machinery—the self-conscious mind.

By nature, the self-conscious mind acts freely, and by operation, it acts in a selective and unifying manner (see Popper and Eccles, 1977 363). Eccles's thesis, argumentations, and concluded hypothesis are based on the famous neuro-experiments of Libet on the human brain (Popper and Eccles 1977, 363–65). The self-conscious mind is continuously active at the cortical modules of the liaison brain area of the dominant cerebral cortex in bringing to effect a 'transcendental property of being "open" to World 2, and thus being the World 1 components of the interface' (Popper and Eccles 1977, 366).

3. Karol Wojtyła's Notion of *Suppositum* as Subjectivity

One of the unique concepts that Christian philosophy contributed to Western philosophy and thought in general is the concept of *persona*—person. This concept of *persona* came into Western thought by means of the effort to explain the mystery of the Trinity in Christian theology. In the Christian metaphysics of being, the *persona* is not the *hupostasis* (in Greek and *substantia* in Latin); that is to say, a person is not only a (primary) substance like every other being, but a person is a *suppositum*. The notion of a person as *suppositum* improves Boethius's classical definition: "persona est individua substantia naturae rationalis" (a person is an individual substance of a rational nature). Boethius's definition of a person as an individual substance of a rational nature does not necessarily entail that a person is a free agent or has autonomy. Hence, the notion of a *suppositum*—a self-subsisting being—implies independence and autonomy, that is a subsistence being—that which "exists in itself and not in another" (Aquinas, ST, P. I, Q. 29, Art. 2). In the attempt to defend Boethius's definition of a person, Thomas Aquinas improves it by emphasizing that *persona* implies *suppositum*.

Aquinas emphasizes the uniqueness of a person as an individual substance of a rational nature and asserts: "[I]n a more special and perfect way, the particular and the individual are found in the rational substances which have dominion over their own actions; and which are not only made

to act, like others; but which can act of themselves; for actions belong to singulars" (ST, P. I, Q. 29, Art. 1). The emphasis of the idea of persons having "dominion over their own actions" and "not only made to act" is an advancement in the notion of a person from Christian philosophy that has remained at the root of Western and by extension, global socio-political conception of the human person. But more importantly, today, this idea should be at the heart of the philosophical question of AI systems' possibility of having the cognitive nature of the human person. Aquinas' improvement on Boethius' definition of *persona* is essential to the definition of a person. One could argue that an AI system that, on empirical evidence, demonstrates rational actions could be signified as a person if given the definition of a person simply as an individual substance of a rational nature. However, with Aquinas' emphasis on having dominion over their own actions and not only being made to act, as that which is central in the signification of "persons," then AI systems, as they are presently, cannot be said to be persons. However, the question will be different when one thinks about whether it can ever be possible for AI systems to have dominion over their own actions and not merely be programmed to act.

Both Boethius's and Aquinas's explication of the notion of *persona* did not unpack more philosophical contents in the understanding of *persona* as *suppositum*— "a subsistent individual of a rational nature" (note the change of "substance" in the original definition of Boethius to "subsistent" in the Aquinas' version of the definition) (ST, P. I, Q. 29, Art. 3). This becomes the philosophical project of Karol Wojtyla's philosophical anthropology. Wojtyła's project is to expound the notion of *suppositum* as "subjectivity" to encompass more philosophical richness than just the metaphysical understanding of the substantiality of the person as a subject (primary substance). Hence, he attempts to expound a philosophy of the subjectivity of the human person that is rooted in Aquinas' notion of *suppositum* by employing the descriptive phenomenology of Max Scheler. The question is: What underpins the person as a self-subsisting rational being? Aquinas has hinted at self-domination or self-governance, but what does it entail, and how does it happen? Wojtyła gives philosophical content to these questions.

Wojtyła maintains that a more comprehensive way to understand what underpins the subjectivity of the human person is to investigate human experience, the experience of oneself. According to him, "[hu] man's experience of anything outside of [one]self is always associated with the experience of himself, and he never experiences anything external without having at the same time the experience of [one]self" (Wojtyła 1979, 3). The most sublime of this experience of oneself is the experience of one's self-autonomy, self-governance, or self-dominance (three different ways of saying one's experience of one's subsistence). In this experience, the human person faces oneself as the owner of oneself that is incommunicable— "in this experience [hu]man has to face [one] self; that is, [one] comes into a cognitive relation with [one]self" (Wojtyła 1979, 3). For Wojtyła, among all human experiences, it is in one's moral or ethical experiences or actions that the human person most properly becomes a person by truly facing the ownership of oneself—making one at the same time a subject and an object unto oneself (see Wojtyła 1979, 4; 37). This experience is not a phenomenalistic one, a sensual and perceptive experience, but an ontological one, the experience of one's existence (see Wojtyła 1979, 4–9). For as humans, our "own subjective being and the existence proper to it (that of a suppositum) appear to us in experience precisely as a self-experience subject" (Wojtyła 1993, 213). With more clarity, Wojtyła maintains: "In the field of experience, the human being appears both as a particular suppositum and as a concrete self, in every instance unique and unrepeatable…The human being is simultaneously its subject and object" (Wojtyła 1993, 221). So, this experience goes beyond the neurological activities of the brain and other nervous systems; it is the complete act of the Self, which Eccles attempts to explain its neuroscientific bases as expounded above.

It is the subjectivity of the human person that makes a person "not only acts consciously, but [makes one] also aware of both the fact that [one] is acting and the fact that it is [one] who is acting—hence [one] has the awareness of the action as well as of the person in their dynamic interrelation" (Wojtyła 1979, 31). The knowledge of this awareness is what is called self-knowledge (see Wojtyła 1979, 37). Hence, by self-knowledge, the ego or Self becomes the proper object of knowledge to the Self—

the conscious Self. This reality is properly called self-consciousness or one's own subjectiveness, which happens as a result of the reflexiveness of consciousness. The reflexiveness of consciousness is more than a reflectiveness of consciousness, which is a mere cognition of one's consciousness. Reflexiveness of consciousness is a direct apprehension of one's own conscious self (see Wojtyła 1979, 42; 44).

Hence, contrary to what philosophers like Dennett seem to be suggesting, Wojtyła clearly maintains that "subjectivity" is not "subjectivism"—a mental attitude or disposition; rather, it is the experience of oneself as a subject and as the efficacious agent of one's own action (see Wojtyła 1979, 56–57). Hence, the conscious experience of "I act," but not merely "action," is at the heart of the dynamic efficacy of human action as a Subject. This dynamic efficacy of human subjectivity distinguishes the reality of "mere happening" from action, for in "mere happening," there is no experience of "I act," but in action, and especially in moral actions, there is the experience of "I act"—being the author and finisher of one's own action. Hence, in this experience, the human person is not merely activated to act; he or she actually creates his or her actions, and by the actions created, one creates oneself as either a morally good or bad person. Hence, it is only with respect to the human person that every action has a moral and/or an ethical implication (see Wojtyła 1979, 60–70; 98–101).

This subjectivity of the human person explains a person as a self-determined—self-governed, self-possessed being. By this structure of self-determination, the human person transcends oneself in action and participates in intersubjectivity with other persons (see Wojtyła 1979, 105–186; 261–300; 1993, 187–195). He maintains that "Self-determination in some sense points to self-possession and self-governance as the structure proper to a person. If I determine myself, I must possess myself and govern myself" (Wojtyła 1993, 192). In sum he signifies the term "subjectivity" as "a term proclaiming that the human being's proper essence cannot be totally reduced to and explained by the proximate genus and specific difference. *Subjectivity is, then, a kind of synonym for the irreducible in the human being*" (Wojtyła 1993, 211) [emphasis not mine].

4. AI and the Critique of the Critique of the Notion of Selfhood

Materialistic philosophers and scientists have always denied the existence of any possible intelligent beings in any possible world except the existence of intelligent humans in this actual world. Now, with the design and development of AI systems, the table seems to turn over; some materialistic philosophers and scientists believe that AI systems are not only possible but actual intelligent beings. On the other hand, most, if not all, religious believers and all religious-oriented metaphysicians and scientists are denying that AI systems are intelligent beings or can ever be intelligent beings. Notwithstanding the growing claim for intelligence to all animals especially primates, all agree or seem to agree that the only actual intelligent being is the human person. This raises two questions: How are human persons (actually) intelligent, or what is the intelligentness in human persons? How do we know that humans are intelligent? These two questions are at the heart of AI research as a science, for the ultimate theoretical end of AI science is to understand intelligence in particular and cognition in general in order to design and create intelligent systems.

It will be fair to assert that epistemologically, there is no aprioricity in the knowledge of the human person as an intelligent being, that is, it is not self-evident—there is nothing in the constitution of a human being as a living organism that self-evidently entails intelligibility. We know the possession of intelligibility or intelligentness in human persons inductively by the fact of human actions. So, following Saul A. Kripke's (see 1980) distinction between á priority, analyticity, and necessity, one could assert that the definition of a person is also not analytical because the meaning is not necessarily entailed in the term "person." This is obvious in Aquinas's need to improve the famous definition of a person (persona) by Boethius expounded above. The question on the intelligentness of the human person begins first with the question: What is a person? There are options: "rational animal" by Aristotle, "an individual substance of a rational nature" by Boethius, and "a subsistent individual of a rational nature" by Aquinas. The three definitions mutually entail one another,

but none of the definitions is necessarily entailed in the term "person." This explains the epistemological shift in philosophical anthropology by Wojtyła in the understanding of a person not merely in the metaphysical sense as *suppositum* but in the emphasis of *suppositum* as subjectivity.

So somehow, since Descartes, through the German Idealists and then the phenomenological and existential movements, a case for understanding a person as a mind, Self, Ego, or Subject has been made. This philosophical move philosophically concretizes the understanding of the human person as a composite of two ontologically different substances—spiritual and physical. Post-Cartesian's critique of the strong dualistic theory of the body/brain-mind problem has become intense and fierce since the twentieth century by most materialistic *cum* naturalistic evolutionary philosophical and scientific proponents. One of those who not only maintains a physicalistic critique against the dualistic interaction of brain and mind but more so desires to make a case for a complete dismissal of consciousness and/or self-consciousness or the Self as illusion is Dennett. The exposition of his thoughts on the notion of the Self above shows that one cannot simply dismiss the existence of a self-conscious mind or the Self. For one cannot hide under science, be it the natural sciences, to simply dismiss as an illusion what is consisted to human intuition. Science can provide a better explanation or a different level of understanding of nature, including human nature and human experiences, but it is not to be dismissive of them. So, what Dennett has done is to give a biological explanation of the Self. For him, the evidenced cultural creation and creative innovation of humans (the World 3 of Popper and Eccles) are not and should not be grounds to impute the existence of a self in human nature.

The main point of Eccles's thought is that while all forms of monistic materialistic theories of the brain-mind problem cannot stand on neuroscientific experiments, the dualistic-interactionalist position is strongly supported by neuroscientific experiments. He further argues for the existence of a free self in all individuals that interact selectively with the brain in such a transcendental manner beyond the physical constitution of the brain. Critiques of the Self and staunch supporters of AI systems like Dennett could raise the question: With AI systems'

advancement in executing most of the high cognitive phenomena that are attributed to the existence of the Self in humans, will it be okay to assert that AI systems possess or could possess the Self? Onyeukaziri articulates questions about AI systems executing what, by observation, could be said to be intelligent behaviors, thus: "Can AI systems performing intelligent actions be said to be conscious and even self-conscious? Three things are possible in the relations between intelligence and (self-)consciousness. Either AI systems, if intelligent, then have (self-)consciousness or AI systems do not have intelligence if they are not (self-)consciousness. Or, the third possibility, is to assert that intelligence does not require (self-)consciousness" (Onyeukaziri 2023, 87).

If Eccles's neuroscientific philosophy provides a strong neuroscientific hypothesis for the existence of the Self or self-conscious mind, one could argue it does not directly respond to the empirically based reality of AI systems executing what, when executed by us, is called intelligent behavior. This is understandable since the motive of Eccles is to defend a strong dualistic-interactionist hypothesis of the brain-mind problem. Essentially, understanding intelligence as symbolic representation and manipulation entails a dualistic relationship between the brain and mind or their model. At present, the two models of AI systems, symbolic AI and Neural Network or Connectionist AI, have been developed to deal with symbolic knowledge representation based on logical and/or statistical manipulations. The case may be different when the research in designing and developing behavioral-based autonomous or Situated, Embodied, and Dynamic (SED) AI models that are non-representative.

The need for SED AI models shows the importance of Wojtyła's critique that emphasizes the dynamic efficacy of the subjectivity of the human person. This means that humans intrinsically possess self-governance, self-determination, and/or self-possession. This is because the conscious experience of "I act" but not merely "action" in the human person is at the heart of the dynamic efficacy of human action as a Subject. The human person is that which contemporaneously is both a subject and object unto itself. This experience is only possible because of the existence of the Self, which makes a case for the existence of the Self only in the human person as not merely a rational substance but a *suppositum*—a self-subsistence

subjectivity that governs and owns itself. Thus, it could be asserted that there is an absolute distinction (or essential distinction) between human intelligence (HI) and artificial intelligence (AI), so the intelligence of HI systems is not merely different but differ from that of AI systems. The Self is the absolute distinction.

Conclusion

This essay has attempted to posit a critique of the contemporary critique of the notion of selfhood in the philosophy of mind and cognitive neuroscience. It discussed how the research in AI, as the science of intelligence *per se* and/or of cognition in general, is employed as a formidable theoretical tool in sustaining philosophical arguments for the denial of the existence of the Self or selfhood in the human person. It also discusses how the empirical existence of AI systems has revitalized the philosophical problematics of the existence or otherwise, of consciousness, intelligence, and autonomy not only in biological systems but also in non-biological systems; the possibility of non-biological life-kinds and the deepening of the body-soul and/or brain-mind problem in the philosophy of mind. More so, it shows how the empirical evidence of the exceedingly complicated operations of intelligence and other cognitive actions in AI systems strengthen the philosophical positions of materialist theorists of the mind, such as Dennett, that, among other things, question the existence of the Self in the human person.

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