



Knowledge and Information

Abstract: What does it mean to know something? Do we have different kinds of knowledge? I distinguish between conceptual and transrational knowledge, the latter being the result of a higher form of thought, Transrational Thinking (Paranoesis) that is. In conceptual thinking we cannot know the objects in themselves, but only in transrational thought. Knowing has to do with information. This concept is analyzed critically. Two modes of retrieval of information are discussed. The non-locality of our mind leads to the non-locality of information, the Hologemes in the Universal Mind (Hyponoesis) that are only accessible to Transrational Thinking.

To know something means to have a true concept of it. A concept is true if it expresses the essence of the object of which it is a concept. The concept is the mental abstract of a physical or experiential object. To have a concept of something is tantamount to having knowledge of it. This is how conceptual thinking understands knowledge. Knowledge means in this context always the possession of a concept by internally appropriating the given sensual representation of an object. The concept is equivalent to the essence of the object. The essence is discovered by the intrinsic mental faculty of comparison and analysis (Plato's *diairesis*). The concept is the generalization of a particular object. Concepts are always universal, never particular.

The world of our thinking is therefore different from the world of particular objects which are only given in perceptions and sensations as representations. We experience particular objects but we think universal objects. Concepts of our thinking are these universal objects. To have the concepts is equivalent to having the objects. The rational is the real, and the real is the rational (Hegel's dictum). A deeper scrutiny of this notion, however, discloses its deficiency. The knowledge we have of objects is only conceptual knowledge and not essential, objective knowledge.

We do not know the objects in themselves (Kant's *noumenon*), in their essence (Scholastic quiddity), but only as conceptual entities of our minds. These concepts do not reflect the true essence or nature of the objects, but only the way these objects appear to our senses. Our ordinary mind's evolutionary function is to assimilate the concept to the object to an indistinguishable degree. Thus the object's appearance to our perceptive mind is believed to be the object's essence. The representations of the objects in our mind are so persuasive in their phenomenal *gestalt* that we naturally incline to confuse object and representation and concept with each other. The Kantian distinction of *phenomenon* and *noumenon* is still valid regarding our conceptual thought. This categorical confusion is, however, most useful in our daily life and as a biological function serves the survival of the species. For most people it is obviously superfluous or useless to know the true nature of the world, since this knowledge is not directly applicable to everyday life.

True knowledge is knowledge of the mind and not of the delusive and projected world that we perceive and experience. Therefore, conceptual thinking is entirely justified, although its horizon became more and more restricted during the progress of humankind. Whereas in former centuries mythological and symbolical thinking predominated or militated against the budding scientific thought, our century is enslaved to a pure rational, scientific and positivistic mode of thought (cf. Marcuse: one-dimensional man/thought).

In Transrational Thinking (Paranoesis), however, we directly know the essence of the object, because we bypass the perplexing maze of conceptual thinking and directly apprehend the being-in-itself of the object, its very essence. This intuition is not a sensational experience but a noetic state of the mind that consists in being one with the essential nature of the object. How is it possible to attain this mental state of the mind, this transrational insight into the very essence of an object?

Before providing a tentative answer to this very complex and intricate question, we have to analyze what knowing exactly means. Knowing has to do with information. It is a mental activity of ordering information within a certain context and associating actual information with memory-stored information. By information I mean the original connotation of the term: in-form = to be inside the form. That which is in the *form* is accessible to our mind as in the *form* of knowledge.

Form is the ancient philosophical term for essence. Plato called it Idea (*eidōs*), Aristotle Form (*eidōs/morphe*). Aristotle characterized the unmoved mover as Universal Mind (Hyponoesis), as pure Form without Matter (*hylē*), as pure actuality. The world on the other side is a compound of Matter and Form. Form is the actualized essence of the potential Matter. So, information is the essence or *form* of an object, universal or particular. This definition of information includes the physical definition as a measurable unit.

Information is produced by the interaction of consciousness and the world. Information is never created *ex nihilo*. All information in the universe is potentially available and will be actualized by conscious thinking, either by means of observation (perception) or of thinking itself. Since all information ever available to thinking is already given potentially within Hyponoesis, the only way to know directly or transrationally is by actualizing this information right from Hyponoesis without using the ordinary instruments of actualization, such as perception, scientific experiment or conceptual thinking (inference, induction, deduction, etc.). These instruments actualize information only indirectly and partially or by strenuous time-consuming efforts (e.g. scientific theories and experiments).

To tap the primary source of information directly and with utmost reliability, we have to apply Paranoesis or Transrational Thinking. How can we actualize information that is not available to our Individual Mind (Exonoesis)? For example, information, which we have never acquired or learned. This seems to be impossible, because most scientists believe that Mind is initially a blank slate that gets formed and written by the gradual development of the brain (neuronal association) and by the constant exposure to environmental influence of diverse kinds (family, friends, school, workplace, culture, religion, politics, etc.).

Even if we accede this scientific definition of the mind it is only valid regarding Exonoesis, that is for its manifestation dependent on the brain's performance and capacity. Transrational Thinking transcends the inherent limitations of the brain and Exonoesis (Individual Mind) and accesses Hyponoesis (Universal Mind) directly. Hyponoesis contains any conceivable and inconceivable information. Since Hyponoesis is timeless, the information is timeless, too. That means, information as such cannot be conceived of as existing in time. There is no information of the future or the past or the present[1]. There is only information. The status of information, however, can be potential or actualized, depending on our mind's activity. Whenever our mind uses or produces information, this information is not created -- even if entirely new and expressed for the very first time -- but only actualized in its potential form. Information can only be expressed by means of concepts.

So, concepts as representations of objects reflect universal information in varying degrees. Information can be partially actualized (fragmentary, conceptual knowledge) or fully actualized (complete, Transrational Knowledge). The latter is only possible through the faculty of Paranoesis (Transrational Thinking).

Information can, however, never be reduced to a physical, measurable unit, since information is conceptual and not sensational or empirical. Information is actualized by the act of thinking. It is not in the object perceived or conceived, but emerges as the result of the thinking process of or

about an object. Conceptualization means information. Concepts as such are not information, but only the manifest vehicle or means of information, the instrument of the actualization of information.

How can we retrieve information?

a) Within Exonoesis (Individual Mind), the memory of the brain is the means of information storage. All information acquired through our senses or by learning (attentive or focused thinking) is stored locally in the memory. This is only local information and its use and retrieval are dependent on the efficiency of thought's methods of accessing that information. Only a small part of all the information of our memory is consciously accessible and reproducible in our thought. There are mnemonics and other memory-improving methods available that may help keep information in direct access, but, despite that fact, all this information is local and private.

b) If we want to retrieve any information and not only local one, we need access to Hyponoesis (Universal Mind). By Paranoesis (Transrational Thinking) we can retrieve any (local and non-local) information without ever learning it, without storing it within the brain's memory in the first place. Transrational Thinking just bypasses the brain's memory and accesses the information resident in the universal "memory" of Hyponoesis. We always obtain complete and absolutely true information and we can never be deceived by using Paranoesis.

However, the primary information in Hyponoesis is not in the form of concepts, such as local information is. Universal information is in the form of *Hologemes*, holistic entities. These have to be translated into the concepts by Paranoesis in order to make them available and intelligible to conceptual thinking. The Hologemes cannot be translated without a considerable loss of the original holistic contents. Thus, conceptual information is by necessity fragmentary information.

The next step is to elaborate a method for accessing universal information in Hyponoesis.

Addendum

Some evidence for getting information outside of the locally stored information in our memory can be found in the scientific study of paranormal or psychic phenomena, such as telepathy and precognition. Both faculties of the mind get information from outside of the local realm of the Individual Mind (Exonoesis) and the brain.

Also in our everyday life, our mind might use intuition, although without us being aware of it or being able to control it.

Example: Phone is ringing. There is a flash of thought in my mind: it's X! And it really is X! How did I know? Local information must be excluded a priori, because the ringing of the phone did not give me any clue as to the identity of the caller. There were no other sensations or perceptions that could have indicated my knowledge of X. Also, there was no way that I could have inferred X on purely logical grounds by reasoning. There only remains pure chance (lucky guess) or a non-local source of information. Although chance cannot be ruled out, it represents a too naive and simplistic account for this phenomenon. There could have been, however, psychological associations. Maybe I was thinking of X in the morning and planned to call him myself or something happened today that somehow is connected to an experience X and I share together. But apart from all these psychological elements, there remains the possibility of telepathy. X is thinking of me when calling and I unconsciously (by intuition) receive this information. It is as if X sends a thought to me and I get it through the very sensitive faculty of intuition. The crucial question is: where and how do I get this non-local information? Since it

happens unconsciously and arbitrarily in our daily life all the time, there must also be a controlled way of accessing non-local information, namely: Paranoesis or Transrational Thinking.

[1] cf. also Einstein's theory of relativity, where time is not conceived of as a succession from past to future but as including all time eventualities simultaneously within the time-space continuum (world-line). Relativistic time is an "eternal Now", containing all past and future events. Our mind is not capable of perceiving the world as a whole, but allows only of a gradual unfolding of distinct parts of it that appear to us as succeeding each other in time.

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URL: <http://www.hyponoesis.org/>

Updated: 6/14/06