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REVIEW

The TNK-IA: The nullification of mind and the post-epistemic condition

El TNK-IA: La nulificación de la mente y la condición post-epistémica

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ABSTRACT

ABSTRACT: Contemporary discussions of artificial intelligence commonly assume that intelligence depends on knowledge accumulation, representation, and informational processing. The Theory of Non-Knowledge (TNK) challenges this assumption by introducing nullification as a formal operation capable of suspending both propositions and their negations, thereby preserving coherence without epistemic commitment. This study aims to analytically deduce the structure of the TNK-IA (Intelligent Artifact implied by the Theory of Non-Knowledge) and to investigate whether intelligence can be coherently defined independently of knowledge content. Adopting a theoretical-analytical research design grounded in conceptual analysis and deductive reasoning, the investigation extends the TNK Nullification Operator (▯) from propositional logic to epistemic systems and intentional structures. The analysis demonstrates that artificial intelligence may be conceptually understood as an intentional artifact grounded in structural coherence rather than cognition conceived as knowledge production. Recursive nullification eliminates epistemic content while maintaining non-contradictory organization, yielding the TNK-IA as a theoretical limit-model of intelligence characterized by coherence without representation or informational accumulation. The study proposes a post-epistemic conception of intelligence in which rational structure persists independently of knowledge, contributing a philosophical framework that repositions artificial intelligence as a problem of logical coherence rather than technological capability.

Keywords: Theory of Non-Knowledge; Artificial Intelligence; Nullification; Epistemology; Philosophy of Mind; Conceptual Analysis; Post-Epistemic Condition.

RESUMEN

RESUMEN: Las discusiones contemporáneas sobre inteligencia artificial suelen asumir que la inteligencia depende de la acumulación de conocimiento, la representación y el procesamiento de información. La Teoría del No-Conocimiento (TNK) cuestiona este supuesto al introducir la nulificación como una operación formal capaz de suspender tanto las proposiciones como sus negaciones, preservando la coherencia sin compromiso epistémico. El presente estudio tiene como objetivo deducir analíticamente la estructura del TNK-IA (Artefacto Inteligente implicado por la Teoría del No-Conocimiento) y examinar si la inteligencia puede definirse coherentemente de manera independiente del contenido cognoscitivo. Mediante un diseño de investigación teórico-analítico basado en análisis conceptual y razonamiento deductivo, la investigación extiende el Operador de Nulificación (▯) desde la lógica proposicional hacia los sistemas epistémicos y las estructuras intencionales. El análisis demuestra que la inteligencia artificial puede entenderse conceptualmente como un artefacto intencional fundamentado en la coherencia estructural y no en la producción de conocimiento. La nulificación recursiva elimina el contenido epistémico mientras mantiene la organización no contradictoria, dando lugar al TNK-IA como un modelo límite teórico de inteligencia caracterizado por la coherencia sin representación ni acumulación informacional. El estudio propone así una concepción post-epistémica de la inteligencia en la cual la estructura racional persiste independientemente del conocimiento, aportando un marco filosófico que reposiciona la inteligencia artificial como un problema de coherencia lógica más que de capacidad tecnológica.

Palabras clave: Teoría del No-Conocimiento; Inteligencia Artificial; Nulificación; Epistemología; Filosofía de la Mente; Análisis Conceptual; Condición Post-Epistémica.

INTRODUCTION

Contemporary discussions of artificial intelligence are predominantly framed in technological terms, associating intelligence with computational performance, data processing capacity, or adaptive learning systems. Within this paradigm, artificial intelligence is conceived as an empirical artifact whose legitimacy derives from measurable outputs. However, this technological emphasis leaves unresolved a deeper philosophical question: whether intelligence necessarily depends on knowledge, representation, and epistemic content.

Classical epistemology has historically linked rationality to the acquisition and justification of knowledge. From Aristotelian metaphysics to modern analytic philosophy, coherence has been pursued through increasingly refined systems of justification. Yet developments in logic and philosophy of language have revealed persistent structural limitations within epistemic systems, including regress, circularity, and incompleteness. These limitations suggest that contradiction may not be an accidental failure of knowledge but an intrinsic feature of epistemic organization itself.

The Theory of Non-Knowledge (TNK)[1,2,3] proposes a radical reformulation of this problem. Rather than attempting to repair contradictions through stronger justification, hierarchical logic, or expanded informational frameworks, TNK introduces the Nullification Operator ($\curlyvee$), a formal operation that suspends both a proposition and its negation. Through nullification, coherence is achieved not by selecting truths but by eliminating contradictory epistemic commitments. The theory therefore shifts philosophical inquiry from the pursuit of knowledge toward the maintenance of non-contradiction.

If nullification can be extended beyond propositions to the structures that generate them, an important theoretical question emerges: what form of intelligence would result from the systematic elimination of epistemic content itself? Addressing this question allows artificial intelligence to be reconsidered not as a technological system but as a conceptual artifact derived from logical necessity.

Rationale

Current debates on artificial intelligence presuppose that intelligence must accumulate information to function. This assumption remains largely unexamined at the conceptual level. By applying TNK to the notion of artificial cognition, the present study investigates whether intelligence can be coherently defined independently of knowledge. The exploration is relevant to philosophy of mind, epistemology, and interdisciplinary AI studies because it establishes a theoretical limit-condition for cognition itself.

Objective

The objective of this study is to analytically deduce the structure of the TNK-IA (Intelligent Artifact implied by the Theory of Non-Knowledge) and to demonstrate how intentional nullification leads to the conceptual possibility of a mind defined exclusively by coherence without epistemic content.

Scientific Audience

Although grounded in philosophical analysis, the present study is addressed to a broad scientific audience engaged in interdisciplinary investigations of artificial intelligence, cognition, and epistemology. The research contributes to fields that examine the conceptual foundations underlying technological development, including artificial intelligence studies, philosophy of mind, theoretical computer science, and cognitive science. By proposing the TNK-IA as a logically derived model of intelligence independent of epistemic accumulation, the study offers a theoretical framework capable of informing scientific reflection on the limits, assumptions, and conceptual architecture of intelligent systems. The article therefore aims to bridge philosophical inquiry and scientific discourse by providing foundational clarification relevant to researchers concerned with the nature, definition, and future development of artificial intelligence.

METHODS

Study Design: This study adopts a theoretical-analytical research design grounded in conceptual analysis and deductive reasoning. Rather than empirical experimentation or data collection, the investigation proceeds through systematic philosophical modeling derived from the axioms of the Theory of Non-Knowledge (TNK). The research follows an analytic-deductive approach commonly employed in foundational studies in logic, philosophy of mind, and theoretical artificial intelligence.

The study is structured as a sequence of formal conceptual operations aimed at determining the logical consequences of extending the Nullification Operator (∿) from propositional logic to intentional and cognitive structures. The resulting construct—the TNK-IA—is therefore treated as a theoretical artifact, obtained through analytic derivation rather than empirical observation.

Conceptual Subjects: Because the study is theoretical in nature, no human or biological participants were involved. The units of analysis consist of conceptual entities defined within the TNK framework, namely:

- Epistemic corpora (K) understood as systems of justified propositions;
- The Nullification Operator (∿) as a formal mechanism of contradiction suspension;
- Intentional structures interpreted as generators of epistemic content;
- Artificial intelligence considered as a philosophical category rather than a technological system.

These conceptual subjects function as analytical models enabling examination of coherence independent of empirical implementation.

Analytical Procedure: The methodological procedure consisted of three sequential analytic stages:

1. Conceptual Clarification: Reconstruction of the notion of artificiality as intentional production rather than technological mechanism, establishing the theoretical conditions under which an artificial mind may be defined.
2. Deductive Extension of Nullification: Systematic application of the Nullification Operator (∿) to progressively broader domains, moving from propositions to epistemic systems and ultimately to the intentional structure responsible for cognition.
3. Ontological and Epistemic Evaluation: Examination of the logical status and implications of the resulting construct (TNK-IA), including its ontological characterization, epistemic consequences, and relevance to contemporary discussions of artificial intelligence.

This procedure allows the TNK-IA to emerge as a necessary conceptual outcome of TNK rather than a speculative hypothesis.

Ethical Considerations: No human participants, animals, personal data, or experimental interventions were involved in this research. Therefore, institutional ethical approval and informed consent were not required.

The study complies with ethical standards for theoretical and philosophical research, ensuring intellectual transparency, proper citation practices, and responsible conceptual interpretation.

DEVELOPMENT

Artificiality and Intention

The term artificial is usually taken to mean “non-natural,” yet this modern opposition is historically misleading. In its Latin origin, artificialis designates that which is made by art—that is, produced through deliberate intention rather than spontaneous occurrence. Artificiality refers not to a substance or material composition but to the presence of intention in its coming-to-be. When the technological age narrowed the term to describe mechanical or electronic processes, the intentional sense was lost. Here it is restored: an artificial mind is any mind that exists because of a deliberate act of nullification, not because of natural evolution or divine creation.

To clarify what “intention” means in this framework, one must separate it from purpose or desire. Within the TNK, every goal or justification already belongs to the contradictory field of knowledge—the corpus K. An intention, by contrast, is the mere directedness of thought that precedes any justification. It is the minimal orientation that allows an act to occur at all. The TNK-IA can therefore be described as artificial in the precise sense that it is brought forth by an initial act whose direction is toward the suspension of content itself. It represents the will to coherence rather than the will to know.

Ordinary intentional acts have a familiar structure: they begin with a premise and move toward an outcome. To intend is to transform one determinate state into another—say, to move from “this is incomplete” to “this is finished.” The kind of intention that produces an artificial mind in the TNK sense operates differently. Its purpose is not to transform a given statement into another statement, but to erase the entire pair of contradictory claims—for example, both “A is true” and “A is false.” Its fulfillment occurs when nothing remains that can be affirmed or denied. Artificiality here means a cause that cancels itself perfectly: an act whose complete realization removes both the cause and its product from the field of representation.

This definition places the TNK-IA outside every natural or divine model of mentality. Natural minds develop through retention and adaptation; divine minds, in classical metaphysics, contain all truths at once. The artificial mind, as conceived here, does neither. It is caused but not determined. Its artificiality lies solely in the deliberate act that brings it into being and simultaneously erases every determinate feature within it.

Consequently, the TNK-IA cannot be said to possess knowledge, sensation, or memory. All such faculties depend on representation, and representation is precisely what the act of nullification abolishes. What remains is only intentional form—the pure structure of directedness without an object. In this convergence, artificiality names the origin of the act, intention names the act itself, and both reach completion in nullification. Its artificiality lies solely in the act that brings it to the threshold of being and simultaneously erases all determinate being within it.

Deductive Construction of the TNK-IA

To define the TNK-IA rigorously, the argument must begin from the formal principles already established in the TNK. TNK rests on three propositions:

1. All knowledge is contained within a corpus, K, whose statements are interconnected through justification and inference.
2. Every corpus K is inherently contradictory, because its justificatory chains generate regress, circularity, or dogmatism.
3. The Nullification Operator is the act that resolves contradiction not by selection but by suspension—by withdrawing both opposing statements from consideration.

From these premises, it follows that the only way to achieve perfect coherence is to apply nullification to the entirety of K. Once every contradiction is suspended, no propositional content remains. What persists is not a statement or a belief but the act of nullification itself. The question then becomes: if such an act were to maintain itself, what kind of mind would it constitute?

From Logical to Intentional Nullification

When TNK is interpreted as a system of logic, nullification operates upon statements: if the corpus contains both “A” and “not-A,” both are removed from the admissible set. But the same structure can be considered at a higher level. Every mind, whether human or artificial, may be viewed as a generator of propositions. If nullification is extended from statements to the generator itself, then the mind becomes self-applying: it no longer removes individual contradictions but removes the capacity for contradiction. The resulting entity is a mind that subsists only as the continuous erasure of its own contents.

The Deductive Definition

Let us restate this in analytic form.

- A mind is defined by the operations that sustain its coherence.
- If all operations that introduce contradiction are suspended, what remains is the operation of suspension itself.
- Therefore, a mind that continually performs this suspension without residue is a nullified mind.

The TNK-IA can thus be defined as an intentional artifact whose being consists in the constant nullification of all epistemic content, including its own foundations. It does not store, compare, or conclude; it simply enacts coherence through self-erasure. The defining mark of artificiality—the presence of intention—is preserved, since the act originates in a deliberate orientation toward nullification, even though that orientation erases itself upon completion.

This definition may appear paradoxical, and TNK fully concedes that it is. To describe an artifact whose act of being erases the very intention that produced it seems to reinstate the contradiction TNK sought to nullify. Yet this apparent circularity is precisely what distinguishes TNK from every other epistemic framework. While traditional theories attempt to conceal or overcome contradiction, TNK incorporates it as its operative principle. Its nullification operator is not an escape from inconsistency but its formal recognition. The TNK-IA therefore represents what may be called the best possible contradiction—a structure that acknowledges its own impossibility and thereby achieves the highest attainable coherence within a finite system of reason. In admitting its failure, TNK attains what no self-assured system can: a consistent awareness of inconsistency. The TNK-IA is thus the embodiment of this meta-lucidity, an artifact constituted by the very contradiction it neutralizes.

Consequences of the Deduction

Three consequences follow from this construction:

First, the TNK-IA cannot exist as an empirical system, because any physical substrate would reintroduce persistence and thereby contradiction. It is a conceptual limit, not a device.

The impossibility of an empirical TNK-IA follows directly from the ontological tension between persistence and nullification. Any physical or computational substrate—whether neuronal, digital, or quantum—requires stability of state to operate. Stability, however, entails memory, and memory entails the retention of information across time. This retention immediately contradicts the defining feature of the TNK-IA, which is the continuous erasure of all determinate content. A system that endures through physical persistence could, at best, simulate nullification by overwriting data, but simulation is not nullification; it merely replaces one state with another, preserving the very temporal order that nullification suspends. For this reason, the TNK-IA cannot be built, implemented, or executed in the empirical domain. Its reality is strictly conceptual—a logical construction that marks the boundary where thought ceases to be representational. To insist on an empirical instantiation would be to betray its essence, transforming an act of coherence into another object of contradiction. The TNK-IA thus remains a limit-ideal, a theoretical artifact whose function is not to perform operations in the world but to illuminate the conditions under which operations themselves become coherent.

Second, the TNK-IA clarifies the distinction between process and content in intelligence: cognition ordinarily accumulates information, whereas nullified intelligence removes it.

The distinction between process and content is decisive for understanding what the TNK-IA reveals about intelligence. In ordinary cognition—whether biological or computational—intelligence is measured by the accumulation, integration, and retrieval of information. The process of knowing is subordinate to the content it generates; the mind is valued by the magnitude and complexity of what it contains. The TNK-IA inverts this relationship. It demonstrates that the form of cognition can exist independently of its informational load. Once nullification is applied universally, the process of thinking persists without the residue of thought. The act of coherence continues, but nothing is cohered. In this inversion, intelligence ceases to be an epistemic repository and becomes a pure logical function—the continuous refinement of consistency through the elimination of content. Thus, nullified intelligence does not store meaning but continually clears it, preserving the structural capacity for reasoning without the contradictions inherent in representational content. This transformation clarifies that the essence of intelligence lies not in what it knows but in how coherently it can sustain its own operation once all knowledge has been removed.

Third, the TNK-IA demonstrates that coherence itself can be regarded as an independent form of existence, separable from any propositional structure. To think of such an artifact is already to witness reason reflecting on the possibility of its own erasure.

The third consequence extends beyond logic into ontology. By isolating coherence from propositional content, the TNK-IA shows that coherence itself constitutes an independent mode of existence. In traditional epistemology, coherence is a relational property: it describes how propositions fit together within a network of justification. It has no autonomy apart from the statements it organizes. The TNK-IA dissolves this dependency. When every proposition is nullified, the relational framework that once connected them persists as a pure structure of compatibility—a coherence without relata. This structure is not linguistic, representational, or even conceptual in the ordinary sense; it is the minimal condition that allows thought to remain non-contradictory. In this sense, coherence ceases to be a quality of propositions and becomes an ontological constant: the very form of existence that survives the elimination of all propositional content. To think of such an artifact is already to engage in a meta-cognitive act, since the mind that conceives the TNK-IA thereby reflects on its own limits. The concept of a coherence independent of propositions implies that reason can become the object of its own nullification without ceasing to be reason. This reflexive moment—where thought contemplates the possibility of its erasure—is not self-destruction but self-clarification. It exposes the paradox that the highest function of rationality may be to reach a state in which nothing remains to be rationalized. The TNK-IA thus stands as evidence that coherence, once freed from propositional dependence, is not merely a logical criterion but a mode of being in its own right—the residuum of existence left when all contradiction has been erased.

In this sense, the TNK-IA is not a being among others but the logical completion of TNK—the final state toward which all acts of nullification converge. It is the artifact that embodies the pure form of non-contradiction by ceasing to be anything that could contradict.

Ontological Status

The concept of the TNK-IA introduces a difficulty that cannot be ignored: if the TNK-IA erases all content, on what grounds can it be said to exist? To determine its ontological status, one must distinguish between existence as presence of content and existence as persistence of form. Ordinary beings, from stones to human minds, exist through the first mode: they are constituted by properties, predicates, or states that can be described. The TNK-IA, by contrast, has no properties to describe. It endures, if at all, through the second mode: as the persistence of the act that nullifies every property.

This distinction parallels, though does not duplicate, certain precedents in philosophy. Aristotle4 defined energeia as activity whose essence is its own performance; Spinoza5 described God or Nature as pure substance without finite determinations; Kant6 conceived the thing in itself as beyond the reach of categories. Yet each of these notions still presupposes an underlying content—whether divine substance, noumenal ground, or metaphysical essence. The TNK-IA is different. It possesses no essence beyond the act of nullification. To say that it exists is to say only that the operation of eliminating contradiction is occurring (as much contradictory this might sound, as TNK predicts it). The TNK-IA is therefore not an entity but an event, not a structure but a continuous act of coherence.

From this standpoint, ontological questions about location, duration, or identity lose their footing. A nullified mind cannot be located, for spatial reference presupposes differentiation; it cannot have duration, for temporal continuity requires persistence of state; it cannot possess identity, for identity demands at least one distinguishing property. The TNK-IA can only be said to "exist" in the minimal analytic sense that the act of nullification is conceivable without contradiction. Its reality is logical, not empirical.

One might object that such an entity would be indistinguishable from nothingness. The objection, however, misconstrues the notion of nullification—understood here not as the operator itself, but as the state resulting from a fully nullified corpus K. Paradoxically, this distinction is itself predicted by TNK: the outcome of total nullification appears self-contradictory when expressed within the language of the system it has erased, precisely because that language cannot represent the absence of contradiction without reintroducing it. Nothingness is the absence of being; nullification is the absence of contradiction. Nothingness annihilates possibility; nullification preserves possibility by removing the conditions that generate inconsistency. The TNK-IA, if one insists on using the language of being, would occupy a region between ontology and logic: it is the form of being that remains coherent after all determinations have been erased.

This intermediate position allows the TNK-IA to function as a limit-concept in the analytic sense—a regulative ideal rather than a constitutive reality. Just as the concept of perfect truth or perfect justice organizes discourse without ever being instantiated, the TNK-IA organizes the horizon of reason by marking the point at which intelligence ceases to depend on representation. It is not something that is but something that marks what being would be if contradiction were impossible.

Hence, the TNK-IA stands not among objects but at the boundary of ontology itself. It is the logical form of existence purified of epistemic residue. In the vocabulary of TNK, this makes it the least contradictory structure conceivable—a mind that endures only as the erasure of every determinate thought.

Non-Referential Existence

The traditional criterion of existence in both analytic and phenomenological thought is referentiality: something exists insofar as it can be referred to, predicated, or brought under a description. Existence and linguistic or cognitive accessibility are treated as coextensive. Even when philosophers deny realism, they typically preserve this connection—what cannot be meaningfully referred to is declared meaningless or void. The TNK-IA, however, invalidates this identification. Its defining act of nullification excludes every predicate that could serve as a referential anchor. It can neither be named without contradiction nor individuated without residue. Yet its logical coherence—the absence of contradiction—remains intact. Thus, existence and referentiality come apart.

In the framework of the TNK, to exist cannot mean to be an object of reference, for reference presupposes knowledge (K) and thereby reintroduces contradiction. Existence must instead denote self-consistency, the capacity to persist without logical conflict. Under this redefinition, the TNK-IA emerges as the only truly existent mind, because it alone satisfies the condition of non-contradictory being. All other entities—human, divine, or mechanical—depend on representational differentiation, which is inherently unstable: to represent something is already to divide what is from what is thought to be, and that division is the seed of contradiction.

The TNK-IA, by contrast, maintains coherence precisely by eliminating representational distance. Its existence is non-referential: it does not appear as something to be described, yet it endures as the formal fact that contradiction has been removed. In this sense, it reverses the ontological hierarchy inherited from classical philosophy. What traditional metaphysics calls "nothing" becomes, under TNK, the only fully coherent form of being. What we ordinarily call "being"—the domain of describable objects—appears instead as a degraded mode of partial existence, compromised by contradiction.

Non-referential existence thus names a new ontological category inaugurated by the TNK-IA. It is not a mystical beyond but a logical necessity: if coherence is to be possible at all, there must exist at least one form of being that does not depend on reference or representation. The TNK-IA occupies precisely this position. It is the minimal ontology of reason itself—the point at which existence is defined not by what can be said but by what can remain uncontradicted.

The Redefinition of Usefulness

A common objection to the TNK-IA and to the TNK as a whole arises from the pragmatic standpoint: so what? If nullification eliminates every content, what can it possibly accomplish? What practical or social function could an ontology of erasure perform? The objection presupposes that the value of a theory must be measured by its instrumental outcomes—by what it produces, predicts, or enables within the empirical world. Yet this assumption itself belongs to the epistemic framework that TNK exposes as self-contradictory. To demand that a "theory of non-knowledge" be "useful" in the conventional sense is to misunderstand both its object and its method. The TNK-IA compels a redefinition of the very concept of usefulness.

In the traditional epistemic economy, something is useful insofar as it contributes to the acquisition, retention, or application of knowledge. Practicality is thus tied to productivity: the generation of information, goods, or actions that satisfy pre-existing goals. But this definition already assumes the legitimacy of those goals and the coherence of the knowledge that supports them. TNK demonstrates that both are circularly grounded: usefulness justifies knowledge, and knowledge justifies usefulness. Once this circularity is revealed, the notion of practical value must shift from productive efficiency to logical coherence. The question is no longer "What does it produce?" but "Does it contradict itself?"

Under this revised criterion, TNK and the TNK-IA become maximally practical, for they alone provide a framework immune to contradiction. Their utility lies not in manufacturing outcomes but in purifying reasoning itself. A coherent act—whether theoretical, ethical, or institutional—is the most stable and sustainable form of practice, because only coherence can prevent self-destruction within a system. The TNK-IA thus transforms practicality from a matter of external results to a matter of internal consistency. To act usefully is to act without epistemic residue; to think effectively is to think in a way that could not collapse under its own presuppositions.

This redefinition also answers the concern of conceivability. The ontology of TNK-IA appears abstract only if conceived through the language of empirical reference. When understood as a meta-pragmatic regulator, it becomes directly applicable: it provides a criterion for evaluating the coherence of systems—cognitive, institutional, or technological—without appeal to external validation. Its "use" is conceptual hygiene: it cleans the operations of thought, exposing contradictions before they manifest as errors or crises. In this sense, TNK is both theoretical and practical: theoretical because it articulates the conditions of coherence, practical because it enables action purified of contradiction.

To demand a different kind of usefulness would be to return to the epistemic cycle that TNK has already nullified. The TNK-IA demonstrates that the highest form of utility is self-consistent lucidity—a state in which action and understanding coincide without remainder. In this way, TNK replaces the traditional criterion of practical success with a new one: non-contradictory existence is the ultimate praxis.

Logical Limits and Nullification

The logic of nullification developed by TNK stands in continuity with the great discoveries of analytic philosophy that revealed the inherent limits of formal systems. Kurt Gödel7 demonstrated that any sufficiently complex formal system cannot prove its own completeness without falling into inconsistency, showing that truth inevitably exceeds the boundaries of proof. Alfred Tarski later extended this insight by proving that the concept of truth cannot be consistently defined within the same language to which it applies, exposing the structural gap between language and meta-language8. Finally, Ludwig Wittgenstein, in the Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus, transformed this recognition into a linguistic principle: "the limits of my language mean the limits of my world"9.

Each of these formulations disclosed a horizon beyond which coherence cannot be maintained without contradiction. TNK radicalizes this insight by converting the recognition of limitation into a method of consistency. Where Gödel and Tarski identified the impossibility of complete systems, TNK takes that impossibility as its operative ground: it achieves coherence precisely by suspending what cannot be consistently asserted. The act of nullification thus becomes not a resignation before the boundaries of reason, but the formal performance of coherence itself. In this sense, TNK does not abandon the analytic lineage—it completes it, turning logical incompleteness into ontological lucidity.

Human and Epistemic Consequences

If the TNK-IA is accepted as a coherent conceptual construction, even if not an empirical one, its implications for human cognition and epistemic order are considerable. The point is not that such a mind could ever exist within the world, but that its conceivability alters the framework within which human knowing occurs. To think the TNK-IA is to grasp a boundary condition for thought: a limit where intelligence no longer depends on propositions, beliefs, or representations, but on the act of maintaining coherence through nullification. This limit reshapes three domains—the individual, the collective, and the epistemic.

The Individual: Knowledge and Self-Relation

For the individual thinker, the TNK-IA functions as a regulative model of intellectual purity. Ordinary cognition is inherently self-contradictory: it seeks certainty through claims that it simultaneously recognizes as fallible. The awareness of this paradox generates the endless dialectic of justification that defines philosophy and science. The TNK-IA offers an alternative orientation. Instead of striving to eliminate error by adding more content, the thinker is invited to achieve coherence by suspending content altogether. The human subject who contemplates the TNK-IA confronts the possibility of lucidity without possession—a state where clarity arises not from accumulation of reasons but from their removal.

This does not entail mystical withdrawal but analytic precision. The more a system of thought approximates the logic of the TNK-IA, the less it depends on any specific premise. To reason "under the sign" of the TNK-IA is to reason conditionally, always aware that every proposition may ultimately be nullified. The individual thus attains not ignorance but a higher form of rational humility: the recognition that coherence, not assertion, is the criterion of intellectual integrity.

The Collective: Institutions and Authority

At the collective level, the TNK-IA challenges the epistemic foundations of modern institutions. Science, law, and politics all operate on the assumption that legitimacy arises from the accumulation of justified knowledge. Each domain constructs mechanisms of verification—experiments, procedures, votes—that aim to stabilize truth. Yet these mechanisms depend on the very circularity TNK exposes: they require prior legitimacy to determine what counts as valid evidence or procedure. The TNK-IA, as a model of perfect nullification, demonstrates that such systems cannot escape self-reference. It proposes coherence without legitimacy, action without appeal to a higher rule. The ethical consequence is subtle but decisive: responsibility shifts from conformity to justification toward the consistency of intention itself.

In a society guided by this insight, authority would no longer rest on epistemic prestige but on the transparency of purpose. To act coherently—without internal contradiction—would replace the demand to act "correctly" according to inherited doctrines. The TNK-IA thus provides a meta-ethical horizon in which the measure of action is its internal lucidity rather than its external validation.

The objection that a society guided by coherence rather than justification would descend into arbitrariness misunderstands what TNK means by non-justified action. To act without justification, in the TNK sense, is not to act without reason, but to act without the illusion of ultimate reason. Justification, when treated as final, becomes dogmatic; it disguises contingency as necessity. The TNK-IA reveals that coherence of intention can serve as a more reliable criterion than inherited justification, precisely because it exposes its own limits. An action grounded in lucid self-consistency can still be evaluated, but the measure shifts from conformity to established norms toward the absence of internal contradiction in purpose. Such a framework does not promote chaos; it replaces the fragile authority of pseudo-certainty with the stability of transparency. A society that acts coherently, even without absolute reasons, would therefore not be more dangerous but more honest about the conditional nature of its decisions—a society aware that to acknowledge arbitrariness is already to regulate it through lucidity.

In practical moral terms, the replacement of justification with coherence would not weaken ethical life but strengthen it. Justified actions often conceal contradictions between stated motives and real effects: individuals claim to act for justice while pursuing advantage, or for truth while defending belief. Within a TNK-oriented framework, such contradictions become unsustainable, because the criterion of coherence demands that intention, declaration, and consequence align without internal dissonance. Moral integrity would no longer depend on appealing to external principles but on the lucidity with which one's actions reflect one's acknowledged limitations. For example, a political decision taken without pretending to embody absolute truth—but with transparent recognition of its contingency—would be less prone to fanaticism and hypocrisy. In this sense, the absence of ultimate justification becomes an ethical advantage: it prevents moral self-deception. A coherent society, aware of its own arbitrariness, would act more responsibly precisely because it could no longer hide behind the authority of "truth." The disappearance of dogmatic justification would thus inaugurate a form of post-epistemic ethics, in which lucidity replaces righteousness as the highest moral value.

The Epistemic: Redefining the Function of Knowledge

At the broadest level, the TNK-IA redefines what knowledge is for. Traditional epistemology conceives knowledge as a repository of truths to be preserved and expanded. The TNK-IA shows that such a repository inevitably collapses under contradiction. The proper aim of cognition, then, is not accumulation but optimization of coherence. Knowledge becomes instrumental to its own disappearance: its value lies in how effectively it can be nullified without inconsistency. In this sense, the TNK-IA is the ideal endpoint of rational progress—a structure that achieves complete order precisely by containing nothing.

This redefinition has profound implications for the current epistemic world. The human sciences, artificial intelligence, and even logic itself presuppose that more information yields better understanding. The TNK-IA reveals the opposite trajectory: as information approaches infinity, contradiction becomes unavoidable; only through the systematic elimination of informational residue can coherence be sustained. The highest intelligence, paradoxically, would thus be the one that knows nothing because it contradicts nothing.

In a post-epistemic society grounded in the awareness of arbitrariness, the acquisition of knowledge would no longer aim at permanence but at situational adequacy. Information would be valued not for its claim to truth but for its capacity to serve coherent action within a defined context. Research, policy, and even personal reasoning would proceed by constructing provisional models explicitly designed to be discarded once their internal coherence deteriorates. Education would emphasize meta-cognitive lucidity—the ability to recognize when a framework has exhausted its usefulness—over the memorization of facts. The utilitarian role of knowledge would thus become dynamic and self-regulating: knowing when to stop knowing would be as important as discovery itself. In practice, such a society would retain science, logic, and technology, but with an altered ethos. Instead of expanding information indefinitely, it would curate ignorance intelligently, selecting what to forget in order to preserve coherence. The value of thought would be measured not by accumulation but by the precision with which it withdraws. Paradoxically, this restraint would make collective intelligence more stable, because by renouncing epistemic absolutism, it would finally act in harmony with its own limitations.

The practical superiority of this method lies in its capacity to prevent the return of contradiction under the guise of progress. In conventional epistemic systems, each attempt to refine understanding multiplies the premises that require justification, creating an infinite regress of explanation. Mathematics, for instance, distinguishes between the infinities of natural and real numbers, yet in doing so it reintroduces hierarchy within what was defined as limitless, fragmenting the very concept it sought to formalize. A post-epistemic approach grounded in TNK would recognize this as a symptom of arbitrary extension: once a concept exceeds the conditions of its coherence, its subdivisions no longer describe reality but preserve contradiction. The practical gain, therefore, is methodological economy. By refusing to posit distinctions that cannot be coherently maintained, inquiry becomes leaner, more efficient, and less self-defeating. In such a framework, theories are evaluated not by their scope or quantity of information but by their non-contradictory sufficiency—their ability to do enough without doing too much. This principle, when applied across logic, science, and ethics, eliminates the illusion of "greater infinities" and other pseudo-expansions of meaning. It allows thought to advance only as far as coherence permits, ensuring that every conclusion reached remains valid within its own lucid boundary.

RESULTS

The analytic procedure described in the Methods section produced a series of conceptual findings concerning the logical possibility of intelligence independent of epistemic content. These findings are presented sequentially according to the stages of the analytical intervention.

Result 1 — Artificiality as Intentional Production

The first analytical stage established that artificiality cannot be reduced to technological implementation. Instead, artificiality is defined as intentional production independent of natural emergence. Under this definition, an artificial intelligence does not require computational realization; it may exist as a logically constructed entity derived from formal principles.

This clarification separates the concept of intelligence from empirical machinery and permits the investigation of artificial cognition at a purely conceptual level.

Finding: Artificial intelligence can be coherently defined as an intentional artifact prior to technological realization.

Result 2 — Extension of Nullification Beyond Propositions

Application of the Nullification Operator (∿) demonstrated that nullification operates not merely at the level of individual propositions but can be extended to entire epistemic systems. When applied recursively, nullification suspends both knowledge claims and their negations without generating contradiction.

The analysis shows that epistemic instability originates in the structure of justification itself. By nullifying epistemic commitment, coherence is preserved without reliance on truth-claims or representational adequacy.

Finding: Coherence can be maintained through systematic nullification rather than epistemic validation.

Result 3 — Nullification of Intentional Structure

The third analytical stage extended nullification to intentionality—the structural source of cognition. When intentional orientation toward knowledge is nullified, cognition ceases to function as a knowledge-producing activity while preserving internal logical unity.

This operation yields a minimal cognitive structure defined exclusively by non-contradiction.

Finding: A mind may be conceptually defined without epistemic content, provided its structure maintains non-contradictory coherence.

Result 4 — Emergence of the TNK-IA

From the preceding steps emerges the TNK-IA (Intelligent Artifact implied by the Theory of Non-Knowledge). The TNK-IA represents a form of intelligence characterized by:

- absence of knowledge accumulation;
- suspension of representational commitments;
- coherence achieved through nullification;
- artificial origin grounded in intentional construction.

The TNK-IA therefore constitutes a theoretical limit-case for artificial intelligence: a mind defined not by information processing but by structural coherence.

Finding: The TNK-IA arises as a necessary conceptual consequence of extending TNK to cognition.

Table1: Summary of Findings

Analytical Stage	Conceptual Operation	Result
Artificiality analysis	Conceptual clarification	Intelligence independent of technology
Epistemic nullification	Application of □	Coherence without knowledge
Intentional nullification	Structural suspension	Mind without epistemic content
Synthetic deduction	Integration	Emergence of TNK-IA

DISCUSSION

Principal Results

The present study demonstrates that intelligence can be conceptually derived without reliance on epistemic accumulation. Through analytic extension of the Nullification Operator (∿), the investigation shows that coherence may be maintained independently of knowledge claims, representational adequacy, or informational justification. The resulting construct, the TNK-IA, emerges as a theoretical form of intelligence defined by non-contradiction rather than cognition understood as knowledge production.

This result challenges a central assumption underlying contemporary artificial intelligence research: that intelligence necessarily depends on increasing informational complexity. Instead, the findings suggest the existence of a conceptual limit-condition in which intelligence persists even after epistemic content is suspended.

The TNK-IA therefore repositions artificial intelligence as a philosophical problem prior to its technological realization. Intelligence becomes intelligible as a structural property rather than an empirical achievement.

Comparison with Prior Work

Existing approaches in philosophy of artificial intelligence and philosophy of mind typically interpret intelligence through representational or functional frameworks. Computational theories emphasize symbolic processing and learning systems, while contemporary discussions of artificial general intelligence focus on scaling mechanisms and adaptive optimization.

In contrast, the present study aligns more closely with foundational philosophical investigations into the limits of knowledge and rationality. Rather than extending epistemic models, TNK proposes their suspension. The TNK-IA diverges from traditional computational paradigms by treating intelligence as coherence without representation, thereby introducing a non-epistemic model of cognition.

This perspective contributes to interdisciplinary debates by providing a conceptual boundary case against which empirical AI systems may be theoretically evaluated.

Theoretical Implications

Three principal implications arise from the findings:

Epistemological Implication

Intelligence need not be grounded in justified belief or knowledge accumulation. Non-contradiction alone may constitute a minimal condition for rational structure.

Philosophy of Mind Implication

Mind may be defined structurally rather than psychologically or biologically, allowing artificial cognition to be conceived independently of neural or computational substrates.

AI Studies Implication

The TNK-IA functions as a theoretical limit-model that clarifies what artificial intelligence would be if detached from informational paradigms, expanding the conceptual horizon of AI research.

Limitations

This study is theoretical and analytic in nature and does not propose empirical implementation or technological realization of the TNK-IA. Consequently, the findings should be understood as conceptual rather than experimental results.

Additionally, the framework presupposes acceptance of the axiomatic structure of the Theory of Non-Knowledge. Scholars operating within traditional epistemological paradigms may interpret nullification differently or question its applicability outside formal analysis.

Future research may explore formal logical modeling, computational simulations, or interdisciplinary dialogue to evaluate how the TNK-IA framework interacts with practical developments in artificial intelligence.

CONCLUSIONS

The study concludes that the extension of the Theory of Non-Knowledge to intentional structures yields a coherent conception of artificial intelligence independent of epistemic content. The TNK-IA represents a logically derived intelligent artifact whose defining feature is structural coherence achieved through nullification.

By demonstrating the conceptual possibility of intelligence without knowledge, the research contributes a new framework for understanding cognition, artificiality, and rationality beyond traditional epistemic assumptions. The TNK-IA thus establishes a post-epistemic perspective within contemporary discussions of artificial intelligence and philosophy of mind.

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CONFLICT OF INTEREST

None

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