

What is the being of beings, the presence of that which is present ? I suggest that “consciousness” is best understood as an attempt to “say” this presence of the present. So, for instance, “consciousness” would refer to the presence of entities that are classified as “physical.”

Physical or empirical entities are *present*. “Consciousness” is their “from-a-point-of-view” *presence*.

Why is there something rather than nothing ? This string of words is best understood not as a question but as a cry of wonder. It is not how the world is but THAT it is in the first place that is cause for wonder.

Before all explanation, beneath all explanation, is the presence of what inspires us to search for explanations. But explanations only refer entities to other entities. Presence itself, if grasped properly, is not “something” that makes sense as a “thing” to be explained.

The word “presence” is a noun. Presence is a concept. The word/concept presence is of course therefore one more entity. But this entity points away from all entities toward the “brute fact” of their presence, of their being there in the first place.

Consciousness is often understood as a thing, as a kind of stuff. As a “clay” that daydreams and toothaches and representational perceptions are “made of.” People argue about how this spectral stuff “emerges” from a different kind of stuff, “physical” stuff. Or, more accurately, “hyper-physical” stuff. Because this dominant presupposed dualism takes ordinary physical ob-

jects (oranges and pitchforks) to be user-interface icons in the consciousness stuff — to be made of the “clay” of consciousness. For this dualism (called indirect realism) the experience things of the world are “really” in the “mind” of this or that person. But, the theory reassures us, the consciousness-icons or representational perceptions in the user-interface are reliable and trustworthy and perhaps approximate the “real” things. Which I therefore call “hyper-physical” to emphasize how sci-fi and *weird* this theory is, despite its banality through familiarity.

If a child grows up and the adults say, for instance, that God had his son tortured out of love for that child, then the child comes to accept this story as *not weird*. Likewise, if most clever people agree that the familiar world we share is “really” a private, hermetically-sealed user-interface, then that too becomes boring common sense. It becomes a platitude that no one really “knows” anything, because (we all know without knowing we know) we are all “really” trapped in a bubble of private consciousness. Obviously. Right ?

Naive realism is just that, naive. Just look at the name ! Every sophisticated person sees that the eye nerve is connected to the brain. So (obviously) the world that I think I live in is really a dream created by my brain, from information that splashes against the sense organs. Nevermind that the sense organs and the brain are part of this so-called dream ! Let’s also ignore that I only believe in other people because I take seriously their appearance through my sense or-

gans, etc. In short, let us forget that only a disavowed naive realism enables (inspires, makes initially plausible) the wild thesis of indirect realism in the first place.

But let us return to the presence of the present. Is presence first-person ? In some sense, yes. There is the world for me, the world for you, the world for him and her. Yet it's THE world, one and the same world. One world, which is seemingly only present from this or that particular perspective. So I suggest that consciousness is best understood as the from-a-point-of-view PRESENCE of the world. And so the presence of the empirical subject associated with that "consciousness." As well as the presence of forks and daydreams.

The tricky part is prying apart this streaming perspectival presence from its situation. Or prying apart the empirical ego from the streaming presence that unveils that empirical ego at the center of a streaming of the world.

If "consciousness" is the presence of the physical, then the whole idea of consciousness *versus* the physical is confused. Toothaches ("internal" or "mental") and tornadoes ("external" and "physical") are both "equally" present. Consciousness as presence is not "mental" or "physical" but the presence of *all* entities, however we categorize them for this or that practical purposes.

Instead of understanding the "ontological subject" as a container of mental representations, we can under this "subject" as world itself, but from an "implied"

point of view.

The belief of the empirical-linguistic subject is the “speaking structure” of the world from that subject’s point of view. The empirical subject is present at the “center” of a presencing or “aspect” of the world.