

LETTER

Today I call it ontoperspectivism. Also known as a phenomenism that smells like an anti-realist version of Harman's stuff. While I try to emphasize the transcendence of objects as much as possible, I'm still in a minimal correlationist. Because perception and belief are situated.

One face of the coin and *not the other* appears here and now. The coin is the logical-temporal-interpersonal *unity* of these faces. Consciousness is the horizontal presencing of the physical, for instance. Of anything and everything. Consciousness is being is time, but I mean Heidegger's temporality. Or James' stream.

Time hides as it shows. The coin is a both of its faces. I usually see the face *as* the coin, though I *can* thematize the face as an object. And I can thematize this thematization, and so on.

This coin example is my attempt to hyper-simplify Husserl's understanding of visual-spatial objects as unified systems of their adumbrations. I tend to use "aspect" or "face" instead of the obscure word "adumbration." The most correct term is "moment," because objects don't only manifest through our eyes. But all objects, as such, manifest "over time."

An object is an enduring interpersonal unity or system or synthesis of its moments. Ayer called objects "logical constructions." *Approximately* the same idea. But I don't take "sense data" to primary. Influenced by Heidegger, I like to start with the pre-theoretical lifeworld. I think most perception is circumspective rather than theoretical. My ontoperspectivism is built on the "historical" lifeworld. Yes, I can walk around the wooden chair and understand it as a system of adumbrations, etc. But it's also the chair my ex-wife brought to the house when we first moved in together. She kept it because her grandfather made it in 1958 and used to sit in it and smoke cigars. But she left it behind and has apparently forgotten it. I haven't heard from her in years.¹

¹I don't have an ex-wife or a wooden chair. I do have a cosmetically damaged but structurally intact *aluminum* chair that my aunt gave me about 25 years ago.

With this addition of this “lifeworld historical” element, my concept of a moment or aspect becomes richer than a Husserlian adumbration. The same objects appear in different phenomenal streams, but they appear always in a new way. Consciousness “unveils” the object, is the presence of an always new “face” of the object. But the object has to have an “identity.” The “faces” are tacitly synthesized. We can step into the same river twice because by “river” we mean something like the located enduring form of the water that is itself always coming and going. Unlike the river. We “impose” or “enact” this “stasis” of the river as “form.” In this sense, entities are “virtual” or “conventional.” But “language is received like the law.” And the “form of life” we inherit and indeed are thrown into performing is far more “automatic” than chosen.

For instance, we inherit — without having to read Descartes — the vague theory of the ghost in the machine. Consciousness is understood as a stuff. An elusive quasi-mystical stuff, which leaves “ingredient ontologists” with a famous hard problem. In my view, too many philosophers speak of physicality as something easy and definite. As if they know what they mean. “Obviously” there are physical things. Perhaps it’s consciousness that doesn’t exist ? I agree that there are physical things. I even agree that consciousness does not exist as a stuff. But consciousness — as being which is not *a* being — is the “presence” and “quality” of physical things.

The forgetting of J. S. Mill, for instance, is also the forgetting of the empirical meaning of the physical. Philosophers have become so confused that they posit qualia as something *in addition to* the physical. To make this mistake is to replace “actual” physical things, which we can see and hear and touch, with the obscure truth-makers of metaphysical realism.

As I see it, my “anti-realism” is intensely *realistic* in an informal sense, while metaphysical realism, as typically coupled with indirect realism, is incoherent science-fiction or an ontological conspiracy theory.

Objects are only meaningfully or intelligibly transcendent (in the phenomenological sense) if their for-now concealed or occluded aspects are at least in principle experienceable. It is pointless and confused to project the “true” being of an empirical entity “behind” its manifestation. But it’s correct that no fugitive perception of the object should be identified with the object. Instead a perception is a “moment” or “face” of the object. Instead of a “true being” projected beyond all possible manifestation, as an incoherent obscure cause of such manifestation, we understand the object as the interpersonal identity-synthesized system of its moments.

These moments can be called “perceptions” and understood as pieces of a stream of experience. But a perception is a genuine piece of the object, not an internal icon that is other than and independent of that object. Mach’s work is helpful here. Certainly the manifestation of empirical objects is functionally related to the sense organs and brains of those for whom the object is manifested. But this need not mislead us into the logical quagmire of indirect realism.

As I was starting to understand phenomenism = ontoperspective, I discovered what came to look like the “basis” of dualism, by which I mean indirect or representational realism. This basis is the understanding truth as a property of statements that mirror and objective reality. This involve at least a tacit belief in an omniscient narrator — in a kind of philosopher’s god who guards the obscure truthmakers. I saw that a radicalized redundancy theory of truth — a general demystification of the very notion of truth — is a crucial component of ontoperspectivism.

Critiques of truth tend to be misunderstood as irrationalism. This just testifies to how mystified we are on the issue, enough to misunderstand science as the pursuit of truth. We pursue instead beliefs that are more effective and warranted than those we already have. I think we are better off talking about belief and the transformation of belief. We merely use the word “true” in order to express and discuss belief. It is belief and not truth that is fundamental. Belief is the horse. Truth is the unicorn.

Is this the truth ? It is, quite self-consciously, “only” belief. Ontoperspective is intensely and self-consciously situated. Perception is situated. And belief is situated While I do reject as nonsense the “objective” world or The-world-as-God-sees-it, I don’t at all question that we *share* the lifeworld. The world is fundamentally a “forum”, at least for philosophers who presuppose their ability to communicate and further specify, in a rational cooperative manner, this world they share.