

# NOTES 23 SEP 2024<sup>1</sup>

**1**

Phenomenalism = perspectivism.

**2**

The world is a plurality of “streamings.” Each streaming of the world is an “ontological ego.”

**3**

An ontological ego is the stream of “experience” of an empirical-linguistic ego at its “center.”

I am an empirical-linguistic ego. A person. The-world-for-me is “my” ontological ego.

**4**

The “ontological ego” is not really an ego. But it is structured by the beliefs of its associated empirical-linguistic ego. I “live in” my beliefs. My beliefs are the “meaning-structure” of the-world-from-my-perspective.

---

<sup>1</sup>These notes synthesize many influences, including Husserl, James, Wittgenstein, Ayer, Mach, Mill, Heidegger, Hegel, Schrödinger, Leibniz, Rorty, Brandom, Feuerbach, and Kojève.

5

Deflationary theory of truth. “P is true” (essentially) means just “P.” Belief is fundamental. Not truth. “True” is a word I apply to beliefs I share.

6

Phenomenalism is immaterialism is a rejection of a perspectival “things in themselves.”

Perspectivism insists that there is only the-world-for-Jack and the-world-for-Jill and so on. Perspectivism is a rejection of an apectival “world in itself.”

7

Perspective = phenomenalism. Perspectivism-phenomenalism is anti-representationalism. For representationalism, consciousness is representative of something that otherwise transcends consciousness.

8

Perspectivism (phenomenalism) is not subjective idealism. For subjective idealism, to be is to be perceived. Subjective idealism fails to distinguish between the empirical linguistic ego and the ontological ego. For subjective idealism, all entities must be witnessed. For phenomenalism, entities do not need witnesses. Reality itself does not need a witness. Wit-

nesses (empirical-linguistic egos that express belief) just “are.”

**9**

Rational discussion does not seek truth. Inquiry is the creation and settling of beliefs. Phenomenalism itself is a belief, not the “truth.” It is an attempt to explicate the human situation, presented as more coherent, for instance, than other more popular explications.

**10**

The appearance of an object is not a representation of that object. Such an appearance is an “aspect” or “moment” of that object.

**11**

The “substance” of an entity is “logical.” A thing of this world *endures* and is *for-others-also*.

**12**

This or that appearance is part of its being. A near-sighted person’s red blur is part of the genuine being of an apple. The nearsighted person understands it to be an apple that endures, which he or she can discuss with others. That “red blur” is a “moment” or “aspect” of that apple in the ontological ego of our

nearsighted person. In that streaming of the world itself.

### 13

For practical purposes, we are usually more interested in “how the apple looks” to a person with excellent vision. But what matters ontologically is the “logical substance” of that apple. The apple is the temporal and interpersonal synthesis of its moments.

### 14

Now to justify the “moments” terminology. An entity *needs time* in order to give more of itself. I can’t see both sides of a coin at once. Time gives me one side by not giving me the other. Time shows to hide and hides to show.

### 15

Each ontological ego is a “personal streaming of time.” An unrolling contexture of world-from-perspective. Embedded within this contexture are the moments of entities.

### 16

I paint a picture of Thomas Jefferson. I understand Thomas Jefferson to “transcend me” in the sense of also being “for others,” who “see” Thomas Jefferson

differently.

**17**

I see a “side” of Joe that others don’t see. Mary see a side of Joe that I don’t see. We both refer to Joe. We both understand that Joe is more than Joe-for-me or Joe-for-Mary.

**18**

I also understand that even Joe-for-me is more than Joe-for-me-so-far. Humans especially live in the future.

**19**

I write a sketch of Joe, understanding that others could read this sketch 200 years for now. Such future readers can intend the same Joe that I intend, without having met Joe, without being able to meet the living Joe.

**20**

The plurality of world-streamings are streamings of the same world through our logic that fuses them together.

21

The ontological forum or ontological horizon is presupposed by any rational discussion. This ontological forum is ontology's necessary object. The condition for its possibility.

22

So it's THE-world-for-Jack and THE-world-for-Jill and so on.

23

Solipsism can be suffered as a belief, but it's absurd to earnestly *argue* for solipsism.

24

Semantic and logical norms are the "essence" of the "External" world.

25

Ontology is the self-explication of the ontological forum.

26

Ontology, as a rational tradition, is a "time-binding" Conversation. It is a "virus," and our mortal bodies

are its hosts.

**27**

An empirical-linguistic ego, as linguistic, is an “idiolect” of the “tribal software.”

**28**

Ontology is adversarially cooperative. Ontological idiolects clash, and this encourages them to synthesize more adequate and coherent sets of beliefs.

**29**

Given the deflation of truth mentioned above, this adequacy is not representational. The goal is not truth. “Idiolects” (ontologists) already — if they are not deflationists about truth — call their *own* beliefs “true.” Explicating coherence and adequacy is part of the Conversation in question.

**30**

These notes are largely footnotes to the tradition presented by Lee Braver in the excellent and highly recommended *A Thing of This World*. I take this perspectivism/phenomenalism to be implied by Heidegger and Nietzsche.

### 31

Ernst Mach published *The Analysis of Sensations* in 1914. J.S. Mill published *An Examination of Sir William Hamilton's Philosophy* in 1866. Both present a genuine phenomenism, though both are often misread as subjective idealists. This misreading is encouraged by their use of the term "sensation." Ayer's *Language, Truth, and Logic* uses "sensation" too, but Ayer emphasizes the "nondual" character of such "sensation."<sup>2</sup>

### 32

Neither Mach nor Mill emphasize the "logical substance" of entities. Ayer is better on this, understanding objects to be "logical constructions."

### 33

Heidegger surpasses them all on this issue, in lectures leading up to *Being and Time*. Being-with-others is (in my words) being an idiolect of the "tribal software." This "software" is Heidegger's "one" or "Anyone."

### 34

Feuerbach, also demystifying Hegel, anticipates some of Heidegger's strongest insights in his *Thoughts on*

---

<sup>2</sup>Charitable readers of Mach and Mill will understand that they too intended "sensation" in this "nondual" sense.



*Death and Immortality from the Papers of a Thinker,*  
published in 1830.