

ASPECT PHENOMENALISM

1. Phenomenalism is not subjective idealism. For subjective idealism, to be is to be for an ego. For phenomenalism, an ego is one more entity in the world.
2. Each ego plays a “starring role” in the stream associated with that ego, but egos must be distinguished from “their” streams. The world is not “mind.”¹
3. Phenomenalism can be understood as a reaction against representationalism. It fulfills Berkeley’s immaterialist intention while avoiding his mistakes.
4. Representationalism² understands experience or consciousness to represent something outside of or beyond such experience or consciousness.
5. In traditional terms, “Mind” represents “Matter.”³ Many “physicalists” remain dualists, insisting only on the priority of “Matter” to “Mind.” In this case, Matter functions as substrate, and Mind somehow emerges from Matter in order to represent it.
6. For representationalism, all experience or consciousness is $f_1(W), f_2(W), \dots$. The consciousness of ego- i is represented by $f_i(W)$, where f_i is the perceptual-interpretative function that transforms W into $f_i(W)$ — into the “bubble” of the “private consciousness” of ego- i .

¹To call everything “Mind” implies that reality needs a witness. This requires finally a self-witnessing God—who ends up functioning like Matter, defeating subjective idealism’s immaterialist intention.

²For instance, consider indirect realism.

³Immaterialism rejects such postulations of “Matter” because they (1) don’t explain anything, and (2) have absurd implications.

7. Some representationalists identity W with the scientific image. Some insist that we can know nothing about it. Still others offer daring sci-fi guesses. All presuppose a gap between “experience” and “reality.”
8. For representationalism, a statement is “made true” by a “truth maker.” Somehow a “true” statement “corresponds” with W .⁴
9. For phenomenism, the world is $W_1 + W_2 + \dots$. Here each W_i is a phenomenal stream. Note that there is no W . The world exists only as a plurality of “nondual” streams.
10. Phenomenism is therefore an intense form of perspectivism. The world is only the-world-for-Joe, the-world-for-Mary, and so on. Note that the *same* world is involved in each case.
11. Entities in the world are logical syntheses of their aspects or moments.⁵
12. These aspects or moments are distributed over the plurality of the neutral or nondual streams or streamings of the world.
13. Let t be a thing. Then t exists as t_1, t_2, \dots , where each t_i is an aspect or moment of t . The thing t is the interpersonal and temporal synthesis of these t_i .
14. Ego-1 is nearsighted. Ego-2 is colorblind. Both perceive the same stoplight s at different times. So s_1 helps constitute W_1 , while s_2 helps constitute W_2 .

⁴That handwaving here is tolerated suggests the deep entrenchment of representational presuppositions.

⁵“Aspects” is a helpful visual metaphor. “Moments” is more general and correct.⁶

15. Ego-1 and Ego-2 can discuss this same stoplight s , despite their being no “true” or “official” version of s . In general, Ego- i tacitly understands that Ego- j sees the same stoplight differently.
16. The “substance” of s is logical.
17. While Husserl correctly grasps the mitigated logical-intentional transcendence of the object, representationalism postulates an absolute transcendence.
18. This intentional-logical transcendence expresses the tacit understanding of each Ego- i that things of the world are not just now and not just for them.
19. The same object can be seen over time in many different ways. In other words, the thing t can help constitute W_i by contributing a variety of differing aspects or moments to this stream.⁷
20. Unlike subjective idealism, phenomenism “dissolves” the ego in the plurality of streams.
21. While Ego-1 is intensely recurrent and central in W_1 , this ego⁸ also helps constitute⁹ various other streams —various other W_i .
22. Each ego has *all of its being* only in or through the plurality of worldstreamings, W_1, W_2, \dots . There is no “real” or “true” ego hidden away somewhere.¹⁰
23. It is correct to speak of an ego’s perceiving and “representing” a state-of-affairs in assertions.

⁷I see the same photo of my mother every now and then. I understand it to be “that old photo where she’s got a huge smile and whip cream on her nose.” I see it differently in different moods, against the background of the rest of my life just then.

⁸By “ego” I mean the entire person, who has a body and speaks and acts in the world.

⁹“appears in”

¹⁰Ayer, a nondual phenomenist, makes this crucial point in *Language, Truth, and Logic*.

24. Yet the stream W_i is not a representation of the world. It is an “aspect” of the world.
25. W_i is structured by the beliefs of ego- i .
26. In other words, ego- i “lives” in their beliefs as the intelligible “significance” of W_i .
27. For this reason, any W_i can be called an “ontological ego,” with ego- i as the associated “empirical-linguistic ego.”
28. In a related terminology, we can identify “ontological consciousness” with the “situated” or “perspectival” being of the world.
29. The redundancy theory of truth “falls out of” aspect phenomenalism.
30. To assert that P is “true” is (essentially) to endorse the original assertion P .
31. Belief, not truth, is fundamental. The apparent need for “truth makers” is a product of representationalist assumptions.