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Our Common Extended Consciousness and the Readability of Things: Two Theses of Hermeneutic Realism

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Abstract

The article consists of a general introduction and two main parts, the first relating to sensory, qualitative consciousness and the second to discursive, intentional consciousness. The general thesis of the first part can be formulated like this: Humans literally overlap in their infinite spatiotemporal field of consciousness, which is one and the same for all and is only oriented differently by each individual, namely egocentrically in each case. On the basis of this common extended consciousness we can talk to each other about things. In the second part, the thesis – inspired by the divergent picture theories of elementary sentences developed by the early Wittgenstein and then by Wilfrid Sellars – is argued that when we talk about things, we read them and translate them into verbal language. We read them as world-sided primordial tokens (1) of their names, (2) of phenomenal "this-such" representations of them, and (3) of various elementary sentences about them, thus treating them as objects, as Kantian intuitions and as token facts respectively. Incidentally, this result can serve to illuminate Heidegger's thesis in his 1950 lecture on language that it is originally language that speaks – as the "ringing of silence"

or "chiming of stillness" ("Geläut der Stille") – and that humans have the call to speak back to language in talking to each other, i.e. to respond to the chiming of stillness.

Keywords: qualia, essential indexicality, space, picture theories for elementary sentences, world-sided ur-tokens of linguistic types

1. Introduction

The philosophical position that I call *hermeneutic realism* and have been advocating since 2006 and under this label since 2016 (see Koch 2006, Koch 2016) is a moderate version of realism that others might call, with similar legitimacy, a moderate idealism. In Thomas Hofweber's helpful terminology, it is a combination of an ontological realism with a conceptual idealism. That is, it does not claim, as ontological idealisms do, "that what there is, and what it is like, are mind dependent" (Hofweber 2016: 257), but it does declare certain basic features of reality to be in some sense dependent on our conceptual capacities. For example, there are no ineffable facts: What can be the case is not beyond our conceptual possibilities. More pointedly, hermeneutic realism holds that reality and mind are logico-ontologically entangled in mutual dependence. Minds are necessarily corporeal und reality necessarily includes minds. Logic thus restricts the physically possible initial conditions of the cosmic process to the effect that beings with conceptual capacities that epistemically individuate themselves a priori and locate themselves a priori in space and time had to emerge from those conditions at some point and somewhere. If this so-called *subjectivity thesis*, which I have been defending since 1990 (cf. Koch 1990: § 3), looks somewhat idealistic, it nevertheless has the rather realistic consequence that the facts, regardless of their effability, cannot all be brought together in a single consistent overall view. In this respect, the subjectivity thesis leads to a fundamental critique of the *myth of transparency*, which in its scholastic and ra-

tionalist versions posited an omniscient being and was then secularised into the naturalistic scientism of our time, according to which a physical *theory of everything* is in principle possible. It is not; for things themselves are of such an ontological constitution that, although they are potentially unconcealed, they do not allow their unconcealment to be fixed in an aperspectival God's eye view as from nowhere. As a consequence, the finite perspectives to which things are open cannot be transcended into the universal by precise calculation and made transparent in an unambiguous way. Rather, universality is a difficult and endless task on which we work together, talking, arguing and learning, under the conditions of what Quine and Davidson called the indeterminacy of translation and interpretation respectively. Herein lies the specifically hermeneutic trait of hermeneutic realism.

In the following, two fundamental theses of hermeneutic realism will be developed and justified. Accordingly, the text has two main parts, one relating to sensory, qualitative consciousness (part 2) and the other to discursive, intentional consciousness (part 3). Some people say that understanding qualitative consciousness is the hard problem and understanding intentionality is the easy problem of consciousness. I think that a philosophical explanation of qualitative consciousness is hard indeed, but an account of intentionality is anything but easy. Given Quine's arguments for the indeterminacy of meaning and reference, Davidson's arguments for the anomaly of the mental, Kripke's Wittgenstein-inspired arguments for the paradox of rule following, to name but a few, it seems incredible to me that people continue to offer variants of functionalism such as causal role functionalism, inferential role functionalism or computational functionalism as candidates for a philosophical understanding of intentionality. But as Heidegger rightly observed, within human being (Dasein) itself, and thus within our understanding of our own being, there prevails an

"ontological back radiation", a reflecting back of the way we understand the world onto the interpretation of our own being (Heidegger 1927: 15-16). Fichte was more curt when he noted that "most people would be more easily led to believe that they are a piece of lava in the moon than an ego", i.e. a free and thinking subject (Fichte 1845/46: 175 footnote).

Heidegger endeavoured to create a new way of words to neutralise the ontological back radiation. In what follows, however, I will stick to the ordinary philosophical terminology. This can lead to unfamiliar, perhaps even paradoxical formulations when the ordinary terminology contaminated by the back radiation is used to escape this very back radiation. Instances of this are the general theses I will put forward in the two parts of my paper. The first can be formulated as follows: People literally overlap in their infinite spatiotemporal field of consciousness, which is one and the same for all and is only oriented differently by each individual, namely egocentrically in each case. (Of course, one would have to distinguish further between the spatial and temporal components of the field, but for simplicity's sake, we will stick to space in the following.) The second thesis states that things, not in and of themselves and not for animals, but for speakers, are literally tokens of linguistic types and can be read (a) as their own names, (b) as indexical singular terms designating them and (c) as sentences about them.

This readability thesis is inspired by quite diverse sources. For one thing, in his evolutionary theory of logico-ontological space, which he terms the *science of logic,* Hegel reports for a certain stage of the evolution that onto-/logical space is all judgement at this stage, i.e. that "all things are a judgement" (Hegel 1830: § 167). If a thing is a judgement, or rather an individual token of a judgement type, it ought to be able to be *understood* or *read* as a judgement and translated into ordinary verbal language. A second inspiration,

and the most important, is provided in the divergent picture theories for elementary sentences developed by the early Wittgenstein and then Wilfrid Sellars. Thirdly, and finally, we have Heidegger's dictum in his 1950 talk on language ("Die Sprache") that "language languages" (or that "speech speaks": "die Sprache spricht", Heidegger 1985:10), and that language speaks as a gathering call, i.e. as a ringing or chiming, but as a chiming of silence or stillness ("Geläut der Stille", Heidegger 1985:27). We mortals have the call of speaking back to language, of answering the chiming of stillness. Gadamer, in his more mundane way, sums up: "Being that can be understood is language" ("Sein, das verstanden werden kann, ist Sprache", Gadamer 1960: 450).

Apart from rare internal criticisms – I shall deal with one at the end of this article –, I usually receive two external objections to the idea that being as understood is language and that things are tokens of linguistic types. Firstly, it is contended that in the case of things, there are no speakers who produce them, and without speakers there are no linguistic tokens. But here we may appeal to David Lewis's "*Lagadonian* method" as a precedent that "exploits our freedom to take the words as anything we please. Do we need one and only one name for everything in some large domain? Just declare that each thing names itself" (Lewis 1986: 145). Things are linguistic tokens not because we produce them in speaking, but because we take them as such in perceiving and understanding them. That is why I am talking of *reading* them. After all, we are used to tokens without perceptible speakers when we read texts whose writers are absent or unknown or have long since died. And besides, if the wind sometimes whispers Mary, it might as well draw readable letters in the sand.

Secondly, it is criticised that language represents, but things do not. This is a bit petty, though, as is again illustrated by Lewis's Lagadonian method. What matters is logical form, not representation,

and logical form, as Wittgenstein already noted in the *Tractatus* and as will be shown, is identical here on both sides, the same for linguistic representations and the items represented, for mind and world, thinking and being. We project logico-linguistic form onto things in the same way that we project it onto spoken expressions or written texts. True, things qua linguistic tokens do not represent anything else. They are ur-tokens, so to speak. They do not *re*-present, but just present themselves in virtue of their logico-linguistic form, and by our reading them, they become unconcealed, as Heidegger would say.

This, then, is the plan for the article: first (part 2), I will argue for the extendedness of consciousness[1], and second (part 3), for the readability of things. I hope that in the course of my argumentation it will become clear that – and how – both theses belong together.

2. Our common extended consciousness

In his book *The Conscious Mind*, David Chalmers explicates his topic, conscious states, thus (Chalmers 1996: 4):

> […] a mental state is conscious if it has a *qualitative feel* – an associated quality of experience. These qualitative feels are also known as phenomenal qualities, or *qualia* for short. The problem of explaining these phenomenal qualities is just the problem of explaining consciousness. This is the really hard part of the mind-body problem.

The problem of explaining qualia is thought to be so hard because qualia do not seem to be exhaustible functionally, i.e. by their

[1] This philosophical thesis of the always already extended consciousness must not be confused with the scientific hypothesis of the artificially extended mind first formulated by Cark and Chalmers (1998).

causal roles in perception and behaviour, and because, on the other hand, nowhere in the firing of our neurons do neurologists find the shades of purple or green we see or the ringing of a bell we hear or "the musty smell of an old wardrobe, the stench of rotting garbage, the whiff of newly mown grass, the warm aroma of freshly baked bread" (6), to quote Chalmers again. The usual idea here seems to be that qualia form the rich phenomenal endowment or decoration of an inner cognitive map of ours that represents our external spatial or spatiotemporal environment as well as parts of our own body, as for instance in the case of pain. Qualia qua concrete decorations of our cognitive maps thus represent objective external states according to this standard picture, like maps represent a territory. The problem, as said, seems to be that brain scientists do not find any phenomenal decoration when investigating neural "representations" of our external environment.

But perhaps the whole picture is misguided and in turn misleading. To find out if it is, we should look at our practice of raising truth claims, i.e. of judging, which is a workable abstraction of our concrete being-in-the-world as human beings. It seems self-evident that, as Gareth Evans once put it, "to make a judgement about an object, one must *know which* object is in question". Evans has called this principle *Russell's Principle* and has specified it to the effect that someone who is "in a position to think of an object must have a *discriminating conception* of that object – a conception which would enable the subject to distinguish that object from all other things" (Evans 1982: 65), i.e. to individuate it epistemically and then to refer to it in speech by what is called singular reference.

Certainly, it may be that "one" (or "man" in Heidegger's German) can talk about a thing without being able to individuate it, relying on the division of linguistic labour. But this kind of talk is then most likely *mere* talk in Heidegger's technical sense of "Gerede". Because think-

ing is essentially articulated through language, it is just as essentially subject to the possibility of falling into mere talk. Nevertheless, Russell's Principle applies to thinking proper and to "authentic" talk.

Now think of epistemic individuation. How do we accomplish it? How do we individuate things in thought and speech? Concepts qua general ideas, precisely by being general, are in principle insufficient for individuation in thought, just as general descriptions are insufficient for singular reference in speech. We also need demonstrative or indexical thought contents and their linguistic expressions to form mixed representations of indexical and conceptual elements of the general form "this-such", e.g. "this child". Wilfrid Sellars analyses singular ideas, i.e. Kantian intuitions, as representations of this form (see Sellars 1968: 4–8). Given these, we can then introduce proper names along the lines of: "Let this child be called Emma." Names, then, are essentially secondary means of reference whose use, moreover, is particularly dependent on the division of linguistic labour. The much-discussed question of the essential or inessential indexical would have to be settled here, in the context of Russell's principle, not as John Perry tried to do in his seminal article, on the basis of our behaviour in discovering the circularity of a sugar lane in a supermarket; and then settled, of course, *with* Perry in favour of the essentiality of the indexical[2].

What is surprising in all this is that even the advocates of the essential indexical do not ask further about the underlying, indeed a priori, presuppositions that we must invest when we think and speak indexically. Everyone seems to notice that our indexicals function like an informal coordinate system whose origin is centred in the particular thinker, but they do not ask how it is possible to establish such an

[2] See e.g. Perry (1979), who discusses the problem within the framework of the theory of action, and, on the other hand Cappelen and Dever (2013), who disagree

egocentric coordinate system in the first place. After all, coordinates must be fixed relative to a real frame of reference, a frame of reference that must belong to that very manifold of things that can be epistemically individuated and referred to by means of the coordinates. The natural follow-up question, rarely asked, then has to be: How is the frame of reference to be originally individuated? Not, of course, by indexicals (which have yet to be introduced), let alone by names, nor by general concepts or descriptions. Since this already exhausts the possibilities of individuating the frame of reference through empirical knowledge alone, some kind of knowledge a priori must be involved.

If we take pains to isolate this a priori knowledge through abstraction in a theory of the a priori presuppositions of reference, a picture emerges that is reminiscent of Kant's transcendental aesthetic in combination with his doctrine of transcendental apperception. But with Kant, these two doctrines remain too separate; it is important to unite them in an account of the a priori self-individuation and self-localisation of corporeal subjects in space and time. According to this account, a subject must know a priori that it exists in a spatiotemporal manifold of things that are perspectivally – and thus partially – perceivable, and that it exists as that thing which, like others, can be perceived from the outside and at the same time is the only thing also felt from the inside. This epistemically unique thing, whose precise physical contours must be determined empirically, is known a priori by the subject as the frame of reference for the egocentric indexical coordinate system, and indeed as the subject itself. Here lies the source of our knowledge of the basic indexical truth: "I am here".

What Kant calls pure apperception, i.e. the representation "I think" that by necessity can accompany all representations of a think-

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with Perry and other proponents of the essentiality of indexicals on a similar, or at

ing subject, seems to have no intrinsic relation to space and time, let alone to the body of the subject. By contrast, the representation "I am here", even when understood most abstractly, in a decontextualised and a priori way, is to be spelled out in the sense of: "I, as a bodily thinker, find myself here in the midst of infinite space, which I partly perceive by empirical intuition and at the same time imagine a priori in its entirety by pure intuition as an infinite whole". This immediate connection between pure self-consciousness on the one hand and the corporeality and spatiality of the self and the world on the other arises from the role of the subject as the frame of reference for the epistemic individuation of things.

But even if in this way thoughts and intuitions are more closely connected than Kant suggested, empirical and pure intuition, or perception and pure imagination, fall further apart than he believed. This is not bad news for Kant, however, but on the contrary excellent news, because it saves the main ideas of his transcendental aesthetic from empirical refutation by the general theory of relativity. Relativity has taught us that, contrary to what Kant and the physics of his time taught, physical space is curved a little out of its Euclidean default position by mass or energy. Nowadays we have to say that perception and imagination reveal different, though closely related things. Perception reveals real physical space, imagination, for lack of real masses and real energies, i.e. real curvatures, reveals the Euclidean default position of space.

Incidentally, this explains why, more than a hundred years after the development of general relativity, we are still unable to imagine a curved three-dimensional space pictorially. Nor will we ever be able to; the space of the imagination is three-dimensional and Euclidean by logico-imaginative necessity. But it is not empirically real. It is

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any rate similarly insufficient, theoretical basis.

transcendentally ideal, as Kant says, or rather, it is ideal simpliciter. For what is empirically real cannot be transcendentally ideal, and vice versa. On this point, Kant's teaching must be corrected, with certain detrimental consequences for his two-world doctrine, which, however, can well be tolerated or even welcomed.

Nevertheless, the transcendentally ideal, which we cognise a priori, unfolds a binding effect on the empirically real, and this is what is essential for Kant's theory. Intuition and imagination converge in the case of purity, that is, of empirical emptiness. And in pure intuition or pure imagination, we know a priori the limiting case in which physical space and time would per impossibile be empty. Real, physical space and time are systematic deviations from this limiting case depending on the distribution of mass and energy. In our life world, these deviations are so slight that even expert physicists did not notice them before Einstein. But even if they had been more noticeable, it would still be true that we know something about real space and time a priori, namely their pure and empty Euclidean default and limiting constitution. Furthermore, it is clear that we cannot attain this a priori knowledge by discursive conceptual analysis alone, but owe it to pure intuition or imagination.

Ideas, to use a Lockean turn of phrase, when discursive, are representations, intuitive ideas are presentations, and imaginative ideas come somewhere in between. If they are impure, i.e. have an empirical content, they are Humean ideas and represent something past or absent or something future or fictitious, fictive or fictional. If, on the other hand, they are pure, then they are pure intuitions and thus presentations, albeit of something transcendentally ideal, an impossible limiting condition of something real. What is intuited a priori in this way as something present is not confronting the intuiting subjectivity as something extraneous, but is an essential aspect of this subjectivity itself. Kant even goes so far as to say that

> if we suspend ["aufheben"] our subject or even merely the subjective character of the senses in general, then [...] even space and time would disappear and as appearances could not [literally: cannot] exist in themselves, but only in us (Kant 1781/1787: A42/B59).

Space and time can only exist in us: This may sound outrageous, since on the contrary we exist in space and time, a fact that is not only pre-theoretically obvious, but also a necessary truth of the theory of the a priori presuppositions of reference. But Kant does not use "in" in a spatiotemporal sense here, as if space and time were enclosed in my head, but rather in a metaphysical sense, similar to that in which a substance is said to be in itself, *in se*, and an accident in another, *in alio*. Yet there is a difference. While a substance has ontological priority over each of its accidents, subjects are as much ontologically dependent on space and time as space and time are dependent on them. After all, thinking subjects are by necessity corporeal, spatiotemporal beings. The essential in-esse that ties thinking subjects to space and time is thus reciprocal.

If we now return to the widespread idea that qualia form the phenomenal endowment of an inner cognitive map that represents our outer environment, we must say that it is indeed misguided and misleading. For we could not refer to the details of the inner map in thought and speech unless we ourselves were the central part of the map – homunculi in our own heads, so to speak – as its egocentric frame of reference, which is of course an absurd idea. Therefore, we must conclude with Alex Byrne and Michael Tye that *qualia ain't in the head* but out there in public and objective space (see Byrne and Tye 2006). The field of our consciousness extends into the expanse of perceptual public space and, indeed, into the infinite expanse of im-

aginative public space. All sentient beings overlap partially with some other sentient beings in their surrounding fields of phenomenal qualitative consciousness and all sentient beings who are also sapient, whose imagination is thus discursively guided, overlap completely in their infinite spatiotemporal field of consciousness. Q.E.D.

Dreams and hallucinations do not provide counter-examples. A person momentarily oblivious of wearing sunglasses may mistakenly locate the proximal brown she sees distally on the surface of a white wall and judge that the wall is brown. Analogously, under the non-standard conditions of dreaming or hallucinating, when the usual channels of perception are blocked or clouded, individuals may systematically mislocate distally certain proximal brain processes that remain inconspicuous under standard conditions and now become conspicuous. But even then, our shared singular space remains the alternativeless field of localisation or, in this case, mislocalisation.

To conclude part 2, let us add some observations that may pave the way to the readability thesis in part 3. If we try to transpose the prima facie somewhat lofty doctrine of our common extended consciousness into a more down-to-earth phenomenological key, we get the statement that all things spatial and temporal are in principle or potentially open to us. They are phenomena in Heidegger's phenomenological sense, i.e. they show themselves, they are potentially unconcealed and become actually unconcealed, insofar as we do our part to actualise the unconcealment by engaging with them together, for instance by talking about them together. Our being-in-the-world is a being-with (Mitsein), as Heidegger noted, who further had the pre-Socratics conceive of truth as unconcealment and sympathised with this view himself. If we take into consideration that also and especially judgements are true – the vast majority of them, as Davidson pointed out – it seems obvious to conceive of things, since they are

unconcealed, as tokens of judgements, and true ones at that[3]. In our perceptions we read them and in our observation sentences we translate them – correctly or incorrectly – into verbal language. Seen this way, errors of perception turn out to be misreadings or mistranslations, for the things read and translated are themselves true, that is, potentially unconcealed.

We can spin this thread of thought a little further. Truth is not merely unconcealment, but has three essential aspects that belong together in tension, a phenomenal, a realistic and a pragmatic aspect. Each of these aspects is reflected in every other, which is why it is easy in philosophical theorising to focus on one aspect and declare it to be the whole truth about truth. The pre-Socratics, if Heidegger is right, viewed truth through its phenomenal or epistemic aspect and conceived of it as unconcealment. Truth-theoretical realists identify truth with its realistic or objective aspect and take it to be a correspondence (to be specified in more detail) of judgements with facts. Pragmatists, finally, identify truth with its pragmatic or normative aspect and conceive it as warranted assertibility. In the spirit of Heidegger, we could link these aspects of truth with the tenses or modes of time, the phenomenal aspect with the present, the realistic with the past and the pragmatic with the future. But this need not be explored further here.[4]

Let us focus instead briefly on classical, scholastic transcendental philosophy, informed by the reception of Aristotle, and on its famous formula of the convertibility of transcendentals: *quodlibet ens est unum, verum, bonum* (quoted by Kant in 1787: B113). Now, if every thing (*ens*) according to this formula is also something true (*verum*),

[3] This accords with the metaphysical thesis cited by Hegel (1830: § 167) as fixing a certain evolutionary stage of onto-/logical space: "All things are a judgement". But since the metaphysicians that Hegel imagines here do not distinguish between types and tokens of judgements, their thesis remains comparatively indeterminate.
[4] But see Koch 2006, Part I, Chapter 3, and Part II, Chapters 3-4.

then we have again the starting point of the readability thesis: "Things are true, so believe them and translate them correctly into true sentences!" Incidentally, the convertibility of ens and verum does not, at first glance, fit well with the correspondence theory of truth prevalent in classical scholastic philosophy. It seems, then, that a subliminal awareness had been preserved that truth is also unconcealment.

3. The readability of things

In the *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus* (henceforth: TLP), Wittgenstein is tacitly committed to a correspondence theory of truth, at least for simple thoughts, which, however, has some special features. First and foremost, Wittgensteinian correspondence is a pictorial relation between facts and thoughts, where thoughts have assertoric force and are thus judgements. Since thoughts or judgements are perceptibly expressed in sentences (TLP 3.1), pictorial correspondence is secondarily a semantical relation between facts and sentences, and indeed sentence tokens ("Satzzeichen", 3.12). Sentence tokens, interestingly, are not objects or things, but are themselves facts like the extra-linguistic facts to which they correspond if they are true: "The sentence token is a fact" (3.14). With Wittgenstein, then, we have a correspondence relation between facts and facts, linguistic facts and extra-linguistic facts.

Secondly, it follows that we find the same logical form on the part of language and on the part of the world. This identical logical form is called the form of actuality ("Wirklichkeit", 2.18) on the side of the world and the logical form of imaging ("Abbildung", 2.281) on the side of thought and speech. The form of actuality actualises atomic objects by connecting them into facts, and on the side of language, the same form, now as a form of imaging, connects names into sentences. Later, Wittgenstein characterises this form very point-

edly as "the one logical constant" and as "that, which *all* sentences, by their nature, have in common with each other. But this", he adds, "is the general form of the sentence" and "the essence of the sentence" as well as "the essence of the world" (5.47–5.4711). But if the form of the sentence and the essence of the world are identical, there is nothing to stop us from conceiving of the facts of the world as sentence tokens, which we understand, read and translate into verbal language.

Thirdly, and perhaps most importantly, Wittgenstein sees the power of imagination as the source of thinking and speaking. He does not say so explicitly (and many Wittgenstein scholars will disagree with me), but it follows from what he says: "We make images of facts to ourselves" (2.1). "The image is a fact" (2.141). "When the form of imaging is [minimal, i.e. nothing but] the logical form, then the image is called the logical image" (2.181). And (3): "The logical image of facts is the thought." I have been translating "Bild" here throughout as "image" rather than "picture" in order to emphasise the role of imagination for Wittgenstein's philosophical semantics. Wittgenstein does not thematise the power of imagination, let alone examine it, but be relies on it as the capacity, firstly, to understand images as images – originally natural "images" such as reflections in water and shadows on the ground – and, secondly to produce images. Thirdly, imagination is the capacity to imagine things pictorially in memory, expectation, daydream, etc. – and in thought, according to TLP 3, a fact that points back to the understanding of images as images –, and fourthly, the capacity to supplement perceptions pictorially with what is shadowed in them. Heidegger once pondered whether the power of imagination might be that unknown common root of sensibility and understanding that Kant ruminates on in the introduction to

the first *Critique*.[5] It is noteworthy that Wittgenstein, unnoticed by scholarship, has an affirmative answer ready, not in words, but in substance.

Fourthly and finally, Wittgenstein formulates a theory that he himself says cannot be expressed in meaningful sentences. According to it, one can talk about objects but not about facts, yet the theory consists largely of theorems about facts. So these theorems are meaningless, although, as Wittgenstein thinks, not worthless; for they are gestures towards something mystical and important that shows itself but cannot be said. Be that as it may, one cannot, at any rate, formulate a readability thesis within the Wittgensteinian framework that would make sense according to the framework. It would only be another gesture towards the mystical.

This changes fundamentally with Sellars's naturalistic and behaviourist philosophy. Sellars can speak meaningfully about facts, which according to his analysis are just true propositions, where a proposition ultimately boils down to certain functionally equivalent sentence tokens of arbitrary languages that are meta-linguistically characterised. Sentence tokens, in turn, are objects, not facts. One can talk about them as tokens, i.e. meta-linguistically, and call them *token facts* if one wishes (but they remain objects), or one can talk about them as natural objects like any others, using the object language. We then speak about them as *natural linguistic objects*.

A second difference to Wittgenstein is that Sellars does not allow for semantical language-world relations. He works within Carnap's syntacticist or inferentialist framework of 1934. All semantical relations are intra-linguistic relations of inference; what looks like semantical relations of reference must be analysed purely intra-linguistically. That the word "Socrates" designates Socrates means that tokens of

[5] Kant 1781/1887: A15/B29, and Heidegger 1991: 137.

that word are to be used according to certain rules of inference. In no way, however, does the word stand in a semantical relation to the Athenian philosopher Socrates. This Carnapian position is hard to swallow and Sellars was reproached with it for instance by John McDowell (see McDowell 2009). It could easily be remedied by the readability thesis, according to which Socrates himself is the world-sided ur-token of the word "Socrates". Reference would then turn out to be a semantical relation between a linguistic type and its world-sided ur-token, i.e. a relation that is simultaneously an intra-linguistic and a language-world relation. But Sellars does not even consider the readability of things as a possibility.

What nevertheless brings his position close to the readability thesis, unbeknownst to him, is his picture theory for elementary sentences. Tokens of elementary sentence, qua natural linguistic objects, picture or map objects, according to Sellars, in a non-semantical, purely factual sense of mapping or picturing. It is this non-semantical and non-intentional representational function of language that supposedly underlies all its other functions as a necessary condition. Sellars's basic idea is that a simple name-predicate sentence is a determination of the name occurring in it. The name (or else an indexical singular term in its place) is determined by being flanked with a predicate, but it could in principle also be determined directly by being produced in a certain style, as is done in maps.

A map is a spatial model of the landscape it depicts, the items in it are cartographic names of geographical objects, and the ways these names are determined in terms of size, shape, colour etc. depict the objects as cities, rivers, lakes, roads, railway lines, borders, mountains etc. of certain sizes and shapes. Furthermore, the names in their cartographic relations to each other depict the named objects according to their geographical relations. As a result, "the items in a map translate into *both* names *and* sentences", but no items in a map

translate into predicates or for that matter into "logical connectives, quantifiers or modalities" (Sellars 1979: 133). Regarding the representational function of language, predicates are only "syncategorematic expressions, contributing to the meaning of sentences without having reference"; they are "simply auxiliary symbols" (59–60) for determining names in the context of predication, as is made apparent by the predicate-free language of maps.

But Sellars is clear that a map "is a parasite" (133) and feeds on an established verbal language, which according to Sellars's linguistic behaviourism is a multi-dimensional system of learned pattern governed behaviour, with (a) language entry transitions from observable situations to observation reports, (b) intra-language transitions, i.e. formal and material inferences, and (c) language exit transitions from intentions to actions. Based on an already established language, maps can then be produced as linguistic annexes and read accordingly.

This would also apply to the alleged inner sensory map assumed by those who believe that qualia are in the head. Sellars is one of them, even though he recognises that in what he calls the manifest image of humans in the world in which we currently still conceptualise our lifeworld, we also conceive qualia as distal qualities of things, thus duplicating the phenomenal into an inner and an outer. If, however, the supposed inner phenomenal map can be treated as an annex to language and thus read, if we can hence think in qualia, then by the same token can the phenomenal outer lifeworld be read, albeit not as a map of something else. We can simply cut through the supposed interior here and take the external things themselves as world-sided ur-tokens (a) of their names, (b) of "this-such" representations (intuitions) of them, and (c) of many simple observation sentences about them in each case.

In this way, Sellars could and should have integrated his picture theory of simple sentences, suitably enriched by a readability thesis, into his philosophical semantics and theory of intentionality. Language entry and language exit transitions, according to this upgrading, acquire an intra-language or inferential second nature. Observable things turn out to be reasons, and actions to be practical conclusions, as Aristotle taught. Things, when read as tokens of their names, are objects, present-at-hand ("vorhanden") in Heidegger's sense, when read as "this-such" tokens, they are phenomena that show themselves, and when read as sentences about them, they are token facts, though not facts in the full sense of "true propositions" (i.e. type facts). Discursively articulated perception can now be seen as a special case of translation and is thus subject to the hermeneutic indeterminacy pointed out by Quine and Davidson. The logical space of reasons as a whole extends to nature, as was already to be expected in light of our thesis of the extended consciousness.

But there is a fly in this promising ointment, an objection to Sellars's specific type of picture theory raised by Irad Kimhi, which would also affect the readability thesis if the latter could not emancipate itself from Sellars's behaviourist overall conception. Kimhi's point is that picture theories à la Sellars treat a token of a simple proposition as giving "a spatial model of a situation", but that a spatial model "can be used to make two contradictory claims" (Kimhi 2018: 104) because it cannot be negated and is therefore open to being used either affirmatively or negatively. While he agrees with Sellars that "a simple propositional sign […] depicts (reveals) a possible determination of name bearers by being a determination of their names", he adds that the sign must also be negatable – which cartographic signs are not – and "that these two roles cannot be dissociated" (*Ib*.) and one handed over to maps and the other to verbal predications. So

maps as spatial models just aren't language, and the things modelled even less so.

Sellars, on behalf of his non-semantic picture theory, would probably reply that maps as parasitic annexes of a language are only possible when the language in question is fully developed. Only when we have been trained long enough into a language does our verbal behaviour acquire a non-semantical cartographic side that allows us to represent the world. Arguably, it is precisely this reply that prevents Sellars from adopting the readability thesis, which is semantical and hermeneutic from the outset and through and through.

Kimhi, too, favours a propositional, i.e. semantical, picture theory, one in which depicting and negating are possible together, just as Wittgenstein did in the *Tractatus*. But there is a crucial difference between these two philosophers. Whereas Wittgenstein tacitly relied on the logically basic capacity of imagination to produce images, Kimhi seems to neglect precisely this essential feature of Wittgenstein's theory. He seems to neglect, in other words, that the minimal, i.e. purely logical form of imaging, the one logical constant that is guiding our imagination, already comprises the whole logical essence of the sentence and of the world and thus in particular negation. They who understand images also understand negation, understand that images are *not* what they depict, and understand that images in their default use are to be used affirmatively. Negation has always already been there, even in images, even in maps, even in things, before we introduce an arbitrary verbal expression for it. Trusting, therefore, that negation will make itself felt anyway, we uphold the readability thesis as a natural consequence of a picture theory that differs from Sellars's in that it is semantical, from Wittgenstein's in that it has objects depict objects, and from Kimhi's in that it sees negation at work in imagination and images as it is at work in discursive thinking and in objective being.

Let me conclude. We started out with the extended sensory consciousness of phenomenal qualities that we share with all sentient beings and in which we spatiotemporally overlap with many. We live it all the time, but it is hard, nay impossible, to say what it is like because our human consciousness has always already been informed by discursive, conceptual thinking, and it is strictly impossible to abstract from thinking by thinking. So we can only speculate about the thicket of sensa or qualia we were in phylogenetically and ontogenetically before we began to light or clear it a little, to make room for a clearance or lighting (Heidegger's "Lichtung") in the thicket. In this awakening of the imagination (Heidegger's "Er-äugnis", i.e. original eying), we started negating, i.e. making distinctions, between a reflection and what is reflected, an image and what is depicted, ourselves and our environment, appearance and being, and so on. The sensory thicket gradually cleared to the world and revealed itself as world-sided language when, as "the chiming of stillness", it called us to speak and we answered the call. Kimhi is perfectly right that revelation and negation cannot be dissociated. But this is not an objection to the thesis that we can read the predicative structure in which revealing and negating are combined into a spatial model of a situation and into the modelled situation. By doing so, we only make explicit what is implicitly included in the situation itself. It would be impossible to reveal by predication if what is revealed were not implicitly and imperceptibly permeated with predicative and logical form.

It is indexical "this-such" representations, i.e. empirical intuitions, in which sensibility and understanding converge, for in them predicative form is implicitly contained, which is made explicit in perceptual judgements: "This bunch of green …" (is a hawthorn, say). In the indexicality of our intuitions, the irreducible mineness (Jemeinigkeit) or perspectivity of our being-in-the-world comes to the fore, in their spatiotemporal form, which we intuit a priori as our common

field of consciousness, their intersubjectivity and objectivity. Objectivity makes general understanding possible, while mineness precludes that this understanding can be spread from one observer to another through calculation via transformation equations as in physics. It must instead be negotiated under the conditions of hermeneutic indeterminacy and charity in an open-ended process of discussion. If even observation sentences are already translations and thus subject to hermeneutic indeterminacy, then all the more indeterminacy will reign in intersubjective interpretation and translation. But our common field of consciousness ensures that our efforts towards universal understanding are by no means in vain, but will yield gratifying partial successes over and over again.

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