ROADS TO OBJECTIVITY

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Abstract

Individual Representationalism is a view that tries to constitute the way in which a mental state can be exhaustively individuated without appealing directly to the exterior world but always derivatively and supplemented by means of intrinsic properties, that is, by representations available in the individual's psychology. Anti-individualism tries to break this independence between the mental and nonmental; anti-individualism claims that causal relations to specific attributes of the environment are both ineliminable and, some of them, non-representational, yet determine what representations, perceptions, images and thoughts an individual has.

This dissertation explores the essence of the incompatibility between individual representationalist theories of mind and anti-individualism, as well as the connection this has on philosophical skepticism. In doing so, it presents a criticism of the faux or idealist or overintellectualized or romantic roads to objectivity that ignore the depth and relevance of externalist accounts of reality and mind-independence.

Two anti-individualist theories of perception, Perceptual Objectivity and Enactive Perception, are examined and rivaled against a form of philosophical skepticism known as the New Wittgenstein. The New Wittgenstein is deceivingly representationalist, so I argue. A main part of this dissertation's goal is to clarify what I think are some common misconceptions regarding anti-individualism's depth and implication.
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Chapter 1: Introduction

We can maintain a connection with reality despite our condemnation to viewing it in private. It is, after all, not merely a couple of unintelligible German philosophers of the early and middle part of the nineteenth century who were speaking, at the establishment of the industrial age, of the human being's estrangement from the world; nor, in its closing years, was a crazy European philologist speaking merely for himself (even if mostly to himself) when he announced the Death of God—by which he meant to record an altered relation in which we have placed ourselves to the world as a whole, to nature and to society and to ourselves. The myth...is that nature survives our treatment of it and its loss of enchantment for us, and that community remains possible when the authority of society is denied us.

Cavell, Stanley, *The World Viewed*, 213-214

A man sets out to draw the world. As the years go by, he peoples a space with images of provinces, kingdoms, mountains, bays, ships, islands, fishes, rooms, instruments, stars, horses, and individuals. A short time before he dies, he discovers that that patient labyrinth of lines traces the lineaments of his own face.

Borges, J.L., *Museum*, afterword

In the twentieth century a definite bias marked nearly all philosophical answers to questions. The main thrust of the answers was that, to represent aspects of the physical environment, an individual must have psychological resources that can represent *preconditions* under which such representation is possible. The individual was supposed at least to be *capable* of representing such conditions internally, thereby doing the objectifying him- or herself.

Burge, Tyler, *Origins of Objectivity*, 7

1.

Philosophy of mind has inherited two principles which bind it to a vast and quite uncomprehended extent. The principles are fallibilism and anti-individualism.

Fallibilism is not new (Peirce famously held it), but it has recently gained full-tilt support; it is unanimous in science and quasi-unanimous in North American analytic philosophy. Fallibility is not skepticism; it is not philosophical skepticism, to be sure, though it is often mistaken for angular skepticism (sometimes called lottery skepticism). I think the equivalence is ill-founded. Though not specifically aimed at fallibilism, in this dissertation I will try to identify the origin of the aforementioned confusion. It is much related to anti-individualism. What is fallibilism exactly? What relation does it have with intentionality? If intentionality is derived it is—so it seems—infallible to some extent. From this apparent consequence many past theories have given up undervived intentionality in order to possess that which they rendered more valuable, namely, infallibility (most of the time this was through some given like sense-data). Some of these views will be examined.
Anti-individualism, or externalism, renders metaphysical isolation impossible. I will try to evaluate a pair of anti-individualist positions, namely, two theories of perception, Perceptual Objectivity and Enactive Perception, against a form of philosophical skepticism known as the New Wittgenstein. The New Wittgenstein, I will argue, is deceivingly externalist in, for example, its account of objectivity. Upon closer inspection, however, camouflaged representationalist traits will be revealed. Under an anti-individualistic arc, I will trace the search for the root of objectivity in three sources: language (where I will direct attacks at the New Wittgenstein), logic and, briefly, imagination. Finally, I will assess its primitive origins in perception. Anti-individualism, objectivity and skepticism are all related concepts but in a more perplexing way than is generally assumed. Part of the goal of this essay is to unblur what I think are some common misconceptions regarding anti-individualism’s depth and implication. Concerning the depth, some odd results will be examined. This dissertation rivals anti-individualism against representationalism (or non-anti-individualistic) positions in their most disguised forms. My primary target is the skeptical solution to skepticism. Indeed, anti-individualism as a potential solution to skepticism is a new and important field of investigation today. As Tyler Burge sums it up:

Empirical reflection on perception forms much of the basis for taking perception to be real and to be an actual objective form of representation. I have assumed, contrary to skepticism, the existence of a physical environment... A question is whether there is another way, an apriori way, of warranting the objectivity of perception (its representing a mind-independent environment as having specific attributes that are mind-independent). A closely related question- roughly speaking, a version of the question of philosophical skepticism- is whether there is an apriori way of warranting the claim that there is perception in this sense, and that we have it.

I will argue that anti-individualism, together with recent advances in the psychology of perception, reveals that for skepticism, absolute skepticism, to take place, an absolute skepticism is required from the start, i.e., from the very evolution of the perceptual system. The relevant question to be considered is: does an immeasurable amount of lottery skepticism equal philosophical skepticism? Before I proceed, I will introduce anti-individualism and the position it militates against, Individual Representationalism.

Anti-individualism is most authoritatively championed today by Tyler Burge. His Origins of Objectivity (2010) traces objectivity to its primitive roots in perception under a straightforward, anti-individualistic arc. Origins of Objectivity is my main framework and will be one of the most developed views in this dissertation, so I will spend little time expounding it here, save for a bare-bones delineation and some brief remarks regarding terminology. In a nutshell, anti-individualism is the view that mental content, including representation of reality and objectivity, depends on factors that extend beyond the individual and the individual’s intrinsic properties or, in Burge’s words:

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1 The New Wittgenstein is a compendium of texts and commentaries loosely unified by interpreting early Wittgenstein and, especially, later Wittgenstein’s writing as an anti-systematic, therapeutic philosophy aiming at dissolving problems rather than offering narrow or metaphysical solutions and, predominantly in later Wittgenstein, by its view and attitude towards skepticism as a shared and public acknowledgment of intermutual vulnerability. In this dissertation, NW will refer exclusively to Stanley Cavell’s Ordinary Language Philosophy.

2 By ‘objectivity’, I mean objectivity in relation to subject matter (to distinguish it from propositional objectivity). A subject matter is said to be objective if, and only if, it is mind-independent. Objectivity is (roughly) synonymous to veridicality. I assume a disquotational, or redundancy (Quinean/Tarskian), account of truth.

3 For instance, if the world exists, it is fallible that it exists, i.e., it might not exist (but only assuming that it exists!). This results from incorporating the two aforementioned principles, fallibilism and anti-individualism.

The ways things are perceptually presented (their representational contents), not just perceptual representata, are determined to be what they are partly through systematic patterns of relations to the environment. Similarly, the ways things are thought of (particularly, what concepts occur in thoughts) in nearly all empirical states, not just the referents of thoughts, are determined to be what they are partly through patterns of relations to the physical environment.\(^5\)

Burge, very cautious regarding the terminology, distinguishes ‘anti-individualism’ from ‘externalism’. Whereas the term ‘externalism’ emphasizes the location of the content, the relevance is minor if not null to anti-individualism, which concerns not the where but the what, i.e., the nature of mental states that represent the environment.\(^6\)

Anti-individualism developed in opposition to the predominant family of views roughly united by the idea that, in order to represent anything as objective, an individual must either part from subjective representations and ‘build up from there’ until representation of objective particulars or objective representation proper is reached, or that any connection with the environment can either be ‘intrapersonally’ internalized for the purpose, cleanly eliminated, or represented in the form of general conditions. Burge calls these families Individual Representationalists and initially blamed Descartes, who confused first person control, for their proliferation.\(^7\) Anti-individualism militates against this view by claiming that causal relations to specific attributes of the environment are both ineliminable and, some of them, non-representational, and yet determine what representations, perceptions, images and thoughts an individual has. Despite the popularity Individual Representationalism has had and continues to have to this day, not to mention the unfathomable consequences that the opposing view implies, Burge considers anti-individualism incontrovertible. Moving beyond the classic thought experiments of the 70’s and 80’s that put narrow content in check, Origins of Objectivity is all but void of extra-scientific thought experiments including the paradigm examples concerning Twin-Earths, Martians and Swampmen; instead, throughout the work, anti-individualism’s appeal pivots mainly on inference to best explanation and the fact that it is presupposed in science.

Notwithstanding, to a certain degree arguments for anti-individualism do indeed depend, at least in part, on thought experiments. I think that, prima facie, the principle itself is undermined if arguments attempting to ground objectivity are ultimately derived from thought experiments. Rather than delving on this, I will take it for granted and focus on the other two forces behind it: elimination of competing views and its unanimous presupposition in science, specifically, perceptual psychology. In considering these reinforcements, we will see how it was only a few but very important linguistic advances of the 60’s and 70’s, strictly speaking, Saul Kripke on Proper Names and Hilary Putnam on Natural Kinds, which contributed the most to anti-individualism’s surge. In fact, the same general insights concerning reference and meaning, e.g., the use of rigid designators and the inherent causality in reference, were extended, via Tyler Burge, to the mind. At the same time, work by the ordinary language philosophers (e.g. Cavell and the New Wittgenstein) concluded that Ordinary Language Philosophy is defined, more or less, not as the return to wide meanings or ordinary meaning, but as a return to the necessary connection between a user of a language and what that user means or intends with his words or symbols. All of these insights stimulated externalist ideas and paved the road for a deeper and more consequential apprehension of anti-individualism in philosophy of mind.


\(^6\) Anti-individualism concerns accounts of the individuation of entities. Location need not even be applicable. The universe itself might be erroneously individuated (e.g. biocentrism, Wolfram’s emergence theories based on computational paradigms). A theory might be external yet still representationalist, i.e. still subdue by the containment problem.

\(^7\) Burge admits having originally mislabeled Descartes an Individual Representationalist. All clues seem to indicate that Descartes was, in fact, an externalist. I will briefly expand on these clues in chapter 3, where Descartes (and others) will be compared and contrasted with a clear-cut individualist, Antonio Rosmini.
I am interested in objectivity. Again, by objectivity I simply mean ‘external to the mind’. I use it synonymously with veridicality: a mental state can be true or false (erroneous or accurate). By mental state (representation is one kind of mental state) I mean a catch-all phrase for mental events and mental acts, for example, perceptions, hallucinations, beliefs, thoughts, the feeling of hunger, the feeling of pain. Representational mental states have a function, namely, ‘aboutness’. They are about something and constitutively imply veridicality conditions. A representation bears information, therefore it involves veridicality. That is, it inherently has a structure that can be evaluated for truth or falsehood (error or correctness, perceptual accuracy or inaccuracy). A representation, by identifying and singling out aspects of the mind-independent environment, can represent or misrepresent. A pivotal fact for anti-individualism is the fact that there are many unrepresentable relations (e.g. myriad causal relations) that, despite being unrepresentable, contribute fundamentally and un substitutionally in determining mental states. A central dispute in the anti-individualist vs. Individual Representationalism debate stems from this particularity. The disagreement is rooted in the question whether two representational states can have identical contents in different situations. This is an essential point as it draws an important line that splits answers into two very different views: those that answer in the affirmative are (most of the time) internalist, while those that answer in the negative are (most of the time) externalist or anti-individualistic. Throughout the dissertation, I criticize the former, namely, phenomenology oriented replies, as well as more complicated representationalist accounts like Antonio Rosmini’s idea of Being and the New Wittgenstein, in favor of the latter, externalist replies. Most of the time the internalists err, as we shall see, in their attempting to extract, by completely artificial means, some infallible principle (from the representation itself or elsewhere) as an aid to objectivity (and thus as a response to skepticism). Matters get trickier in the more complicated cases, especially when this principle turns out, as it did for the New Wittgensteinians, to be skepticism itself. Stanley Cavell, for example, confused fallibilism and philosophical skepticism. Whereas the concept of fallibilism functions perfectly under (well-articulated) anti-individualistic accounts, the required pressure of philosophical skepticism depends on 1st person accounts, and thus, at least indirectly, on Representationalism.

But for now let’s illustrate, preliminarily, using a much less sophisticated example. Bertrand Russell believed objects to be ‘permanent possibilities of sensation’. Russell believed in sense-data: At the root of Russell’s theory (of the nature of sense data) is the claim that in perception we are directly acquainted with perceptual objects that are not physical objects or properties. Russell maintained that these objects of acquaintance are the first objects of reference and the primary data or evidence for all knowledge, including empirical knowledge. They are the only particulars which we are acquainted. Russell needed this point to preserve his strategy for answering skepticism. That strategy involved postulating a base of certain empirical knowledge and representation.

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8 For Rosmini, only Light of Being imputed on the phenomenology flux achieves objectivity. Rosmini’s Light of Being was infallible by itself.
9 Burge, Tyler, Origins of Objectivity, 120.
The theory of Perceptual Objectivity resolutely opposes this perspective. The core idea of Perceptual Objectivity is that perception, in all its complexity and extension, and not sense-data, is the starting point of objectivity. Perceptual Objectivity concerns objects of perception (to distinguish it from very a different type of perception, fact perception). It argues that object perception is inherently objective in the sense that causal processes and systematic mechanisms in the perceptual apparatus distinguish what elements are perspectival and which elements are not perspectival. It is the non-perspectival elements which are rendered objective (mind-independent). Thus, there is (in the subsystems of the perceptual apparatus) already an elimination of the intentional part, thereby separating a mind-independent reality from mind-dependence. What this means, roughly speaking, is that nature does the objectifying for us. Accounting for this usually involves a causal theory of perception. In a causal theory of perception, a perceptual object is simply the object that causes such experience, i.e., it is determined constitutively by the relevant causal facts in question. The causality is the primary ‘pointer’, so to speak. The gist is that many of the relevant causal facts are neither available nor representable by the perceiver.

Finally, how objective is Perceptual Objectivity? Wherein is Perceptual Objectivity objective? These issues will be the aim of the final sections of the dissertation.

3.

The next three chapters will present three faux loci of objectivity respectively: language, logic, and the imagination. In chapter 5, I will trace objectivity back to perception. Chapter 6 is an intellectual base for future investigation.

A final remark. Throughout the dissertation I will address a schism. I distinguish between two world-view models: Limit 1 (Common Sense and the x) and Limit 2 (Ordinary Language models). It is a speculative account based on the anti-individualist/individualist dichotomy. In expounding it here, I risk over-generalizing. The account clearly requires a dissertation all its own. I will outline below.

The schism concerns two world-views. By world-views I simply mean perspectives. I will refer to them as Limit 1 and Limit 2.

Limit 1: an example of Limit 1 is Ordinary Language Philosophy. It is always conditioned and involves coherentism. It is internalist. It tries to exhaust, whether by structures/structuring or conditions/conditioning. Ordinary language takes care of itself. It exhausts only what it can exhaust. Epistemology is an answer to skepticism! Ordinary language is extraordinarily cautious: once classified, once in familiar territory, it becomes completely self-normative. If words fail us, no man’s land does not invade preternatural and unheralded, there is still a game going on- this is what it means to analyze. Again, epistemology stemmed from skepticism.

Limit 2: an example of Limit 2 is ‘Common sense and the X’ or direct realism, where the X is external and underdetermined. Common sense ignores things because it assumes things take care of themselves at an external and unrepresentable level, and are completely mind-independent (it is skepticism that X’s things, i.e. limits).

I will expand on this throughout the dissertation.
Chapter 2: The Uncertain (or Ideal Language is Brought to the Ground, Skepticism ensues)

“The meaning is the use” calls attention to the fact that what an expression means is a function of what it is used to mean or say on specific occasions by human beings. That such an obvious fact should assume the importance it does is itself surprising. And to trace the intellectual history of philosophy’s concentration on the meaning of particular words and sentences, in isolation from a systematic attention to their concrete uses would be worthwhile undertaking. It is a concentration one of whose consequences is the traditional search for the meaning of a word in various realms of objects, another which is the idea of perfect understanding as being achievable only through the construction of a perfect language. A fitting title for this history would be: Philosophy and the Rejection of the Human.

Cavell, Stanley, *The Claim of Reason*, 206-207

The goldfinch, the material object, is... uninscribed and mute: but man speaks... ‘You cannot fool the people all the time’ is ‘analytic’.

Austin, J.L., “Other Minds”, *Philosophical Papers*, pg. 113

What we call our ordinary lives, or the perspective from which we understand the everydayness of our ordinary lives... is determined by a prior surmise of that life, and its language, as vulnerable. Vulnerable, I would say, to skepticism, but with the understanding that skepticism wears as many guises as the devil.

Stanley Cavell, *Philosophy the Day After Tomorrow*, pg. 1-2

Abbreviations:

OLP: Ordinary Language Philosophy

W1: Early Wittgenstein; from his arrival at Cambridge in 1911 until 1931 (shortly after Lecture on Ethics)

W2: Later Wittgenstein; 1931 until his death in 1951

NW: The New Wittgenstein

1. Perhaps the first and most direct reply to the skeptic is that skepticism can’t doubt everything since, at the very least, the proposition ‘everything can be doubted’ must be true from his point of view. It certainly hasn’t proven to be the best reply, since the skeptic can, and hitherto has, quickly answer that even that proposition can be doubted. This is an old reply.10 To which the non-skeptic, if obstinate enough, will counter that ‘if that is so, then, at least that new proposition has to be true’, and the rest is a tragic story of who is the most persistent or finishes in a well-known joke, e.g. they starve to death or fall from a cliff. But this is not the main difficulty of skepticism, of course, as the situation’s reaching an impasse degrades the dilemma into a question of who has the burden of proof (which, skepticism being what it is, will

10 A version of this, of course, famously stemmed from Aristotle (*Metaphysics*, Book A) against the sophists. As Burge notes (*Origins of Objectivity*, 548) Aristotle insisted that objectivity is constitutively present in representation from the very beginning. This not only shows how far back externalist accounts of representation are to be found, but also anti-individualism’s intricate nexus with the problem of skepticism.
surely claim a prima facie victory, but that is another matter). The problem with the non-skeptic reply is that it begs the question. Or, more precisely, it accuses the skeptic of begging the question. This reply usually takes the form of something like ‘doubting presupposes certainty’, which has become an oft-repeated motto. The idea is the same: the skeptic requires at the very least some ground or claim at which to direct the skepticism at.

Burden of proof reliance and question-begging considered, this is not a satisfying reply to the skeptic. A satisfying reply to the skeptic must neutralize or rebut the skeptic’s views on justification and knowledge in a non-question-begging way while accepting the full-fledged burden of proof, i.e., committing oneself to providing warrant for one’s position and never appealing to the other party’s lack of it. Anti-individualism has represented for many a starting point for such a reply. Tyler Burge, anti-individualism’s main contributor in the last three decades, is not that optimistic, arguing that anti-individualism, by itself, presented against the skeptics, still begs the question (in a manner similar to the one just discussed). According to Burge, to defeat skepticism in its most general forms, a transcendental argument is needed, that is, an argument stemming from necessary conditions for claims in question and arriving at the conclusion that there are physical objects, other minds, a mind-independent external world, knowledge, knowledge of aforementioned entities, etc. Anti-individualism alone cannot complete this task since, at best, it shows that beliefs (most if not all) are, by their very nature, necessarily and/or causally related to the environment. As Burge notes:

But I think that (anti-individualism) needs further argument to engage the skeptic. Wherein is anti-individualism justified? Wherein are we warranted in determining what perceptions and beliefs we have? Do such justification and warrant not beg the question against the skeptic? If these questions are answered satisfactorily, then one has shown that our practices are reasonable, and one has answered the skeptic. If they are not addressed, then it seems to me that...it begs the skeptic’s question.

Even before anti-individualism took the stage in analytic philosophy, during the first half of the twentieth century there was a brand new uproar that skepticism was unraveling. Ludwig Wittgenstein and J.L. Austin devoted most of their life’s work, that is to say, most of their work can be seen, essentially as a long reply to the skeptic. Skepticism cancels itself, according to Wittgenstein, since any doubt requires a background of certainty, if at the very least, a grammatical one: ‘The game of doubting presupposes certainty’ and ‘a doubt without an end is not even a doubt’. Austin writes in ‘Other Minds’:

The human intellect and senses are, indeed, inherently fallible and delusive, but not by any means inveterately so. Machines are inherently liable to break down, but good machines don’t (often). It is futile to embark on a ‘theory of knowledge’ which denies this liability: such theories constantly end up admitting the liability after all, and denying the existence of ‘knowledge’.

Thus Austin sketches how ‘the gist’ of the problem can be explained away: there is no solution to philosophical skepticism; it is enough that language, specifically vernacular, allow us to discern the sources of ordinary incredulity. One cannot flawlessly outline the limitations of knowledge; it is enough to classify its development accordingly. In other words, any answer to the skeptic naturally invites further pushing, as if the skeptic were trying to delve deeper into ‘no man’s land’, a place of no authority where

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11 Of course, showing that the skeptic’s position is untenable since it lacks justification (or something else) is merit enough and could well provide a starting point for richer arguments. But the ultimate argument for radical skepticism, so to speak, will always be there and the nature of the problem requires a direct confrontation.

12 Hilary Putnam and Donald Davidson are the two most prominent examples.

13 Hahn and Ramberg (eds.), Reflections and Replies, 443.


16 Austin, J.L., ‘Other Minds’, Philosophical Papers, 98.
nothing can be taken at face-value. But this implies a face-value upon which all other values can be questioned so that we need not take anything else at face-value. This face-value, after all is said and done, is skepticism itself. This is the skeptical solution to skepticism. Doubt presupposes certainty; nonetheless, doubt can also be, and finally is, absolute. For example, in ‘Other Minds’, Austin concludes that there must be things that require no justification, since man can always push further and further, question deeper and deeper, until (for example) he will reach the point where he is questioning the supposition that there are other minds: ‘What justification is there for supposing that there is another mind communicating with you at all’? In a similar vein, Wittgenstein writes: ‘If I have exhausted justification I have reached bedrock, and my spade is turned. Then I am inclined to say: “This is simply what I do.”’

There is much ado about what is meant by the bedrock metaphor. What is it exactly? And how does one know when one has reached it? A vast portion of the Investigations dismisses potential candidates (e.g. propositions striking one as immediately true; ostensive definitions; mental images; logical determinism and the referentialist Arcadia promoted by Frege and Russell, etc.). Elsewhere, a short space is devoted to actually advocating candidates like rule-following and action. He writes:

Giving grounds, however, justifying the evidence, comes to an end; but the end is not certain propositions’ striking us immediately as true, i.e. it is not a kind of seeing on our part; it is our acting, which lies at the bottom of the language game.

In this chapter I will briefly discuss some of the classic literature of the aforementioned philosophers while pre-targeting the greater objective of the dissertation by presenting some arguments and afterthoughts concerning skepticism from an anti-individualistic perspective. I will begin with an exposition and criticism of G.E. Moore’s common sense philosophy, also called direct realism. An important part of these criticisms will be in light of W2’s remarks in On Certainty, which I will follow up afterwards. To avoid repeating the oft made comparisons between W2 and Austin, I will only be alluding to the author of Sense and Sensabilia in the vein of W2 as synthesized by Stanley Cavell’s New Wittgenstein. Following my discussion of Cavell, I will quickly jump to anti-individualist accounts of representation, meaning and knowledge. If ‘meaning ain’t in the head’ as Hilary Putnam famously quipped (Putnam 1975: 227), then the problem (including the radical skeptical problem) is transferred to the external world. This amounts to saying that the question of whether there is an external world must be, so to speak, answered by the external world. Again, this by itself does no fundamental damage to the general forms of skepticism. More is needed.

Before I continue, I want to expand a little on a secondary yet relevant psychological aspect: how should the skeptic’s claim be classified. Is skepticism:

A) A threat. If so, what type of threat?
B) A scandal. Kant famously declared: ‘The “scandal of philosophy” is not that this proof (of the external world) has yet to be given, but that such proofs are expected and attempted again and again.’ Stanley Cavell contested: ‘I am the scandal’, meaning that failing to acknowledge the existence of the external world, other minds or a goldfinch outside your window, echoing Austin, is not a description of the external world, other minds or the goldfinch, but a (bad) description of language: ‘Philosophy may in no way interfere with the actual use of language; it can in the end only describe it. For it cannot give it any foundation either. It leaves everything as it is.’

17 Austin, J.L., ‘Other Minds’, Philosophical Papers, 115.
19 Wittgenstein, On Certainty (§204).
C) Indeed, a joke. Moore says that nobody actually disbelieves having two hands or being born sometime in the past, etc., even when (especially when I should go further in saying-as it's being counterweighed at that precise moment-) said by a philosopher.

D) Finally, a precondition. There is a serious problem with this last term, this philosophical tic that has become overtly, if not perversely, schematic, and which I will delve into in discussing Tyler Burge’s Perceptual Objectivity in the fifth chapter. If NW presents skepticism as inherent and ineliminable, is it correct to call it a precondition? Is skepticism an effect?

Except for D, which will be discussed afterward, these secondary psychological points will be met throughout this chapter. A and C will be discussed in the section on Moore; B in the section on Cavell.

2.

G.E.M. Moore’s two papers *A Defense of Common Sense* (1925) and *Proof of an External World* (1939), though written more than a decade apart from each other, both conform with the strict analytic agenda (e.g. ‘but to hold that we do not know what, in certain respects, is the analysis of what we understand by such an expression, is an entirely different thing from holding that we do not understand the expression’ (Moore: 1925)), and, both papers, in a nutshell, can be summarized as follows: in certain propositions, we have no more good reason to doubt than to be certain.

In the final section of *A Defense of Common Sense*, Moore famously analyzes the proposition ‘this is a human hand’: ‘there is a thing, and only one thing, of which is true both that it is a human hand and that this surface is part of its surface’ (Moore: 1925). How does the skeptical problem enter here? Bluntly, here’s how: I can only perceive a certain portion of my hand, i.e., a specific angle, under certain lighting conditions, in other words, what I perceive is a representation (and not the hand itself, not the ontological certainty). So how is knowledge possible? Moore provides three possible answers to this problem (even though he admits all three are not without serious objections).

1) When I perceive a hand, I perceive part of its surface directly. This avoids, among other things, double skepticism, e.g., I doubt whether my sense datum is trustworthy, not to mention its origin. But if we grant authenticity to the sense-datum, the skeptical problem is unified. Two objections (which for Moore are all but defeating) are the microscope (if A perceives the sense-data emerging from x using plain sight, while B perceives sense-data emerging from x using a microscope, no doubt x will appear to possess different qualities to A and B, thus sense-datum is not identical to surface) and double vision (a similar scenario and argument occurs here, however, the objection becomes more serious in this case, since there is only one perceiver). As we shall see, anti-individualism modifies the picture somewhat. Sense-data theory is a classic example of Individual Representationalism. From a sense-data theorist conception of reality, an individual is bombarded with sense-data and must filter and recreate the external world (representationalist theories that came after sense-data theories did so by representing the

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22 Austin writes: ‘I can smell what he is smelling’ differs from ‘I can know what he is smelling’. ‘I know what he is feeling’ is not ‘There is an x which both I know and he is feeling’, but ‘I know the answer to the question “what is he feeling?”’ And similarly with ‘I know what I am feeling’: this does not mean that there is something which I am both knowing and feeling (‘Other Minds’, 96-97).

23 Note that this can go on ad infinitum. Of course this homunculi dilemma deters sense-data theories. Ironically, these dilemmas are precisely what the sense data theories of knowledge sought to expunge through-out their long trajectory from the Empiricists to well into the 20th century. Here, Moore stumbled upon an intentionality-explaining theory, in the form of direct realism, which would eventually, albeit some essential transformations, replace sense-data and individualism with the so called ‘tracking theories’ or ‘external accounts of representation’.

preconditions). This solution (direct perception of the surface or direct realism) does not require representation of preconditions and is as close as Individual Representationalism ever got to anti-individualism. Just to jump ahead a little, from an anti-individualist perspective, there is no ‘threshold horizon’ or individuated skin that ‘cuts’ the sense-data from the sense-data receiver. Of course, physically, the sensorial organs do receive the sensorial stimulation raw; however the organs and the stimulation they receive are so intimately intertwined with the environment, not to mention causally dependent upon it (as it is within the environment where the organisms and their sensorial organs have been phylogenetically adapted to represent veridicality conditions), that individualist accounts will always be inherently incomplete.

2) “There is one and only one thing of which it is true both that it is part of the surface of a human hand, and that this sense-datum is an appearance or manifestation of it”, analyzed from xRy, where R is the “ultimate and unanalyzable relation” between the human hand and the sense-datum.” As Moore observes, this relation creates even more problems, such as the exact relation between thing-in-itself and the appearance. Again, anti-individualism explains away the misguided need for such a relation. Anti-individualism does not require a seems-is distinction as a prerequisite for representation of the environment.

3) Artifacts such as ‘hypothetical facts’ and ‘conditions’. Moore in many ways advocates this position. He writes: ‘(t)he third type of answer...is the type of answer which J.S. Mill seems to have been implying to be true when he said that material things are “permanent possibilities of sensation”. He seems to have thought that when I know such a fact as “This is part of the surface of the human hand,” what I am knowing with regard to the sense-datum which is the principal subject of that fact (is)...a whole set of hypothetical facts each of which is a fact of the form “If these conditions have been fulfilled, I should have been perceiving a sense-datum intrinsically related to this sense-datum in this way”’ (Moore: 1925). This is the classical mistake of Individual Representationalism. Anti-individualism does not require (not even intrinsically) an ability to represent pre-conditions of veridical representation.

In the second part of the 20th century philosophers tried to account for the necessary conditions for empirical representation ((2) and (3)). Tyler Burge opts for a version of (1) adjusted to anti-individualism, and discounts (2) and (3) as ‘hyper-intellectualizing’ and being directionally biased to unity of consciousness, verificationism, and Individual Representationalism.

It hardly need be said that representation of bodies as such does not require representation of mind-independence or a seems-is distinction. Children perceptually group bodies as bodies before they have representations as of mind-independence. Few if any nonhuman animals represent mind or mind-independence. Physical bodies are mind-independent, of course. We come to understand this point once we acquire the concepts needed to understand the issue. Perceiving and conceiving bodies does not depend on understanding the point. Children's representations are realist in this basic sense: they represent what is in fact a mind-independent or nonperspectival reality, and they do so without supposing any reference to mind. Children and animals are realists not because they represent bodies as mind-independent, but because they cannot help but ignore idealism. We philosophers should emulate children.25

In chapter 5, I will discuss Burge’s tracing of objectivity (objectivity in Moore’s implied sense) to its most primitive form, sans preconditions, sans verification procedure, as the starting point of representation, vindicating Moore. But before doing so I want to assess two further alternate replies to this lacuna of objectivity: Wittgenstein and one of his most prominent interpreters, Stanley Cavell.

3.

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A distinguishing trait of *On Certainty* is Wittgenstein's seeming uncertainty in the 676 remarks. If Stanley Cavell wrote that *Philosophical Investigations* brings philosophy to an end 693 times,26 *On Certainty* seems to bounce it back to life with a vengeance 676 times. Indeed, it is not without extreme distress that the reader encounters the 676th remark of *On Certainty*. After an optimistic sequence of elucidations that seem to finally fulfill at least the vital part of our 'therapy', the final pathetic 'but even if in such cases I can’t be mistaken, isn’t it possible that I am drugged' plunders the page one last time, sealing. If words fail us and texts fail us, then the reader will not know what to do.

But let’s slow down. *On Certainty* is a reaction to Moore’s claim that certain propositions are exempt from doubt. For example, there is no ground to doubt the claims, in the present tense and ostensibly uttered, ‘here is one hand’ and ‘here is another hand’; since there are at least two objects existing at that moment, thus there is an external world.

At this point I want to expound a preliminary and impertinent observation: hands are non-threatening. Phylogenetically, it has proven advantageous for humans to animate inanimate objects rather than the opposite. For instance, to mistake a tree for a tiger is quite harmless, but to mistake a tiger for a tree can be very dangerous. Anthropomorphism of nature plays an important role in the development of intelligence. It seems humans have an inherent tendency to bet for the predator or the enemy rather than inanimate matter.27 However, we never say that the tree is ‘less real’ than the tiger. Au contraire! Many people have not seen tigers but even so they will not take pains to examine the exact ontology of a threat. If we extend this perceptual idiosyncrasy to epistemological matters, we can see why ‘the unknown’ causes so much fuss: environmental stasis is developmentally the basis of veridicality, hence of error and misrepresentation.28 no wonder the immediate environment has been traditionally confused with sense data (as if one had to infer from one’s immediate surroundings the universe yonder). What lies beyond the scope of my perceptual limits is a mystery, hence, we are driven to exclaim ‘Here be dragons!’ or similar remarks.29 Take, for example, the expression ‘I might be mistaken, but the room appears to be on fire’. As Carlos Pereda quips: ‘sometimes some things require no argument’.30 Immediate threat is a classic example. Threat is a language game all its own or, for all we know or care, the thing-in-itself.3132 Radical skeptical scruples like ‘the possibility of currently being or having been on the moon’ can’t affect the present: language is as superficial as it allows itself.33 On the other hand, ‘The room is on fire’ is no argument since it demands no argument. It requires no sufficient conditions.34 Moore’s 3rd hypothesis solution is the ‘blindest’ of the three, since it assumes blindness. If blind, many philosophers reasoned subsequently, then you need preconditions. Preconditions are, in almost all cases, language bound (and,
to be sure, artificial). This is one of the reasons, I think, why philosophy in the 20th century was so infatuated with language.35

Returning to our main discussion, regarding Moore’s hands, Wittgenstein writes:

If the true is what is grounded, then the ground is not true, nor yet false.

And elsewhere he compliments:

Being and seeming may, of course, be independent of one another in exceptional cases, but that doesn’t make them logically independent; the language game does not reside in the exception.37

In other words, On Certainty claims that the background of language games is action not fact, i.e. not Descartes or Moore’s doubt-exempt propositions. Perceptual Objectivity is similar to Moore’s direct realism in the sense that representation comes distilled by nature38 and in that it comes to an end somewhere and that end is the representation itself, objective and containing veridicality conditions. In the ‘here is a hand’ argument, the causal mechanisms that presently and historically allows representation as of the hand play a role that cannot be proxied, reduced or eliminated, and involves unrepresentable processes that extend beyond the perceiver. Thus, the objectivity implied in Moore’s utterance is even far more primitive than he supposed.

4.

In this section I will present Cavell’s New Wittgenstein, albeit mended under an anti-individualistic critique. Ordinary Language Philosophy, like phenomenology, investigates the whole, the totality of reality, through the all-encompassing mediators, ‘language’ in OLP and ‘appearances’ in phenomenology, which it considers to be more basic than physical particulars. OLP, like phenomenology, errs from the beginning, betting for a starting point that is vacuously subjectivist. This self-sufficiency has been deeply undermined by a new cut, anti-individualism versus Individual Representationalism, championed by Tyler Burge, which argues that objective representation of physical particulars is more basic than appearances and, indeed, more basic even than the general conditions that (would) produce such objective representation.

As Burge puts it:

Objective empirical representation of the physical environment is not contingent on any capacity to represent general preconditions on objectivity. Objective perceptual representation of the physical environment precedes and

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35 In the next chapter we will see that one of W1’s main motors in adopting a relational (contextual) view of meaning, along with certain advantages regarding falsity and inexistents, is his insistence on the relativity of whatever is the case: it needs a context lest it never be distinguished from its surrounding, in an Eleatic sense. It has been a historical mistake to assume that the general particular-surrounding distinction depends on ‘something additional’, like language or transcendental logic. A great deal of problems stem from this oft assumed faux requirement. Anti-individualism refutes such requirements. Anti-individualism, backed by empirical science, assumes the particular-surrounding distinction. Even the seems-is distinction finds its primitive origins in perception.


38 Representation is not, for example, something like a fractal calculus or some complex functionalism, it is wholly determined.
does not depend on an individual’s ability to represent such general conditions. It precedes and does not depend on having thought, let alone language.39

This is a strong claim and will be argued for in chapter 5, but, suffice it to say, part the conclusion derives via the laboratory: perceptual psychology, in studying the nature of perception, has secured overwhelming evidence that animal perception, including human perception, is of particulars, and that the objectification happens at a basic and unrepresentable level in the perceptual apparatus:

Certain processes in perceptual systems systematically distinguish effects of stimulation that are special to the individual and the context from perspective-independent attributes of the wider environment. Explanations of the formation of perception keys on processes in perceptual systems that make this distinction. Such processes constitute the ground of perception, representation and objectivity. They are unconscious. They are not imputable to the individual perceiver. They occur within perceptual systems. The principles governing processes in which idiosyncratic individual states are distinguished from effects (perceptions) of objective environment conditions are not themselves represented within the system. The system simply operates according to law-like patterns described and explained by scientific principles. This minimum objectivity in an individual’s perception and perceptual belief is completely independent of abilities of the individual to represent the sorts of general conditions on objectivity...Objective representation need not be derived, rationalized, validated by the individual.40

So the argument is, in its strongest sense, empirical. (Perceptual psychology, of course, like any science, presupposes objectivity).

The cut I have alluded to between anti-individualism (natures of mental states depend on causal relations to the environment, many of which are non-representational) and Individual Representationalism (the most basic and trustworthy evidence of the external world is outright insufficient and objects always fall short, requiring further objectifying and rationalization by the subject)41 connotes an incompleteness that is eerie enough. How pathetic42 attempts at integrating the incompleteness have been is an interesting (and still open) question. But a more fundamental question concerns the effects that this incompleteness has in the explanatory power of science, given that both views are *world-views* with completely different limits.

Under this anti-individualistic background, it is no wonder an ineliminable skeptical gap dogs Cavell’s NW: criteria, convention, way of life, language, etc. all constitute a *Limit 1 World-view*, that paints (something like) coherentism. OLP is representationalist since it depends inherently on language. As if language is all there is! Imponderable evidence, skepticism and, especially, action are all ‘definable’ and ‘delineable’ *within* the world-view, the language games, or the linguistic idealism. It is precisely under this Limit 1 perspective that the external part (action, etc.) takes the deceiving form of a clean limit, delineable perhaps in the form of preconditions. Yet we must remember what anti-individualism reveals: an unrepresentable part will naturally shun individuating conditions, vastly undermining this *sub specie aeternitate* Limit 1. It is *the fact* that this can only be revealed (‘hinted at’) that makes it look *as if* there are really no dire effects at all but quite the contrary (philosophy leaves things as they are). As if we could still say: the appearance *is* the reality. But we are really facing a lacuna: the linguistic idealism, i.e., a limit, i.e., Limit 1, is still solipsistic. And the inevitable question is ‘what lies outside the limit?’ And the answer of course is always ‘we cannot know’. Desperate embrace of language and ways of life does not annihilate the solipsism, the alienation, the estrangement from the world’ (Cavell euphonizes this as ‘the Human’). The problem, ultimately, is how to move from this view to a Limit 2 that includes, but never eliminates or reduces, undeterminable characteristics. In other words,

40 Ibid.
41 This cut should not to be immediately associated with the time-worn noumenon-phenomenon cut, the armchair argument cut par excellence, from whence phenomenology sprung, since any transcendental gap is unaffected (what is imponderable, is imponderable to end).
42 ‘Pathetic’ in the *ad hominem* sense, i.e., as anthropomorphic motivation.
a Limit 2 where, by being anti-individualistic, the external and the unconditionable factors are taken into account. The question of which factors is empirical. I will explain.

To make things clearer, I will play the part of the position I am arguing against: I will assume an OLP standpoint (Limit 1) and try to show how an external thesis is inevitably revealed (thus leaping into a Limit 2).

Inside this ordinary language niche, skepticism is all-powerful and represents a perpetual check to criteria. The often evoked ‘degradation’ from logic to grammar, from pictures to tools, from ideal language to ordinary language, etc., such fall, in Cavell, seems to be ultimately controlled and exhausted by a collection of expressions, human expressions, conditioned expressions, of skepticism.

Cavell writes:

Wittgenstein’s teaching is everywhere controlled by a response to skepticism, and why it is that the skeptic’s denial of our criteria is a denial to which criteria must be open. If the fact that we share, or have established, criteria is the condition under which we can think or communicate in language, then skepticism is a natural possibility of that condition; it reveals most perfectly the standing threat to thought and communication, that they are only human, nothing more than natural to us.

Here, ‘reveals’ is a key word. Criteria implies a commensuration that enables communication and language, that is, the criteria can be indentified with a linguistic idealism which is, for now, our closest avower: from here we bet and assume, make choices and beliefs; this is realm of epistemology. At this point, Cartesianism can be integrated into the OLP picture. Cartesian doubt only works if it is imputed as a stipulatory solution; so to speak, like this: if it were the face value, this is how the world would objectify (this is imagination, the conditioning, the individuating system, and will be briefly commented in chapter 4). Under OLP, by default, we take nothing at face value because the default position is ordinary skepticism, which consists in ordinarily accepting the limits of human knowledge and the limits concerning the human stance on the external world and the self (there is, to be sure, imponderable evidence lurking here and there, but, ultimately, inside the language niche, all will take care of itself when acknowledged). OLP is like a game of cat and mouse: if we take things at face-value we risk tragedy and neurosis; but never taking anything at face-value is risking intellectual grief, to say the least, irreversible isolation, to say the most.

Let’s go deeper. Wittgenstein, commenting on behaviorism, wrote:

How does the philosophical problem about mental processes and states and about behaviorism arise? - The first step is the one that altogether escapes notice. We talk of processes and states and leave their nature undecided. Sometimes perhaps we shall know more about them- we think. But that is just what commits us to a particular way of looking at the matter. For we have a definite concept of what it means to learn to know a process better. (The decisive movement in the conjuring trick has been made, and it was the very one that we thought quite innocent.)- And now the analogy which was to make us understand our thoughts falls to pieces. So we have to deny the yet uncomprehended process in the yet unexplored medium. And it looks as if we had denied mental-processes. And naturally we don’t want to deny them.

This passage is followed by the irresistibly vain:

What is your aim in philosophy? - To shew the fly the way out of the fly bottle.

Wittgenstein indeed makes the problem (the human condition: the commensuration of reality with our fancies) look like a bad day at the grocery store. Where is the friction OLP promised against ideal

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43 NW reduces OLP (limit 1) and keeps the X (limit 2) as philosophical skepticism.
44 Behaviorism is not a problem today; it collapsed as a vacuous science. Science speaks unhesitatingly of the mental and by no means claims the mind to be apart from the brain.
46 Ibid, (§309).
language's ineffectiveness? An innocuous but bold answer is: it's there...somewhere. A good place to search for it is in the bounds of representationalism and anti-individualism. I repeat: the non-representational is not eliminable; it is implied and cannot be set aside. It is like the dark matter of the universe: we know it's there. The laws of physics tell us a cesium clock will lose a second every few thousand years or so (even though there is no commensuration in the form of a clock as precise or more precise than the cesium clock; but there is the external as a limit). So, too, in the mind (the mind is a measuring device): causality undermines a complete and reducible (transcendental) world view like that of Descartes and the phenomenologists. The depths of anti-individualism are unfathomable. There is more life and reality than language, to be sure. Still, question marks are not imputable on their own. Yes, man speaks and man can't help but speak. Yes, skepticism is intractable in language. But what about in mind? Is skepticism specifically a problem of language? Is there such a thing as mute skepticism? Perceptual Objectivity and veridicality in a causal accounts of perception is a type blind skepticism (Noë calls it the New Skepticism). But for (Cavell’s) OLP, any face-value is undermined by skepticism, which is absolute.

For now, we are looking for ‘externalist hints’ under an ordinary language aporia, where meaning is connected to ‘use’ and exhausted by such. Criteria, that threshold concept, i.e. the exhaustion of justifications, is a key in understanding skepticism. That there is no absolute criteria is almost a truism for philosophy. Most thinkers have heeded this idea; from Peirce's fallibilism, Wittgensteinian ‘sophistry’ and Rorty's Neo-pragmatism, all the way down to deconstruction and post-structuralism, in the continental tradition.

Cavell is no exception. Cavell’s NW is an amalgam of W2 and Austin. W2 and Austin both, willy-nilly, appeal to criterion, so let us compare the criteria of two. Wittgenstein’s criteria, Cavell calls grammatical criteria (sometimes simply grammar). Austin’s ‘non-grammatical’ or ‘established’ criteria relates names to objects. While Wittgenstein’s criterion relates concepts to concepts (of an object), Austin’s criteria relates to ‘marks or features’ of an object in order to underpin its nature, what kind of thing an object is; it classifies.

Writes Cavell:

The general relation between these notions of a criterion is roughly this: If you do not know the (non-grammatical) criteria of an Austinian object (can’t identify it, name it) then you lack a piece of information, a bit of knowledge, and you can be told its name, told what it is, told what it is (officially) called. But if you do not know the grammatical criteria of Wittgensteinian objects, then you lack, as it were, not only a piece of information or knowledge, but the possibility of acquiring any information about such objects überhaupt; you cannot be told the name of that object, because there is as yet no object of that kind for you to attach a forthcoming name to: the possibility of finding out what it is officially called is not yet open to you. (To what does the child attach the official name <Nyuw York>? The child’s world contains no cities.) This is, I take it, part of what Wittgenstein wished to suggest in saying that “Essense is expressed by grammar: You have to know certain things about an object in order to know anything (else) about it (about it)…To think of a word as embodying a concept is to think of the word as having a grammatical schematism.47

A few lines later, Cavell says that this schematism ‘is the frame of the world, and to exit from it should mean to exit from our mutual attunement.’48

To be sure, a criterion is an attunement; a harmony. That a man can out-tune himself, become an exile, cast himself outside the language game, seems to be a real possibility, the dangerous possibility (but also the most enthralling), of the human condition. That is Cavell’s reading of Wittgenstein, so radically different from traditional readings, e.g., Malcolm.49 Unsurprisingly from this attunement there follows a

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48 Ibid.
49 Wittgenstein believed in God. Not just use of word God.
criteria fallible enough to allow a skeptical gap and, hence, an implied, undeterminable realm, so to speak, beyond which, there is, for Cavell, a possibility of faith.\(^{50}\)

But why go this road! Why doesn't one instead merely fill the gap with the external world, in the same sense that Moore and Austin fill it with truism? Perceptual Objectivity claims we need not ‘bet’ for reality as perception is inherently objective. To do so, that is, to leave that individuating gap, is to over-intellectualize perception. This is not the way to go. Science has enough ado about error and imprecision to have a problem like skepticism of the material world on top of that. Perceptual Objectivity is a theory that claims the bet alluded to three lines back is automatic. It happens at an unrepresentable level. It happens systematically. Thus, skepticism as a lacuna of objectivity is not skepticism but something else, e.g., intellectual grief. Surely I can pretend the world is made of zombies. Surely I can pretend there are no souls. In short, I can fail or avoid acknowledging. But my perception is still objective. Under anti-individualism, one need not even acknowledge in order to dispel skepticism. (Spiders do not acknowledge the external world yet still represent particulars in the environment as veridicality conditions and as mind-independent).

But Wittgenstein writes:

Knowing is in the end based on acknowledging.\(^{51}\)

And:

Can one say: “where there is no doubt there is no knowledge either”?\(^{52}\)

These are two of the key characteristics of OLP and of Limit 1 from which stem the fallacy that ‘something must replace something’; that, in a sense, since meaning is use, philosophers can only complete sentences (thus, the remote slogan ‘meaning is not in the head’ bores itself deep into the unremote pedestal). And it’s from this OLP point of view that for the ordinary skeptic, any object can be an impenetrable thing-in-itself.\(^{53}\) And the problem is then very much exacerbated. But this merely means that the skeptic is the problem!\(^{54}\) The price of the 1\(^{st}\) person point of view is untenable and way too remote. Surely one can paint a picture where the subject is unremote and the external world is. One need only then make the external world as remote as one wish, and by exacerbating the external he is (inversely proportionally) vindicating and safekeeping the individual. It is then only a matter where to pin the claws of faith, whether at the external yonder over and above the unsurpassable Gap or at the internal I, where one can doubt everything except the foundation, the doubting doubter cozily harbored inside the human niche. Either way it should be safe from scientism and madness. It should be safe even from reality itself. Alas, this is still too remote!

Cavell writes:

Wittgenstein’s motive (and this is much shared by Austin) is to put the human animal back into language and therewith back into philosophy. But he never, I think, underestimated the power of the motive to reject the human: nothing could be more human. He undertook, as I read him, to trace the mechanisms of this rejection in the ways in

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\(^{50}\) Faith as the external. Is there a hidden motivation? The God of the gaps?


\(^{52}\) Wittgenstein, *On Certainty* (§121).

\(^{53}\) The time lag involved in perception has hitherto confused accounts of perception. The problem is the time it takes light from the object to travel to the perceptual system and the time it takes the respective organs and the brain to process this light: for all we know, by then, the object is not there anymore, or never was (analogously to the light traveling from the stars and light-years). No wonder many views have confused the object with sense-data.

\(^{54}\) Solipsism is not identical to realism. Solipsism is significantly less than realism; it is not a complete whole; it is limited, since perspectival, yet not a whole.
which, in investigating ourselves, we are led to speak “outside language games”, consider expressions apart from, and in opposition to, the natural forms of life which give those expressions the force they have.\textsuperscript{55}

If idealizing is wrong (since skepticism is absolute and we can never move beyond the language game), does this mean we are stuck in a no man’s land called criteria, in a metaphor within metaphor? Is this not an idealism, too? Given these perpetually shaky foundations, how is proof and science possible? How can it be checked for, say, internal consistency? Wittgenstein’s answer is that at the center of the city of words, there is bedrock and there are riverbed propositions. And that riverbed points; there is action; and even though nothing ever ‘consummates’ thoroughly, there is still an ongoing search for that consummation. Against the idea that there is faith beyond the language game and the skeptic gap, Cavell writes: ‘underlining the tyranny of convention is the tyranny of nature’.\textsuperscript{56} So a second interpretation of Cavell can be fleshed out: idealism is wrong not because skepticism is absolute, but because there is no creative element above and beyond the world. Reality determines, language merely binds.

Austin, we recall, exhausts (analyzes) the skeptical problem as a debate between the traditional philosopher and the ordinary language philosopher. The OLP’s question is: How is the problem utterly overlooked or trivially solved? Austin’s answer is: if the doubts arise naturally (e.g., Descartes) then they are natural (skepticism is inherent). And the question then becomes: So how can they be obliterated naturally? And the answer seems to be ‘yes’. If a man claims he can really know if the material world exists (or really know it doesn’t exist), Austin will declare the person unfit to talk. Wittgenstein would declare him mad or polysemous.\textsuperscript{57} No wonder therapy and quietism became important alternatives for them.\textsuperscript{58}

5.

Recapitulating, the problem is, in a word, intentionality. How is it that signs point? What is the relation (of containment or matching) between signs and the world? Wittgenstein’s trivialization of the verb ‘to know’; Austin’s ‘classification’; and Moore’s ‘common sense’; the three point to extemalism yet due to their own background and baggage of Individual Representationalism either can’t spot or deal with it, as in the Wittgenstein quote on behaviorism above. I am assuming (as has been generally claimed) that Moore lost himself in the end, yet his direct realism is very close to anti-individualism, it is closer to Perceptual Objectivity than the other two by far. It is, to be sure, a Limit 2, ‘common sense and the x’ view. This Limit 2 appropriately lacks the intellectual grief of Cavell as well as the humanistic mysticism and anti-scientism of W2 and his appeal to paradox, both of which stem in part from an externalist and unwarranted angst at the given conjoined with the dogma that one must level it somehow; a motivation to construct a ‘no-holes’ home-building, so to speak (and what better place than language, the ‘house of being’?) But, alas, as a home, it is artificial. Notwithstanding, new externalist accounts of knowledge have sprung since. This accounts hinge on externalist accounts of primitive objectivity that have their origins in perception and will be fleshed out along this essay. Before moving on, as a way to make this

\textsuperscript{55} Cavell, Stanley, \textit{The Claim of Reason}, 207.
\textsuperscript{56} Ibid, 123.
\textsuperscript{57} And as mad, unreliable. Yet isn’t he always playing the part of an unreliable narrator, the one who leaps outside the language game or outside ‘what can be the case’. Why?
\textsuperscript{58} Quietism: ask no questions and I will tell you no lies (or no truths). Let us consider this example: exposing someone in front of group. This \textit{action} puts the \textit{claim} in check, so to speak. It can now be true or false. Hadn’t one publically uttered the claim, some private language would have been possible, where the claim was irrefutably true. (Private argument as “weary explanations” or “incomplete explanations”). Some things do go without saying, but once it’s the center of attention, the claim immediately becomes vulnerable; once affirmed by testimony, modesty obligates one to counter it, to counter one’s self. In social relations it’s all about what we don’t know. This shows that skepticism is not accidental. It has matured, especially today. \textit{(So is skepticism also a (the last?) motivated, happy consequence...a promotion of fraud and illusion? Recall its etymology!)}.
paragraph clearer, let us quickly compare (before turning to examples based on the ‘mad joke’) Moore and Burge’s account of ‘met in space’.

In *Proof of the External World*, Moore considers the necessary conditions of the phrase ‘to be met in space’. His argument, roughly, consists in jumping from the specific to the general, e.g. plants exist, therefore there are things “to be met in space”, therefore, there are external objects, therefore, there is proof of an external world. ‘Met in space’ (roughly) means ‘can be confirmed by other minds’, according to Moore. But exempt from this are grammatical statements, riverbed propositions, and analytical propositions. So not all propositions lead to or imply a material or external world, but ‘met in space’ implies other minds, e.g. scientific facts, knowledge of other minds, etc.

Contrary to this, argues Burge, to be *met in space*, all you need is perception.

Yet the aim of this chapter is not (yet) the non-question-begging and anti-individualistic reply to skepticism, but the limits of a criteria-based conception of objectivity and skepticism from within the artificial bounds of language. In other words, skepticism at its best defense (against itself and against absolutism): an attempt at fleshing out the ‘conceited reply’ before attempting the ‘humbler’ Perceptual Objectivity reply (outside language bounds, all the way outside, so to speak, which will be the aim of chapter 5). The main idea here is that belief in a mind-dependent reality is a type of neurosis. I will investigate this proposal in four examples below. The examples, by no means, profess providing the exact key for the bolt. Like the rest of possible examples, they are loose and ad hoc.

Before turning to them, however, I want to point out two key notions. The first notion is the notion of non-phenomenological reduction: even amid an environmentally intertwined, ordinary language schema (Limit 1) there is a non-phenomenologically reduced allocation that arises upon the appearance flux. It is causally connected to the extra-mental. Examples include the circulatory system, metabolism, oxygenation. They ground the external connection and limit the effect. They denature a purely phenomenological account. Yes, a reduction, but no, not phenomenological. It provides grip. In a way, it makes Limit 1 insufficient.

The other notion is the notion of a rhetorical imperative: as in ‘I give you permission’, used before any utterance. Obviously, there is no such tool. It is superfluous normativity. And as such it is outside rules and even private language. This notion tends to make Limit 1 superfluous.

Let’s keep these notions in mind, especially on the superfluity and insufficiency effects on Limit 1, as we take up the examples to follow.

**Example 1: Making the language game more flexible than is natural.**

Consider the following common joke: A asks B: ‘May I ask a question, actually, two questions?’ B replies to A: ‘As long as you say them one at a time’ (as if he could do otherwise). The point is that at least skepticism can’t be defined as the domain of all senseless questions. Or as the totality of all possible questions. (An analogue in perception: one perception at a time.)

The error lies in making the language game more flexible than is natural (like thinking that a footnote can be added or made part of any sentence; a rhetorical imperative, it becomes superfluous).

**Example 2: Total bewilderment**

Perceptual Objectivity (fleshed out in the next chapter) is still a controversial issue but its tools and methods are clear. One possibility Perceptual Objectivity suggests in its accounts of conceptualization and objectivity concerns intermodal origins of objectivity, that is, objectivity produced through reciprocation of different senses (for example, sight and sound). However, this example investigates objectivity under OLP alone.

Recall §148 of *On Certainty*:

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59 That this never happens, that the reality is the reality to consciousness, is a mistake.

60 Recall the old puzzle: how fast does time flow (how fast is a second)? Recall the Eleatic paradoxes; again, calculus as an externalist ‘cut’.

61 Relation to the negation sign? Compare: solipsism/realism.
Why do I not satisfy myself that I have two feet when I want to get up from a chair? There is no why. I simply
don’t. This is how I act.62

Say I am walking down a familiar staircase in the dark. Say, on the last step, I think there is one
more stair and I lose balance. The instant I lose balance, for all I know, I can be missing a foot since I am
so familiar with the stair case. Here, the epistemic weigh is the same, for all we know.63 This is similar
to the total bewilderment even Austin speaks of.64 Here the example is, of course, insufficient. It gets
non-phenomenologically reduced (no vagueness paradox).

Total bewilderment also occurs in animals.

Example 3: Jungle eyes and symmetry

The FM-21-76 Department of the Army Field Manual suggests the following skill when isolated
and paving way through dense vegetation and avoiding enemy contact:

With practice you can move through thick undergrowth and jungle fairly silently by cautiously parting the
vegetation to make your way.

Avoid scratches, bruises, and loss of direction and confidence by developing “jungle eye.” Disregard the pattern of
trees and bushes directly in front of you. Focus your eyes beyond your immediate front, and rather than looking AT
the jungle, look THROUGH it. Stoop occasionally and look along the jungle floor.65

To be sure, the mind is always in sequence: eye movements, saccades, rapid and unconscious
change of focus, scanning, change blindness and 180 angle (the eyes follow odd things, rest is
background). Particulars are the default mode and, as such, ineliminable. That is the nature of perception
as is currently researched by perceptual psychology.

Now consider these analogies: perception already a form of jungle eyes; Jungle eyes as the sub-
specia aeterni; as logic and normative science; as a map upon which we steer (Ramsey); Jungle eyes as
reality.

Example 4: mind-control and happy/unhappy worlds (psychology/psychiatry)

A patient believes mind-controlling aliens dog him.66 Curiously, to remember the aliens means
the aliens are affecting him (that is, only when he thinks about the aliens are they controlling him). But
the patient believes he has an antidote: the word ‘soursop’. Pronouncing ‘soursop’ casts the aliens away
and the patient returns to autonomy. Examples of paranoia of this sort, the feeling of being controlled,
abound. They take the form of a solution to the-X that blurs everything. Consider the schizophrenic
fearing ‘these are not my thoughts’.67 Not being in control is not the same as being controlled. This
eexample is a complete metaphor for the skeptical problem. In the example, the aliens’ presence is

63 The age of man, evolution, culture and relative lifespan pretty much balance up epistemic weight today, as
Hume notes.
64 Time, that instant, if we could experience that instant. The time problem takes the form: how is time revealed.
What is simpler than time. How is it pouched?
65 Survival, Headquarters, Department of the Army, 1970.
66 This is a real life example, from an actual (unstudied) case.
67 Indeed, not just the schizophrenic but any mind: in chapter 4 I will briefly discuss Colin Mcguinn’s analysis of
dreams, as well as the relation between a belief and the will.
revealed to the patient by its very occurrence: if he remembers the aliens that means they are controlling him and an action: uttering 'soursop' casts them out (compare touching wood, or crossing oneself).68

Again compare: 'this depression is not mine, hence, I must battle it' with 'this is me, I am this depression' (the world of happy man is different from world of unhappy man, (W1:T.L.P., 6.43)).

6.

Finally, taking a last and bold opportunity to surmise, it is as if Limit 1 wants to have logic and epistemology united, one world, one big confusion. Anything can become ordinary, that is the quid and limit. But all possibilities become possibility once they happen. Limit 1 fails. Limit 1, OLP, seems to argue something like this. The non-OLP position is 'everything except words, since words mislead. Indeed, what misleads but words?'; and OLP replies: 'But without words what except absolute misleads?' Or again: the non-OLP position: 'If a thing depends not on human choice, it infallible'. The question is: could there be such a thing? But language is not choice! Says OLP. It depends on the adverbs we are analyzing, says Austin. (Yet attributes are traceable: they point at the external world). The skeptical problem: Conditions of inaccessibility not verifiability.

In the next chapter I will anti-individualistically examine some representationalist positions including Antonio Rosmini’s Light of Being and 20th century logical perfectionism, starting with Wittgenstein.

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68 A more radical example: thinking yourself into an aneurism. If you think hard enough! Or a more day-to-day example concerning circulation and the circadian cycle: trying to make your blood pressure rise more sharply in the morning upon waking up. So thinking about thoughts affects thoughts externally. Is this an external fallacy?
Chapter 3: The bedrock (or 'science of being' becomes formal, and then returns)

We ask whether this world is nothing more than representation. In that case, it would inevitably pass by us like an empty dream, or a ghostly vision not worth our consideration. Or we ask whether it is something else, something in addition, and if so what that something is.

Schopenhauer, A., *The World as Will and Representation*, Second Book, §17

Even if we were given the whole universe to enjoy, we would not be satisfied. There is another requirement, over and above the many contingent beings on offer. The vast number of objects captivate and seduce us, but simultaneously weary and oppress us. We cannot be sated by a profusion of ungraspable, unsatisfying objects. In the end, we will seek some order in that profusion. We will look for something necessary and unique in it; we will never be fully satisfied until we have reduced and subdued the huge diversity and universality of things to a single principle. There, in the immutability of this principle, we will discover peace and calm of mind, where nothing remains to be desired because nothing else exists. In it, we are sated yet unwearied; in it, nothing is lacking, not even the most absolute simplicity.


Abbreviations:

OLP: Ordinary Language Philosophy

W1: Early Wittgenstein; from his arrival at Cambridge in 1911 until 1931 (shortly after Lecture on Ethics)

W2: Later Wittgenstein; 1931 until his death in 1951

NW: The New Wittgenstein

1.

In this chapter I will examine some representationalist mistakes committed by early and latter Wittgenstein. I will compare these mistakes to a 19th century theologian, Antonio Rosmini whom I believe exemplifies a clear cut case of Individual Representationalism, despite the trouble he took in criticizing a lot of the representationalism inherent in other philosophers prior to him. First I will compare two different views on the private language paradox, Cavell’s teacher-pupil interpretation and Kripke’s legislative interpretation. Then, I will dissect the two Wittgensteins, Rosmini, and Cavell’s New Wittgenstein respectively. The criticisms will be anti-individualistic.
Individual Representationalism, individualism or, sometimes, internalism (the names already suggest it) is a view that tries to constitute the way in which an individual, e.g., a person, a mental state, an animal's mental state, can be exhaustively individuated without appealing directly to the exterior world, achieving it rather by means of intrinsic properties and nothing else (contrariwise, anti-individualism tries to break this independence between the mental and nonmental). By 'individuated' I mean separated or bounded (by sufficient reason) from within: as if each 'representation' had a watermark (visible, implicit or decipherable) that contained all the relevant information needed, not only to trace, but to reformulate that representation in terms of sufficient conditions- so that, in that sense, it is 'cut' from the outside world, ultimately extending only to the individual's immediate surroundings, hence enticing the Individual Representationalist to form necessary and sufficient conditions of the mental content strictly from narrow, environment-independent features supposedly stemming from and leading to those immediate surroundings.

The precise moment in history when full-blown individualism took the podium, as well as the exact incitation, remain unclear, but when it comes to finger pointing, Descartes and Kant are the primary suspects. Interestingly enough, they were probably, like Aristotle, anti-individualists. Nonetheless, prima facie, both thinkers committed ground-level mistakes. Burge himself blames Descartes for individualism's proliferation, and initially mistook his view as individualist. After all, it was Descartes who encouraged the 'individuating temptation' mainly by means of the demon thought experiment, which, in turn, stems from an incorrect account of the first person. Descartes, of course, chides the Demon argument as unintelligible and ultimately appeals to God. This appeal (God being external at least in terms of the individuated mental states in question) grounds the idea that Descartes was an anti-individualist. Indeed, the (un)innocent thought experiment blurs the distinction between the mental and non-mental: suppose I am nomologically cut from the outside world; I can still, metaphysically and perhaps logically, re-create a representation of some "stuff", something like the world, and finally extend this to the claim that, for all I know, there is no outside world: This "stuff" is generally called sense-data. Anti-individualism denies this self-sufficiency. It maintains an ineliminable causal nexus to the environment itself and the environment as mediated through other individuals, while maintaining the ontological status of the mental state itself intact and unreduced. An unnerving potential consequence of anti-individualist accounts is epiphenomenalism. Consequently, there is an air of epi-phobia (as in Fred Dretske) in current anti-individualist literature. A fair question at this point, from an anti-individualist perspective, concerns the apparent disjunction 'either an externalist account of reality or a ground-level

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69 It would seem that today dualisms in the likes of Plato and Descartes are out of the question (Elizabeth's question puts any relation between the mental and non-mental in check; indeed, a major portion of history has heeded to this dilemma, which, stretched far enough, has engendered the most ingenious ground-level mistakes, such as pre-established harmony, De Molina's scientia conditionata, to name a few). However, for science, specifically perceptual psychology, the mental state, as a notion and as kind, is in many ways ineliminable, but this does not mean we have to accept the same old dualism. However, it does spell out two important things: naïve realism is scientifically untenable and epiphenomenalism is a legitimate threat.

70 Thus it turns out that the main, historically quoted weak point of Descartes' argument from whence stems the circularity of his ontological argument (the historical weak point from which his argument was torn to pieces), his appeal to God, turns out to be under an anti-individualist perspective. Under this perspective, it is the first part of the argument, his aseptic metal isolation, (and not the appeal to God) which is most ominous: it stemmed individualism, the view that one can infer one's nature from mere introspection. This confusion has produced dire effects on presentism, time and science.

71 If the mental state is ineliminable and causally connected to the environment (controlled by it), then the mental state is, so it seems, necessarily a consequence of it:

72 See 'Burge on Mentalistic Explanations, or Why I am Still Epiphobic', in Reflections and Replies: Essays on Philosophy of Tyler Burge, ed. Hahn and Ramberg.
mistake': does a sensible, non-externalist account of reality yield a ground-level mistake?\(^{73}\) If so, Wittgenstein made two ground-level mistakes: the ethereal ontology of W1 and the linguistic idealism of W2. Both yearned *terra firme*, yet what they sought was too anthropomorphic, too aporiatic. I will assay these two views cursorily, starting with W2's partial idealism. The focus will be objectivity.

Before reviewing W2, I want to caution against a potential confusion and in the process make the disjunction mentioned in the last paragraph clearer. Linguistic idealism is not anti-individualism but is the result of an attempt at keeping the individual minimally individuated while maintaining everything natural, i.e., not falling into a pathetic fallacy or giving the individual supernatural abilities. Only the best theories have done this (i.e., described the structure of thought deep enough to blur the inherent dependence of thought and the world; they are usually motivated by a wish to maintain a dictatorial view of freedom or truth\(^{74}\)). Transcendental idealism is an understandable effect of this attempt at saving individualism (since for the individualist, individualism represents his whole perspective, an absolute *Weltanschauung*). Is it an unfortunate idiosyncrasy of language that anti-individualism can be equalized and leveled to a weird type of idealism? Is this skepticism? Cavell thinks so. This is basically his skeptical solution to the problem of skepticism, the infamous skeptical goggles. (In chapter 5, after examining a final ‘categorical’ alternative in chapter 4, namely, imagination, we will consider anti-individualism’s best theory (and complement) to this problem, which extends beyond language and unto representation itself).

W2 criticizes the utopian referentialist view of language Frege and Russell instilled in him and which influenced his own earlier thought: the double idea that language refers to things in the world and that logic guarantees this connection. If one wasn’t inebriated by such an optic, one could spot the false ideal motivating the foolhardy endeavor. One would see thus how the ideal (that language, somehow, is completely intentional, it reaches into reality, it refers) ends up being disguised later as a happy consequence.\(^{75}\) In the *Investigations*, W2 criticizes all attempts at apotheosizing the relation between words and objects. But then how is it that words refer to objects in the world? By elimination, W2 clears the ground of false candidates (ostensive definitions, word as essence, word as thing, etc.). The barren leftover? Family resemblance; rule-following; normativity; usage; criteria (and its fragility, its humanness, its failure); action; etc., all of which are not exactly free of oddity.

It seems one is left with the idea that language is autonomous, and that one cannot step outside of it; from this, the paradox that left Kripke with an ‘eerie feeling’ can be made clear: if normativity is all we know, normativity is reality. Let us focus for a moment on the specific passages that brought the hackneyed paradox alight:

This was our paradox: no course of action could be determined by a rule, because every course of action can be made out to accord with the rule. The answer was: if everything can be made out to accord with the rule, then it can also be made out to conflict with it. And so there would be neither accord nor conflict here.

And hence also ‘obeying a rule’ is a practice. And to think one is obeying a rule is not to obey a rule. Hence it is not possible to obey a rule ‘privately’: otherwise thinking one was obeying a rule would be the same thing as obeying it.

\(^{73}\)That is, concerning the very building blocks. Revisionist metaphysics and not just descriptivist, as in Strawson’s classification.

\(^{74}\)Through this common tampering we get the goldilocks-esque principles, pointed by Antonio Rosmini, behind philosophical explication, namely that a theory should be governed by no more causes than necessary, but also by no less. False theories can be superfluous or insufficient. (See Rosmini, *New Essay Concerning the Origin of Ideas*, vol. 1, section 1). Unsurprisingly, Rosmini thought to have hit the bull’s-eye. We will summarize his straightforward idea following W1.

\(^{75}\)This is an old tripping stone: is it any wonder that the Kantian noumenon is not bound, and enables freedom? See Desmond Hogan’s ‘Noumenal Affection’, *Philosophical Review*, vol. 118, 2009, 501-532.
Language is a labyrinth of paths. You approach from one side and know your way about; you approach the same place from another side and no longer know your way about.\textsuperscript{76}

The distinction between the apparent and the real is inexistent in a private language and, thus, the existence of a normative community that tests the rules becomes necessary for meaning. The Kripkenstein\textsuperscript{77} version of private language states that concepts are not founded except politically through social rules and conventions (e.g., student-teacher relations, ‘if you do not follow this rule you will be cast out’, etc.). Stanley Cavell has a different reading of these three gnomic paragraphs. Instead of Kripke’s legislative solution, Cavell takes §217:

‘How am I able to obey a rule?’ - if this is not a question about causes, then it is about the justification for my following the rule in the way I do. If I have exhausted the justifications I have reached bedrock, and my spade is turned. Then I am inclined to say: ‘this is simply what I do.’\textsuperscript{78}

In other words, there comes a point when the teacher will say to the student ‘lesson over, we are through and finished, done for, I have showed you how it’s done, take it or leave it, you are by yourself’ (or an equivalent). That is, justification must come to an end someplace,\textsuperscript{79} just as the teacher must leave the student alone sometime. Sometimes, we act without justification, as some things require naught justification: the first basic aspects of instructions, for instance.\textsuperscript{80}

Cavell writes:

In (Cavell’s) Wittgenstein the exhaustion of justifications is marked by an inclination to say that I can only show something –this!- and then I may, or not, go back to my steps without conclusion. In Kripke’s Wittgenstein the exhaustion of justifications is explained by saying or finding that justifications were always on inclinations, mine or yours, after which I go on to watch the other’s steps.\textsuperscript{81}

In \textit{Conditions Handsome and Unhandsome}, Cavell accuses Kripke of having overemphasized the appeal to rules. There is more to the rule in the same way that there is more to life than language. It is an accident of instruction, \textit{yet another} accident of instruction, that language takes care of itself. The missing link is not power. But there is an imponderable temptation to fill the gaps, so it is no wonder that power, being natural, or capable of naturalization, becomes the new ‘Objects’ (from W1); that is, the instructor as the authority and the student as the rule-follower always on trial.\textsuperscript{82} Cavell does not accept this view; yet one must not imply that Cavell has a pacifist view of instruction, I think, but only a more general one.\textsuperscript{83} What Cavell seems to be getting at is, bluntly put, that we can sometimes tune-in to the world and we can sometimes tune-out; we can always (to use the Emerson phrase he quotes) ‘draw a greater circle around any circle’ (through any style of argumentation that you wish), and come to see that this tuning-in and out

\textsuperscript{76} Wittgenstein, L., \textit{Philosophical Investigations} (§201-203).
\textsuperscript{77} Commonly used compound that refers to Kripke’s Wittgenstein, i.e., Kripke’s reading of Wittgenstein concerning the privacy paradox of private language.
\textsuperscript{78} Wittgenstein, L., \textit{Philosophical Investigations} (§217).
\textsuperscript{79} This seems to foreshadow anti-individualism.
\textsuperscript{80} The privacy paradox leaves one thing out: namely privacy. Must one bite the bullet finally?
\textsuperscript{81} Cavell, Stanley, \textit{Conditions Handsome and Unhandsome}, pg. 72-73.
\textsuperscript{82} Comparable to a Nietzschean construal of punishment (discussed mainly in \textit{The Genealogy of Morals}): the systematic casting out of misfits and outcasts; of course, the larger the society and the more powerful the authority and law codes become, the greater the tolerance for the misfits and outcasts will be.
\textsuperscript{83} Contrast W1’s angst-neutralizing view, i.e., as a whole, as \textit{all but} what is the case, of the world as insignificant against W2’s mature view of the self as hyper-significant; similarly contrast the mutual reversal of expectation that tails each view: W1’s panacea against W2’s taciturn submission to finitude, to skepticism, to quietism.
is, in a sense, possibility, but is also already an ‘in-tune all its own’: a glimpse at the structure from within the structure. No wonder we bump straight into failure when attempting to generalize or to complete all preconditions: the gap is my inheritance, ‘I am the scandal’. Glitch exposed, Kripke and Nietzsche tried to close the gap via power, the only purely naked artificiality.84

Is Cavell naïve and merely interpreting a command as an invitation? Certainly a large portion of the weight of his argument hangs on the fact that you can always consider, whether as a student or as an instructor, the option of following a rule or risking exile (or loneliness or grief). But a deeper reason why Cavell insists on Kripkenstein’s implausibility is that it entails a further skepticism that is more skeptical than the skepticism it tries to overcome. All you did was add a new skepticism. Power,85 less astonishing and more obscure, absorbs all of the shock. It tries to reduce. It becomes double skepticism: but how did skepticism get there in the first place? Through what process? Cavell calls Kripkenstein conformist; a bland yeamer for facts. There are facts missing, thus power.

But does Cavell merely express this gap in the form of conditions, e.g., conditions for skepticism? Is this pure individualism? Could it be that what happens when one individuates is that skepticism turns out to be too general, like Antonio Rosmini’s idea of being? Cavell proposes that rule-following might just be acknowledgment, e.g., having a kind of confidence in oneself, supplementing and not replacing the fear of others. The fact-less voice,86 the primitive echo, a certain presence, is what Cavell is trying to rescue or caution against impetuous reduction. Recall the Emersonian epigraph he uses to open Conditions Handsome and Unhandsome (and from where he gets the title): ‘this evanesce and lubricity of all objects, which lets them slip through our fingers when we clutch hardest, (is) the most unhandsome part of our condition’. Compare the human condition with the individualist desire to establish the conditions for objectivity. Is that the real yearn? (Its very mirror, externality?) Or is it something more? Again, the skeptical solution and its relation to the human condition present a faux impasse. For now I will comment (anticipating the Burge discussions) that an overwhelming number of non-human animals follow rules and have social structures. More so, power can be reduced to function in most non-human animals. Thus Cavell’s interpretation seems, prima facie and from and anti-individualist perspective, less plausible (than, say, Kripke’s).

After all, if a rule is not understood, does it still make sense to call it a rule? One thing is to follow a rule and another to be a rule. This is a key idea in intentionality. The most unnerving part of Wittgenstein’s idealism, indeed of any idealism, is its lack of origin. Anti-individualist accounts of perception are exhausted by an inherent matrix of particular/surrounding egocentrism forged by nature.87 The question is how is the medium revealed? How do we move beyond this student-instructor impasse? In the remainder of this chapter I will assay antecedent logical origins. I will start, in the next two sections, with W1’s two levels of reality and Rosmini’s Light of Being.

84 On any bland reading of the history of philosophy, there seems to be an ongoing devaluation of concepts that began when Parmenides’ Nothingness, so tabooed in the Middle Ages, devaluated to nihilism in the nineteenth century; in the century following that, nihilism conflated with skepticism; now, skepticism seems to be breaking down into fraud (ontology to metaphysics, metaphysics to epistemology, epistemology to what? Raw shrewdness? External revelation, where psychology ends and psychiatry begins? Logic was originally the science of being! Quine and Burge have returned logic to its subject matter as we will see in this chapter). Kripke: acting blindly but acting. Nietzsche: willing nothing is willing. Existentialism translates this to responsibility. In sum, there are not many options if one wants to extrapolate Wittgenstein without falling into the old traps, but one so dearly wants to say there is more than this linguistic idealism! Let us keep these haphazard musings in mind as mere figures of speech as we examine the roads to objectivity.

85 By ‘power’ I mean power as authority or command over other people, organisms and things. But also in the Nietzschean sense, which is almost a truism, as the main driving force of man.

86 In its purest sense, hence so hidden.

87 In a nutshell, the main idea is that any organism sophisticated enough to have a perceptual system already, ipso facto, distinguishes particulars from the surround and, more importantly, characteristics that are part of the perceptual system itself from the characteristics that are not, e.g. the objects of perception.
But before moving on, let us finally flesh out the linguistic idealism W2 opted for. Paraphrasing Elizabeth Amscombe's ideas in 'The Question of Linguistic Idealism', David Bloor writes:

'We don't have a concept everywhere we see a similarity (Z, 380). Nor do we always see similarity between objects that fall under the same concept. There must therefore, be an active, creative element in concept formation. To grasp this we must appeal to something over and above the object being referred to.'

This is a strong and very deep argument. It has been the guiding thread up to this point and will be all the throughout the dissertation.

Bloor continues: 'We must attend to the linguistic practice associated with the word, and its point and purpose for its users'. (This is) 'something over and above the object being referred to'. This means reality is 'in the making', so to speak, an 'ex-static' reality. Referring, that philosophical McGuffin, is a linguistic practice, like everything else. Rules and action are behind it and form a 'non verbal matrix of action'. The essence of referring is created in the process of human interaction. We do not refer to the object, but the referring itself. Through separation from the object, the result is idealism.

In sum, the allure of linguistic idealism is that it responds to skepticism and inexistent objects. The downside is the vagueness and vulnerability to rule-following paradoxes it engenders and that have lead to political solutions (Kripke) and inherent skepticism (Cavell). This idealism cannot be private (in the way that Berkeley’s could (but of course isn’t)). It militates against skepticism. The goal is the most general reality, the limits of thought. The result is an idea of family resemblance and the human condition. We have become more sensible to our skins, to our condition. And one of the dangers (though not the main one) is the dogma that the conditions stem from inner processes within the bounds of the skin. The lesson for the OLP’s seems to be that skepticism is after all a real threat. Not just non-sense on par with metaphysics.

Next, as reminiscence to the landscape prior to this late critique of referentialism and logic, I will discuss Donna M. Summerfield’s fitting and tracking theories, and her unique placing of W1 as a hybrid.

2.

We have seen that the simultaneous demise of referential views of language and logical absolutism was a direct objective of W2's critique of philosophy and language. More so, Sraffa's counterexample (a sign with sense yet no logical form) and Ramsey's persistence that logic is a normative science and nothing else (ideas which he expanded on and examples he reproduced throughout all his later writings), incited him to permanently give up his youthful pipe dream. But W1 was much more.

It is a characteristic of ground-level 'mistakes' to involve the very building blocks of reality, a form of atomism being such; Eleaticism and Anaxagoras’ Nous are others. W1’s adoption of Objects is a ground-level mistake, one of the last of its kind. W1 still believed in logical absolutism. To best understand W1 in a manner that enlightens, let’s (again) recall his own latter self-criticisms:

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89 Ibid, 356.
91 Has science blockaded philosophy from committing ground-level mistakes? Science covers the ground. It’s her burden now. Prima facie, it seems science will be just as overwhelmed with ground-level mistakes (divergent and mutually inconsistent 'views from nowhere') as philosophy has in the past: e.g. biocentrism, Wolfram's *A New Kind of Science*, Superstrings, etc. (Not that they are all mistakes, of course).
92 Tyler Burge admits that Wittgenstein (both 1 and 2) is hard to classify. Is it correct to call him an individualist? For this reason, even Burge bypasses any deep discussion of the Austrian philosopher.
93 Though ahead of Frege's and Russell's universalist conception of logic.
But I did not get my picture of the world by satisfying myself with its correctness; nor do I have it because I am satisfied of its correctness. No: it is the inherited background against which I distinguish between true and false.  

From this perspective, it becomes clear how strange belief in atomic propositions sounds; almost magical in DIME sense. In fact, it is on par with Colin McGinn’s transcendental naturalism, which makes them both part of the Limit 2, common sense world view from the schism I developed in the introduction. Atomic propositions ground, since logical absolutism wants to disable any sense of aporiotic groundlessness. W1 is concerned with absolutism in the way that W2 is (turns to) with idealism: while being motivated by an urge for an all or nothing need for generality, both Wittgenstein’s oversee the anti-individualist solution; similarly, Wittgenstein was, on both occasions, more concerned with realism (a position I think he clearly defends) rather than with relativism. Explanatory power and causality, he mostly ignores. More precisely, he nods at this causality. For, I think, Wittgenstein’s position is, in both cases, common sensical, i.e. materialist; naïve materialist at that. Even in W2, it is a type of naturalism that ‘manages’ the language games; a mind-independent naturalism. I will not argue for this here but for the remainder of this section I will try illustrate.

Why was W2 so concerned with social institutions? The answer is, I think, in part, because he utterly missed it earlier, and, in part, because nothing should be left out. He wanted the complete picture; a transcendental picture. Alas, he was still an individualist, at least in his goal. He would not be satisfied with an externalist account; there must be some minimal control. That is, to give an analogy, he wanted to preserve the ‘cabin pressure’, so to speak, artificial though it has been found to be. If conditions outside change and different ontologies emerge, as they surely will, we still have our niche, our cabin pressure, where we grew up; it is our inherited background (but as such it is also the genesis of paradoxes in the sense that we can create different rules for different phenomena and have the power to promote them). Intentionality is messy and pragmatism is not a foolproof proxy. An externalist solution (using the cabin pressure analogy) would be to realize that the whole fabric of the plane is from the start built from normal conditions of the environment. The causal link is there essentially (there is no deeper essence than that). Thus, by bringing nature back to its origin (who moved it in the first place?) does any attempt at creating artificial preconditions of objectivity and flawless intentionality seem foolhardy. Considering this opposition between nature and natures against art and the pathetic fallacy, it is no wonder that the privacy problem emerged. The paradox is born and dies with it: it is the very thought experiment (that thought experiments brought anti-individualism, in all its depth, slight might seem strange and bizarre, even ironic, yet we must not forget it was thought experiments that sank the picture into individualism; Tyler Burge employs practically no thought experiments in Origins of Objectivity; science sides with anti-individualism).

From the common sense view W2 jumped to the ordinary language view, incorporating genesis, clarity of motivation, human aspects, human trails, and institutions. But ordinary language is individualist. It is either superfluous (has no explanatory power: what does it matter to say that if reality

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95 DIME is an acronym meant to enlist the four ways McGinn (Problems of Philosophy, The Limits of Inquiry, Blackwell, 1993) conceives philosophers use to tackle down philosophical problems: (D) Domesticate, e.g. reduce, dissolve, digest, etc., (I) Irreducibility, i.e., postulate something irreducible, or (M) Magic, i.e. postulate something magic or unfathomable, or, lastly, (E) Eliminate, e.g. by renouncing.
96 The inherent background will be related to non-perceptual sensory states in chapter 5.
97 Once and for all, is it acceptable to label Wittgenstein an individualist? After all, he was the principal pioneer of the ‘thinking is not in the head’ slogan, a precursor of anti-individualism; Burge I mentioned does not classify him; there is far too much ambiguity and too many interpretations of his thought to pin him exactly. But if pressed on it, I would probably opt for the individualist label. W2 was centrally concerned with the social institutions in-themselves and there are clear passages, many of them, e.g. PI, pp.xii, 230, that show how he tried to subtract the linkage with the world, ignoring its explanatory power (and the points just discussed further the link).
was different there would still be language games, there would still be such and such but not such and such) or underdetermined. Ordinary language philosophy, when done correctly, merely reduces or traces back, i.e., genesis (precisely what logical perfectionists and verificationalists tried to do). Ordinary language philosophy is therapeutic but can’t represent the process. We have to jump right in. There never is an absolute origin. And there is no argument for this. It seems W2 is implying no one has come up with something plausible. W1, Summerfield believes, was such a system. Let us quickly turn to it for once.

Donna Summerfield champions W1.98 Summerfield distinguishes between fitting and tracking theories of content determination in accounting for intentionality, that is, the ability humans (and some animals) have of representing the external world. Both theories try to account for intentionality by answering the question, how is intentionality possible? The examples Summerfield gives of fitting theories are shared feature theories and iconic theories; examples of tracking theories are covariance and indexical theories. Overgeneralizing a little, fitting theories tend to be individualist while tracking theories tend to be anti-individualist. This is a result of their main difference, namely that in fitting theories there is independence between the sign and the thing represented whereas no such complete independence is ever to be found in tracking theories. As Summerfield writes:

According to fitting theories, it is the relationship among signs, perhaps within a system of signs, that gives them sense, rather than some external relationship to objects, events, or situations in the external world...it is guaranteed by the relationship of the elements within the sign or the sign’s relationship with other signs in the system. (Whereas) according to tracking theories, it is the existence of a nonaccidental connection between signs and objects, events, or properties in the external world that confers meaning.99

This clearly gives fitting theories at least a psychological advantage. For fitting theories, whatever gives meaning (say, the set of conditions) is epistemically accessible to the person doing the meaning. This is individualism’s allure in a nutshell. Whereas for tracking theories, the conditions are not accessible; they are external and not representable and indeterminable.

But this creates a problem for fitting theories, namely that, if intentionality has a functional role, then how is the function itself represented. Hence, there is a gap, a transcendental gap which results in a Cartesian theatre: a regress of interpretations (this gap can, we have seen, on some relative accounts, be almost dissolved: in some onomatopoeic words as well in ostensive defining, for example. But there is also the problem of privacy, even after the gap is dealt with). In sum, fitting theories need a primitive that is given, and not explained.

Tracking theories stop the regress simply by appealing to the external world: ‘the theory says exactly what the extension of ‘John’ is: the set of all the causes and effects of token of that symbol. Metaphysically speaking, content is perfectly determinate’ (Summerfield 1996:114).

Summerfield complements:

The challenge Wittgenstein faces is clear: to stop the threatened regress of interpretations in a way that offers both determinacy and to the problem of how signs can point to what is not there. To meet that challenge, the early Wittgenstein makes a radical distinction between Names and propositions and, correspondingly, between objects and facts: Names track objects and so no Name can point to what is not there; propositions fit (or fail to fit) facts and so any proposition can point to what is not there...propositions have sense but not reference; Names have reference, but not sense.100

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100 Ibid, 119.
Simple objects themselves and their inherent combinatorial power grounds logical form. Logical form is the connection itself (between signs and the world), the tracking part of the account. It is ground-level, i.e., the most primitive level. The connection is non-accidental. It presupposes limits. (Wittgenstein says that even if there are infinite objects, there must still be Names). In other words, it is not 'up to us'. Parallel to this name/object connection at the ground-level (which guarantees reference), there is a proposition/fact connection at a secondary level (which guarantees sense, e.g. their use). This proposition/fact connection is the fitting theory part.

As Summerfield notes, this double dimension avoids vicious circularity:

Names track objects, propositions fit facts. Names have only Bedeutung; propositions have only Sinn. In an important sense, Names, unlike propositions and arrows, do not “point” at all: “(Names are like points; propositions like arrows- they have sense)” (TPL, 3.144). So to explain one connection via the other is not to presuppose the same thing one set out to explain. Second, unlike propositions, Names cannot point to what is not there. So there is no need to explain how they can point to what is not there.

There is a double dimension since, according to Wittgenstein, intentionality only happens at the level of the proposition, not the Name. The Name cannot refer to what is not the case or to inexistente objects, but a proposition can. Thus, only propositions can be true or false. This way, W1 maintains the referentialist view that posits Names (simple objects, ‘the substance of the world’, absolute and changeless) as the ultimate bearers of meaning. And since ‘only in the context of a proposition does an expression have reference’, both dimensions are necessary.

The defeating problem of this account is that, bluntly stated, there are no such Objects. But even assuming the existence of such Objects, there is still the problem of objectivity to straighten out. In this account, the problem of objectivity might be articulated like this: what guarantees the correlation between the world and objects, that is, what guarantees that the form of thought is form of the world? What guarantees (or entitles) the picture theory? As Isidoro Reguera, author of *Ludwig Wittgenstein*, observes:

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101 One can compare this with Burge’s anti-individualistic maxim that an individual need not and cannot represent the pre-conditions.


103 We must remember that the picture theory of propositions, in a quasi-fabricated, holistic account of reality, includes a positive and a negative sense. A proposition, by its very nature, already posses two senses, one positive and one negative. The structure, only revealed by intentionality and the ways thinking exhausts itself, is limited from the start, i.e., we are precluded from but thinking in this bipolarity; it is exhausted analogously to the way that a picture is internally related and exhausted in and by these internal relations. Thus, if this isomorphic sense of the proposition (‘internal sense’) is intelligible, then the proposition is automatically rendered an ‘external sense’. A kind of barren transcendent logic (and what is logic but barren, producing no harm and no improvement, it does nothing, it is how things are and not another thing, it is possibility and as such ‘takes care of itself’: a mere tautology/contradiction lens): this is thinking, this is possibility. Given the whole of logical space and the whole of reality, there is nothing missing. Logic is possibility and, ‘pointed to the world’, it is ontologically polarized with veridicality conditions and what is the case and not the case. I will relate this conception with Rosmini below. Subsequently, I will relate this to ‘the image’ in chapter 4, and, in chapter 5, to the inherent veridicality conditions of perception and to perceptual constants. In sum, this is the Tractarian account: internal relations of the picture, if complete, creates a first sense of minimum permissibility which then, taken as such, is automatically put in relation to everything that is not part of the picture, which as a whole, is the negation of the picture as the picture itself, and only the picture itself is excluded.
The *Tractatus* supposes an obscure Leibnizian harmony between language and the world, presided by God himself; he exposes a healthy common sense that says that language must speak of something and if this is not about the world, then what? He recours to the old Parmenidian belief that something logical cannot be only logical, that is, that thinking and being are one and the same.\(^{104}\)

Again, whence lies the objectivity? Given this magical (in DIME sense as heralded above), Leibnizian pre-established harmony account, there remains a lacuna of objectivity so cardinal, that the development of W2’s linguistic idealism is no wonder. One need only observe W1’s Objects and Russell’s permanent possibilities of sensation’s\(^{105}\) dilution in ‘a thing’ called grammar (compare Names and family resemblance); or the fact that skepticism is ascertained nonsensical at the end of the *Tractatus* while skepticism is ascertained intractable at the end of the *Investigations*.

Individual Representationalism has a biased view of necessity. The view is that one can represent the causal relation (the essential causal relation or even a pictorial and formal—and as such exhausting—relation) between the world and one’s sense data. The view takes sense-data as raw and believes sensorial capacities alone are insufficient to represent a lot of aspects of the physical world and, as such, they need supplementing; consequently, one feels that one must work one’s way up to the intellectual grasp of the essences, the hidden secrets of reality, so to speak. Anti-individualism, conversely, counters this idea that objectivity needs maturing by claiming that sense data is never raw and that there is mind-independence from the start since representation is always about particulars.\(^{106}\)

In sum, there are cases where word-object relations have no meaning (e.g., pain) and there are some rare cases where word-object relations are basically undeniable, such as ostensive definitions, onomatopoeic words, performative utterances perhaps, etc. The question then is, are word-word mediators enough to guarantee objectivity (i.e., word-word mediators providing a thin but exhaustive, non-parasitic sheet around the ‘ontological blanks’ such that in some strategic places the performative utterances and ostensives pierce through) and enhance enough to, at least, draw out an arrow that points to objectivity and, thus, the medium is (almost?) revealed. Why is this not enough, for example, for W2? Why jump to say that skepticism is inherent, as if the difference was transcendental? As if the only way to synthesize idealist and realist accounts of reality is if the realism is constituted and exhausted by the linguistic idealism.

Next, I will discuss a clear-cut, no-question, individualist: Antonio Rosmini, in the hopes that it will clear some of the confusion generated by these two views of reality.

3.

In this section, I will cursorily lay out an insightful presentation of Rosmini’s alleged individualism and compare it with W1. Rosmini introduces an almost ethereal notion which he scales down to the most corporeal and explicit of ideas in the form of a precondition to cognition in general. According to Rosmini, this notion is very simple; so simple that, once it’s recognized, it can only be assented. To be sure, it provides all that is needed to guarantee objectivity, *just like that*, without ever over-rationalizing

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\(^{105}\) Isn’t the term ‘permanent possibility of sensation’ already a Copernican revolution of value, away from the mind and onto the object itself, a do-it-yourself individualist tinkering?

\(^{106}\) So is it all a question of imputing value? But if representation is of particulars and value something superfluous in the sense that valuelessness, in terms of objectivity, is impossible (for it would already be a value even to consider it), is it then right to consider objectivity as something ‘imputable’, that is, is it a value? This presents the final paradox of objectivity, namely, as one trying in vain to level a value with mind-independence. Value, if anything, is mind-dependent, so we bump right into the paradox in the most ironic form.
(something he blames Kant, et al, to have done). Rosmini is referring to the notion of being in general which, of course, faces the same challenge Wl’s Objects face, namely, the demur of what it is exactly? Light of Being is invoked by thought experiment and by arm chair arguments to fill the objectivity lacuna, and ends up with results so unclear and faith-appealing, that one suspect’s mere intellectual welding. Nonetheless, it exemplifies Individual Representationalism as preconditions to objectivity, the minimum precondition, so to speak (and isn’t this simplification already spurious?). It seems he brings it down to ground level: mere assent, saying that things are as they are and not another thing; not too much, not too little, as we will see, is already saying too much. To level preconditions with their alleged ontological equivalents, say, in the noumenon (this is what I mean by ‘intellectual welding’) is foolhardy.

It is unfortunate that ‘Light of Being’ invokes something magical. In a sober reading, it is the most concrete of all ideas. To call it ‘an idea’ is already debilitating. Light of being is, essentially, logic (but logic not as formality or vacuousness, but as traditionally conceived, i.e., as the complete collection of the constitutive norms of thought) plus something more (which we will of course take up). An interesting question at this point is: does Rosmini require one to represent this precondition, this notion of being? From an analogy he often evokes of Light of Being as illuminating from outside the mind, I think the answer is no.\(^{107}\) I do not accept Light of Being but I will present it here, in its original theological schemata, as a critique of Individual Representationalism and, at the same time, as Individual Representationalism’s last stand, so to speak.

Light of Being means idea of entity in general; defined as ‘innate idea in the human spirit and form of intelligence’.\(^{108}\) Rosmini identifies the notion of being as the basic component of all human knowledge. The notion of being is universal and a priori. As such, Rosmini insists that such notion derives (and can only derive) from God himself. All other knowledge of the world derives from a synthesis of the notion of being and sensation; thus no other notion, least of all intelligence, would be possible without this idea of universal entity or, as Rosmini calls it, ‘congenital idea in the human spirit and form of intelligence’.\(^{109}\) The notion of being’s appeal stems from the fact that it allows to make distinctions between different things since it is the first activity of the human spirit and, at the same time, in a Rosminian sense, also total activity: it is the limit of thought and the most irreducible of notions.

Rosmini writes:

We note that all things and parts of things, together with their perfections, are ultimately acts of being. Being, actuated and limited in different ways, receives different names in different things. The word being means simply the first activity and every activity. To say something 'is' is to say it acts. Nothing is, unless it acts; it must act in order to be; what a thing does to posit and maintain its being, is an action. Thus every action is contained in the notion of being, which indicates and measures everything; without knowing what being is, we cannot 'measure' different beings, that is, 'distinguish', 'judge', or 'perceive them intellectively'. I cannot perceive any being intellectively unless I say to myself that it is a being, that is, has the activity of its being determined in a definite mode and at a definite level. I can make no judgment about it if I do not first understand what is meant by the word being in general, which I always pronounce in making a judgment.\(^{110}\)

\(^{107}\) In this interesting sense one could argue that Rosmini is an externalist. But one should be careful as it is the precondition that is external; this is odd and it will be contrasted with Perceptual Objectivity. But even more eviscerating, it seems Rosmini meant light of being to be implicitly representable since there occurs a division of the mind, an atomic categorization, the part that is sensible is individuated from the remainder, remainder being light of being, but in an opposite way: light of being as external, and then is leveled all with the internal. This is clear individualism. (Compare ground-level mistake with eye-level mistake).

\(^{108}\) Rosmini, Principles of Ethics, art. 2, 4.

\(^{109}\) Ibid, art. 2, 4

\(^{110}\) Ibid, art. 2, 5.
Rosmini insists that without a base to measure, i.e., if there is no unit or standard, it is impossible to judge or distinguish between particulars, much the less, between actions. In sum, nothing can be intellectualized.

The notion of being is the foundation of all knowledge: the notion of being (notion of existence in general) is presupposed in all cognition- it is the most general of all notions. It constitutes the fundamental principle of all intuition, of human knowledge. All other notions are derived and depend on this first notion. In other words, the notion of being objectifies human knowledge.

The argument, in a nutshell, is that all notions normally depend on other more general notions. To avoid infinite regress, it follows that there must be a notion to which all other notions derive from: the most general notion is ‘the idea of universal being, congenital idea of the human spirit and form of intelligence’. This, we know now, is individualism. Yet Rosmini seems to be ahead of his time in his opprobrium of empiricism and rationalism as externalizing what is internal and internalizing what is external respectively. Twentieth century Individual Representationalism erred similarly in its misguided analysis of objective perceptual representation as deficient and in need of supplement either by representation of law-like patterns extractable from the subject’s sense data flux (e.g., sense data theorists) or by representation of conditions for generality (e.g., Quine’s holism). Ultimately, Rosmini still maintains that objectivity can only be produced internally, only he truncates the conditions to leave only the essential one. In this way, he was ahead of his time yet still an individualist.

According to Rosmini, there is only one a priori truth and that is the idea of being. All other conceptions derive from this notion through distinct functions. Everything depends on being including the idea of language games, including, as Jacob Buganza argues in Being and the Good, the principle of contradiction:

From there Rosmini affirms that even the principle of contradiction depends on the notion of being. What argument could be given in favor of such a posture? I find this one convenient: before reasoning, that is, before analysis, it is necessary to have certain material to elaborate the reasoning on, since reasoning is fundamentally formal. What gives reasoning its material? Perception of the quiddity (quidditas); quiddities, all of them, have their fundament in being. According to Thomist philosophy, the first operation of human understanding is simple apprehension, then comes judgment and finally reasoning, which concludes in a new judgment. That way, what comes first is more fundamental, and this is mere apprehension that, certainly, focuses on the quiddities of material entities (proper object of understanding), but in the general referential framework of the idea of being (common object of understanding).

The following long quote by Rosmini will help clear the point:

If we observe our acts of knowledge we see that the intellect, in contradistinction to feeling, perceives objectively, that is, focuses its attention on an object different from itself. In its very act of understanding, the intelligent spirit posits something different from itself, abandoning itself in order to concentrate on what is present to it. Indeed it is a condition of intellectual activity that the term of the operation is perceived as different from the one who perceives, or better, excludes the perceiver. The opposition between the person who perceives and what he perceives is such that one cannot simultaneously be the other, nor both be perceived by the same act. Hence in the very act of perception, the one who perceives is not at the same time what is perceived. This difference or opposition that observation reveals between the perceiver, as perceiver, and what is perceived, as perceived, is real, not imaginary. There is a difference between being as perceived and the subject who perceives.

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111 Ibid, art. 2.
112 Buganza, Jacob, El ser y el bien: una relectura escolástica de los Principios de la ciencia moral de Antonio Rosmini, 37, my translation.
113 Under an anti-individualistic arc, it is not intellectual activity, of course, but the system itself that does the work. The former would entangle one in homunculi dilemmas and containment paradoxes.
We must therefore consider being in itself and in so far as it is employed by the intelligent subject who has the notion of it.

Although the perceiving subject differs from the perceived object by the very nature of intellecive perception, there is a certain bond, in which understanding consists, between the perceiver and what is perceived. This bond is so intimate that a single individual is formed from the two principles without either absorbing the other. Thus we see that the light of reason (being) is united with the human subject and comes to form part of human nature in such a way that without it humanity would no longer exist.

Because the bond is so intimate, the twofold nature (so to speak) of the human subject, essentially intelligent and therefore essentially in possession of a universal object of his understanding, has often been overlooked. This oversight, which confuses the object essential to the intelligent subject with the subject itself, has caused many errors. What belongs only to the object is attributed to the subject, and vice versa what belongs to the object is attributed to the subject. This mistake has given rise to two erroneous systems of ethics, to which, it seems to me, all errors in moral teaching can ultimately be reduced.  

For W2 (who was obsessed with the idea that one must unravel philosophical concepts, including the most general, which are the most embedded and, hence, the most difficult), no notion can be prior to its use because the notion or concept is the very use, it is practice (also for W2, the opposite of the notion of being, that is the notion of non-being, makes no sense). Against this, Rosmini postulates that the notion of being is not exhausted by its use but refers to something more: precisely the minimum (and maximum) material reference necessary in discourse to reach objectivity.

So what does ‘Light of Being’ really mean? It means the external additive the mind receives to achieve the minimum objectivity necessary for thought (so minimum it blurs the individualist-externalist distinction since it refers but does not mingle with the individual). It separates individual from the external world better than many other individualists, for example Kant, were capable of (the best way to do this, paradoxically, is by not attempting, thus some of the best philosophers are many times unreliable narrators, e.g. W1; in Tyler Burge, an anti-individualist or externalist, objectivity is not internalized by means of a leveling precondition, for Burge objectivity is in perception from the start and without further complement, so in a strange way, Burge is more general than Rosmini, for what is more general than expunging all generalizations?).

Light of Being, according to Rosmini, is infallible as such but allows error. Light of Being, producing nothing but simple truth, allows error because error depends on human choice and, as such, is contingent on human power. It is only the precondition that is infallible. Consequently, non-objective thought is impossible by this account. Sense data theorist, confused by a backward conception of first person (which was later unraveled in the later part of the twentieth century), believed that raw sense data, as such, that is, as a flux, is infallible. (Note how the infallibility constant is reversed in the sense data theorists and Rosmini.)

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\[114\] Ibid, art. 4, (§13-14).

\[115\] This Wittgensteinian grasp, meaning of a word is its use, moved up to the level representation in philosophy of mind resulting, in effect, in externalism: minds depend on other minds and on causal relations to the environment, direct or mediated in turn by other minds. A lot of arguments can stem from this view against the singular idea of being. Light of Being rests on an ill-founded, faux equivalence; the universe cannot be internalized that way.

\[116\] It seems clear that the notion of being is the most general and universal of notions. But that does not imply it necessarily be the first notion. For example, it can be a priori but synthetic. There are at least two notions of being: being as existence and being as universality, that is, universal entity and entity. Descartes famously tried to derive one from the other (particular to the general) and ended up in a vicious circle. Yet the fact that it is not so necessarily, does not imply it cannot be necessary (if one was keen enough) or it could be that the notion of being is necessary but not sufficient to erect a science of morality. It is necessary insofar that thought is inconceivable without it. Here Rosmini is assuming a rationalist/dualist position of the mind, only simplified in the most elegant form. His point of view is clear enough: notion is first. Without notion of being, there is no understanding. (A materialist or an epiphenomenalist would level notion of being, it would classify it as a posteriori).
The notion of being as minimum objectification, seen as a necessary condition for all language game, besides avoiding the pitfall of a linguistic idealism as well as the phenomenology trap, provides a startling advantage in, for example, religious discourse. I will cursorily lay it out here.

One of the Investigation’s main criticisms abides precisely in the study of religious phenomena. W2 seems to imply that in religious discourse all we need to know is the role God and religion play in the life of humans (while paradoxically insisting that God exists, but that is another matter). The criticism is that such a role is not enough; it must also refer to something beyond its language game. In other words, God is not just the totality of uses of the word “God”: it must, necessarily refer to an omnipotent, omnipresent and omniscient being, i.e. something beyond the language game, to make sense. When a person prays he does so not just to engage in a religious language game and implore the various uses of the different religious words he employs. He does so because he truly believes that God exists.

The advantage is that, under Rosmini’s account, appealing directly to God is not necessary but appealing to being, the minimum ontological weigh, is. Religious discourse need not refer directly at God to make sense but it does need to refer to this idea of being (idea of existence). This idea must be something beyond the language game. 117 And by stepping out of the language game, idealism crumbles; while retaining all the other advantages.

If this sounds too good to be true, that’s because it altogether is.

Next, we shall see how this is intimately related to W1.

4.

Being, according to Rosmini, is also the mere possibility of things, which essentially constitutes the transcendental logic of the Tractatus. 118 For W1, solipsism is intractable and he never negates it or professes a solution; he merely develops it under a linguistic optic. Traditionally, the solipsist identifies his world with the world, whereas W1 levels these perspectives (‘the limits of my world are the limits of my language’ TLP 5.6). For W1, solipsism collapses, so to speak, at an inexistent point, ‘point 0’, where,

\[\text{One of the ways in which Rosmini invokes the idea of being is through a reductio ad absurdum. Without notion of being, cognition is impossible (which is absurd). An important and obvious detail is that Rosmini’s logic is still an Aristotelian logic: subject-predicate. However a functional logic does not, prima facie, eliminate this implication, for example, if we say for all x, x exists. We cannot infer existence by mere logic. Thus, many ontological arguments have been refuted, Descartes’ for example: for all x, if \(\phi x\), then \(\psi x\) (where \(\phi x\) is interpreted as ‘x is God’ and \(\psi x\) as ‘x has eternal existence’) does not imply that there exists an x such as \(\phi x\). But Rosmini was referring to light of reason and not reason itself. If I understand correctly, light of reason is objective inasmuch as light, inasmuch as a relation, since the relation is a special relation, it is all encompassing; it is, to be sure, the possibility of all possible relations. It is an ontological relation, so to speak. (A function can only be illustrated but cannot be defined (W1). Thus, being cannot be defined. But the fact that it cannot be defined only implies that it is the most general of notions. How can one define the most general, the relation of all relations?) Wittgenstein writes in the Tractatus: ‘The ‘experience’ that we need to understand logic is not that something or other is the state of things, but that something is: that, however, is not an experience. Logic is prior to every experience-that something is so. It is prior to the question ‘How’, not prior to the question ‘What?’ Logic precedes all experience as the idea of being precedes all experience. Logic is the notion of being: that something is. 118 When I say that being is logic in W1, I mean several things: I relate Rosmini’s idea of being with: 1. Being as the universal variable, the form of the proposition- this is how things are. (n, 0, n+1): ‘[-p, -T N(-T)]. This is the general form of the proposition’ (T.L.P. 6); 2. Being as logic itself; 3. Being as tautology (being is a tautology; it is the totality of tautologies (a tautology in turn, in itself), that is, of logic (2)); Being as the mystical; 5. Being as silence; Of course, Rosmini would say being is received (and can only be received). This way, it is prior to all these relations. (Yet ‘prior’ confuses, as it is not space or time; a priori, confuses too. We only mean an unrepresentable presupposition.)} \]
with the experience (facts, the case) and the limits of this very experience, reality is exhausted and thus leveled with realism.

The possibility of states of affairs is, as such, objective. Objectification is not necessary to make this notion of possibility intelligible; it is intelligible since it is objective. The notion of being is 'point O'. It cannot be eliminated or even reduced. Let us recall Hume's problem of the sensations and the diaphanous aspect of consciousness: when he introspects (as he writes in 'On Personal Identity') and tries to point directly at what he calls 'his self', he always ends up bumping into 'this or that' sensation and never with the self itself. Thus he affirms that a person is naught but a collection of different perceptions. These perceptions, Rosmini would say, all have a common notion, universal being. The difference between the notion of this collection of perceptions and the notion of being is the minimum difference, so trivial that it gets lost and is easily confused since it is in each of them, in all of them and in the collection of them. I think this is why W1, who bought this idea of Hume, affirms that 'all propositions are of equal value' (TLP 6.4).

Being would not have the same sense if it only applied to some objects and not others because being does not occur; being compounds everything (since it is thinking itself). Like a tautology, it refers to everything. Furthermore, I think, it does not admit a knowing subject. (For W1, it is the form of the predicate.) Here's an error on Rosmini's part: the light of being is not 'received' by the subject because, to say the least, being is not the subject \(^{119}\) (but this does not imply that it is, nonetheless, received!), it is the limit. I explain below.

The subject, as a singularity, does not exist in Wittgenstein:

The subject does not belong to the world: rather, it is a limit of the world.

Where in the world is a metaphysical subject to be found? You will say that this is exactly like the case of the eye and the visual field. But really you do not see the eye. And nothing in the visual field allows you to infer that it is seen by an eye.

This is connected with the fact that no part of our experience is at the same time a priori.

Whatever we see could be other than it is. Whatever we can describe at all could be other than it is. There is no a priori order of things.

Here it can be seen that solipsism, when its implications are followed out strictly, coincides with pure realism. The self of solipsism shrinks to a point without extension, and there remains the reality coordinated with it.\(^{120}\)

Wittgensteinian solipsism collapses in a realism at point O; in the use and the notion itself: we are the use and the use is the notion. (The limits of my language mean the limits of my world.) Similarly, for Rosmini, there is a balance. The glass is either half full or half empty, so to speak. But it is half full precisely because the glass is half full, half empty and the idea of being is received (and that is why we can say that it is half full and not half empty). There is no more mysticism. Mysticism has a name: ens. And it is received. Is Rosmini an improvement of W2 and W1?

In effect, from the point of view of Rosmini, one is apt to feel there is more to it than the 'aporiatic' (apodictic) equilibriums that occur as much in W1 and W2. (In W2, more than the language game, while in W1 less than transcendental logic (consequently more simplicity)). W2 tried to eliminate the transcendental logic of W1 since he needed abrasion, as a step towards objectivity; towards self dependency, anthropology, life, criteria. Criteria is diluted in grammar or, as Isidoro Reguera writes:

\(^{119}\) For Rosmini, the subject is roughly equivalent to 'bearer of intelligence'.

\(^{120}\) Wittgenstein, *Tractatus Logico-philosophicus*, 5.632-5.64.
Possibility is only grammatical, a mere grammatical determination over the use of a word that is born only in language and perishes in its uses. It does not have constitutive metaphysical value (nor transcendent, nor hyper real). It’s relative to language and nothing else; relative to the form of thinking and nothing else; relative to the human form of considering things and speaking of things. (That’s the only real form of possibility that counts). It is relative, very relative, to game. It is bound by the game. Without it, like the pawn in chess, any possibility does not mean anything. What is a human possibility if not a grammatical possibility? \(^{121}\)

The answer for Rosmini, I have specified above, is of something else; something beyond the language game. Something related to W1:

It would seem to be a sort of accident, if it turned out that a situation would fit a thing that could already exist entirely on its own. If things can occur in states of affairs, this possibility must be in them from the beginning. (Nothing in the province of logic can be merely possible. Logic deals with every possibility and all possibilities are its facts.) Just as we are quite unable to imagine spatial objects outside space or temporal objects outside time, so too there is no object that we can imagine excluded from the possibility of combining with others. \(^{122}\) If I can imagine objects combined in states of affairs, I cannot imagine them excluded from the possibility of such combinations. \(^{123}\)

The object only exists as a relation in W1. The idea of being is the possibility of all relations. And this relation has ontological weight: it is based interiorly on relations but the relations have existence on their own. \(^{124}\) And at least that is objective. And since the relation is given, i.e., it is received, it cannot be but a relation (since at least that relation is present), but it’s a relation that encompasses everything. In logic, it would be a tautology (W1); in W2, the totality of all grammars. Grammar simply trivializes the use of being. It is simply connecting it like that, and nothing else (without over-intellectualizing). Nonetheless, without this precondition the world would slip by us, like Schopenhauer says, ‘like an unconscious dream or a phantasmagoric mirage not deserving our attention’. \(^{125}\)

Being is incommunicable precisely because it is the most private and the most divulged (it is in everything from birth). \(^{126}\) It is the intellect that objectifies, not sensation. If it were only just sensation, the phenomenology trap would be inevitable and skepticism would be absolute given the inherent angular perspective we have (I can never have a complete perception of a chair, for example; this oversight will be substituted with Enactive Perception). Intellect is notion of being (notion and not being itself). It is the ‘cement’ of the intellect. If it were not a notion, i.e. if it were being itself, then idealism would be an intractable problem in the same way that skepticism would be intractable if we only had perception. The Wittgenstein of the Tractatus teaches us that the world is made up of facts and not things. There can be

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\(^{122}\) One of the criticisms (Frank Ramsey’s) to the Tractatus attacks its conception of space and time as logical necessities. For Rosmini, space and time (extension and unlimited space) ‘run parallel’ to the notion of being (but are not part of it).


\(^{124}\) One can relate this to the solution of the problem of theoretical terms in a scientific theory provided by Frank Ramsey, Rudolph Carnap and Joseph Sneed. The problem of theoretical terms of scientific theories conceived as a non-linguistic structure (in turn militating against the statement view) concerns the empirical content of scientific terms. Ramsey’s solution is to simply substitute the theoretical term for an existential variable. For Ramsey, a scientific theory is a conjunction of empirical statements and existential variables (which can be substituted for the best alternative). For example, the theoretical predicates A, B, C, simply become \(\exists A, \exists B, \exists C\). Endowing theoretical terms with ontological status is analogous (in terms of its minimalism, the minimum intelligible solution) with Rosmini’s solution of the idea of being for intelligence against the schism between empiricism and rationalism.

\(^{125}\) Schopenhauer, *The World as Will and Representation*, paragraph 18.

\(^{126}\) Babies objectify perfectly. They see the world as particulars that have veridicality conditions. Rosmini was closer to Perceptual Objectivity than many philosophers that came after him. (Rosmini excluded animals of course).
no existential, only relations. Everything is a notion. Everything is a relation since, by *reductio ad absurdum*, if it weren't a relation it would, necessarily, be a whole, since there would be no way to discern one object from its surroundings. This is why the mind is divided into facts, that is, in what is the case.\(^{127}\)

In sum, the idea of being is the minimum ontology of the question; it is assent to the question (the anthropic principle already says too much). Being cannot be explained away. Objective existence is needed to give sense to propositions in their totality. We do not receive life before being.\(^{128}\) Life is being.\(^{129}\) This completes my exposition of Rosmini's idea of being.

Up to this point, I have introduced Wl, as well as Rosmini's idea of being, albeit their obscurity. My position is that both views are Individualist, as they both try to supplement thought either by elucidating its limitations (Wl) or by representing the minimum condition for objectivity (Rosmini); both consider human powers and nature as insufficient. Taken together, they are intriguing insofar as they try to set the minimum difference between the individualization and the external world (minimizing the arm chair part of the argument, so to speak). Rosmini’s main error lies in missing the context; in that dependence on the environment is already implied by the context itself, and the fact that meaning extends away from the mind. As minimum as it is, light of being is already superfluous (even under his own idea of superfluity by which he so aptly criticized in Kant) and there is no need for it.

Objectivity as an unrepresentable presupposition has historically made many philosophers feel squeamish. How else can one arrive at an idea of natures?\(^{130}\) We need something to steer upon! Under this picture, it was always assumed that something was missing: call it the lacuna of objectivity. Motivations abound for attacking full-fledged anti-individualism (Rosmini wanted to save from epiphenomenalism, hence, his third (act) (comparable to Peirce's thirdness). He has also motivation in ethics: god becomes condition), which says the opposite, namely it is not the lacuna that need be assumed but objectivity itself.

Notwithstanding the problems contemporary anti-individualism presents for Rosmini's view, as the abbreviation for minimum conceivable individualization, Light of Being, in a sense, symbolizes Individual Representationalism's last stand. But, alas, it still over-intellectualizes. Under anti-individualism, one need not and cannot represent conditions (need not because objectivity is fine by itself, it is presupposed by nature; and cannot since most conditions, including the complete causal link, are out of reach, out of control, imponderable characteristics, we can only imply so much, much less represent).

Is the only precondition for existence its mere trivialization? Again, to use the example fourteen paragraphs back, if we claim that religious discourse need not refer to the world (incomplete relations), nor God (the mystical? What would turn out to be the new mysticism once notion of being is de-mystified?), but being (totality of relations and with ontological weight), does not the same problem

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\(^{127}\) Only the angst-crushing point of view, sub specie aeterni, mystically escapes this.

\(^{128}\) Might being not be an extreme coincidence? But then, how do you eliminate the presupposition? Being is implied in all possibility. It is generality. Once thought about, they can't be not-thought. Thinking is being (Parmenides).

\(^{129}\) Vast are the criticisms to the idea of being; this is a blitzkrieg enumeration: being as a superfluous concept; ignoring the *pars destruens* and concentrating only on the on the *par construens* backed by an inherent 'being by generality' in man; contemporary research in biology on evolution and 'universal moral grammar' (see Glausiusz, Josie, The Origin of Right and Wrong, Discover, The Brain, Fall, 2009); notion of being as a survival and navigating structure, a 'kluge', an accident; a mere impulse to simplify; perceptual unity; Perceptual Objectivity; Enactive Perception; biocentrism; scientism; naturalism; being as a humean bundle of perceptions i.e. sense-data theory; a criticism appealing to beasts (does an orangutan have notion of being?); vitalism; inherent anthropology prior to being; being as mere feedback from the senses and memory; to name a few. None of these arguments defeat notion of being prima facie.

\(^{130}\) Or essences.
emerge: it does not refer to God but is received from God, as Rosmini insists (only he adds an extra step to his problem-therapy of his own therapy, the ladder that is not mentioned in W2).

Let us compare it with Descartes. Calvin Normore writes:

There are for Descartes two sources of error in ideas. One is the mistaken supposition that there is something in the world that an idea is of; the second is the representation of something in the world as other than it is. There are two sources of error in ideas for Descartes because there are two ways in which an idea may be caused— it may be caused formally or it may be caused objectively. 131

This splits an idea into two senses: the formal 'aboutness' and the objective 'aboutness'. When converging, they represent; unconverging, they misrepresent (this is the line Rosmini, an individualist, takes). Descartes takes a different line, concentrating solely on the objective 'aboutness', that is, the objective cause of an idea, which for Descartes is precisely objective reality, regulated (or not) by God. 132

Hence, Descartes was not an individualist. Hence, it could be argued that Rosmini was an externalist. After all, Rosmini himself, like Burge, openly criticized over-intellectualization. Consider, for example, his critique of Kant, as always fine-tuning, leveling, ad hoc. Can a comparison then be made with what Tyler Burge calls 'entitlement'? 133 I will not pursue this matter.

4.

That logic is about being, that it concerns and depends (exhaustively) on subject matter, is an idea that goes at least as far back as Aristotle. Indeed, logic has long been called the science of being. It was Kant who developed the form of hylomorphism (though he credits Epicurus) that we know today in which the formal aspect of reality is split from the subject matter. Despite the profusion Kant's view has had hitherto (it's almost unanimous amongst logicians the claim that logic is demarcated by formality), in the last 60 years it has come under attack. These attacks have been incited primarily by Quine's defeating attack on analytical truths. In fact, it was part of Quine's lifelong project to bring logic back to the subject matter or, in a sense, back to empiricism. His problem consisted in connecting nerve-end triggering with the fabrication of scientific theories (aided only by the outputs of these very scientific theories, including the valid feedbacks stemming from such back and fro). By being adamant in requiring a subjectivistic starting point, and by ignoring the full-fledged, unrestricted and unavoidable dependence on the environment, Quine individuates, and thus, misses the mark. As Tyler Burge squarely puts it:

How to bridge the feared gap between thought and subject matter without causal-experiential relations still needs an explanation. (C)onnection to a subject matter lies in the conditions that make logical inference possible. The fear of a gap derives from an illegitimately subjectivistic starting point- a conception of thinking that does not inquire into the objective conditions that underlie the possibility of thinking. 134

131 Normore, Calvin, 'Burge, Descartes, and Us', Reflections and Replies, pg. 7.
132 That is, since natures depend on the will of God, they could be, or could have been, other than what they are.
The fact that anti-individualism focusing solely on 'physical reality, easily blurs the similarities between anti-
individualists and Descartes as an externalist.
133 See, for example, Burge, Tyler, 'Perceptual Entitlement', Philosophy and Phenomenological Research, 67 (2003), 503-548.
An anti-individualist, Burge follows Quine's footsteps (bringing logic back to subject matter) but is careful not to make the same individuating mistakes. He continues thus:

Logical theory invokes the notion of truth. Truth is world-oriented. It entails successful relations of reference to or truth-of a subject matter. Any attempt to separate truth from a subject matter must produce reasons. In the absence of such reasons, logical truths cannot justifiably be regarded as true independently of relation to a subject matter.

And further down:

Given that logic abstracts from attributes specific to any entities, how do we know there are entities? Does logic provide this knowledge? Should it provide such knowledge, if it is to be an apriori science of being?

The axioms of first-order logic commit it to the existence of entities. The variables of quantification range over a non-empty domain. Non-denoting terms are idealized away. But the existence of free logics, allowing an empty domain, suggests that these points do not establish metaphysical conclusions. One might see classical first-order logic as helping itself to presumption of an existing world. One might conclude that knowledge of existence does not reside in logic, and that free logic best represents knowledge expressed in first-order logic.\(^\text{135}\)

Now, to have a complete argument, validity and consequence must be taken into account. Briefly, validity and consequence are intuitive, that is, they are notions. Logical validity, i.e. truth, and logical consequence, i.e., truth preservation are semantical and meta-logical. (Thus, beyond logical form). Thus, their analysis and application must be systematic, hence requiring mathematical entities. Mathematical entities (infinite), queasy nominalism notwithstanding, are real and, as such, subject matter. (I will not argue for this here).

If for Quine logic is subject matter bound, for Burge mathematics is subject matter. I am interested in mere objectivity. The blunt problem with truth is that nothing explains truth. Objectivity is mind-independence and something more. If truth is disquotationalism, then truth plus value yield objectivity? Taking out the intention, disquotationalism, a mere connection to the world, guarantees objectivity. I will expand on this in chapter 4 when I discuss Colin Mcguinn's logical realism, where truth and objectivity have to do with mind-independence and so subtraction of the mind-dependent part, the intentionality itself, imagination, once creative element in concept formation is exhausted, breeds objectivity.

Recapitulating, let us recall W1's ontology: true and false, positive and negative facts. A world view can be of the facts themselves (what is the case, what is not the case) or nonsensical or it can be of the whole, the *sub speciae aeterni*. For Rosmini, something is missing. A critical part. So minimum and subtle it has never been pinpointed as such. So trivial and general it seems inarticulable and originless. It is presupposed in all cognition. Indeed, mere acknowledging and special pleading is all it takes to grasp the notion. It seems natural to suppose that both were aware of externalism, yet by no means of externalism's depth.

Burge and Quine insist that logic is not independent of subject matter, contending against Wittgenstein's Leibnizian position of intention-world harmony. According to Burge the world distinguishes subject matter for us, *inherently*, through perception. The nature of perception is to separate mind-independence from mind-dependence, it objectifies from the start; the 'matching problem' is artificial and has always been since sense-data is never as raw or necessary as it has traditionally been taken to be by the sense data theorists from Hume and the empiricists to well into the mid-twentieth century.'

\(^{135}\)Ibid.
On the other hand, Individual Representationalism requires having higher notions of intuition. In this sense, Rosmini seems odd because he makes the higher notion seem trivial. Sort of like a ‘catchy ambiguity’, a 50-50, related to the animus, (if you will). Now, if logic is the science of being and consists in subject-object, there is a much disputed problem, namely, the infamous containment problem: given the subjective ens and objective ens and the fact that we can’t have two substances, how are they both contained in general ens? Derivative from Aquinean double dimension, Rosmini fuses all in acting ens, the subject that acts. But how is objectivity guaranteed? Light of Being! An external warrantee and the exact point where descriptive metaphysics tries to become revisionist, in all their innocence.

In §114 of the *Investigations*, W2 writes:

(Tractatus Logic-Philosophicus, 4.5): “the general form of the proposition is: This is how things are.”- that is the kind of proposition one repeats to oneself countless times. One thinks that one is tracing the outline of the thing’s nature over and over again, and one is merely tracing around the frame through which we look at it.\(^{136}\)

Note the terms ‘repeats’, ‘tracing’, ‘rule’, ‘private rule’; language is a system of signs and as a sign, external, so there is no containment problem, it seems. There is only general ens. But by conditioning, by establishing preconditions Individual Representationalism sneaks in.

Further in §120, Wittgenstein writes:

You say: the point isn’t the word, but it’s meaning, and you think of the meaning as a thing of the same kind as the word, though different from the word. Here the word, there the meaning. The money, and the cow you can but with it. (But contrast: money, and its use.)\(^{137}\)

In anti-individualism, mental states depend on the contexts they’re in (e.g., causality or other mental states) analogously to the way words inherently depend on the context in W2 and the linguistic turn. This is externalism in a nutshell.

But in this last example, W2’s cow/money example, the scenario is still Individual Representationalist in the sense that logic still exists, only it has never been as flexible and as exterior. Yet W2 means exterior to language! As if language were a thin sheet that covered reality; W2 still wears the goggles of §114. W2 is still Schopenhaurian beneath the skin and is still looking for the essence, only in undeterminable ways: inside the limits set by the x, while shrugging off the complete history of philosophy. The dire moral seems to be that those who try hardest to shrug it off are the ones greatest chastised by it. One need only recall Schopenhauer’s version of the mundane origin of logic in the pre-socratic disputatios.

In sum, I compared Cavell’s and Kripke’s account of the privacy paradox in order to connect the gap, the inherent skeptical gap, with some attempts at filling that gap (W1 and Rosmini). The attempts have been representationalist. Next, I will asses one last possibility, a possibility often overlooked, namely, imagination, as a final attempt at filling the objectivity lacuna before delving into Perceptual Objectivity, my main line in this dissertation.

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\(^{137}\) Ibid (§120).
Chapter 4: The Nether Road: Imaginatio (an interlude)

Metaphysically a pyramid is as evanescent as wrappings are, or a flash of neon.

The concept of truth seems simple in the following sense: it has no conceptual decomposition, and no empirical essence or nature. We cannot analyze it into conceptual constituents, and we cannot expect to discover a hidden underlying empirical structure for it. Truth is primitive, in this sense.

In this cursory chapter I will lay out an account of the faculty of the imagination derived from Colin McGinn’s authentic layout presented in *Mindsight: Image, Dream, Meaning* (Harvard: 2004). An account of imagination will not only enrich and probe our larger scale account of objectivity, but will function as a forward to chapter 5, the main delve into Perceptual Objectivity. This chapter is highly suggestive and, in a sense, I want to set it apart from the main line of argument, the essence of the incompatibility between representationalist theories of mind and anti-individualism, and the connection this has on skeptical gaps and philosophical skepticism, and, finally, a criticism of the faux or idealist or overintellectualized or romantic roads to objectivity that ignore the depth and relevance of externalist accounts of reality and mind-independence.

*Mindsight* is a short book (just over 160 pages), yet deals with one of the most perplexing topics in literature and philosophy, imagination itself. Using remarks by Wittgenstein and Sartre as its base, McGinn examines the mysterious faculty known as imagination and seeks to replace the old Humean scheme that imagination is but a vague perception, i.e. fundamentally indistinguishable from a perception except by a matter of degree and resolution. Spectacular conclusions are arrived at in the process but the main one is that imagination is a faculty all its own. Whether or not McGinn’s arguments are sound is for the most part irrelevant since I will merely extract from them some uncontroversial premises and their immediate, not-so-uncontroversial consequences (I will ignore most of the *final conclusions*) only to *illustrate* the possible outcomes of anti-individualism (McGinn’s position is clearly anti-individualistic, as are his arguments for the most part). Hence, the brevity and lightness of this chapter.138

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138 To give an analogy, if this were a book on pro-animal movements, this would be the chapter that deals visually with the massacres of factory farming using violent descriptions and bloody photographs. Of course, the arguments contained in the other chapters are more important, but a picture of the reality of the killing exposes the shock value, so to speak, and complements the thesis and yet can be set apart from the rest of the dissertation. Here the shock value is the flash consequences of anti-individualism in something as obscure like imagination.
McGinn lays out some common sense characteristics of the image (as contrasted with a perception). To ‘imagine’ is usually defined primarily as to form a mental image of something not immediately present to the senses. Indeed, etymologically, ‘image’ derives from old French to middle English: imagier, imagene, and in turn from Latin imàgin-, s. of imágō which means, a copy, likeness, equivalent to im- (cf. imitate) + -ágō.

An image, to be sure, is intentional; it is subject to the will (while a perception is not). If, when imagining X, attention towards X ceases, the image of X evaporates. McGinn contrasts this to a hallucination. A hallucination of X is just like a perception of X, except X is not physically present in the hallucination, while it is in the perception; in both the hallucination and the perception the same faculty is affected. On the other hand, an image of X is a whole different ball game, as we shall see.

Another characteristic of imagination is that it can give no new information about the world. This is an alleged consequence of the fact that an imagination is inherently mind-dependent in the sense that it requires, and is exhausted by, intentionality: we must, to a clearly marked degree, focus our attention on the object imagined. Of course, not even apparently common sense/ordinary language characteristics of a first person phenomenology are immune from problems. It has been empirically shown (McGinn himself recognizes) that new information about the world can, in fact, be learned from images. For instance, a person might be asked to describe a specific and unusual detail about an object, whereas the person will imagine the object and then mentally scan or flip the image to the location of the detail and ‘observe’ it through the mind’s eye, so to speak, and answer the question by describing what he ‘sees’. Then again, it might be argued that no (truly) new information was really learned. The point is there are always borderline cases and undeterminable characteristics, even when the thought experiments have been idealized.

But a far more interesting outcome concerns a well-known and very peculiar puzzle: it seems impossible to imagine X if one is, at the same time, perceiving X. (The perplexity of Escher’s paintings as well as the infamous duck-rabbit picture stem from this paradox). This sets a very strange limit to imagination. In an important way, this undermines, for example, the idea that imagination is possibility; that anything imaginable is, to a certain degree, at least metaphysically possible. (Descartes, Hume, Rosmini and many others have held versions of this romanticist idea). The idea is based on an Individual Representationalist account of mental representation where the subject (precisely the wrong account of the first person) could be metaphysically isolated. Reality, it turns out, is much more limited. Something as trivial and mundane as seeing-as, so canvassed by Wittgenstein, places a bitter limit to our beloved fancy, the ‘esemplastic power’ so dubbed by Coleridge, to the surface.

To repeat the characteristics and consequences we have just seen:

- Characteristic: imagination is subject to the will, i.e., mind-dependent.
- Consequence: Therefore, imagination gives no new information about the world.

But counterexamples abound, for example, experiments have shown if a person (say a non-zoologist) is asked if frogs have tails or not, a person will form a mental image of a frog and then scan the image and look for a tail. Thus, new information is learned.

This example also immediately alludes to another interesting outcome which brings out an important maxim about anti-individualism. It has to do with referring; referring under an anti-individualistic perspective.

In McGinn’s words:

When (a) subject is asked about the number of windows in (a) room (not present), he mentally inspects the room itself…: what he “scans” is not the image of the object but the object. Of course, he does this by having an image of the object, but the mental operations are directed not at the image but at its object. The intentional object of such mental operations as scanning, rotating, and inspecting is the external thing, not the image of it. Compare the mental operation of scanning a room by means of ordinary perception: I am asked how many windows are in my living

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139 This experiment is cited in McGinn.
140 Is the information inferred or abduced?
room, so I go next door and have a look, scanning my eyes over the room. Obviously, here, the intentional object of the scanning operation is an external physical thing-not the percepts I have in scanning the room. I don’t scan percepts at all; indeed, it is hard to know what this would be. The percepts are vehicles of the scan, not its objects. So what is scanned is identical to what is seen. Now, I think the same should be said of the kind of mental scanning involved in these imaginary experiments: subjects scan the room with their mind’s eye, not their image of the room. They no more scan the image than the perceiver scans his precépts. Thus, the object of the scanning operation is identical to the object of the image: the room itself.141

Speaking of uncanny consequences! Yet, I repeat, the purpose is to illustrate the depth and potential, unnerving potential, of anti-individualism, not the argument’s validity.142 Even an ephemeral images refers to things, not representations of things. Of course, we can direct attention at the image itself sometimes, but doing so necessarily requires extra effort. In ordinary, non-reflective imagery, the focus is on the object and never on its image/duplicate. But precisely this idea, that attention is to the image and always to the image, is one of Representationalism’s core assumptions which was taken for granted and very seldom argued for. Simplicity of inference does away with it and summons anti-individualism. But we must be careful, anti-individualism does not deflate the representation into, for example, some type-type or token type identity, au contraire, the representation retains its autonomy, i.e., its explanatory power. It is rendered ineliminable yet dependent (precisely because of this dependence is it ineliminable) on factors beyond it: it is connected to the external world in heavier ways, many of these unretrievable, than Representationalism can account for.

Meaning is not in the head; meaning is out there! There is ineliminable interconnectedness. An aseptic, metaphysical quarantine is hopeless. Life is already a four billion year process of domestication. Perception is the result of a long process of causal interaction. So causality is inherently implied in perception’s very nature (as is perhaps the role of action).143 Twin earth inspired thought experiments and scientific updates have shown that a mental state must be held together somehow; that remote, truly remote places keeping the individual individuated, whether in language or in perception or, it seems now, in imagination, are impossible, in the hard sense. These advances bloomed in the seventies and have been ever since. But the core idea goes as far back as Aristotle, who always insisted on it, as if forgetting the world is the acme of foolishness. But perhaps Samuel Beckett said it best when he wrote: ‘you’re on Earth, there’s no cure for that’.144

2.

In chapter 3, we examined logic and possibility. The idea that logic and imagination are intertwined is an idea very present in early Wittgenstein.145 It certainly is central in Rosmini, where possibility is imagination (Rosmini called it Light of Being). To think that imagination is objectivity, or is necessary for objectivity is a symptom of Individual Representationalism. Is imagination necessary for

141 McGinn, Colin, Mindsight, 67.
142 I think there is, to be sure, a function between perception and imagination. Perception provides the spectrum. Imagination works from it. But both are external! It is a mistake to think a mental picture is made up of isolated mental materials only (to give an analogy). I will not delve into this issue.
143 I will examine this possibility concerning action in perception in the next chapter.
144 Beckett, Samuel, Endgame.
145 In W1, imagination provided the missing link, in that it took care of the assertion sign that nuanced Frege and Russell so much; for W1 imagination is identical to modal logic, that is, imagination exhausts modality, it does not express it.
logic (after all, analytic truths need to be imagined, i.e., tried out in the mind; exhausted)?\(^{146}\) And what about negation? Negation needs intention yet negation is unimaginable (trying to imagine not-blue is difficult, to say the least).\(^{147}\)

This has been a very superficial examination. It is based principally on introspection, a very risqué endeavor. I wanted to illustrate the depth of anti-individualism, the extent to which mental states extend beyond the head. There is a deep relation between perception, imagination, objectivity and skepticism. I have merely tried to sketch a possibility.\(^{148}\) For instance, is image to idealism what perception is to objectivity? But an image could be (I think it is) external, just as perception is (inherently) external. Images are not bound. Skepticism is mind-dependent as objectivity is mind-independent. There is no truly philosophical problem of skepticism. Skepticism aims at perception. Imagination is skepticism's agent. (Words are on credit, but dreams are what you make them.) Roughly speaking I wanted to examine what bad science (or biased introspection) plus good, anti-individualistic reasoning, can yield. Next up, good science and anti-individualism.

\(^{146}\) If not so, if there is no relation, neither descriptivist nor pictorialist, the two traditional accounts, then the Eleatic Paradoxes would be easily solved: one has to first imagine the tortuous moving, \(\frac{1}{2}, \frac{1}{4}\), etc. Perception is objective. Imagination, subjective. Zeno's paradoxes have no important bearing on reality. Time of imagination is imaginary time.

\(^{147}\) Is this related to what we discussed in chapter 2, namely, the non-phenomenologically reduced, as in the paraplegic trying to get up from chair yet facing a phenomenological nothingness. (Free will; conceptual formation; oxygenation). Again, Negation, action (to be discussed in the next chapter).

\(^{148}\) I want to postulate two sketches for future research. One sketch is the image as a particular. Perception is inherently of particular-surround or mere surround. But the visual field of the image is particular only. That is why it is hard to scan an image. Imagine a flock of birds. How many? Sure we can count. Yet counting adds information ad hoc lest it is a perception (what is someone said to have a photographic memory?). Another sketch. Delusion is about belief and need not concern a hallucination. Constitutively, it is about belief, the hallucination is accidental or not present in most cases. The image is so related to belief it can be identical to it many times. The Delusional does not hallucinate but believes his imagining (let us recall our discussion on Moore and tigers).
Chapter 5: The Captives (Perceptual Objectivity)

Perception by itself is enough; therefore what has sprung purely from it and has remained true to it, like the genuine work of art, can never be false, nor can it be refuted through any passing of time, for it gives us not opinion, but the thing in itself. With abstract knowledge, with the faculty of reason, doubt and error have appeared in the theoretical, care and remorse in the practical.

Schopenhauer, A., *The World as Will and Representation*, §8

Often it is said that sensation is raw data, whereas perception involves interpretation of data. The terms ‘data’ and ‘interpretation’ are rarely glossed. These terms are at best metaphorical. Each is misleading. Sensation does not play the role of data or evidence. Thinking that it does is the primary mistake of the sense-data tradition. Perception does not involve interpretation. In perception, no one, indeed, nothing, takes sensation as an object to be interpreted. To attribute literal interpretation to a perceptual system is to engage in the most elementary, confused, homunculus thinking.

Burge, Tyler, *Origins of Objectivity*, 367

We want to understand something that is already in plain view. For this is what we seem in some sense not to understand.


1.

In this chapter, I will focus, as I have been already been doing disparagingly above, on Tyler Burge’s Perceptual Objectivity, in particular his recent exposition ‘Perceptual Objectivity’ (*The Philosophical Review, Vol. 118, Number 3, July 2009*) and his just out book *Origins of Objectivity*. After extracting some key concepts, I will complement the exposition with some specific criticisms and open questions.

Perceptual Objectivity is a new and radical theory. It presupposes an anti-individualistic account of mental states. Anti-individualism has, in its current form, not surprisingly, caused quite the uproar, especially in analytic philosophy. Some philosophers have worked out and extended its implications to other areas.\(^{149}\)

Before beginning our exposition, let’s specify what is meant by a ‘mental representation’. Burge is a realist\(^ {150}\) about mental causation and intentionality (though not having been restricted or forced to such a stand under anti-individualism alone). That is, he considers unproductive all attempts at naturalizing or deflating the notion of representation. Without such notions (for instance, exhaustively accounting for biology in terms of function), explanation and prediction of mental lives and behavior is

\(^{149}\)Alva Noé and Andy Clark, for example, have a much hastier, more radical account of anti-individualism’s effect in, for example, accounts of consciousness. I will briefly discuss some of its characteristics further on in this chapter.

\(^{150}\)He is a realist in his opposition to idealism and also in his view on universals.
severed. Representation as a notion has a practical and ineliminable role in scientific explanation. There is nothing mysterious about it: representation means veridicality conditions plus intentionality (i.e. being as of entities in the physical environment). Veridicality plays a key role in psychology. Burge follows psychology’s explanatory use of representation. Science, especially perceptual psychology, organizes itself around the notion of veridicality and representation. Representation is a teleological notion. It serves a function. It concerns biological needs. It is ineliminable in, for example, vision, as we shall see later.

The differences between the two forms of biological explanations alluded to above are worth mentioning. Burge clearly explains the difference between explanation as pure function (e.g., eliminativism) and explanation as veridicality (e.g., holism):

Biological explanations of function explain a different feature of reality than do explanations of veridicality and error. Biological explanations of sensory registration and function, on the one hand, and psychological explanations that center on accuracy, on the other, are different types of explanations... So biological explanations cannot reduce explanations whose point is to explain accuracy and inaccuracy of representational states. A non-vacuous appeal to veridicality conditions in psychological explanation requires evidential support independently of the fact that there is causally based co-variation with external conditions that have biological function.151

Yet that does not mean the first naturalist explanation152 is not exhaustive, in the sense that it implies a baseline for the second non-naturalist explanation:

Patterns of bi-directional, pre-representational causation also provide a baseline from which perceptual capacities are individuated and explained. Interactions between individual organisms and environment help determine the range of causes of sensory discrimination that are candidates for being representata of perceptual states (given that perceptual capacities are in place). What types of entities can be representata, and what causal relations between environmental entities and sensory states help determine perceptual states’ representational content, are both constitutively limited by the nature of pre-representational individual function.153

In other words, functional and veridicality explanations are related, in the same sense that biology is related to physics, yet they produce different outcomes and these outcomes are undeterminable under the generalizing laws (involving pattern recognition and symmetry). Just as it one thing to assume there are all-encompassing general laws (e.g. Standard model, etc.), it is another thing to come up with a law about how these laws come about (a law about law, meta-law so to speak) and, indeed, the outcomes of these laws (strong emergence). In the sense that laws involve interpretation is where the context comes into play (precisely why anti-individualism so important).

Burge writes:

I think all perceptual states are part of a sensory system constitutively associated with individual functions-paradigmatically, with individual agency. A perceptual state is constitutively part of a system some of whose states are attributable to individuals. The representational content of all perceptual states is partly but constitutively fixed by causal relations that derive functional interrelations between individuals and the environment. Moreover, perceptions are constitutively part of a perspective. And perspectives are constitutively attributable to individuals.154

A caution. Perceptual Objectivity is not the same thing as objective perspectivism, yet the two might be confused. That is, since representational states cannot occur in the void and they, necessarily, imply a wider environment, it is futile to formulate something like a stereotype or a narrow content that can single out representational states without involving a wider reality. Again, it is not the mere

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152 Of course, ‘explaining’ explanation in this sense can be misleading.
154 Ibid, 373.
externalism that is so important, but the depth of the role environment plays in the mental states' constitution. It extends beyond reference and meaning and into thought itself and even into the very mode of representation.

But our main topic is objectivity. As I have argued, concerning objectivity, perception needs no supplementary apparatus. This is an empirical matter. The perceptual system functions to represent the world. Phylogenetically, the evolution of the perceptual system faced many limitations in its access to information, principally concerning space, time and resource. Space and time limitations are obvious. Necessarily, the perceptual system needs to be significantly smaller than the universe and work at an efficient rate also significantly lower than the age of the universe. As for resources, organisms are subject to the second law of thermodynamics. The subsystematic mechanisms and computations take time, so the computation itself is a problem since it needs to compensate for that amount of time and the system’s interference and feedback in order for the representation to be accurate. Yet organisms represent the world in real time. The only way to do this is, again, by assuming facts about the world. The system ‘erases’ evidence of the perceptual system in order to represent an accurate picture of the world. Let’s recall the Tractatus’ picture of the eye: Wittgenstein avers that the eye is never seen; solipsism is no accident but from the perspective of solipsism, of claustrophobic pattern recognition, of naïve cartesianism, a realism is tied up. On behalf of that, anti-individualism says it is apriori that any mental state depends constitutively on external factors, primarily causation, as Kripke and Putnam have proved for reference and meaning respectively, and Burge has expanded to the mind.

To the perceptual system, part of the information received (not sense-data, of course, nor some input-output specified by the paradigm of functionalism and the computation theory of mind) is irrelevant, part of the information is quite relevant; and part of it is constant, while part of it is intermediate; part of it is accessible, part of it is inaccessible. In order to represent accurately, the system has functionally and permanently assumed some facts and inferences about the world that remain constant, more or less. They are called perceptual constancies. For example, in order to make out shadows and edges, vision assumes an average general lighting (i.e., sunlight scattered by the sky and the environment, i.e., Gibson’s optic flow) which illuminates more or less uniformly at any given moment. From this assumed uniform base, sharp contrasts in the lighting indicate edges or shadows (I am idealizing, of course). Consequently and simultaneously, there is a standard deviation that accounts for illusion.

Now we must not confuse this. The transformations involving perceptual constancies in the perceptual system from the light arrays striking the retina are automatic. The system need not and does not represent the transformations. For instance, sharp contrasts in lighting cause neurons to fire rapidly (let us assume and idealize this way for the sake of argument). Yet there is no need to interpret that information. To do so would be a form of Cartesianism. There is nothing more to interpret. It is impressive how often scientific jargon and reasoning slips on this note. For example, Homero Figueroa, a scientist specialized in Artificial Intelligence, writes:

El proceso de profundidad a partir de la estereoscopía tiene por objetivo tomar al menos dos imágenes de una misma escena y, a través de encontrar los puntos correspondientes, inferir la estructura tridimensional o profundidad de los objetos presentes en la escena.156

Here, Figueroa is trying to describe the process of vision and the fact that superficial, two-dimensional light striking the retina is transformed into a three-dimensional representation of reality. Yet

155 Could it have been the case that vision evolved in connection to some kind of intelligence where the agent does part of the objectifying himself? I think not, many nonhuman animals have vision and posse no extra-perceptual objectifying capacities.

the word ‘interpret’ is ill-used, for there is nothing to interpret. There is no sense in which the eyes have to interpret, for example, a two dimensional, upside down image and convert it into a three dimensional image. The transformations are automatic and the result is objective. The representation is objective unaided. The cause of a representation as well as the point where it is no longer a representation, cannot, in itself, be represented, since many of the processes that produce the representation are not themselves represented. A representation is irreducible to a certain extent. Burge writes:

Underlying invocations of a supplementary apparatus is the assumption that unless fundamental general conditions that make objectivity possible are represented by the individual, it is impossible to distinguish genuine representation from the surrogate representation of a thermometer or amoeba.

But there is no interpretation at primitive levels. Let’s recall Rosmini’s ‘goldilockesque’ principles: ‘explain no more, explain no less’. For Rosmini, this principle was axiomatic, a thought experiment without an empirical basis. But it should now be clear that the principle has empirical foundations: it is anti-individualism: the representational state has constitution, i.e., necessary and sufficient conditions. By explaining no more, nor explaining no less, externalism’s account of mental states imply an external reality and at the same time is aided by it; while any internalist, hyper-intellectualizing theory of representation pins the burden of formulating a complete account of reality on the perceiver (but what better aid than an external world?). Representationalism, I think, always explains too much. Just to give another extreme example of how scientific writing is still plagued with representationalist dilemmas: Alva Noë accuses neuroscience of Cartesianism in locating the mind in the brain. I will discuss Noë’s alternate position further down.

2.

Perceptual Objectivity assumes an anti-individualistic point of view. It is a matter of constitution: Perceptual Objectivity anti-individualistically individuates macro-entities in the environment. Perception is self-effacing, insofar as it sets apart acquisitions that are intrinsic to the perceptual system from the ones that are extrinsic.

Science is, and ever will be, on the whole at least, anti-individualistic. And for a sound theory of Perceptual Objectivity, two problems must be accounted for: the disjunction problem and the underdetermination problem. I turn to them below.

The Disjunction Problem

157 Even if they did interpret there would still be a point where no further interpretation is possible. (This form of reasoning led W1 to the armchair conclusion of simple objects, as we saw in chapter 3). But by lex parsimonia, interpretation happens at first instance, at subperceptual level. Such ‘interpretation’ is not really an interpretation and the individual, as a whole, does not partake in the transformations. Against Wittgenstein, science today, perceptual psychology specifically, freed from inhibiting verificationalist preconceptions, assumes this idea.


159 Thus there is either an X, as in the common sense world view or a phenomenology, a scientific or ordinary language limit setting, which turns out to be epistemological, as we saw in the two world views Limit 1 and Limit 2. (A way of ‘softening things up’ in order to have a foundation).

160 ‘Truth is disquotation’. Perceptions’ similarity to the Quinean, Tarski-based conception of truth is no coincidence.

161 Yet only 50 years ago scientific methodology was still impregnated with Individual Representationalism, e.g., verificationalism. Verificationalism still resonates today, lightly, to be sure, but fortunately not near as an all-encompassing filter it once was.
The disjunction problem is a topic much discussed in mainstream philosophy of mind today. In fact, it is so overused that Simon Blackburn has dubbed hardcore defenders of disjunctivism’s endemic as suffering from ‘disjunctivitis’. It usually takes the form of the argument from hallucination: it is possible to have an experience phenomenologically indiscernible (by Leibniz law, identical) of object X when object X is in fact present, and when X is not present but hallucinated. The problem is how to discern the real case from the fake case. And the challenge is that any theory of representation must account for this ‘disjunction’, this ‘either/or’, and preferentially provide an explanation of the way a representational state might misrepresent.

As we have seen, anti-individualistic literature concerning the mind was preceded by anti-individualistic literature concerning linguistic reference, most notably in Kripke and Putnam. In Naming and Necessity, Kripke replaced the descriptive theory of reference (after having rebuked it by means of clever counterexamples, e.g., examples of Proper Names in which they are used on occasions when the user has no way to individuate it by means of descriptions, e.g. has no clue at all about the name, yet surely refers to the Proper Name holder) with a causal theory of reference where a Proper Name, for example Aristotle, is referred to by causal and linguistic factors. Putnam’s thought experiment of Twin Earth centers on the disjunction problem: a Twin earth inhabitant experiences a phenomenologically indiscernible perception of water yet does not refer to water but twin water. Thus, meaning depends inherently on factors beyond the mental state.

So in Perceptual Objectivity the disjunction problem is certainly addressed, since, by anti-individualism, a mental state’s constitution depends on factors beyond the mental state’s themselves, most fundamentally on causality.

Perception is inherently teleological. Perception is goal-oriented. It must be able to distinguish between sensory registration and perception proper. This is primitive objectification: accurate representation of the environment beyond the immediate surroundings and beyond mere bodily stimulation, and, though hardest to see, beyond its own perceptual apparatus. Action and agency are very likely to be prior, phylogenetically, to perception. Might primitive objectivity be action plus perception? Indeed, perception involves action, perhaps inherently so. The backside of an object is as objective as the front side, this is what perception is: to perceive is to have a skill that includes action and a capacity to explore the world. Representation is veridicality conditions and perception is representation and exploration. Both concern accuracy and inaccuracy: representation of the way the world actually is or a misrepresentation. Thus, the disjunction problem is addressed and angular skepticism fades.

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162 Is language, with its symbols and tokens, inherently representationalist? Wittgenstein believed all the problems of philosophy are recurrent because language has remained the same and language has seduced philosophers to ask the same questions. Philosophy of mind has certainly taken over philosophy of language as the dominant branch in North America. Part of the motivation for this was the Kripke-Putnam-Burge chain reaction described above. New methods of experimentation have also played an important part.

163 Is this ‘surely’ an assumption? That is, is it an externalist presupposition? In other words, claiming that a Proper Name refers is like claiming, ‘something, at least, has to be for real’.

164 Thus there is also a primitive objectivity that allows a disconnection of the essential from the trivial. This is very often observed in babies. Babies seem to be inherently essentialists insofar as they are aware of natural kinds.

165 It seems that sometimes action ‘overruns’ perception.

166 Action in perception, I believe, is also related to a problem we discussed in chapter 4, the chapter on imagination, namely, negation. Negation is hard to pin. Is seems to evade sharp definition. Now, clearly negatives and action don’t mix, so to speak (an action is never negative, but a perception can be negative, that is, action is given, tautology, time, external conditions, etc.) Indeed, what is the use of action in a negative? W1 knew this, I think. One can almost imagine him smiling as Russell searched the room for a rhinoceros in the famous anecdote.

167 Objectification of a goal missing from action and immediate surroundings, free will, these are complex issues beyond the scope of this dissertation.
The underdetermination problem

On the underdetermination problem, Burge writes:

The underdetermination problem... is the problem of explaining how the (perceptual) system represents, often veridically, specific environmental conditions, given that its input only registers, functionally encodes, proximal stimulation that underdetermines such conditions...

The science of vision attempts to explain ways in which perceptual systems solve instances of the underdetermination problem. Explanation has been rich and often backed with substantial mathematical detail. In sum, science amounts to a set of processes that leads from registered information that correlates with proximal stimulation to perceptual states that represent specific environment conditions, even though those conditions are only one among many physically possible causal antecedents.168

The underdetermination problem is trickier than it seems. As much as it has been used to defend a cause, it has been used against it. It's a decisive fact. (In chapter 2 was examined how the rule paradox in Wittgenstein let loose many controversies about meaning and how Cavellian skepticism stemmed from it).

The idea of Perceptual Objectivity is that underdetermination is solved by nature, by the system itself and not by a posteriori intelligence. The principles governing the solution are not accessible to the system. They are not themselves representable. They stemmed from repeated causal interaction with environment. They resulted in analogs of environmental regularities available as patterns and pattern recognition capacities.

Burge examines specific examples of transformations from underdetermined sources to the formation of perception. These are, of course, anti-individualistic. I will examine these ways. They are key in understanding Perceptual Objectivity. They provide epistemic warrant. Together with the Putman inspired thought experiments alluded above, they represent anti-individualism's strongest arguments against any form of representationalism or associationism. The examples of transformations point to necessary constancies in the perceptual system. The constancies are not there by accident. They are a product of extended causal interaction with the environment.169

Convergence, three-dimensionality and triangulation

The eyes can fix the location and establish an approximate distance through convergence. Convergence is based on a geometrical constancy. By means of partly unrepresentable, trigonometric computations, given that the distance between focal points of eyes is constant and parallel170 and by cuing in proprioceptive feedback of the direction in which the eyes are pointed, the point where the two eyes meet can be computed. Thus, approximate distance of objects can be calculated. The same principles apply to stereoscopy and 3-d vision.

Tracking bodies over time and space

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169 Many of the examples involve action at a distance, which makes many a philosopher feel queasy. As if not being present implies not being objective. These philosophers tend ignore action, action embedded in the causal relations, agency and social and linguistic mediators. The perceptual system and language are great examples of action at a distance. Skepticism towards action at a distance usually stems from, I think, bad analogies in the physical real (like physical limitations in the transfer of mechanical energy, as in tools like gears and angular limits to transfer of rotation; contiguity) and limited metaphors of language. Anti-individualism allows seeing beyond these metaphors and into the depth of knowledge and evolution, life vs. world, the unity of One World, interconnectedness, so to speak.
170 'Constant and parallel'. Constance is already a kind of mind-independence.
Many animals have an innate capacity to track objects over time. In the course of tracking, if the moving object, say a fleeing rabbit, is blocked by an opaque object, say a tree, the perceptual system automatically expects the tracked object to appear on the other end of the tree following the assumed tracking course. Experiment have shown, for example, that babies and some animals show surprise when an object being tracked is blocked as in the above example but the moving object does not appear at the expected place and time (the other side of the tree). This implies perceptual constancies about the way objects ‘behave’ in reality. They emerged from repeated encounter with it. Of course, illusion is a threat yet the threat is a result of the rule, i.e. the presupposition about reality encoded in the perceptual system, the perceptual constancy. Doubt presupposes certainty was W2’s theme in On Certainty; now we see that the theme is present outside of language and in biology itself.

Lightness

Organisms experience objects as having pretty much the same color and tone despite changes in lighting conditions. The perceptual system must make up for this discrepancy. It must be compensated for somehow. Current visual theory and perceptual psychology assume causal interactions between the perceptual system and the environment to have occurred for a long time. In other words, visual theory assumes anti-individualism. These interactions have yielded perceptual constancies that compensate for the color discrepancies just mentioned. The perceptual constancies are part of the perceptual system. The exact computations are not representable nor need be available. Most of it is automatic and part of the subsystems of the perceptual system.

Inverted image

The perceptual system functions in order to give us a clear representation of the world. Yet what is present in the retinal image is by no means a clear representation of the world. What is present is an upside down, unevenly resolved and distorted image, to say the least. Yet through perceptual constancies (assumptions about the world embedded in the perceptual system through eons of interaction with it), the system can transform the retinal image into a clear representation of the world.

It is still very easy to fall into Individual Representationalism given this scheme. Take the inverted image for instance. Descartes himself theorized on how the mind made up for this discrepancy (as did Kepler). Yet the perceptual system is not the mind. We must not fall for Representationalism! One must ask, inverted, yes, but relative to what? The algorithms and computations are part of the perceptual system, to be sure, but by no means are they representable or even accessible to the mind or the end product.

We must guard against any type of anthropomorphic fallacy.

Time and timing

Time delay is a tricky issue. Indeed, photons reflected from an object into the retinal image take time to travel. Thus, by the time they reach the retina, kick-start the electrochemical processes that result in the representation, the object is delayed, since we are not representing the object itself but only its state some moments ago.

This can easily be translated into a form of representational skepticism. A type of uncertainty principle. At least, one can see how a sense-data theorist might be baffled. The anti-individualist knows, however, that there is more than what is given. The perceptual system supplies the lacunas of the world of representation. That is precisely how vision works. Vision is not some immediate process. As we mentioned earlier, detractors of anti-individualism might chide the argument by claiming that it postulates impossible action at a distance. As if that made it un-objective! I think it proves just the point: it was

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171 I held earlier that calculus is a form of externalism. The relation between imagination, limits and action at a distance is an interesting topic for future research.
created for a purpose. Perception is teleological. Its function is to represent the world accurately. It is objective. It implies veridicality conditions.

**Convexity and concavity**

The fact that humans and some non-human animals automatically imply a default concavity instead of convexity in certain patterns of the visual field where the appearance is vague (a computer would be unsure whether it is convex or concave) argues for anti-individualism and perceptual objectivity. Perceptual systems by default assume solidity and closed bodies (e.g. stones, moving animal instead of hollow backgrounds). A number of theories take this self-evident fact about perception as a clear indication of how evolution and regularities of the environment and the organism's repeated encounter with that environment type-individuated the perceptual states.

Despite the plausibility and elegance of this theory, I think another possibility should be acknowledged. I find an analogue in digital cinema cameras and interframe compression which could also explain perception and does not involve repeated encounters with the environment but mere parsimony and energy saving. Interframe compression involves shrinking down the image in size (to save memory and space) while maintaining quality of the image as constant as possible. The image is shrunk by codecs (algorithms). Like the perceptual system, the process is teleological and it involves constancies (the codecs). To give an example, say the camera records a scene with one actor reciting a monologue which takes place entirely in a living room. Throughout the scene the living room is more or less unchanging and the only perceptible motion is the slight movements of the actor's body. The codec then finds ways to delete repetitive information from one frame to the next. Obviously, in this example, the background is what is being compressed. Thus it records one frame with instructions to repeat.

This challenges the above theory since this is a possibility which need not necessarily involve repeated causal relations with the environment. The perceptual system could have been guided by mere 'cosmic laziness'.

**Color, Stability, Slant, Obstructions, resolving power as uneven**

A lot of the ever-present dirt, mote and particles from environment (even including particles from the eye itself) which would otherwise obstruct vision are 'erased' by the subsystem itself; again, through repeated relation to environment. As Alva Noë sums it up:

Change blindness doesn't show that we fail to experience the rich array of detail we seem to see. It shows something else: that our ability to sustain perceptual contact with the environment over time is not just a matter of there somehow being a picture of the scene in our brains; rather, it is a matter of access. And this, in turn, is a matter of skill. For example, seeing requires a practical understanding of the ways that moving one's eyes and one's head and one's body changes one's relation to what is going on around one. And also, significantly, it requires that we do not occupy a (Cartesian-like) demon world. Our ability to lock onto and keep track of the world – our sturdy perceptual access to the world – depends not only on our skills but also on the fact that the environment in which we find ourselves is governed by certain causal and physical regularities. Our perceptual consciousness of the world a

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172 The example calls back attention at the caution mentioned earlier. ‘Preference’ and ‘choice’ are not the most technical terms in language. The perceptual system has no ‘choice’ in say choosing between concavity and convexity, of course. The choice is presupposed. Choice is made on behalf of this presupposition. For instance, we could take a phenomenon in the visual field to be convex in case we have reasons to believe we are being deceived. But this implies another context! A Cartesian solution and not a mute skepticism, so to speak. And, just to push the argument all the way, we cannot strip down and say there is a position where it is blunt Representationalism of nothing or at least my own sensation. It is still a solution with its context and not a blank doubt. Action somehow is presupposed. Action is the default predisposition. Not intelligence but mere action. Insects have action, thus they have a weapon against the insect demon of deception. Action is anti-individualism mark.
a causally, spatially, temporally well ordered, regular and predictable place depends on the world’s actually being that way.\textsuperscript{173}

**Other examples of distal environment representation from proximal stimulation in some animals**

There are myriad examples of perceptual constancies and distal environment in entomology. There is homing in ants (similar to Salmon homing). There are also spectacular examples of other perceptual constancies in the sand scorpion and the Portia spider. In all the examples, the distal environment is as objective as the proximal stimulation. It is mind-independent.

This shows two things. One is, of course, the perceptual constancies themselves. Perpetual constancies are capacities for objectification. Objectification separates registration of surface stimulation that is local to individual and occasion elements in that registration that are (according to formation patterns) representationally specific to attributes in the physical environment. Thus objectification separates local, idiosyncratic registrations from representations of individual-independent, occasion-independent, mind-independent, perspective-independent, beyond the individual… Objectification lies in marking off states that are as of specific system-independent elements in the environment from states idiosyncratic or local to the perceiver… perception is the product of objectification.\textsuperscript{174}

And the other is the fact that there is never complete immunity to illusion. Thus the disjunction problem is addressed.\textsuperscript{175} There is a discrepancy between what one sees and sensory stimulation. Yet the brain makes up for this discrepancy. ‘Default’ conveys the means of perceptual constancies.\textsuperscript{176} As Burge again ratifies:

All perceptual systems exhibit a complex set of factors and principles that help explain the transition from registration of proximal stimulation to perceptual representation.\textsuperscript{177}

This not only shows that perception is active, but also that the perception considers the individual as a whole. Perception is not agency; however, perception is attributable to the individual given that the perceptual system is a subsystem of the individual as a whole.

3.

And what about objectivity? Wherein is Perceptual Objectivity objective? In that it is mind-independent, and not another thing. Value is a different facet. Value is subjective. Axiology is not our concern for now.

Anti-individualism is found in perception, and very concretely so, as we saw in the examples:

Objectification is formation of a state with a representational content that is as of a subject matter beyond idiosyncratic, proximal, or subjective features of the individual. The subject matter is mind independent, or it is constitutively non-perspectival… Objectification resides specifically in the ways perceptual systems overcome proximal stimulation’s underdetermination of environmental representata, and sensory registration’s underdetermination of perceptual representation of those representata… Overcoming that problem involves

\textsuperscript{173} Noë, Alva, *Out of Our Heads*, 141-142.

\textsuperscript{174} Burge, Tyler, *Origins of Objectivity*, 399-400.

\textsuperscript{175} The disjunction problem and the underdetermination problem turn out to be two sides of the same coin.

\textsuperscript{176} Being \textit{that-way} and not \textit{being} (the continental problem of being confuses nomology precisely because of this problem). Doubt presupposes certainty; perception neither presupposes language nor intelligence. So, being underdetermined, it is underdetermined all the way; likewise, disjunctivism means the disjunction problem reaches everything; fallibilism. Perception is world-oriented since the world orients the system, perception is not a discovery, hence, not an objectification of the world.

\textsuperscript{177} Burge, Tyler, *Origins of Objectivity*, 315.
systematically neglecting aspects of sensory registration that are not likely to correlate with relevant environmental conditions, and capitalizing on aspects that are likely to correlate.\textsuperscript{178}

Yet, despite all, the system refers, accurately or inaccurately, to particulars against surround. That is the default perspective. Objectification happens automatically. Unconsciously, if you will. It is not forced upon by the individual. It occurs in the subsystems and is itself systematic. It is part of the structure of those systems. Perception is a product. It is the \textit{finished} product.\textsuperscript{179}

Now, a perceptual system cannot represent its own perception. (This is related to the containment problem and the map paradox made famous by Russell\textsuperscript{180}). A perceptual system causally depends on environment and, hence, energy deficiency is an essential factor.

Summing up, the exercising of perceptual constancies is the key to objectivity. Perception provides the first account of objectivity as a violent result of biological processes in the unrecoverable primitive organic muck. Of course, science’s accounts of objectivity is different. It concerns ideal events, not concrete objects as in non-abstract caveman thought.\textsuperscript{181} Yet it is precisely in the non-abstract caveman thought where objectivity is default. This account has not changed, nor cannot it change. It is part of its constitution, and is related to natural kinds, artifacts and other minds. We will, of course, always yearn for ever more general accounts of objectification that includes both. But we should judge by the same sword. Before delving into the problem of the 3\textsuperscript{rd} man we should distinguish Perceptual Objectivity from the objectivity of science. Perception is inherently perspectival, i.e. marked and limited by egocentric framework. Thus, perceivers are locked in a kind of presentism, a solipsism, so to speak. It is one thing to extend this all the way to science, cosmic laziness, the event, 4-dimensionalism and even beyond; it is another thing to account for objectivity as mind-independence. Cosmic laziness (or the law of parsimony) is for science what the ‘view from nowhere’ is to the human observer; science concerns events; perception, the particular and the surround; both seek perspective independence. That is why a complete account of the origins of objectivity must match the two. In the road to objectivity, someplace has got to be a starting place.

As Burge puts it:

I think that it is the fact that attributive abilities are never exercised separately from singular applications in perception that helps mark the non-conceptual, non-propositional status of perception. The problem of explaining how objective reference emerges in thought is not that of explaining how conceptual abilities (much less linguistic abilities) make possible a breakthrough to objectivity or to singular reference. Objectivity and singular reference are constitutively present in autonomous perception. The problem is to explain what it is to separate attribution from its role in aiding singular reference, to arrive at propositional predication. A capacity for such separation is a central aspect of achieving the specific context independence and generality that are embodied in pure attribution, propositional thought and rational inference.\textsuperscript{182}

Objectification happens at subsystem. It does not even require language in order to objectify. To think so is to hyper-intellectualize. Perceptual states are what they are by environmental interaction. Amid the interaction, relevant and non-relevant causal relations are mingled.

4.

\textsuperscript{179} No wonder Fred Dretske is worried about epiphenomenalism.
\textsuperscript{180} A perfect map of the world made in the world needs to include a representation of that very map which in turn needs to include a map and so on \textit{ad infinitum}.
\textsuperscript{181} I find the situation analogous to the fate of the meter standard. The meter used to be defined as the length of a metal bar conserved in Paris. Subsequently, the meter’s definition became abstract, defined as distance travelled by light in a vacuum in a precise fraction of a second. (And a second in turn defined by means of an exact number of vibrations of a cesium atom in the vacuum).
\textsuperscript{182} Burge, Tyler, \textit{Origins of Objectivity}, 539.
Lastly, I want to consider, as way of illustrating a possible counterexample to the anti-individualistic theory of Perceptual Objectivity, a specific and very influential case in point: the work on philosophy of mind and perception of Wilfred Sellars. Sellars is particularly important because he encompasses my overall goal in two ways: first, as an example of a critique of sense-data within an individualist framework, and, second, as a hyper-intellectualizing representationalist target for anti-individualism.

Sellars thrived during the pith of the linguistic turn in which subjectivistic (atomistic) approaches to philosophy, which were based on sense-data (Sellars dubbed it ‘the Given’ or ‘givenness’), came under attack all at once by philosophers who, by appealing to intersubjectivity, interdependence, necessary role of context, and so on, replaced it with language, discourse and, ultimately, structure.

For the most part, the attacks worked. Atomism was debunked. Yet the supplants did not persevere very long either, and were quickly, notwithstanding their attack on the inner, regarded as linguistic idealisms (as we have seen in chapters 2 and 3). In the case of Sellars, he argued that language is necessary for understanding even direct perception; indeed, according to Sellars, language (inferential connections to propositional beliefs) is pre-supposed in sense data; language is a precondition for objectivity. According to Sellars, in perception, the realm of the self-evident, there is, nonetheless, ‘a slow building-up of a multi-dimensional pattern of linguistic responses.’

Sellars defines ‘the Given’ as:

The idea that observation ‘strictly and properly so-called’ is constituted by certain self-authenticating nonverbal episodes the authority of which is transmitted to verbal and quasi-verbal performances when these performances are made ‘in conformity with the semantical rules of language’ is, of course, the heart of the Myth of the Given. For the Given, in epistemological tradition, is what is taken by these self-authenticating episodes. These takings are, so to speak, the unmoved movers of empirical knowledge, the ‘knowings in presence’ which are presupposed by all other knowledge, both knowledge of general truths and the knowledge ‘in absence’ of other particular matters of fact. Such is the framework in which traditional empiricism makes its characteristic claim that the perceptually given is the foundation of empirical knowledge.183

Through a complex set of reasoning and elucidations, including the evocation of a thought experiment where a genius ‘invents’ internalized impressions (1st person nonverbal imagery, thoughts, in foro interno) purely out of ‘overt’ verbal behavior and discourse (‘looks’ and ‘looks talk’), as well as poignant restatements of his behaviorist background doctrine, Sellars concludes that a reporting role is the only necessary addition to a primitive language game of this sort in order to internalize into private 1st person episodes (immediate experiences) and obtain givenness (Sellars was in many ways a functionalist). Thus he concluded that, logically and methodologically, rules and roles are prior to abstract and theoretical entities; an outcome of this is that a common language of discourse encompasses scientific discourse, i.e., science ‘flowers’ upon the ‘prescientific stage’ or, as he puts it, since ‘discourse no longer appears as one plane parallel to another, but as a tangle of intersecting dimensions...scientific discourse is but a continuation of a dimension of discourse which has been present in human discourse from the very beginning’.184 185

Burge criticizes Sellars by pointing out that, in the first place, Sellars’ position has no place in perceptual psychology. This undermines the position in the face. Indeed, it is a matter of fact that no current science that studies perception would agree with Sellars in maintaining that to perceive something as a certain color or shape requires one to be equipped with the propositional abilities he speaks of, much less that such a perception is the ‘culmination’ of an extremely complex array of linguistic practices.

Sellars, by arguing that perception necessarily implies propositional abilities, concludes (in parallel to his crushing of givenness) that perceptual beliefs have no warrant unless they are aided by

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183 Sellars, ‘Phenomenalism’, 90.
184 Sellars, W., Empiricism and the Philosophy of Mind, §38
185 Ibid, IX, §40-41.
186 This is probably the reason why he wrote that science is always revisable, but cannot be revised all at once, §38.
language. This is refuted by obvious counterexamples. Young children and some animals have been scientifically (and common-sensically) proven to have the capacity to form perceptual belief yet surely have no propositional abilities or language use what so ever. Nonperceptual sensory registration, perception proper, and thought need to be properly distinguished. Sellars distorts the epistemology: perception is epistemically prior to language (though not to sensory registration). More so, perception, by itself, can provide warrant, or, as Burge prefers to dub in order to include children and animals, entitlement. Warrant does not reside entirely, or primitively, or in first instance, as Sellars believed, in inferential connections of propositional belief. A child is surely entitled to a perceptual belief. Reasons (including inference and linguistic abilities) are not the only source of epistemic warrant, Burge insists.

Beyond these certainly valid counterexamples, anti-individualistic attacks of the form we have considered equally apply. Any attack on ‘the inner’ and at internalism should be extremely cautious; the Philosopher's Investigation, for example, illustrates ways in which language (and mere descriptions of how language ordinarily functions even at its minimum capacity) reveals how inner processes are not sufficient for meaning and understanding (neither are mental rules; nor inner pictures; nor experiences); indeed, he makes any pre-theoretical picture seem foolhardy. A good question for Sellars is, if he is so keen at criticizing foundations, why is language immune from such criticisms? There is a temptation, given there is no essence as to how language works and the fact that it is mainly through language that the anti-essential idea is revealed, to take the language itself to be the essence, by merely, as Sellars did, bending it in the form of a precondition. (Even the Investigations despaired and hinted at some grammatical essence and grammatical harmony.) Yet one must not confuse reveal with constitute!

Openness to this confusion, I think, is slowly bringing about the demise of structuralism and linguistic all-encompassing world views, which so captivated the last century’s intellectual endeavors. Externalism urgently needs to replace this self-contained world view (I have called it Limit 1). Language is not all there is. While knowledge and consistent apriori replies (for instance a priori replies to skepticism) do involve higher capacities, objectivity and perception are too primitive for such devices. It was a merit of the latter part of the 60's and beyond that philosophers like Kripke, Putnam and Burge made it clear that one need not understand, nor describe, nor self-refer in order to refer, to say the least, but also to mean and, indeed, to think. We must be ready to extend this even further, if need be. Only so will we be freed of idealism.

Sellars rightly concluded in fallibilism yet he somehow missed the bigger picture; instead of language he should have, being the reflective generalist he was famous for being, uncovered anti-individualism. Philosophy of mind is not parasitic on language. Whilst it makes all the sense to presume that thought is parasitic on language, there are certainly no grounds for believing today, given advances in the science of perception, that perception and perceptual capacities are.

In Burge’s words:

(N)eo-Sellarsian views rest on false dilemmas. They assume that either perception provides propositional reasons, or it contributes nothing to epistemic warrant for empirical belief. The dilemma is methodologically misguided. It sets requirements on epistemic norms. Then it maintains that perception must meet this requirement or fail to be relevant to epistemic norms or evaluation. We then have the absurd situation of philosophers either maintaining that perception is epistemically irrelevant to empirical warrant or dictating that perception must be propositional, clearly an empirical issue that depends on the nature of perceptual capacities. The epistemic value of empirical belief depends on the contribution of empirical belief by perception. Norms apply to use of capacities. Perceptual capacities are obviously relevant to warrant for perceptual belief and knowledge. Sellars’s method fails to ground empirical warrant in understanding of, or indeed any serious reflection on, perceptual capacity.188

Perception aims at achieving veridicality. A clear and scientific study of perception shows that it does not depend on language.

187 Though I think this view, at least in some respects, is likewise erroneous.
5.

In sum, Kant’s question *what are the minimum conditions for representing the world objectively* that marked the blueprint for the philosophy that stemmed afterwards has seen some ups and downs; we have certainly examined a few positions from this motley. Kant’s answer was, of course, a complex set of categories; Rosmini brought them down to one; Sartre, in a radical reversal of idealism, to zero, that is, to a nothingness. Sellars, Quine, Neo-Kantian Strawson, et al, in a sense; to a negativity, to a harmless, yet all-encompassing in its fullest sense, *pre-condition*: the nonesuch, *sine qua non*, language herself. These last thinkers, in trying to come up with an indefeasible constitution of objectivity aimed at a refutation of idealism fell straight into it: bounded by the premise *the structure of language determines the structure of thought*, they jumped, not without impunity, to conclusions that blurred the limits of world and experience. But ‘the world is the world, my experience is my experience’ is a saying that goes back at least as far as Aristotle. This is not to say that all attempts at resolving the stubborn old tripping stones will surely go bankrupt, but it is to say that a change of direction to externalist accounts is imperative.

We have seen how atomists like W1, motivated by a need for control, symmetry, and an aseptic medium which prompted them to adapt their 1st person starting point (their sense-datum given), tried to construct objective representations using simple yet verifiable unreducibles: particulars, so called. It was W2 by reincarnating the ancient Greek dilemma of analyticity and the third man and applying it to the problem of interpretation and signs (interpretation must come to an end; adding more signs does not help) that the casting out representationalism and internal sources of meaning began, first in line was his own picture theory. But at that point, the new problem (the temptation) was that language and her aporias seemed general enough to allow it to be equated with the world or made into a precondition. It certainly seemed resourceful and at the same time harmless enough. But what makes one think that representing the *manifested* preconditions (in order to get a match) accounts for the totality, i.e., the necessary and sufficient, of the general conditions for representation of a mind-independent world? We have seen that many of the conditions for perception need not be represented, indeed need not and are not made available by the perceptual system. Fortunately, the representation of the preconditions is not necessary for representing a mind-independent world.

The jump from atomism to holism might seem like a big progression, yet it is still bound by the same Kantian question. The question, ever so slick, seems to split the answers into a disjunction: either an idealistic or a transcendental answer. That is, whether singling out structure or precondition, these preconditions or structures will be either idealistic or transcendental structures or preconditions. Last century surely was the century of last stands: last stands that took the liberty of ‘forgetting the world’. That they did so mostly, if not entirely, because of the fact that the sign is arbitrary makes it seem even more dramatic. This world-forsaking liberty is no longer acceptable. Though not as full-fledged as most of the accounts of his time, Sellars, for instance, evoked a type of functionalism. But still, by appealing to a common observation language -thus a common coin- which is more important, i.e. methodologically prior, than the world, Sellars hyper-intellectualized. Be it in the form of language or discourse, as

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189 We did not review Sartre, not even superficially, of course, but I think existentialism represents an ingenious response to the ‘nomological before the metaphysical’ change of direction. However, their response, their motto ‘existence precedes essence’, instead of being backed by an extant science, equated the nomological with a metaphysical void, a 1st person lacuna that subtly took the place of the objectivity lacuna.

190 ‘Coincidentally’ Sartre found freedom in the void of consciousness, just like Kant found libertinage in the noumena.

191 Recall the Derridian motto ‘there is nothing outside the text’.

192 Though Sellars correctly pointed out that the world had been equated with sense-data; if only he had paid enough attention to realize sense-data is not perception!
Sellars and his philosophy of language contemporaries believed for many years, be it in the form of isolated structure, be it in the form of theory, anti-individualism is efficiently casting out idealisms. As Mark Rowlands puts it:

To reveal a portion of the world, say an object, as being one way rather than another is simply to represent it by way of various properties that it has independently of the structuring activities of the mind or language. In short, language may indeed, to an extent, structure our experience and so help bring about a certain way of revealing the world. But it is only if we make the inane mistake of confusing structuring of experience with structuring of the world that we end up with any sort of idealist conclusion.¹⁹³

Finally, Moore’s direct realism was a furious attempt to expel the residue of all the alluded attempts (and all the attempts to come) at refuting idealism and answering skepticism. As if common sense can take care of it all, including itself. Even though Moore probably did not know where he was going, science, I think, has sided with Moore’s direct realism. Perception is objective and neither the conditions nor the preconditions need be represented. And the lesson seems to be that the very attempt at a representation of the preconditions is as idealistic as the idealism it aims to abnegate. More menacingly still, it forces a morbid and quite unnecessary adherence to the idea that the phenomena is methodologically (and perhaps logically) prior to the noumena. There is no question it is an attractive picture for some purposes: for one thing, it requires a person to do the objectifying him or herself, perhaps as a diversion or perhaps as a pseudo-restriction to slyly avoid a number things -including, among other things, the truth, that the world is real and for the most part it is as it appears to be-. Literature, I think, has made the most of the skeptical gap consequence of these accounts, but also Theology, as it requires an external power to do the objectifying, as for example, in Rosmini; I will not delve on how much the skeptical gaps ended up benefiting Kant’s motivations. In the next and last chapter, I will make a final assessment of Individual Representationalism and the externalist accounts that are replacing them, along with a few final speculations and some brief looks forward.

¹⁹³ Rowlands, Mark, Externalism, 42.
Chapter 6: Conclusion-The Final Road: The Medium Revealed?

Yes, even then, when already all was fading, waves and particles, there could be no things but nameless things, no names but thingless names. I say that now, but after all what I know now about then, now when the icy words hail down upon me, the icy meanings, and the world dies too, foully named. All I know is what the words know, and the dead things, and that makes a handsome little sum, with a beginning, a middle and an end as in the well-built phrase and the long sonata of the dead. And truly it little matters what I say, this or that or any other thing. Saying is inventing. Wrong, very rightly wrong. You invent nothing, you think you are inventing, you think you are escaping, and all you do is stammer out your lesson, the remnants of a pensum one day got by heart and long forgotten, life without tears, as it is wept.

Beckett, Samuel, Molloy, 27

The antithesis of a real and apparent world is lacking here: there is only one world, and this is false, cruel, contradictory, seductive, without meaning. A world thus constituted is the real world. We have need of lies in order to conquer this reality, this "truth", that is, in order to live. That lies are necessary in order to live is itself part of the terrifying and questionable character of existence. Metaphysics, morality, religion, science-in this book these things merit consideration only as various forms of lies: with their help one can have faith in life.

Nietzsche, Friedrich, Will to Power, Vintage, New York, 1968, §853 (1886: fragmentary draft of preface to new edition of Birth of Tragedy)

But Faith, like a jackal, feeds among the tombs, and even from these dead doubts she gathers her most vital hope.

Melville, Herman, Moby-Dick, VII, 43

1.

I think I have clearly spelled out and made imminent the difference and incompatibility between anti-individualism and Individual Representationalism. It takes additional foresight to grasp the depth of it. For instance, according to Alva Noë, contemporary neuroscience, by adhering to idea that the mind is identical to (supervenes on) neural activity in the brain, continues to be constrained by representationalist accounts in their study of consciousness. The brain plays an important role, to be sure, yet it is embedded, dependent and contingent upon causal connections and interplay with the wider environment. Neural-only explanations always fall short. The brain is necessary but not sufficient.

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194 Functionalism, computational theory of mind, etc. all consist inherently in an input/output frame of constitution; again, input/output relative to what? Anti-individualism shows how foolhardy individuating the 1st person (i.e., presenting the exact limits of the first person account) is; so how foolhardy is objectifying, taking what is already foolhardy as an assumption, and assuming input/output of information to the 3rd person?

195 Again, let's take vision, for instance. What is visual about the neurons? What is visual about the mechanics themselves? The mechanics provide explanatory power, of course, but we are interested in vision. This is always a complex issue; perhaps the study of consciousness is not of this century.

196 Indubitably necessary (there is outstanding empirical evidence for this), yet whether it is replaceable is, I think, still an open question.
But one thing is for sure. The wider environment is necessary since the body schema extends beyond normal body.\textsuperscript{197} Tools; technology; indeed, language are all part of the net dynamism of consciousness. We are endowed with wider minds than we can accurately map.

And this is just concerning consciousness as a whole. So what does this mean for perception? It means that the perceptual system is likewise embedded in the environment at an inseparable level. Perception, by its very constitution, is interaction. Perception involves action.

As Noé puts it:

Our sense of perceptual presence of the detailed world does not consist in our representation of all the detail in consciousness now. Rather, it consists in our access now to all the detail, and our knowledge that we have this access.

To experience an object is a different process from inferring an object. We do not form hypotheses of external objects as in the Millian conception that Moore thought, by elimination, to be the most plausible. Moore’s hypothesis solution to the existence of external objects is inferential and is based on an incorrect 1st person account of perception. It was vastly influenced by Russell and sense-datum theories. ‘Enactive Perception’ is another anti-individualistic theory of perception (besides Burge’s Perceptual Objectivity) that might replace outdated (yet still resounding!) representationalists accounts. Both theories, Perceptual Objectivity and Enactive Perception, are compatible. As we saw in the last chapter, the back of an object might be out of view but it is accessible. The environment is part of the relation between objects and the environment. The relation we have to the backsides of objects is not different than the relation we have to front sides (except that one is the front and one is the back). The world is there; it is not depicted before it is there; there is only one reality and it is not a representation. So if presence is real, angular skepticism is solved. The computer upon which I am typing gives the appearance of solidity. This appearance is not mere vacuous phenomena afflicting my visual field. Firstly, there is intermodality going on between eye movements, touch and sound. Secondly, even if vision is all I have (say I am deaf and limbless), the possibility of confusing my computer for a flat, nonsolid patch of color is very limited for two main reasons. One is that belief is, perhaps with one of two unimportant exceptions, passive, and we first need to believe that the computer is not real, or that there is a nontrivial and relevant possibility that it is not real; this, by itself, is already a pertinent checkpoint. The second reason is more essential: I need only act\textsuperscript{199} (action is more primitive than perception; perception probably evolved as a complement to action), merely tilt my head, for instance, thus changing my angle to -voila- reveal the lateral side of the computer and even backside if need be. Thirdly, even in the extreme case where I am completely immobilized (suppose even that my eye muscles face paralysis, through, say, some potent anesthesia and I assume the form of a passive receptor of light arrays), there is still, ultimately, some interplay between my memory and the perception, and, harder to see but much more fundamental, the world is there: the world plays an indispensable part in memory. The world is the ultimate hard-drive. The world does not disappear simply because the world just does not behave like that. The world has no behavior. It is us, the scandalous creatures, who inject behavior and animate thing. A conjunction of memory, action, and instinct are all embedded in the environment. Seeing is exploring the world; not exploring how we explore the world. Seeing is, apriori, explorative seeing. The eyes, by their very constitution, are explorative organs. We need not subsequently objectify their results. Finally, perception evolved, so there is a fourth reason: the perceptual apparatus functions to separate and dispel information that is proper of the perceptual system from information that is proper of the perception itself. Or as Burge puts it:

\textsuperscript{197} Artificial Intelligence will need, apriori, a context, an environment.
\textsuperscript{198} Noe, Alva, \textit{Is the Visual World a Grand Illusion?}, 10.
\textsuperscript{199} \textit{In the beginning was the deed}; Goethe’s phrase so beloved by Wittgenstein checks even pure skepticism; no interpretation just experience; objective experience.
Objectification is not the product of an ability to represent conditions on objectivity. It is the product of subindivudal, modular abilities and their constitutive content-determining relations to the environment beyond the perceiver. What makes perceptual psychology work—what makes explanation in terms of representational states with veridicality conditions fruitful—is the complexity and systematicity in a system's operations. This complexity and systematicity makes psychology's solving its underdetermination problem explanatory and illuminating. Solution to that problem cites processes that systematically filter proximal stimulation that is not likely to correlate with relevant environmental conditions in order to produce probable specific correlates of specific environmental attributes. Proximal stimulations are processed to provide a perceptual model of the world, as distinct from informational and functional responses to stimulation in the individual's surfaces.200

The perceptual system was (anti-individualistically) embedded in a context from the start (it did not evolve inside a demon world; if it did, we would be worried that the perceptual system evolved in a nondemon world). Vision is not an artful process of analysis of information or of the raw data flux. Transformations, inherent in the perceptual system (which involve nonrepresentable processes), render inoperative the need to objectify results, let alone produce them by other intellectual means, say by coming up with full-fledged situations, as in a parallel arguments, or as preconditions.201 I can, of course, come up with hypotheses, but there is no given, i.e., there is no artificial constant emerging out of the flux that can be incorporated into the transcendental picture as, say, a logical map upon which we steer. Hypotheses are fallible. Anything beyond the normal environment from which perception most likely evolved from requires empirical investigation (just like Descartes has to come up with 'stories' to flesh out his doubts; Descartes doubts are really possible solutions. The empirical investigation might test them but the solutions must necessarily—not without grief—admit to the disjunction problem, underdetermination, fallibility and anti-individualism). This might seem trivial to a scientist, where skepticism is not even an issue, but philosophy really bled for the anti-individualism principle. Anti-individualism sprung from the hopelessness of the armchair; it posses all its glory and all its exorcisms. Beyond the Molinistic phobia of derived intentionality and some old yearning for a showy type of infallibility (whether cheap, like sense-data, or everlasting like Anselm's perfect, non-as-such perfection), beyond perhaps a few first person point of view nostalgias, fallibility and anti-individualism are rapidly recasting the landscape of North American philosophy of mind.

We have just examined the most extreme examples so far: Alva Noë has recently extended externalism to consciousness itself, its architecture (vehicle externalism). For Noë, a complete account of consciousness is, apriori, holistic. Thus he argues in Out of Our Heads, Why You Are Not Your Brain and Other Lessons from the Biology of Consciousness:

According to the intellectualist conception, we are habit-free. Our distinctive nature reveals itself precisely in the fact that we perceive, we evaluate, we decide, we plan, we act. We are free precisely because we rise above mere habit and act from principles. Now; there is something to this. There is a value in the freedom that comes from deliberation and decision; it is valuable to rid ourselves of prejudice. But here's the sticking point: judgment, deliberation, decision making, always takes place in a context, a setting. There is no such thing—Descartes' fantasy notwithstanding—as deliberation and judgment all the way down. Making judgments, applying categories, interpreting— all of this requires that one's terms and concepts are settled, at least by and large...

The fantasy of rational emancipation is just that—a fantasy—at least if it is meant to suggest that there can be a presuppositionless form of mental life.202

Indeed, we are out of our heads. This is a radical and very speculative prototype, though very cogent and, prima facie, very determinate: it's preferable to uncork than to recoil within; best to double up than double down; that is, it's better to move up one level than to move down one or two (even one,

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201 In other words, nature is not that crippled. Engineering starts elsewhere, never at ground-level, never in metaphysics. I think this is a merit of anti-individualism.
unfortunately, is enough to run the danger of an infinite regress). I am speaking figuratively, of course.203

To think this way masks the ‘impartiality’ of which we are referring to. What I mean is that
representationalist theories, all of them, possess a ‘heaviness’ that consists in (the world being my
representation) jam-packing everything in something less than that whole but yet containing
(miraculously) the essential features and mechanisms of the whole. And by placing the whole burden on
the brain (or soul), the bloated head (or soul) tends to be filled with conceptual fistulas. Anti-
individualism: let bloodletting begin!

2.

But what other specific consequences can be laid out? A good way to problematize this new
astonishing hypothesis204 is by directing it at a concrete example. How about brains in vat
situations...are they no more? If the out-of-our-heads hypothesis is true, then, in the traditional sense, I
think brain in vat dilemmas have been explained away, for, as Noë explains, given the vast amount of
stimulation the brain would need to receive in order to simulate the human body and its interactions, the
vat would look something pretty much like the body and the external world. This is deeply connected to
my earlier claim that skepticism becomes ontological, in the sense that the nomological precedes the
metaphysical. From a different angle: the ‘brain in vat’ situation is not a ‘blank doubt’ but a solution,
comparable to a Cartesian doubt-solution. As a Cartesian solution, i.e., from within the imagined
situation, I can’t say I might be a brain in a vat, either I am or I am not, and each implies a different
context. This is related to one of the very first claims I made in the dissertation, namely, that a doubt such
as ‘the external world exists’ can only be fallible, paradoxically, if and only if, the world exists. To better
elucidate, I want to explore a thought experiment. Imagine waking up in an empty room with a thick wire
connected to your spinal cord. The other end of the wire disappears through an outlet in the wall. You
suffer from amnesia and do not remember how you got there. Written on the wall in front of you is a
detailed note explaining that you are currently a subject of an experiment. The wire connected to your
spinal cord is imputing every sensation that you are currently experiencing, including an exact replica and
feel as of an actual wire connected to your spinal cord that instant. In fact, in reality, the room is exactly
the same: the sensations you are receiving are identical to the sensations your body is receiving in the
zombie-like state it is in right now. Disconnecting the wire will bring you back to reality, waking up your
zombie counterpart (and you, of course, will disappear). All you have to do is pull the wire, which the
note ends by challenging you to do. This is the strangest incarnation of the disjunction problem I can
think of. Would the mental state after pulling the wire be indistinguishable from the mental state prior to
pulling? Let us assume it would be. Of course, de re, things are completely different. Representation for
your sleeping self, in that context, is a forced representation). The de re is the only factor that implies a
connection to the external world (as in the Twin Earth thought experiments). The two situations are
essentially different even though the same natural kinds are used in both scenarios! So is the situation
seems more than nomologically impossible, i.e. is there a more fundamental type of impossibility than

203 It is precisely the 1st person accounts which locks us in analogy dilemmas.
204 Francis Crick, of course, dubbed ‘astonishing hypothesis’ the idea that the mind is the collection of nerve cells
and glial cells, and their interactions and behavior with the associated molecules of their immediate surroundings.
The mind is exhausted by these processes. On the other hand, by insisting that the processes occur not only
inwardly but outwardly too, e.g., by taking the whole animal and its interactions with macro-processes, Noë
claims: "the subject of experience is not a bit your body. You are not your brain. The brain, rather, is part of what
you are" (Noë, 2009: 7). This is no less astonishing a hypothesis.
nomology? Is it logical, is it metaphysical? Is this how the brain the vat would look like? I think this thought experiment is ripe for future research.

Another way to problematize is by means of the old and overwrought containment problem. Consciousness can’t be ‘contained’ since any containment will cause changes that they themselves must be contained. This is an old paradox. It affects the extent of consciousness (or the extent of being, as Rosmini and others saw it). If consciousness is not contained, I think there is no containment paradox. Subjective ens is no more. This is similar to what quantification did. Whether quantification succeeded is an open question. Let’s examine another thought experiment, let’s call it the virtual man thought experiment. First, let’s assume an input-output computer paradigm theory of mind. A state-of-the-art recording device which records the totality of a person’s consciousness as he experiences it is implanted in a person’s brain. The inputs from that recording device have outputs elsewhere where they re-create a world-as-I-experienced virtual man. This virtual man is a replica except he has no choice though he certainly experiences choice. This is like the Twin Earth experiment except it is not twin earth but twin individuated man, i.e., not just about natural kinds in external world but about natural kinds in man. Natural conditions are necessary, they are not just normatively there. Again the main idea is to undermine Individual Representationalism. The claim is that a parallel argument will never over-experiment any experiment.

And speaking of old problems, Descartes too, needs context in turn, in laying out his solutions (and never reach mute skepticism). Descartes’ demon, which allegedly represents the greatest kind of skepticism, philosophical skepticism, still needs an explanation, a context. OLP would say, ‘you must explain how you came up with something, lest they won’t believe you’. Can doubt be extraneous? (Even mute skepticism needs anti-individualistic solutions, so none but mere lottery skepticism -as if last of this weren’t enough!-). Cartesian solutions need reality; imagination is a poor substitute. Besides, we are already more vulnerable than we can possibly charter. Existence is a problem of the intellect, not perception. It is not a problem of the transformations in the perceptual system that depict particulars in the environment as having veridicality conditions. Inherent skepticism is, granted (or not) part of the human condition. But we can’t blank out perception! The blank slate shouldn’t haunt us anymore. If we don’t presuppose an external world, the perceptual system will. Against the skeptic Austin would say ‘learn to talk’, but how can the skeptic convince his perceptual system, or convince a child? As Nietzsche, or his forger, lamented in My Sister and I: ‘the world hasn’t been annihilated, only me. Nature rejects even the noblest ideas, in favor of simple animal existence’.  

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205 The map paradox (discussed in the next paragraph) I think renders this situation nomologically impossible. The thought experiment, of course, assumes specific nomological laws.

206 I think this is particularly interesting since it shows how even representationalist accounts presuppose some direction in the flow, making a reality to representation flow possible; while making a representation to reality seem fallacious.

207 The need of external conditions, the need of the world is imminent here.

208 This thought experiment needs to be reformulated so as to include input-output as an output of information and Turing machines.

209 Compare: ‘Every language can describe every observable phenomenon’ (Sneed’s hypothesis), very similar to Wittgenstein, ‘each language is perfect’, vs. Russell, who wanted to move closer to the ideal language.

210 Madness. Or un-intelligence. Or a ‘view from nowhere’.

211 Yet that does not mean unlimited vulnerability, the demon thought is an anxiety symptom, if a person can allow the possibility of being that vulnerable through imagination. If I can imagine something creepier than reality, I have upper hand, in some morbid sense. More of this below.

212 Is even Perceptual Objectivity overintellectualizing? It seems circular, but non vicious, as in WJ’s double dimension treated in chapter 3.

213 Even phrases like these illustrate the depth of Representationalism in our lives. I am speaking from their perspective, of course.

214 Apocryphal, attributed to Nietzsche, Friedrich, My Sister and I, pg. 38, Biblioteca Edaf.
Burge, of course, doesn’t precipitate himself as much as Noë does. He is satisfied enough with the way the earlier representationalist views have been replaced. He, too, expresses optimism that this will have value against skepticism:

The work on anti-individualism shows that not just linguistic reference but the kind-identity of many mental states is constitutively dependent on causal relations to the environment, or on communicational relations to others with relevant causal relations to the environment. These relations cannot be assimilated to verification procedures or descriptions available to the individual. But they help determine the nature of mental states and their representational content.

A primary lesson from these bodies of work (Kripke, Putnam, Donnellan, Burge, McGinn) is that reference and the representational identities of mental states depend, constitutively, on more than what the individual can describe, find, confirm, or believe about what is represented. They depend partly, but constitutively on causal and functional relations between the individual and environment. So there is no reason to insist that psychological conditions necessary for objective representation require the individual to do the objectifying himself or herself. Some of the work can be done by the psychological subsystems. Some if it can be done by needs and activities of the individual and causal relations between the environment and these needs and activities. The individual need not be able to represent the operations of subsystems or these needs, activities, or relations.215

We are not as original as we once thought. The mind is limited and context bound. Claustraphobia unnerves but philosophy leaves things as they are. But we can look at this from another perspective: if the mind extends out of the brain, there is a kind of freedom. Before it was stuck in Cartesian theaters; passive little men behind passive little men; or Sartre’s nothingness that equaled libertinage; or Molina’s free soul; in all these cases, the price was skepticism. There is overwhelming support to let go of this conception. The reward is objectivity. The road is direct realism. The jump, let us not confuse, is ultimately from passive to active.

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created for a purpose. Perception is teleological. Its function is to represent the world accurately. It is objective. It implies veridicality conditions.

*Convexity and concavity*

The fact that humans and some non-human animals automatically imply a default concavity instead of convexity in certain patterns of the visual field where the appearance is vague (a computer would be unsure whether it is convex or concave) argues for anti-individualism and perceptual objectivity. Perceptual systems by default assume solidity and closed bodies (e.g. stones, moving animals instead of hollow backgrounds). A number of theories take this self-evident fact about perception as a clear indication of how evolution and regularities of the environment and the organism’s repeated encounter with that environment type-individuated the perceptual states.

Despite the plausibility and elegance of this theory, I think another possibility should be acknowledged. I find an analogue in digital cinema cameras and interframe compression which could also explain perception and does not involve repeated encounters with the environment but mere parsimony and energy saving. Interframe compression involves shrinking down the image in size (to save memory and space) while maintaining quality of the image as constant as possible. The image is shrunk by codecs (algorithms). Like the perceptual system, the process is teleological and it involves constancies (the codecs). To give an example, say the camera records a scene with one actor reciting a monologue which takes place entirely in a living room. Throughout the scene the living room is more or less unchanging and the only perceptible motion is the slight movements of the actor’s body. The codec then finds ways to delete repetitive information from one frame to the next. Obviously, in this example, the background is what is being compressed. Thus it records one frame with instructions to repeat.

This challenges the above theory since this is a possibility which need not necessarily involve repeated causal relations with the environment. The perceptual system could have been guided by mere ‘cosmic laziness’. 172

*Color, Stability, Slant, Obstructions, resolving power as uneven*

A lot of the ever-present dirt, mote and particles from environment (even including particles from the eye itself) which would otherwise obstruct vision are ‘erased’ by the subsystem itself; again, through repeated relation to environment. As Alva Noë sums it up:

Change blindness doesn’t show that we fail to experience the rich array of detail we seem to see. It shows something else: that our ability to sustain perceptual contact with the environment over time is not just a matter of there somehow being a picture of the scene in our brains; rather, it is a matter of access. And this, in turn, is a matter of skill. For example, seeing requires a practical understanding of the ways that moving one’s eyes and one’s head and one’s body changes one’s relation to what is going on around one. And also, significantly, it requires that we do not occupy a (Cartesian-like) demon world. Our ability to lock onto and keep track of the world – our sturdy perceptual access to the world – depends not only on our skills but also on the fact that the environment in which we find ourselves is governed by certain causal and physical regularities. Our perceptual consciousness of the world as

172 The example calls back attention at the caution mentioned earlier. ‘Preference’ and ‘choice’ are not the most technical terms in language. The perceptual system has no ‘choice’ in say choosing between concavity and convexity, of course. The choice is presupposed. Choice is made on behalf of this presupposition. For instance, we could take a phenomenon in the visual field to be convex in case we have reasons to believe we are being deceived. But this implies another context! A Cartesian solution and not a mute skepticism, so to speak. And, just to push the argument all the way, we cannot strip down and say there is a position where it is blunt Representationalism of nothing or at least my own sensation. It is still a solution with its context and not a blank doubt. Action somehow is presupposed. Action is the default predisposition. Not intelligence but mere action. Insects have action, thus they have a weapon against the insect demon of deception. Action is anti-individualism’s mark.