Senses of Self
Approaches to Pre-Reflective Self-Awareness

Edited by Marc Borner, Manfred Frank,
and Kenneth Williford

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Introduction
Pre-Reflective Self-Consciousness and the *De Se* Constraint: The Legacy of the Heidelberg School

Marc Borner, Manfred Frank, Kenneth Williford

Part I. Preliminaries

1. *Egological vs. Non-egological & Reflective vs. Pre-reflective*

This collection has its origins in four interdisciplinary workshops, one held annually at the Berlin School of Mind and Brain from 2010—2012 (*Origins of Self-Consciousness I-III, Workshop on Pre-Reflective Self-Consciousness*), and one at the *Zentrum für interdisziplinäre Forschung* (ZiF) in Bielefeld in 2013 (*Self-Representationalism, Pre-Reflectivity, and Mental Impairment*). This original interdisciplinary approach, especially the dialogue with neuroscientists and psychiatrists, has been retained in this collection. However, the collection has been enlarged by a number of solicited contributions that highlight special aspects of the core theme: *self-consciousness.*

Our title, *Senses of Self,* is meant to capture the multivalent nature of the notion of self-consciousness and the philosophical and scientific controversies surrounding it. The nominalized reflexive pronoun 'self' in the composite 'self-consciousness' evidently admits of various interpretations. It can be understood as referring to the "subject" of consciousness or the "person" whose consciousness it is and who directly refers to herself or himself by 'I', but it can also be understood to refer to *consciousness itself*, conceived of *impersonally.* And the latter, in turn, can be understood as a single episode (a "momentary minimal subject") or as diachronically unified "stream of consciousness".

Both personalist and impersonalist views of self-consciousness have been widely defended. Gurwitsch called them "egological" and "non-

From "Fichte's Original Insight" to a Moderate Defence of Self-Representationalism
Manfred Frank

Abstract

Fifty years ago, Dieter Henrich wrote an influential little text on 'Fichte's Original Insight'. Seldom so much food for thought has been put in a nutshell. The essay, bearing such an unremarkable title, delivers a diagnosis of why two hundred years of penetrating thought about the internal structure of subjectivity have ended up so fruitless. Henrich's point was: Self-consciousness cannot be explained as the result of a higher-order act, bending back upon a first-order one, given that "what reflection finds, must already have been there before" (Novalis). Whereas Henrich's discovery had some influence in German speaking countries (and was dubbed the 'Heidelberg School'), it remained nearly unnoticed in the anglophone (and now dominant) philosophical world. This is starting to change, now that a recent view on (self-) consciousness, called 'self-representationalism', is beginning to develop and to discover its Heidelbergian roots.

I. History Part One: Instead of an Introduction

Unlike physical states, mental states, when occurring consciously, seem to have been "always already self-registered" (Henrich 1971, 12, 17).

Here we take up once again one of the oldest and most persistent intutions of occidental philosophy. Plato, in his early dialogue *Charmides,* considers whether prudence or soundness of mind (σωφροσύνη) doesn't by necessity imply a kind of self-knowledge (τὸ γιγνώσκειν ἑαυτόν, 164 d, 165 b). He even wonders if this self-related knowledge is carried by our mind as something rather formal or as an additional objectual content (169 d ff., 170 d ff.) but doesn't come to a definite conclusion. Aristotle, however, emphasizes at various places in his

From Metafact to Metaphysics in "the Heidelberg School"

James G. Hart

Abstract

The works of Dieter Henrich and Manfred Frank argue that consciousness is fundamentally a self-awareness antecedent to reflection. This essay picks up the suggestion that consciousness itself is a field or medium of manifestation. As such it is a "metafact," the anonymity of which transcendental philosophy seeks to overcome. This is required because the "facts" of the light of the mind and the intelligibility of what the mind discloses elude philosophical investigation as long as the anonymity reigns. Clarifying self-consciousness illuminates what essentially must elude normal categorial and predicative investigation which presuppose the light of the mind and intelligibility. The seemingly esoteric issue of the discovery of the primacy of the pre- or non-reflective self-presence at the foundation of first-person reference may be said to found metaphysics in so far as this requires evidence for the inseparability of being from manifestation.

1. Metaphysics

The "Heidelberg School," which is known for doing pioneer historical and critical analysis on self-consciousness, refers, for reasons of convenience in this paper, to Dieter Henrich and Manfred Frank. I here wish to express my indebtedness over many years to these fine thinkers.

This paper focuses on showing how their analyses of self-consciousness verges on the "first principles" of metaphysics. These are the prior explanations or conditions for everything that exists and is manifest through thoughtful perceiving, and conceptual elaboration. How these principles are themselves amenable to demonstration is itself a beginning question of metaphysics. If showing the ground requires presupposing its grounding the showing is also a non-showing.

The 'I think'. What it is all about: Self-knowing, Self-thinking, Self-consciousness

Gerhard Seel

Abstract

Kant distinguishes two kinds of knowledge of one-self: empirical self-knowledge due to inner sense and a priori self-knowledge achieved by transcendental apperception. This conception encounters a host of problems. I try to solve these problems from the perspective of today's phenomenology and analytical philosophy. I first introduce a new conception of inner sense and time-consciousness and argue that empirical self-knowledge must be based on the category of person, a category Kant did not list in his table of categories. I explain how the schematism of this category works. Then I introduce the a priori notion of the subject which corresponds to Kant's 'I think'. However, unlike Kant I hold that the notion of the subject is the notion of a being which has certain a priori capacities. Kant did not see that the term 'I' must be conceived of as an indexical. I argue that this indexical refers to both, the subject who does the thinking and the person who is thought. On this basis I give an answer to the question how genuine de-se knowledge is possible. I further defend—against Wittgenstein and others—the use of a private thought language. Finally, I show that what I have developed is—notwithstanding the refutation of important elements of Kant's theory—still essentially a Kantian approach.

> The 'I think' must be able to accompany all of my presentations (CPR, § 16).

Kant's theory of the 'transcendental apperception' is puzzling until today and has caused many controversies among scholars. However, my purpose is not to settle these controversies or to give a new interpretation of Kant's theory. I will rather use Kant's theory as a starting point to answer the systematic question how self-knowledge, self-thinking and self-consciousness are possible.

   Let me start with an overview over Kant's position. What is the

Reflexivity, Transparency, and Illusionism: Engaging Garfield

Dan Zahavi

Abstract

The notion of pre-reflective self-awareness is much more accepted today than 20 years ago and has become part of the standard repertoire in philosophy of mind. The notion's increasing popularity has not surprisingly also led to an increasing amount of criticism. My focus in the present contribution will be on a particular radical objection that can be found in Jay Garfield's book Engaging Buddhism*. It seeks to undercut the appeal to pre-reflective self-awareness by arguing that there ultimately is no such thing as phenomenal consciousness.*

The notion of pre-reflective self-awareness is often associated with the work of Sartre (1957, 2003), but the core idea, the idea that reflective self-awareness is a latecomer and depends on the contribution of a more basic form of self-awareness, one that is part and parcel of phenomenal consciousness, is widespread and has been defended by thinkers from a variety of different philosophical traditions, including phenomenology, analytic philosophy and German idealism. A persistent defense of the idea, which draws on resources from these three philosophical traditions, has also been a hallmark of the so-called *Heidelberg School* (see, e.g., Henrich 1970, Frank 1991, Zahavi 2007).

The notion of pre-reflective self-awareness is much more accepted today than 20 years ago and has become part of the standard repertoire in philosophy of mind. The notion's increasing popularity has not surprisingly also led to an increasing amount of criticism. One line of attack has focused on what might be called the universality question. Is it truly the case that all conscious mental states involve pre-reflective self-awareness? Does the link hold by necessity such that it characterizes *all* experiences, however primitive or disordered they might be, or might it, for instance, be something that only holds true for a more limited group of experiences, say, normal, adult, experiences? I have discussed some of these objections in other publica-

Reflecting on Pre-Reflective Self-Consciousness

Robert J. Howell

Abstract

Most philosophers in the phenomenological tradition hold that in addition to the explicit self-consciousness we might get in reflection, there is also a pre-reflective self-consciousness. Despite its popularity, it can be a little difficult to get a grasp on this notion. It can seem impossibly thin—such that it really amounts to little more than a restatement of the notion of consciousness—or problematically robust—such that it seems to conflict with the apparent transparency of consciousness. This paper argues for a notion of pre-reflective self consciousness that avoids these extremes. It is argued that though pre-reflective self-consciousness exists and is an important part of conscious experience, it is not an intrinsic feature of first-order consciousness. Instead, it is constituted by an agent's background awareness of her ability to reflect and thereby self-ascribe her experiences.

> … reflection has no kind of primacy over the consciousness reflected-on. It is not reflection which reveals the consciousness reflected-on to itself. Quite the contrary, it is the non-reflective consciousness which renders the reflection possible; there is a pre-reflective cogito which is the condition of the Cartesian cogito. (Sartre 1956, liii)

Introduction

It's fair to say that most philosophers in the phenomenological tradition hold that there is a sort of self-consciousness present even in unreflective states. It is sometimes said that consciousness is always conscious of itself. Catchy as this is, it is a bit obscure. What exactly does this pre-reflective self-consciousness add to consciousness? Can it be reduced to something more familiar, or is it simply a brute feature of consciousness?

If pre-reflective self-consciousness isn't really something over and

Varieties of Self-Apprehension

Anna Giustina

Abstract

The Brentanian idea that every state of consciousness involves a consciousness or awareness of itself (Brentano 1874), which has been a central tenet of the phenomenological school, is a current topic in contemporary philosophical debates about consciousness and subjectivity, both in the continental and the analytic tradition. Typically, the self-awareness that accompanies every state of consciousness is characterized as pre-reflective*. Most theorists of pre-reflective self-awareness seem to converge on a* negative *characterization: pre-reflective self-awareness is* not *a kind of* reflective *awareness. Whereas reflective self-awareness is* attentive *and* descriptive*, pre-reflective self-awareness is* non-attentive *and* non-descriptive*.*

This paper aims to show that the reflective/pre-reflective dichotomy overlooks a finer-grained distinction. The first part is devoted to arguing that the typical use of the adjective 'pre-reflective' conflates two properties (non-attentiveness and non-descriptiveness), which are in fact separable. Accordingly, not only can there be non-descriptive and non-attentive self-consciousness (i.e. pre-reflective self-awareness), but also non-descriptive *but attentive self-consciousness. I call the latter* primitive introspection*. The second part of the paper is devoted to arguing that, whereas both pre-reflective self-awareness and primitive introspection enable the subject to apprehend the phenomenology of their experience, the* kind *of apprehension each allows for is different. By analyzing the notion of apprehension in terms of* information acquisition *and* personal-level availability *of information, it is proposed that, although both pre-reflective self-awareness and primitive introspection allow for* acquisition *of the maximal amount of information about the experience, only primitive introspection makes* all *such information* personal-level available*.*

1. Varieties of non-descriptive Self-Awareness

1.1. *Pre-reflective self-awareness: a standard characterization*

The idea that, for any mental state to be conscious, its subject must somehow be aware of it traces back to Aristotle (Caston 2002); it was advocated by Descartes (Dewalque 2018) and explicitly professed by

What has Transparency to do with Husserlian Phenomenology?

Chad Kidd

Abstract

This paper critically evaluates Amie Thomasson's (2003; 2005; 2006) view of the conscious mind and the interpretation of Husserl's phenomenological reduction that it adopts. In Thomasson's view, the phenomenological method is not an introspectionist method, but rather a "transparent" or "extrospectionist" method for acquiring epistemically privileged self-knowledge. I argue that Thomasson's reading of Husserl's phenomenological reduction is correct. But the view of consciousness that she pairs with it—a view of consciousness as "transparent" in the sense that first-order, world-oriented experience is in no way given to itself—is not compatible with it. Rather, Thomasson's view is, from a Husserlian vantage point, self-undermining in the same way that any genuinely skeptical view is self-undermining: it undermines the conditions of its own possibility. This is one of the motives Husserl has for developing a same-order view of self-consciousness as the complement to his transparent method for self-knowledge acquisition.

§1 Introduction

Given the methodological primacy of Husserl's principle of all principles,[1] which takes the evidentiary legitimacy of adequate intuition for knowledge to be originary, absolute, and foundational (Husserl 2014, §24), it may seem that the only plausible reading of Husserl's view of self-knowledge would be an introspectionist reading. The introspectionist about self-knowledge takes *privileged* self-knowledge—i.e., knowledge of one's own mind which, (i) does not rely on the same sort of evidence as our knowledge of the minds of others (immediate) and (ii) is not subject to the same sorts of er-

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1 Whenever I cite Husserl's work, I will refer to the section number and, when necessary, also to the page number of the original publication.

From Non-Self-Representationalism to the Social Structure of Pre-Reflective Self-Consciousness

Kristina Musholt

Abstract

Why should we think that there is such a thing as pre-reflective self-awareness? And how is this kind of self-awareness to be characterized? This paper traces a theoretical and a phenomenological line of argument in favor of the notion of pre-reflective self-consciousness and explores how this notion can be further illuminated by appealing to recent work in the analytical philosophy of language and mind. In particular, it argues that the self is not represented in the (nonconceptual) content of experience, but is rather implicit in the mode. Further, it argues that pre-reflective self-consciousness is best understood as a form of knowledge-how. Finally, it will be argued that our sense of self is thoroughly social, even at the basic, pre-reflective level.

1. Arguments for pre-reflective self-consciousness: theoretical and phenomenological

Human beings are self-conscious, that is, we possess the ability to think about ourselves. However, it is contested how this ability is best described and whether there are different levels or aspects to this. While some authors argue that self-consciousness requires the possession of concepts (in particular the possession of the first-person concept), others hold that we already possess an awareness of ourselves at a very basic, minimal, and nonconceptual level. This minimal kind of self-awareness is often dubbed pre-reflective self-consciousness. Why should we think that there is such a thing as pre-reflective self-awareness? And how is this kind of self-awareness to be characterized?

With respect to the first question we can distinguish a theoretical and a phenomenological line of argument in favor of the notion of pre-reflective self-awareness. The theoretical argument has its roots

Liminal Manifestation and the Elusive Nature of Consciousness

Matthew C. Eshleman

Abstract

This programmatic essay sketches a few reasons for the elusive nature of conscious experience. It proposes that while neither introspection nor phenomenologically refined reflection delivers direct 'observational' access to intrinsic features of conscious experience, intrinsic features of consciousness, nonetheless, manifest themselves in our experience in a liminal way. Overall it proceeds in two movements. Negatively, it argues that implicit self-awareness renders any notion of reflective access methodologically superfluous but existentially irresistible. Positively, it argues that 'reflective' access to the liminal dimensions of conscious experience should be construed in purely semantic terms, tied to indirect experiential acquaintance. It concludes by suggesting that what goes by the name mental transparency, even its strong versions, does not rule out liminal manifestation: mental transparency is not mental invisibility.

Introduction

In recent years philosophers have frequently remarked upon the elusive nature of conscious experience. Ubiquitous during our waking lives, our ordinary efforts to grasp conscious experience, as opposed to grasping its objects or content, seem to come up empty. As Fred Dretske aptly observes, "conscious experiences have that peculiar diaphanous quality—the quality of always being present *when*, but never *where*, one looks for them" (1995, p. xiii). For example, in searching for intrinsic features of a perceptual experience it can seem as if one 'sees' through 'perception' only to grasp that which one perceives. One does not, after all, perceive perception: what one perceives is the perceived. The putative failure to grasp perceptual conscious experience itself has come to be called "mental transparency." According to the thesis of mental transparency, perceptual experience is very roughly akin to looking through a perfectly transparent window: all

Pre-Reflective vs. Reflexive Self-Awareness

Terry Horgan

Abstract

In this paper I propose an account pre-reflective self-awareness, both vis-à-vis onself and vis-à-vis one's own phenomenally conscious mental states and processes. I argue that pre-reflective self-awareness is a form of acquaintance with oneself and with one's phenomenal states that is distinctively direct in this sense: it is not mediated by mental representations of those states or of oneself. I also argue that there is an important kind of reflective self-awareness that is reflexive, in this sense: it involves mental representations of one's phenomenally conscious states, and of oneself, in which pre-reflective self-awareness plays a distinctive contributory role—a role I call 'direct self-presentation.'

1. Phenomenal Consciousness and Pre-Reflective Self-Awareness

In this paper I propose an account pre-reflective self-awareness, both vis-à-vis oneself and vis-à-vis one's own phenomenally conscious mental states and processes.[1] I argue that pre-reflective self-awareness is a form of acquaintance with oneself and with one's phenomenal states that is distinctively direct in this sense: it is not mediated by mental representations of those states or of oneself. Reflective self-awareness, by contrast, it is a representationally mediated form of awareness of oneself and of various aspects of oneself.

I also argue that there is an important kind of reflective self-awareness that is reflexive, in this sense: it involves mental representations of one's phenomenally conscious states, and of oneself, in which pre-

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1 Hereafter I use the term 'state' broadly, to cover both temporally instantaneous states and temporally non-instantaneous processes. I will use the term sometimes to apply to multiply instantiable state-*types*, sometimes to apply to *tokens* of state-types, and sometimes to apply to both. Context should make clear which usage is intended.

Subjective Character, the Ego and *De Se* Representation: Phenomenological, Metaphysical and Representational Considerations on Pre-reflective Self-awareness

Miguel Ángel Sebastián

Abstract

There is a substantive disagreement with regard to the characterization of pre-reflective self-awareness despite the key role that is supposed to play for the distinction between conscious and unconscious states. One of the most prominent ones—between egological and non-egological views—is about the role that the subject of experience plays.

*I show that this disagreement falls short to capture the details of the debate, as it does not distinguish phenomenological and metaphysical disputes. Regarding the former, the contenders disagree on whether pre-reflective self-awareness concerns the subject of experience or the experience itself. I first argue that such an awareness has to be indexical—*de se *or* de mentis *respectively—, and then show that* de se *awareness can straightforwardly address classical objections against egological views, whereas* de mentis *awareness fails to support epistemological arguments in favor of non-egological ones. The metaphysical commitments of a phenomenologically egological view depend on what the corresponding* de se *awareness demands from reality. I consider two alternatives, the structural and the representational approach and offer some considerations in favor of the later and its* prima facie *neutrality with regard to the metaphysical dispute.*

1. Introduction

An interesting way to approach the problem that consciousness presents is to think about its distribution: what kind of entities entertain conscious experiences? I have no reason to doubt that, if the reader is a human being, she enjoys the conscious intellectual pleasure of reading this paper. Things get more complicated as we move away

Higher-Order Theories of Consciousness and the Heidelberg Problem

Josh Weisberg

Abstract

It is widely held that consciousness is partially constituted by a "pre-reflective" self-consciousness. Further, it's argued that the presence of pre-reflective self-consciousness poses a problem for "higher-order" theories of consciousness. Higher-order theories invoke reflective representation and so do not appear to have the resources to explain pre-reflective self-consciousness. This criticism is rooted in the Heidelberg School's deep reflection on the nature of self-consciousness, and accordingly, I will label this challenge the "Heidelberg problem." In this chapter, I will offer a higher-order answer to the Heidelberg problem. Instead of attacking the problem head-on, I'll argue that the view can explain why there appears to be a Heidelberg problem, even if consciousness is ultimately realized by higher-order representation. But I'll also argue that the theory has indexical resources to more directly counter the Heidelberg problem. Either way, I hope to show that the higher-order theory survives its trip to Heidelberg.

It is a widely accepted claim in phenomenology that consciousness is in part constituted by a special kind of "pre-reflective" self-conscious-ness.[1] Accounting for this sort of self-consciousness is thus central to the challenge of explaining consciousness. However, a number of theorists argue that the nature of pre-reflective self-consciousness rules out a class of explanatory theories of consciousness, the so called "higher-order" (HO) theories.[2] This criticism is rooted in the Heidelberg School's deep reflection on the nature of self-consciousness, and accordingly, I will label this challenge to HO theory the "Heidelberg problem." Broadly, the Heidelberg problem contends that no reflective theory can account for self-awareness. Since the HO theory is argu-ably a reflective theory, it is undermined by the Heidelberg problem.

In this chapter, I will contend that the HO theory can explain pre-

1   Henrich 1982; Frank, 2004; cf. Zahavi and Gallagher 2012, chp. 3.
2   Frank 2004, 2007; Zahavi 2007; Zahavi and Gallagher 2012.

Some Comments on Josh Weisberg's 'Higher-Order Theories of Consciousness and the Heidelberg Problem'

Gerhard Preyer

Abstract

Josh Weisberg discusses what he calls the "Heidelberg Problem" (named after Dieter Henrich's Heidelberg School). However, he mischaracterizes this problem and believes he is able so resolve the problem, as mischaracterized, as well as meet the de se constraint, in the theoretical frame of reference of the Higher-Order Thought Monitoring theory of consciousness. This commentary highlights the fundamental flaw in his approach, while encouraging further philosophical exchange with our American philosophical colleagues about the "Heidelberg Problem".

1. The Heidelberg School

1. The Heidelberg Problem. The Heidelberg School (Henrich, Pothast, K. Cramer, Frank) has long drawn considerable attention in the philosophy of mind. Discussion of a so-called "Heidelberg School" goes back to Tugendhat (1979). A variety of philosophers have contrasting views regarding what we now call the "Heidelberg problem": for example, Gallagher, Gennaro, Hart, Kapitan, Kriegel, Shoemaker, Siewert, Williford, and Zahavi, as well as Horgan and Horgan/Nichols.[1]

What is this "problem"? In the philosophy of consciousness, a *regress* and a *circle* occurs when we assume that a conscious mental state is "conscious" only by virtue of some other conscious mental state. The regress and the circle can only be cut by the assumption of an "immediate (pre-reflective) as an unmediated consciousness" as a non-repre-

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1 On "The Heidelberg School", see also: Frank, Hart, Williford (in this vol), Zahavi (2007).

Self-Acquaintance and Three Regress Arguments

Kenneth Williford

Abstract

The three classic regress problems (the Extensive Regress of states, the Intensive Regress of contents, and the Fichte-Henrich-Shoemaker Regress of de se *beliefs) related to the Self-Awareness Thesis (that one's conscious states are the ones that one is aware of being in) can all be elegantly resolved by a self-acquaintance postulate. This resolution, however, entails that consciousness has an irreducibly circular structure and that self-acquaintance should not be conceived of in terms of an independent entity bearing an external or mediated relation to itself but rather in terms of a realized relation-instance relating to itself as well as to something other than itself. Consciousness, on this account, has a categorially curious status. It is like a relation-particular hybrid. This can be formalized in terms of the theory of hypersets, which in turn can be used to elucidate the problem of individuality, one source of the conceptual difficulty with adequately characterizing* de se *content.*

1. The Self-Awareness Thesis and the Regresses Three

There is a variegated family of theories of consciousness all committed to the claim that the conscious mental states are those that one is aware of being in. Call this generic claim the Self-Awareness Thesis (SAT); it goes by other names (e.g., the "Transitivity Principle", see Rosenthal 2005, 3–10). Higher-Order Representation (Thought, Perception, Monitoring) theories (e.g., Lycan 1996, Rosenthal 2005, Gennaro 2012) as well as Self-Representational (e.g., Kriegel 2009, Williford 2006a) and Dual-Content theories (Carruthers 2000, 2005) are all committed to representational versions of the SAT. But anti-representationalist (or acquaintance-theoretic) theories (e.g., Zahavi 1999, Williford 2015), also accept versions of the SAT. According to these latter theories states of consciousness (or acts, episodes, streams

The Senses of a Bodily Self

Shaun Gallagher

Abstract

I focus on the sense of ownership and ask whether this experience is something over and above one's bodily experiences, or something intrinsic to them. I consider liberal, deflationary, and phenomenological accounts of the sense of ownership, and I offer an enactive or action-oriented account that takes the sense of ownership to be intrinsic to the phenomenal background and our various bodily senses, including the sense of agency.

The experience of one's own body, specifically as a form of self-awareness, is a complex phenomenon, and involves some complicated issues that cut across a number of disciplines, including philosophy, psychology and neuroscience. Although my focus will be primarily phenomenological, and I'll leave aside various related metaphysical issues, I'll also consider what we can learn from psychology and neuroscience about body self-awareness.

Body self-awareness occurs in and across all of the sensory modalities—vision, audition, touch, taste, olfaction, the vestibular sense, proprioception and kinaesthesia, nocioception and sense of temperature, but also via some sensory experiences that are not easy to classify or name. Here is a list (based on Mason 1961; also see Gallagher 1986) that tries to capture some of the multiplicity and variation of what we might experience when we experience our own bodies.

> Pain (of various sorts and descriptions, including headache and eyestrain), burning sensation, prickling of skin, itching, "crawling" of the skin, giddiness or light-headedness, faintness, throbbing, tightness (e.g., of chest or skin), hunger, thirst, dryness of mouth, nausea, "turning" of the stomach, "lump in throat," fullness, distension, heartburn, bowel sensations, tingling, "smothering," palpitation, "cardiospasm sensation," "flutter," hollowness or emptiness, tension, pressure, heaviness,

Pre-Reflective Self-Awareness in Psychotic Disorders

Andreas Heinz

Abstract

Disorders of the self figure prominently in psychotic experiences. Subjects describe that "alien" thoughts are inserted in their mind by foreign powers, can sometimes hear their thoughts aloud or describe complex voices interacting with each other. Such experiences can be conceptualized in the framework of a Philosophical Anthropology, which suggests that human experience is characterized by centric and excentric positionality: subjects experience their environment centered around their enlived body and at the same time can reflect upon their place in a shared lifeworld from an excentric point of view. Pre-reflective self awareness has been suggested to ensure that subjects can identify their own thoughts or actions as belonging to themselves, even when they reflect upon them from an excentric point of view. This pre-reflective self awareness appears to be impaired during psychotic experiences, when subjects no longer identify thoughts in their own stream of consciousness as belonging to themselves and instead attribute them to an outside agent. Among several potential causes, it is suggested that such impairments can be due to discriminatory or traumatic experiences, which affect the enlived (centric) position of a person and make her feel encircled and deeply threatened by aversive powers. As a consequence, the afflicted individual may fundamentally distance herself from her current centric position in a hostile environment, at the price of experiencing her own thoughts or actions as alien. Philosophical Anthropology may thus help to explain how social exclusion, discrimination and traumatization can promote psychotic experiences and why social support is of primary importance for any treatment of psychosis.

Introduction

Psychotic disorders including schizophrenia are characterized by a fundamental alteration in the relation between a person and her environment. Specifically, verbal communication can break down and appear to be incoherent or at least hard to understand, the environment can appear to be threatening and full of ominous signs that need

Pre-Reflectivite Self-Consciousness as a Bodily Trait

Marc Borner

Abstract

A theory of pre-reflective self-consciousness (TOPS) can be made fruitful if pre-reflectivity is understood as a bodily trait. This approach helps to overcome certain blurry definitions of pre-reflective self-consciousness (PrSCs) from the past, and can aid to a philosophical explanation of self-consciousness, which also goes in line with many psychological and cognitive neuro-scientific findings. Especially it can help to understand certain pathologies like neurodegenerative, affective or psychotic disorders from a different angle and thus might help to bring new insights into these fields.

Introduction

When I watched my daughter Lilly growing in her first months of life, I witnessed what many parents do with their children as well: After her first days of confusion and oblivion about the shock on being born into this world, she slowly got to learn the ability of having a body. And not just that: it seemed that she as well became more and more aware of her surroundings and by that of being within and different from these objects of the world. I propose that she became aware of herself without reflecting upon this fact and thus having obtained pre-reflective self-conscious states.

Many people disagree that something like pre-reflective self-consciousness might be possible at all or claim that the phrase in itself is contradictory or void in its level of explanation. Here I will explore possibilities and limits of theories of pre-reflective self-consciousness (TOPS). I will investigate why and to which extend it might be beneficial to presume such an approach, and to which extend these theories might be superior to alternative views that pre-suppose that self-consciousness can just be reflective.

The Ubiquity of Self-Awareness

Tomis Kapitan

Introduction

Two claims have been prominent in recent discussions of self-consciousness. One is that first-person reference or first-person thinking is irreducible (the *Irreducibility Thesis*), and the other is that an awareness of self accompanies all conscious states, at least those through which one refers to something. The latter – here termed the *Ubiquity Thesis* – has long been associated with philosophers like Fichte, Brentano, and Sartre, though each articulated his own version of the claim. More recently, variants have been defended by Dieter Henrich (1970) and Manfred Frank (1991, 1995a, 1995b). In Frank's words:

> … every mediated reference to something different from consciousness is mediated by immediate self-awareness. This mediation may be called "transcendental" in a weak sense of the term, according to which what is transcendental does not pertain to the objects of which we speak or think but to the preconditions of such speaking or thinking – presuppositions that fundamentally include *a subject immediately certain of its self*. (Frank 1995b, 49–50)

Like Henrich, Frank finds immediate self-awareness (mental familiarity, *Vertrautheit*) to be "non-conceptual" in that it requires no mediation of concepts and no identification or classification of an *object* of thought in terms of a distinguishing set of characteristics (Frank 1995b, 34–35). It is a direct acquaintance with one's own mental acts or *subjectivity* which, properly speaking, is not an act of *reference* at all but a "pre-reflective" and "pre-linguistic" state of consciousness (compare Sartre 1957, 41). To establish its ubiquity, Frank appeals to a *Dependency Thesis*: immediate self-awareness is an original type of consciousness that is presupposed by reference to any sort of object, including indexical references by means of "this," "here," "now," and object uses of "I" (Frank 1995b, 49). He argues for this claim, in turn, by recourse to the characteristics of indexical thinking.

Nonconceptual Self-Awareness and the Constitution of Referential Self-Consciousness: Objections to Tomis Kapitan

Stefan Lang

Abstract

This essay argues that persons not only have nonconceptual bodily self-awareness and nonconceptual mental anonymous self-awareness but also, at least if they produce the expression 'I', nonconceptual mental egological self-awareness. It contains information of 'I' being produced by oneself. It is argued that this can be seen if we examine the constitution of referential self-consciousness, i.e. the consciousness of being the referent of 'I' oneself. The main argument is: A. It is not possible to explain the constitution of referential self-consciousness if it is not assumed that persons have nonconceptual mental egological self-awareness. B. It is possible to explain the constitution of referential self-consciousness if it is assumed that persons have nonconceptual mental egological self-awareness. C. Thus it is reasonable to assume that persons have nonconceptual mental egological self-awareness. The justification of the thesis that persons have nonconceptual mental egological self-awareness is presented while discussing Tomis Kapitan's analysis of conceptual egological self-consciousness. Conceptual egological self-consciousness contains information of being a subject oneself. It is argued that it is not possible to explain the constitution of referential self-consciousness with the help of Kapitan's interpretation of conceptual self-consciousness. However, it is possible to explain the constitution of referential self-consciousness within the framework of Kapitan's account if it is assumed that persons have nonconceptual mental egological self-awareness.

In the last couple of years *Tomis Kapitan* and *Manfred Frank* defended the view that persons have a nonconceptual mental anonymous self-awareness ("anonymous self-awareness", for short).[1] That means, it is a kind of self-awareness without *conceptualization* of its content;[2] it is

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1 Frank 2012, 356, Kapitan 1999a, 40. Cp. Henrich 1970, 275, Lichtenberg 1979, 97, Sartre 1997, 45–46.

2 Frank 2012, 358, Kapitan 2006, 402. I will use 'self-awareness' to refer to (different)

Egological Ubiquity: Response to Stefan Lang

Tomis Kapitan

1. Introduction

I thank Stefan Lang for his intriguing remarks and for his attention to my views on self-awareness. It has long been my motto that *refutation* is far superior to *neglect*, so I welcome the challenge that he has presented, and for this occasion to weigh in on a certain debate concerning self-awareness by clarifying the position that I have been trying to develop.

In this response I plan to do the following:

- Raise a concern about Stefan's distinction between two types of self-awareness.
- Criticize Stefan's argument for a restricted version of the ubiquity thesis,
- Respond to Stefan's charge that I have not explained egological self-awareness and, hence, have not explained thinking reference.
- Restate my reasons for claiming that egological self-awareness cannot be ubiquitous.

2. Two Types of Self-Awareness

Many of us are partial to some form of the claim that self-awareness accompanies all conscious states. But this *ubiquity thesis*, as it is called, can be interpreted in different ways depending upon what is meant by 'self-awareness,' an expression that lends itself to different readings, depending upon what is meant by 'self' and 'awareness.'

Stefan follows Manfred Frank in distinguishing between egological

Stationen einer Freundschaft

Dieter Henrich

Um viele Jahre ging ein Vorspiel unserer späten Freundschaft voraus. In ihm kamen schon dieselben Motive auf, die unsere späteren Begegnungen mehr und mehr durchzogen und getragen haben. Bis 1972 lehrte ich an der Columbia-University in New York, meist über die Philosophie von Leibniz bis Hegel und über die Philosophie des Geistes. Dabei ging es mir nicht darum, eine Botschaft zu exportieren. Ich suchte nur nach der besten Gelegenheit, mich mit der angelsächsischen Analyse vertraut zu machen – vor Ort und möglichst im persönlichen Umgang mit ihren Protagonisten. Als ich damals hörte, dass Donald Davidson zur Rockefeller-University gekommen war, bat ich also sogleich darum, an seinem Unterricht teilnehmen zu können. Ich fuhr dann, wie in den Jahren zuvor zu einem Seminar von Wilfried Sellars, mit meinem blauen Beetle von Stop-Licht zu Stop-Licht quer durch Manhattan, um ein Seminar von Donald und John Wallace über ‚satisfaction‘ zu besuchen. Es erwies sich als eine Art von Colloquium der beiden, wobei Wallace eine Art von permanentem Referenten gewesen ist. Ich konnte, wie die meisten im kleinen Kreis, nichts zu dem Thema beitragen. Aber Donald hatte doch bemerkt, dass da einer ‚von der andren Seite‘ (Manhattans und des Ozeans) gegenwärtig war. Er schickte einen seiner Studenten zu mir, um mit mir Kants *Grundlegung* zu studieren, und er lud mich zu einem Vortrag ein. Als Thema wählte ich dafür die Entstehungsgeschichte der Kantischen Ethik – ein Gebiet, auf dem ich meiner Sache und auch meines Englisch hinreichend sicher war. In dieser Geschichte kam schottischen Ethikern eine der Hauptrollen zu. Mit ihnen hatte ich mich im Studium auch rarer Quellen seit langem befasst. So erwartete ich wohl Interesse, aber keine gelehrte Debatte. Umso mehr war ich verblüfft, als mich Donald in einen komplexen Dialog vor allem über Humes Ethik und ihr Pro und Contra verwickelte. Er wandte sich diesem Thema mit profunden Kenntnissen und zugleich mit einem Schwung und einer inneren Beteiligung zu, die ich gewiss nicht von dem Feinmechaniker auf den Gebieten von Semantik und Entschei-

The Logic of Conspiracy Thought: A Research Agenda for an Era of Institutional Distrust and Fake News

Luis Roniger and Leonardo Senkman

Abstract

This article analyzes the logic of conspiracy theories, stressing that it would be erroneous to assume that such theories about collusions and intrigues are irrational in nature. On the contrary, they operate on a logic that is no less coherent than scientific discourse, although it differs from the latter in its verification and discard methodology as well as in its mobilizing role. Being part of a larger research that explains the recurrent spread of conspiracy narratives in one region of the world, elucidating their historical and contemporary conditions of crystallization, the article claims that such research agenda has universal appeal, particularly in an era of institutional distrust and changes in the structure of information diffusion.

The Argument: Beyond Particularism, yet Looking for Thick Readings of Specific Configurations

The Latin American Research Commons (LARC) has just published a book that analyzes the recurrent spread of conspiracy narratives in Latin America, elucidating their historical and contemporary conditions of crystallization.[1] The book, whose Spanish title would read in English *Latin America Backstage: Uses and Abuses of Conspiracy Theories*, does not claim that the societies in South and Central America are unique in facilitating the diffusion of conspiratorial thought and plots. Under certain conditions, conspiracy stories and narratives can arise and proliferate in any society. For example, for centuries Europe-

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1 The work is the product of an interdisciplinary research collaboration between Leonardo Senkman, a social historian and historian of ideas, and Luis Roniger, a comparative political sociologist interested in the interface between politics, society and public culture (Senkman and Roniger 2019; and see Roniger and Senkman 2018, 2019).

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