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Hi ! Nice to hear back from you on *My View of the World*. In my responses below, I try to state my ideas with force, for clarity, but I consider all of my beliefs to be tentative and never finally determinate.

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For all his exposition of language and having read Wittgenstein I am still surprised that he didn't see how calling his "One Being"/Brahman/Self for "consciousness" is taking a term out of its context, but then again he is far from the only one. This might also be because he was not familiar with Wittgenstein at the time this essay was written.

As Derrida liked to stress, we are constantly **re**contextualizing the "same" words, which are gradually changed through just this continuous recontextualization. More on the later Wittgenstein below, but here I'd like to emphasize that Schrödinger's view is, from my POV, the same as young Wittgenstein's view. The "One" is just the world, and "aspects of the one" are just "transcendental egos". Wittgenstein's term for this "transcendental ego" is "the philosophical I." This "philosophical I" is not really a subject or an ego at all. Instead it is simply an aspect of the world. The world is the system of such aspects. There is no "nonaspectual" or "nonperspectival" portion of the world. The being of the world is "aspectual." For instance, a spatial object is (to oversimplify) the unified system of its adumbrations, each of which is "perspectival." There's an inferentialist aspect to objects which I won't go into here, because it's not as relevant to the main point. One way to say all this is that the world is exactly the system of all the experience of sentient creatures. But to accept this is to see that "consciousness", in its most radical sense, is merely a synonym for being, the world's being, its only being. It becomes cleaner and more logically consistent, in my view, to talk then of worldstreamings rather than streams of "experience." Because the idea is **beyond** "idealism", though it flowers from the soil of idealist considerations. It comes back to the world. There is only the world, only the "one", but given as a system of steaming aspects.

His “materialist” explanation for the always-novel aspect of experience is a good and believable one. He seems so close to being able to flip it all on its head and break out of the paradigm cleanly, but then I do think his embedding in his paradigm holds him back from fully doing it and announcing the primacy of experience/consciousness.

As I read him, he definitely embraces the gist of the primacy of consciousness. But the more serious we are about this primacy, the more “consciousness” becomes a synonym of “being.” As the “space” for the world’s happening, I “am” the world, including not only my nose which is in the visual field but also the fork and the newspaper. And this world is colored by my “mood” and includes the ringing in my ear and a toothache. Includes everything in fact, prior to a merely practical division into physical and mental, real and imaginary. The world is given as if it was the lifeworld from the mobile POV of an embodied creature within that lifeworld. For practical reasons, we filter out most of this world and call a tiny remainder “real,” and completely forget that the 3rd person POV is an intensely filtered idealization of the only POV that any of us have ever known, the 1st person POV. I say “as if” because these creatures that are supposed to be having the experience are themselves just entities within that “experience.” We tend to believe that other humans and similar animals are “sites” of the world’s being, that they are “sentient” or “consciousness.” But to me this only makes sense if “consciousness” is a synonym for (aspectual or situated) being.

I think the later work of Wittgenstein is great. I was strongly influenced by it, directly and through Rorty. But a typical application of interpretation of the later stuff boils down to paradoxical anti-philosophy. We might sum up the problem this way: “Language on holiday” *is itself* “language on holiday.” (Wittgenstein was far more creative, but Ayer’s style is more honest than the later Wittgenstein’s, because Ayer wasn’t ashamed of being a philosopher.)

Even early Wittgenstein called his own assertions nonsense, while clearly presenting them as valuable. To me this particular quirk of the TLP

was a defect. I think he just meant that clarifications of concepts, offered throughout the TLP, are “tautologies-in-retrospect.” They are something like suggested definitions or determinations.

The later Wittgenstein makes comments that suggest a disgust for philosophy, as if it were an addiction. So the philosopher becomes a therapist, who has presumably learned to cure others by curing himself. Personally I don't like the shift away from scientific seriousness toward what seems to become a cult of personality and quasi-mystical koans. I should be clear that I can very much respect the abandonment of philosophy for spiritual reasons. A genuine quietism, a quiet quietism, is coherent, makes sense. But some take Wittgenstein to have “proved”, for instance, the impossibility of ontology, etc. But this is just the “proof” of the “impossibility” of “proof.”

One can be a genuine skeptic or a genuine quietist, but one cannot “prove” either position, without performative contradiction. If language is too muddy or too “local” for general statements, then this statement itself lacks meaning and authority. To say that concepts cannot be taken out of context is to put the concept of concept in a new context, which is to rip it from all of its previous contexts. Then, as Derrida stressed, context is indefinite, with no clear boundaries.

So much of human life, perhaps its essence, is interpretation, grasping the relevant context on the fly, somehow mostly succeeding in practical terms. Our **skill** with language greatly surpasses, it seems, our theoretical understanding of that skill. So there's something “infinite” about this skill, which suggests that every theory will be too simple and crude to “catch” what language is. This is the most potent “anti-philosophical” charge in the later Wittgenstein. Fair enough. And I sometimes played with this antiphilosophy. But now I'd say that it's a rare philosopher who expects perfect clarity or a final theory. We know already that our project is infinite, that our beliefs are imperfect, blurry, and tentative.

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All earnest anti-philosophical points turn out to be philosophy, just as Kant's critique turned out to be one more system of the kind he was supposed to be beyond. You may recall my discussion of the “forum.” It's not that one can't have genuine doubts. The problem is the para-

doxically arrogant projection of a theory of knowledge on others. So a Kant-type thinker will have a skeptical theory of knowledge, but he will then assume this “skeptical” theory applies to every actual and possible subject, which is of course a very bold assumption. The paradox is that the thinker insists that he is trapped in appearance or his own mind and yet also that others are too. So he is trapped in his mind and yet has profound knowledge about the minds of others, which is incoherent. The Wittgenstein version is a theory of language about the impossibility of any theory of language, which is understood to constrain what others can mean. And so on.

But the project of philosophy **presupposes** the possibility of genuinely binding conversation, the “authority” of “logic,” basically. It is therefore confusion to try to “prove” the impossibility of philosophy, for only philosophy could do this. But it is not confusion to be genuinely skeptical about the possibility. It’s just that the behavior coherent with such a skepticism is silence, or perhaps an explicitly esoteric mysticism. I personally don’t mind explicitly esoteric mysticism. But that’s because it is honest about its esotericism. I have seen many spiritual cranks on philosophy forums, though, who can’t make up their minds whether they are esoteric mystics or logic-constrained exoteric “scientists”.

I think there’s an ethical element here (an aesthetic or taste element, if you prefer). It’s more “noble” or “beautiful” to act in conformity with one’s beliefs. The scientific project, in its non-pragmatic mode, is basically “ethical,” motivated toward an ideal sociality and toward the ideal “citizen” of such an ideal communication community.