

1

Zahavi's chapter "Real Realism" is great. I fantasize that he was influenced by some of my anonymous posts. In any case, it's great and a little sad. Great and vindicating that a professional is using material that I independently developed on my own. "Sad" that I am therefore less "useful." One hopes to carry a relatively unique gift. Of course nothing is entirely new.

My interpretation of Wittgenstein (and Mach) is still sufficiently radical to stand out. It's almost already there in Zahavi. But Husserl's work is full of talk of "consciousness" and the "transcendental ego". Even though his work escapes dualism, it still emphasizes something a creative "pure witness." I think we must (to be "rational" and "pure") dissolve every bone of the subject in the hot soup of the world. Mach did this. Wittgenstein did this. James did this. But I'm not completely happy the exposition of any of the three, as great as they all are. Updating is matter of emphasis and terminology, right ?

2

You ask me about John Vervaeke. I'd probably fucking love this guy in person. I could maybe drag him, temporarily, into my "transcendence." The "problem" with Vervaeke and his type (which includes Jordan Peterson) is the lack of ice-cold scientific "amoral" impartiality. Vervaeke is about to publish a book called *Awakening from the Meaning Crisis*. **But this is a self-help book !**

What is wrong, you might ask (but really you wouldn't), with self-help books ? Nothing. Except that I (personally) don't like to see phenomenology "bent" away from a serious and "pure" focus on what is —as opposed to what ought to be. Vervake descends into politics, into playing the guru.

Let me be more specific. The primordial bracketing is a forgetting of the local petty self. Pure perception is serene. It does not see the world as something to be fixed. It "sees the wheel." The "whole point" of philosophy or ontology is to articulate "eternal" structure, which is to say "deep" structure. So it's confusion to offer deep and therefore unchangeable structure and then lapse into an evangelical mode.

Of course I have studied this type of character for years in an interactive way. With one guy in particular. Whose anti-scientific feeling veiled itself in terms of a tired critique of a strawman crude materialism. Yes, a few people like this are out there, but his real problem was with individual freedom, which includes the freedom of each of us to ignore the private homegrown religions of others.

The “meaning crisis” is a personal problem. It is a veiled political complaint, a nostalgia for “old time religion” that was never actually present. The “return of the sacred” is just the return of mystification, a retreat from the white flame (fright claim) of critical rationality.

3

People hate genuine ontology like they hate death, because it implies their death. It presupposes their death. Their finite ego is dissolved in the rest of the world. The only (relative and fragile) immortality is disidentification with the “cardboard applicator” (the host). I mean the always already dying primate wetware.

Let me revisit my vision of science. Theory and perception is “pure” **of** “local” egoism. As Schopenhauer and Hume both emphasized, our thinking is primary practical. We use it to get food and make babies (and for all the means that contribute to those ends.) That’s a bit of a crude simplification. But the point is that thinking tends to be narrowly selfish and greedy. How can I get tenure ? Or get an interview ? Or win this argument ? Get revenge ? Maximize my profit ? And so on. The meatwagon is implicitly understood to be the real me. I “am” this named body. I am not the Conversation or the perspectival being of the world itself. As Mach saw, the communal scientific ego is still motivated (toward, for instance, self-explication), but it is relatively generous and “altruistic.” It is “selfish” in that it takes for the local ego and gives to “science” the resources spent on research. And this gets us back to the “worldly foolishness of ontology.” The spiritual “phenomenologists” are primarily “self-help” gurus. But even in Husserl’s time there was a tendency toward esoteric cults of Seeing.

And even in Husserl with the crisis rhetoric we have what I would call a descent. His opening salvo is even a little embarrassing. To me he reads like a spoiled old man who has not realized (or who has forgotten) that

philosophy is “antithetical.” His brilliant work (and I adore most of his work) was a “parasite” on the productivity of the engineers who needed some profound reading in their spare time ? He was a dreamer, who refused to wake up, or at least felt that he should try to use his brilliant work as a cure for our alienation. But, like that boomer I interacted with for years, he misdiagnosed the situation. The “problem” is freedom itself. Pontificators have a freedom-hating streak in them. Daddy wants to spank the bad little boys who will not do their philosophy homework.

4

My dirty joke at the end hints at my “psychoanalytic” “core.” But it’s also about understanding radical freedom in terms of unmitigated responsibility. I don’t mean the sugary self-righteous indignation. I mean a deep grasping of one’s own complicity in the “evil” of the world. The phrase is boring to me by now, but I mean “the integration of the shadow.” This is the way of death and devastation, the way of “true” “spirituality” and “transcendence” as far as I can tell. Language is essentially figurative and elusive (de Man), but I sometimes emphasize the figurativity of this or that “magic” word. *Anyway*, I don’t believe in constant bliss as a real possibility. One can be relatively attuned or enlightened or whatever, but joy is, to some degree, a function of situation. Bodily health, of course, but also friends and lovers and fellow researchers. Community. As you know, my protagonist “H” is a blurry symbol for the “realized” man. But more on that later.