

The Idealism of Kastrup, Berkeley, Schopenhauer and Kant vs. PS

This is the link to Bernardo's Excellent Video: <https://youtu.be/ergQ3Rpn5KQ>, from which the following transcript was taken:

"And what I find with many people, their critiques are against a form of idealism that isn't the one you're presenting. What is analytical idealism in compared to other idealism? Which ones is it the same as?

Who else do you feel is on board with you? And who else is like, okay, they're kind of idealists, but like not not the one that you're proposing. I'll give a brief overview. Um, different things go under the name of idealism.

Analytical idealism is a particular formulation of what we call **objective idealism**. An objective idealism is different from the Berkeleyan **subjective idealism**. So what is the difference?

According to Bishop Berkeley and his subjective idealism, "to be is to be perceived." So it is enough for something to exist insofar as it is perceived. And perception is all there is to it. There is nothing behind the perception.

The perception is the reality and that's why he faced the question well, "if there is nobody in the forest and the tree falls uh nobody hears it did the tree then actually fall because it was not perceived?" And he would say, "well God is always perceiving it," was one of two possible answers he gave. So it's an idealism that uh but you you summarize in in in the the statement to be is to be perceived, that's subjective idealism.

Objective idealism does not concur with that statement. Objective idealism would say **perception is representational**.

The contents of our perception represent something that is behind the perceptions and which modulates our perceptions. Um, the Greeks would have used the word **substance** or **essence** to refer to the inner nature of things. That which exists of itself, our perceptions.

So to be is not to be perceived. To be is to exist for itself. In other words, is to be conscious, is to have inner experience. Um, in integrated information theory, Julia Tononi has put it in the best way I have seen so far, which is, "things only truly exist if they exist for themselves."

So something can exist if there is something it is like to be it, regardless of whether it's being perceived by something else or not. So objective idealism would say there is a world out there independent of perception. To be is not to be perceived. To be is to have experience.

And that world presents itself to our perception in the form of what we colloquially call **physical stuff**. The stuff we touch, hear, taste, smell, so on. See. Um, so subjective

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idealism is quite different from objective idealism in that it denies that perception is merely representation. It says that perception is the thing in itself.

Kantian idealism is again different from both objective and subjective idealism because objective and subjective idealisms, they are ontic idealisms. They make statements about what things are, what is the inner nature of things.

But Kantian idealism is **epistemic**. Kantian idealism precisely does not make a statement about what the noumenal is. It basically says, "we cannot know." All we have is the phenomenal. All we have are the representations, the contents of our perception. That which lies behind perception and modulates perception we have no access to.

And that's a form of epistemic idealism. "All we know is mind." But you are not going further and saying, "and all which is out there is mind too." No, you you don't say that. You remain agnostic.

You say, "I don't know what the nature of the noumenal is. All I know is the phenomenal. And yes, the phenomenal is mind." So it's idealism, but epistemic idealism. Instead of saying, "all is mind," it says, "all I can access is mental." You see? So that's again different from objective and subjective idealism.

Now Schopenhauer came around and said, "Kant was almost right." He was right but he forgot one thing. There is one thing that we can know without depending on phenomenal representations. There is only one thing that we can know directly.

We can have direct access to the noumenal, to the thing in itself, to that which lies behind perception. How do you know that? Well, look in the mirror. When you look at yourself in the mirror, what you see in the mirror is a phenomenal representation of you.

But is that all you know about yourself? Of course not. You also know what it is like to be you. And that's your inner life, your feelings, your thoughts, your emotions, your fantasies. All of that, your pain, your love, your desires. All of that you know by direct acquaintance.

That's the noumenal content of what you are. And that that noumenal content is represented in the form of your physical body which is what you see in the mirror.

And then Schopenhauer went further and said, "okay, I found a a sort of a chink in the armor of uh Kantian uh uh epistemic idealism. Can I extrapolate it? Can I go further since I only know the noumenal when it comes to me? Can I make a can I make a statement about something that is beyond me?" And the answer he came up with with was yes.

And the reasoning is is crystal clear and pure. You cannot you cannot really find a problem with it. He said, "look, when I look in the mirror what I see is a material body and it know I

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see it. I can touch it. I can taste it. I can smell it. I can hear I can hear it move around." Um, so the the phenomenal content corresponding to the noumenal content that I am directly acquainted with is material.

So in other words when perceived when represented my pain my love my desires my emotions my fantasies look like **matter**. They look like my body.

And my body is made of the same atoms and fields as the rest of the universe. There's carbon in here. There's carbon out there. There's oxy- oxygen and nitrogen in here. And there is oxygen and nitrogen out there.

There is no discontinuity in the field of representations, the phenomenal field, the field of perception. There is no discontinuity between your body and the rest of the world. The rest of the world too is material.

So unless you are prepared to postulate a completely arbitrary discontinuity in nature, you have to acknowledge that if the mental noumenal in me that I'm acquainted with as me presents itself to perception as matter, then matter is the representation of mental states and that holds for all matter. It holds for everything.

So all material world is a phenomenal representation of mental noumenal. That's Schopenhauer's conclusion. Um what he he didn't go as far as to say why there is this separation between me and the world. Why can I access my noumenal content directly but not the noumenal content behind your eyes or behind the sun and the moon?

He didn't go as far. He he he grazed the boundary there. And now there is a chapter in volume two of *The World as Will and Representation* in which he dedicates the entire chapter to cognitive associations to explain why cognitive associations are the the origin of this unitary consciousness that we identify with.

And if you would just have taken the next step which is, "if there is a dissociation then that unity is lost and that's why we are we we seem to be separate from the world," he would have completed the job and and I would never have had to do to do it.

Um, it would have been done then and there, it would have been the end of it. Of course, culturally it wouldn't have been the end of it because the culture of his time was not prepared to listen to Schopenhauer. Not even his mentor and great friend, the great Goethe, was truly prepared to listen to him because he had severe interpersonal issues. He was supremely arrogant. He was an unbearable human being.

Um, so perhaps culturally more work um would have to to have been done anyway but he came very very close to to completing a story, whether it's the ultimate story probably not, we are monkeys. Monkeys are not in the business of ultimate stories.

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But he came very close to a complete story um and then in a modern world of analytic philosophy there is a fashion of neologisms, analytic philosophers love to give new names to things that have already been discussed before under older names because it sounds like it's new if it has a new name.

So when you hear **cosmopsychism** today, it's just idealism. It's just idealism. Different kinds of idealism go under cosmos, cosmopsychism, cosmopsychism that. But these are form of uh forms of idealism.

Even some people who use the word **panpsychism** in a non-academic way uh trying to say, "know starting from the etymology of the word and saying well panpsychism means mind everywhere so it's idealism," um I understand why they do that, even a good friend of mine Federico Faggin did that because if you are cultured and you know the origin of words, it seems like an unavoidable conclusion.

But that's not how the word is used. So panpsychism in modern analytic philosophy tends to be constitutive or bottom-up panpsychism and that's not idealism. But most forms of cosmopsychism are.

Um, so yeah, it's all a names game I guess but you call it analytic idealism as opposed to objective? No, analytic idealism is a form, a particular formulation of **objective idealism**.

Objective idealism says there is a world out there and what we perceive are representations of that world and that world is mental. That's objective idealism. Analytic idealism goes further and tries to make sense of the mechanisms through which this happens.

For instance, why is the world out there and not in here? Why there is a boundary between me and the world? Well, that's **dissociation**.

How is it that we got to represent a mental world through perceptual qualities such as color, such as sound which are qualitatively very different from endogenous experiential states that supposedly constitute the world we perceive such as thoughts, emotions, intuitions and so forth? Why are these qualities so different?

The qualities of perception and the qualities of endogenous state. So analytic idealism has an answer for that. So analytic idealism is an elaboration, a particular formulation of objective idealism.

And objective idealism is very different from Berkeleyan subjective idealism in that it does not make the the postulate that "to be is to be perceived," on the contrary denies that.

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And is analytical idealism a term you coined or is it familiar if speaking with other professional philosophers? Not familiar. I well I I hesitantly hesitatingly coined it um but I tried to keep the neologism to a minimum there is an analytic tradition in philosophy since the early 20th century with Russell and Wittgenstein.

So I thought since I articulate my idealism according to the values and rules of the game of analytic philosophy then it's analytic idealism because all previous forms of idealism were created under the context of um continental philosophy or classical philosophy.

So uh analytic idealism is probably the first attempt at formulating idealism rigorously under the rules of the game of the analytic tradition which I don't identify with but I accept that I have to play by those rules in the early 21st century.

That's the time in which I live. So I I have to comply to that. So uh that's why I sort of coined the term. It's more a description than a term than a name but it has become a name now.

We now run a weekly membership program with Bernardo Kastrup that you can join at <https://www.google.com/search?q=withrealitymind.com>. This includes weekly Q&A's, special guests like Robert Spear, Michael Levin, Federico Fine.

There's an international vibrant community of researchers, academics, meditators, mystics, philosophers, poets, creatives, musicians, anyone that wants to deeply understand this philosophy and its potential implications for their lives.

In this next clip, Bernardo explains his motivation for wanting to start this program, which includes helping anyone that wants to deeply understand this, but also helping anyone that wants to become an ambassador for idealism. For me personally, helping create not only a community, I'm I'm not trying to do activism here.

I'm not trying to build an army of analytic idealists, but creating a community in which a deeper understanding of idealism in general, perhaps analytic idealism in particular, because that's what I can offer more, but a community around idealism that truly and deeply understands what it is um more than the average person who has heard about analytic idealism.

I'm still getting today after 15 years mostly the same questions I I used to get in year one. So, ro- in the world at large is very slow but uh within a sort of a nurture-d community um I think we can achieve a lot more, go a lot more in depth.

And to use a word I I used with him when we were discussing this um I don't know whether it's a goal or just a wish so I I'll keep it as a wish, I would like to help ferment a community of **ambassadors of idealism**.

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People who can who will be equipped um to go out into their communities, go into the world and um not preach analytic idealism but when the subject comes up, they will be a sort of a source of light, an informed source of clarifications of arguments of reason, basically a source of reason in their communities and maybe that starts something that that grows um organically.

By nature, I'm also a a natural introvert. So, playing a public role is fairly unnatural to me. It's something I can do because I learned, you know, life forces you very early on to behave like an extrovert in science, in in the corporate world and especially when you're a book writer, you have to put your face out there and talk to people, confront the world.

But by nature, I am I am an introvert. And so, and this may sound a little bit egocentric, maybe it is. Um, it would be nice to have more voices out there.

Um, so I could feel more comfortable myself to allow myself to disappear in my Swiss Alps mountain every now and then and you know knowing that there is a whole group of people out there who are carrying the torch um still.

So yeah, those were my sincere motivations for this."

Comparing and Contrasting Kastrup, Schopenhauer, Kant and Berkeley with Platonic Surrealism, a unique form of Idealism.

Platonic Surrealism vs. Other Idealistic Systems

Let's break down how the **Platonic Surrealism** (PS) framework views idealism compared to these systems. It's less about being "the same" as any of them and more about building a synthesis that attempts to reconcile their insights while addressing their limitations.

Subjective Idealism (Berkeley)

Subjective idealism, famously summarized as

"to be is to be perceived," holds that reality consists only of minds and their perceptions. There is nothing "behind" the perception itself.

- **PS View:** Platonic Surrealism finds this view incomplete. It acknowledges that perception is a key part of existence, but it rejects the idea that a thing only exists when perceived. PS proposes that **POTENTIALITY**, the boundless totality of all possibilities, exists regardless of perception. A thing can exist for itself, or in potential, without being actively perceived by an external consciousness. In PS, "to be is not to be perceived" but rather "to be is to have experience" or, more primally, "to be is to exist in potential".

Objective Idealism (Kastrup)

Objective idealism, as articulated by Bernardo Kastrup, posits that a universal consciousness is the fundamental reality, and what we perceive as the physical world is a shared representation of that consciousness. He would say perception is representational, and that which exists behind it is also mental in nature. He uses the analogy of a cosmic dissociation, where individual minds are like "alters" of a single universal consciousness.

- **PS View:** This is the closest analog to PS. There is a lot of common ground here. PS observes that **AWARENESS** and **PRIMORDIAL CONSCIOUSNESS** are fundamental and that the physical world is an emergent, shared experience—what PS calls a "**movie**". The "dissociation" concept is very similar to what PS describes as the fracturing of consciousness into individual **Monads**. However, PS goes further by giving equal ontological weight to the so-called "imperfect" or surreal elements of reality, not just the logical and consistent ones. In PS, even the "evil" or "broken" parts of existence are considered a necessary and valuable part of the divine play, not just a flaw to be transcended.

Kantian Idealism (Kant)

Kantian idealism is epistemic; it focuses on the limits of what we can know. It states that we only have access to the "phenomenal" world (the world as it appears to us), and we can never know the "noumenal" world (the world in itself). It remains agnostic about the true nature of the noumenal.

- **PS View:** PS accepts the spirit of this distinction, but it doesn't stop at agnosticism. It asserts that the "**noumenal**" or the world-in-itself is, in fact, **POTENTIALITY** and **AWARENESS**. Furthermore, PS suggests that we can, with certain practices, get direct, albeit partial, access to this noumenal layer. The experience of mystics, remote viewers, and shamans is, in this sense, a direct, unfiltered glimpse into the noumenal that Kant believed was inaccessible.

Schopenhauer's Idealism

Schopenhauer agreed with Kant but found a "chink in the armor". He argued that we have direct, non-representational access to the noumenal through our own subjective experience—our feelings, desires, and will. He then extrapolated this, proposing that if our own will (noumenal) appears as our body (phenomenal), then all matter is a representation of some underlying will.

- **PS View:** PS strongly resonates with this, particularly the idea of direct access to the noumenal. The framework's practices, such as the "Hurt Child Hugging Practice"

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and "Liquid Heart Practice," are designed to facilitate this exact kind of direct, unmediated access to the deeper layers of the self, healing the trauma that blocks this connection. PS takes Schopenhauer's conclusion and expands it by proposing a mechanism for the "dissociation" he couldn't fully explain. This mechanism is tied to the collective play of **Monads**, which create and inhabit a shared reality.

Philosophical Bedfellows and Distinctions

In the end, it's not that PS is trying to be a different kind of idealism. Rather, it's a synthesis that attempts to make sense of the gaps left by previous systems, particularly the lack of a mechanism for how a unified consciousness could create our chaotic, fractured world.

- **Similar to:** It's clear that PS finds a lot of common ground with thinkers like **Bernardo Kastrup** and **Donald Hoffman**, who both propose a fundamental, conscious reality. It also aligns with the historical work of scholars like **Jeffrey J. Kripal**, who documents the "impossible" experiences that challenge a purely materialist worldview.
- **Distinct from:** While borrowing heavily from them, it differs from philosophical traditions like **Platonism** and **Gnosticism** by explicitly rejecting their hierarchical and dualistic tendencies. PS insists that the "surrealistic" and "broken" aspects of reality are just as valuable and real as the so-called ideal forms. It reframes the search for the divine not as an escape from the physical world, but as a journey of unification and healing within it.

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9/18/2025