

# Adverbial Account of Intransitive Self-Consciousness

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## Abstract

This paper has two aims. First, it aims to provide an adverbial account of the idea of an intransitive self-consciousness and, second, it aims to argue in favor of this account. These aims both require a new framework that emerges from a critical review of Perry’s famous notion of the “unarticulated constituents” of propositional content (1986). First, I aim to show that the idea of an intransitive self-consciousness can be phenomenologically described in an analogy with the adverbial theory of perception. In an adverbial theory of perception, we do not see a *blue* sense-data, but we see something *blue-ly*, whereas in intransitive self-consciousness we are not conscious *of* ourselves when we undergo a conscious experience—instead, we experience something *self-consciously*. But what does this mean precisely? First, I take intransitive self-consciousness to be the first-person operator that prefixes the content of any experience that the subject undergoes, regardless of whether or not the subject is self-referred. Further, I argue that this first-person adverbial way of entertaining a content of any experience in Perry’s revised framework fixes the subject as part of the circumstance of the evaluation of the content of her own experience. We can only evaluate whether the content is veridical or falsidical relative to the subject undergoing the experience. This is referred to here as “self-concernment without self-reference.” When I am absorbed reading a book, I do not self-represent my own experience of reading a book, let alone see myself as a constituent of the content of this experience. Even so, I experience that reading *self-consciously* in the precise sense that *I* do belong the circumstance of the evaluation of the selfless content of my experience of reading the book. The content of the experience of reading a book is simply a propositional function, true or false of myself.

## 1 Introduction

The phenomenological tradition from Husserl to Heidegger and Sartre postulates a form of pre-reflexive self-consciousness in opposition to the traditional reflexive self-consciousness in which the subject knowingly self-refers. However, this pre-reflexive self-consciousness is almost always described negatively: as non-reflexive, non-cognitive, non-transitive, not object-consciousness, and so on. As Schear (2009: 14) puts it, when it is time to offer a positive description of the phenomenon, we are left with incomprehensible metaphors such as “subtle background presence” (Zahavi, 2006b: 124). Moreover, it *seems* to be meaningless to talk about a primitive and omniscient form of self-consciousness with no knowing self-reference at all.

Things become still more confusing when we are told that *all consciousness involves this pre-reflexive self-consciousness*. One might honestly suspect that what they are calling pre-reflexive self-consciousness is nothing but simple consciousness. This is the way that the Heidelberg school has attempted to solve the old dilemma between a vicious circle and an infinite regress (Henrich, 1967, 1971; Pothast, 1971; Tugendhat, 1979). Whenever I am awake, I am always

conscious, even when I am not knowingly self-referring. Is that what phenomenologists meant by phrases such as “subtle background presence?” I do not think so.

Moreover, the very idea of a *pre-reflexive* self-consciousness has been understood quite differently in old and recent literature. Fichte was certainly the first to propose an account of self-consciousness in a pre-reflexive way. He understood this pre-reflexive self-consciousness in terms of what he calls a spontaneous act of *self-posit*: a sort of intellectual intuition of the self that dispenses Reflection. Recently, Horgen and Kriegel have proposed a neo-Brentanean reading of pre-reflexivity: in an experience, it is not only the scene that is represented in the content, but also the experience itself, and the subject of experience. According to Kriegel, “a mental state is (intransitively) self-conscious when it represents its own occurrence” (2003: 103).

Bermúdez (1998) has also proposed a non-conceptual primitive form of self-consciousness that dispenses with reflection altogether. Pre-reflexivity means a kind of knowing self-reference without mastering the *token-reflexive rule* of the employment of the first-person pronoun (1998: 15). Many cognitive psychologists describe *self-awareness* in a similar sense: a self-reference given in perception and proprioception that dispenses with reflection. However pre-reflexive they are, these putative forms of self-consciousness are not *intransitive* or *non-objectual* in the original sense required by the phenomenological tradition. To avoid any further confusion, from now on I will avoid the term “pre-reflexive.” Like Kriegel (2003: 103), I prefer the technical term *intransitive* self-consciousness. Still, in my adverbial account there is no self-reference, as no mental state represents itself.

When we observe the reasons given in support of the idea of intransitive self-consciousness, things do not look any better. In the recent history of continental philosophy, this idea is motivated by three reasons. The first, and perhaps most quoted one, is the alleged necessity of avoiding the infinite regress that is generated by the traditional Theory of Reflection. The phenomenological solution to this old problem (Sartre) is to postulate an intransitive form of self-consciousness in which the subject does not take herself as the object either of some intellectual intuition (Fichte) or of some nonconceptual self-awareness (Bermúdez). However, as we will appreciate, this argument is far from convincing. For one thing, only Shoemaker, in his seminal paper (1968), provides an acceptable solution.

The second reason is what Schear (2009) has recently called the “interview argument” in Zahavi’s work (2006b). The idea is intuitive, but his argument is not very convincing. The idea is that intransitive self-consciousness is required to explain not only reflexive self-consciousness (what is false), but also every form of reflexive consciousness. Suppose I am reading a book when someone interrupts me to ask me what I am doing. Now, since I am able to reply immediately, without inference or observation, I must be intransitively self-conscious of my experiences the whole time that I am reading (Zahavi’s favorite example, 2006a: 21).

As it stands, Zahavi’s argument faces the so-called “refrigerator light problem” (Schear, 2009). Every time I open the door of my refrigerator the light is on, but of course that does not mean that the light is on the whole time that the door is closed. Likewise, every time someone interrupts me by asking me what am I doing, I can immediately reply by knowingly referring to myself as the subject that was reading. However, that does not entitle me to infer that I was intransitively self-consciousness all the time that I was reading. As before, an easier explanation is available. When I was reading the book, I was the *subject* of my experience all along. But that does not mean that I was intransitively *self-conscious* the whole time that I was reading. I first become self-conscious when the focus of my attention shifts from the book to myself as the subject undergoing the experience of reading.

However, the most promising reason in support of the idea of an intransitive form of self-consciousness is what we may call the phenomenological argument. According to Zahavi, careful attention to our conscious experience reveals what he calls “mineness” or “for-me-ness.” The conscious experience is distinctively *mine* in the sense that it is *me* rather than you who is having the experience. The intuitive suggestion here is that, if there is something that is like “to read a book,” than that like is *for me*. Even though I do agree with this phenomenological description, I think that it requires further explanation. What does it mean to say that, in all my experiences, there is something that is “what it is like to be in those experiences” *for me*?

This paper has two aims. First, it aims to provide an adverbial account of the idea of an intransitive form of self-consciousness. Second, it aims to argue in favor of this account. For both of these things, a new framework is required, which emerges from a critical review of Perry’s famous notion of the “unarticulated constituents” of propositional content (1986). First, I aim to show that the idea of an intransitive self-consciousness can be phenomenologically described in an analogy with the adverbial theory of perception. In the adverbial account, we do not see a *blue* sense-data, but we see something *blue-ly*. However, in intransitive self-consciousness, we do not necessarily experience ourselves whenever we undergo a conscious experience. Instead, we experience something *self-consciously*. But what does that mean exactly? First, I take intransitive self-consciousness as the first-person operator that prefixes the content of any experience that the subject undergoes, regardless of whether or not she is self-referred in that content. Further, in my revised version of Perry’s framework, I argue that this first-person adverbial way of entertaining a content of any experience fixes the very subject as part of the circumstance of evaluation of the selfless content of her own experience. We can only evaluate whether content is veridical or falsidical according to the subject undergoing the experience. That is what is referred to here as “self-concernment without self-reference.” When I am absorbed in reading a book, I do not self-represent my own experience of reading a book, let alone myself, as a constituent of the content of this experience. However, I do experience reading *self-consciously* in the precise sense that *I* do belong to the circumstance of the evaluation of the selfless content of my experience of reading the book. The content of the experience of reading a book is simply a propositional function true of false of *myself*.

The plan of this paper is as follows. The first section reminds the reader of some truisms about self-consciousness and undertakes an analysis of the traditional Theory of Reflection. In the second section, I present the phenomenological idea of an intransitive self-consciousness as the historical solution that Sartre proposed to this dilemma. However, I reject the idea that intransitive self-consciousness is the best solution to this classical dilemma. In this section, I also manifest my misgivings about Zahavi’s interpretation of intransitive self-consciousness with relation to Shoemaker’s notion of self-reference without identification. I will try to persuade the reader that the old phenomenological concept of an intransitive self-consciousness is best captured by what I am calling here “self-concernment without self-reference.”

The third and final section of this paper is devoted to explaining my reading. Starting with a critical review of Perry’s famous notion of “unarticulated constituent,” I will try to show that, when there is something that is “what it is like to be in the state representing that content” *for me*, I am entertaining the selfless content of my own experience. Therefore, the content of my own experience is meant to be evaluated in a world that is centered on me and the context of the experience.

## 2 Self-Reference and Reflexivity

The connection between self-consciousness and reflection is commonsensical. Even so, in order to establish and define the main concepts that are involved, I shall remind the reader of some well-known things here. Thus, let us suppose that Oedipus, as king of Thebes, while examining the evidence of Laius's death, is led to think the following:

(1) That murder deserves punishment.

To the extent that Oedipus happens to be Laius's murderer, by thinking (1), he refers to himself, even though he is *unaware* of that fact. Things change as the tragedy comes to its end and Oedipus realizes that he is Laius's murderer and that he married his own mother. Terrified by his discovery, he might have thought:

(2) I feel remorse!

Thus, even though Oedipus self-refers in (1), he is only self-conscious when he knowingly or reflexively self-refers in (2). In contemporary philosophy, (2) (as a vehicle of thought) is usually called an "I-thought," and its propositional content is called *de se* content. In contrast, (1) is only a thought that "happens to be" about the subject herself: that is, a thought that contains an accidental or an unbeknown self-reference and whose propositional content is either *de dicto* (such as "the murderer of") or *de re* (such as "that guy"), but never genuinely *de se*.

This uncontroversial truism clearly connects conceptual self-consciousness to knowing or reflexive self-reference. However, according to a long and living tradition (the Theory of Reflection), which extends from Locke (1959) to Rosenthal (2004), such cognitive self-reference requires *another* higher-order thought beyond the original I-thought (2) in order to make it self-conscious. The idea is as simple as this: if I becomes conscious of something by representing it, then I could only become conscious of myself by a higher-order thought representing myself as the subject that some lower-order thought is about. Thus, even when he entertains (2), Oedipus is still not self-conscious. According to Rosenthal, for example:

"Though the thought itself does not describe that individual as thinking that thought, the individual that thinks the thought is disposed to pick that individual out in that way, by being disposed to have another thought that so identify the first thought is about." (Rosenthal, 2004: 167)

Therefore, Oedipus only becomes self-conscious when his original I-thought (2) disposes him to entertain the higher-order thought (3), which identifies him as the subject of thought (2), as the following explains:

(3) I am the individual that (2) is about.

In this Theory of Reflection, one only manages to knowingly self-refer when one's first-order thought (2) disposes one to entertain higher-order thoughts (3) that refer back to (2) and identify the subject as the individual that (2) is about. Only this meta-representation can account for the key difference between the accidental self-reference in (1) and the cognitive self-reference in (2), disposing the subject to think (3).

The main difficulty that this Theory of Reflection faces is better formulated in terms of the traditional dilemma between vicious circularity and infinite regress. This dilemma can be described as follows. On the one side of the dilemma, in order to know whether (2) is about him, Oedipus has to know the truth of (3), but that requires him to entertain the following higher-order thought:

(4) I am the individual who is having thought (2).

But, in order to know (4), Oedipus would have to entertain a further, higher-order thought, to the effect that he is having thought (4):

(5) I am the individual who is having thought (4).

The same issue will arise over and over again *ad infinitum*.

Rosenthal does not recognize the possibility of a vicious regress, because he assumes from the beginning that *unaware* higher-order thoughts could enable lower-order thoughts to become conscious (2004: 164; 167). However, as Zahavi correctly claims (2006a), it is a complete mystery how a non-conscious higher-order thought could render an equally non-conscious lower-order thought conscious just by representing it.

On the other side of the dilemma, the knowledge expressed by (3) is already rooted in Oedipus's original lower-order thought (2). But insofar as self-consciousness emerges as the result of an act of Reflection on oneself, to assume that the knowledge expressed by (3) is already rooted in Oedipus's original lower-order thought (2) is to *presuppose* knowing self-reference rather than to *provide an account of* it. That is what Fichte calls a vicious circle (1937).

Therefore, Fichte was the first philosopher who clearly saw this as a threat to the Theory of Reflection. If self-consciousness was only able to emerge as the result of thought turning back onto itself < *Sichzurückzuwenden* > (higher-order thought), in a sentence such as (2), knowing self-reference is presupposed rather than explained. He describes this dilemma in the following words:

“We become... conscious of the consciousness of our consciousness only by making the latter a second time into an object, thereby obtaining consciousness of our consciousness, and so *ad infinitum*. In this way, however, our consciousness is not explained, or there is consequently no conscious at all, if one assumes it to be a state of mind or an object and thus always presupposes a subject, but never finds it. This sophistry lies at the heart of all systems hitherto, including the Kantian.” (*Nachlass*: 356)

Henrich reformulates Fichte's paradox in the following terms:

“(a) It is not difficult to see that the reflection theory is circular: if we assume that reflection is an activity performed by a subject—and this assumption is hard to avoid—it is clear that reflections presuppose an “I” which is capable of initiating activity spontaneously, for the “I” as a kind of quasi-act cannot become aware of its reflection only *after the fact*. It must *perform* the reflection and be conscious of what it does as the same time as it does it.” (1971: 11)

However, Cramer has formulated this problem with the most clarity:

“But how can the subject know the she in the reflection has herself as her own object? Apparently, only through the fact that the ego knows that she is identical with herself as her own object. Now, it is impossible to attribute this knowledge to reflection and to justify knowledge from it. Because for every act of reflection is presupposed that the I am already acquainted with myself, to know that the one with whom she acquainted, when it takes herself as object, is identical to the one who is making the act of reflective turning back on itself. The theory, which wants to make the origin of self-consciousness understandable, therefore ends necessarily in the circle: that knowledge already must presuppose what it wants to explain in the first place.” (Cramer, 1974: 563)

Fichte's own solution to this problem is unclear, but very well known:

“The “I” posits itself absolutely, that is, without any mediation. It is at the same time subject and object. The I only comes into being through its self-positing—it is not an preexistence substance—rather, its essence in positing is to posit itself, it is one and the same thing; consequently, it is immediately conscious of itself.” (*Nl* II: 357)

However, Fichte has never explained his discussion of self-posing < *Sichsetzen* > (Henrich, 1967: 18). The formula “the ‘I’ posits itself” can only negatively characterize his own rejection of the Theory of Reflection. However, according to the Heidelberg School, the idea of “self-positing” seems incomprehensible. Following this traditional reading, Fichte seems to mean that the “I” comes into existence through self-positing. Still, “how could someone perform that very act of positing if it does not yet exist in the first place?” (Pothast, 1971: 71).

But there is a more charitable reading of Fichte's insight. According to Frank:

“But there *is* consciousness; so this model must be wrong. If wrong, then consciousness must have been immediately acquainted with itself, that is, prior to any objectification by means of a succeeding consciousness. Fichte accounts for *this immediate self-acquaintance as the complete indiscernibility of subject and object in self-consciousness*. Now in Kantian terminology an immediate consciousness is an intuition. But what is intuited here, is not a spatio-temporal entity, like in sensible intuition, but rather the being of the sheer spontaneity of apperception: hence the intuition is deemed to be intellectual.” (Frank, 2004: 77. The emphases are mine)

Fichte's original insight is that self-consciousness is based on self-acquaintance or a level of self-intuition. Since the self-intuition is not spatio-temporal, its form must be the sheer spontaneity of apperception: *an intellectual intuition*. I become acquainted with myself any time that I think. That is what Fichte means by self-positing. To be sure, Fichte is right when he holds on the Cartesian insight that whenever I perform an act of thinking, I knowingly refer to myself. However, in those terms we are back to circularity: how can the subject be acquainted with the sheer spontaneity of her apperception if she did not previously know that she was the subject behind the act of her own intellectual intuition?

### 3 Intransitive Self-Consciousness

Phenomenologists postulate a pre-reflexive, non-intentional form of access to oneself as a natural way out of this dilemma. In this sort of primary self-disclosure, one does not take oneself *as an object*, either of one's own inner perceptions or of one's own thought. Rather, primary self-disclosure is a non-objectifying and non-perceptual form of self-consciousness. Husserl was the first to claim that experience is self-conscious in the sense of being lived through (*erlebet*), rather than in the sense of being the object of reflection (1984: 669). But Sartre (1976) was certainly the philosopher from the phenomenological tradition who most contributed to the elaboration of what is called pre-reflexive self-consciousness today. For Sartre, only the necessity of syntax compels us to say that we are pre-reflexively aware *of* our experiences or *of* ourselves. In his words:

“Thus 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, 1976: 19–20)

Heidegger presents the same idea of an intransitive self-consciousness:

“Dasein, as existing, is there for itself, even when the ego does not expressly direct itself to itself in the manner of its own peculiar turning around and turning back, which in phenomenology is called inner perception as contrasted with outer. The self is there for the Dasein itself without reflection and without inner perception, *before* all reflection. Reflection, in the sense of a turning back, is only a mode of self-*apprehension*, but not the mode of primary self-disclosure.” (Heidegger, 1989: 226)

The basic claim is that intentional or transitive consciousness of the world entails a pre-reflective, intransitive, non-intentional self-consciousness. According to Sartre, one becomes pre-reflexively conscious of oneself in one’s confrontation with what one is not. Therefore, there is no threat of infinite regress: “because consciousness has no need at all of a reflecting consciousness in order to become conscious of oneself” (1957: 45). The intransitive self-conscious is an immediate non-cognitive relation of the self to itself.

There is no space here to undertake an (necessary) exegesis of the main contributions of the vast phenomenological tradition to this notion. Therefore, I limit myself to summarizing those features that I consider to lie at its core. First, we are told that intransitive self-consciousness is a non-objectifying form of self-consciousness. By living through (*erbeben*), we do not see ourselves as objects of any intentional consciousness. Second, we can see the importance of idea that intransitive self-consciousness is the most primitive form of consciousness. Third, we can reflect on the idea that intransitive self-consciousness is a necessary condition for any intentional consciousness of the world. This suggests that intransitive self-consciousness is not the result of any self-awareness or self-observation. The fourth and last feature is closely connected to the second one: intransitive self-consciousness is omnipresent. Since I am awake and not in a coma, I am always intransitively self-conscious.

Recently, Zahavi (2006a: 280) has interestingly suggested that the key idea of a pre-reflexive or intransitive access to oneself (which does not present oneself as an object) could be understood as a form of self-reference without identification (in the way that Shoemaker (1968) characterizes immunity to error through misidentification relative to the first-person pronoun). In his own words:

“Rather, my pre-reflective access to myself in first-personal experience is immediate and non-observational and non-objectifying. It involves what has more recently been called... “self-reference without identification” (Shoemaker, 1968). (2006a: 280)

Zahavi’s reading is heavily based on the analogy between Husserl’s and Sartre’s characterizations of intransitive self-consciousness as non-observational and non-objectifying, and Shoemaker’s (1968) and Wittgenstein’s (1958) characterizations of self-reference without identification as being subjective (the use of the “I” as subject in contrast to the use of the “I” as object).

However, this striking terminological similarity is deceptive for at least three reasons. First, as Zahavi himself recognizes, the phenomenological tradition conceives pre-reflexive access to oneself in a non-intentional or non-referential way, and where there is no self-reference, there can be no *self-reference* without identification in the first place. In other words, whereas in

Shoemaker's account, the self as subject is part of the first-person content (2) [I-thought], Husserl's and Sartre's self as subject is never part of any content at all.

Second, Shoemaker's self-reference without identification is the only correct solution to the traditional problem of the Theory of Reflection. The only way of detaining an infinite regress (without avoiding presupposing the knowing self-reference that it must explain in the first place) is to assume that in limiting cases, such as those of self-ascription of mental predicates, self-reference does not require self-identification or is identification-free. In contrast, however interesting the phenomenological idea of an intransitive self-consciousness may be, it is not a real solution to the traditional problem of the Theory of Reflection. For one thing, if there is no self-reference in intransitive self-consciousness, it cannot account for knowing self-reference in the first place.

Moreover, Shoemaker's self-reference without self-identification does not capture any of the other key features of the phenomenological view, as described above. First, Shoemaker's account does not capture the phenomenological idea that pre-reflexive self-consciousness is primitive—while intransitive self-consciousness does not need to involve any self-concept, we certainly need a self-concept for cognitive self-reference, even when this self-reference is identification-free. Second, self-reference without identification sufficiently meets the criterion that intransitive self-consciousness is a condition for transitive consciousness. Obviously, Oedipus thinking (2) is not a condition for his representing anything else. Third, self-reference without identification cannot capture the idea that the intransitive self is omnipresent in all of the subject's experiences. We do not spend our waking lives thinking I-thoughts such as (2).

Now my first suggestion is to provide a positive description of the idea of an intransitive self-consciousness in an adverbial way that is analogous to the adverbial theory of perception. According to the adverbial theory of perception, we should think of sensory qualities as adverbial modifications of the experience itself rather than as properties instantiated by sense-data. Hence when someone has an experience of something blue, something like blueness is instantiated, but in the experience itself, rather than in its object. Thus, instead of saying that we experience blueness, we should say that we experience *blue-ly*. In a nutshell, the fundamental idea is to interpret the properties of the object of experience through adverbial modifications of the perceptual verbs (see Crane, 2015).

The adverbial theory of perception has two fundamental motivations. First, it aims to do justice to the phenomenology of experience while avoiding the commitment to Moore's ontology of the sense-data theory (Ducasse, 1942; Chisholm, 1957). The second motivation, closely connected to the first, was to reject the subject-object model of perception. Now I want to suggest that both motivations also link to the phenomenological idea of intransitive self-consciousness. First, phenomenologists want to avoid the reification of the subject as a substance. Second, phenomenologists also want to reject the subject-object model of self-consciousness. In that sense, their criticism of the Theory of Reflection goes deeper than Fichte, the Heidelberg school and the recent neo-Brentanean accounts (Horgan and Kriegel, 2007). It is not enough to reject the idea that self-consciousness emerges as the intellectual act of reflection on oneself. We must reject the idea that self-consciousness is always the object of the subject's thoughts, perception, proprioception, and so on. Therefore, the natural suggestion is to take self-consciousness as an adverbial modification of the representational content of experience: the subject's first-person way of entertaining the content of experience. It works just like an epistemic operator that prefixes any representational content:

(6) I think that *p*.



Where  $p$  can be the content of any experience the subject undergoes regardless of whether or not she self-refers in that experience.

#### 4 Intransitive Self-Concernment

In this final section, I want to finish my alternative account. My starting-point is Perry's famous thought-experiment (1986). Perry invites us to consider Z-landers, a group or a tribe who live in complete isolation and have never left Z-land, the place where they live. What matters to us is the following. When Z-landers file weather reports such as "it is raining," "Z-land" is an argument role of a certain relation that never changes  $\langle \text{rains}; \text{Z-land} \rangle$ . The correct conditions of its content certainly *involve* Z-land: the place where the Z-landers' weather report is filed. This content is correct or accurate if it is raining in Z-land at the time that Z-landers report it. However, Z-land is an argument role that never changes. Therefore, Z-landers do not need to worry about Z-land. According to Perry, Z-land is a so-called "unarticulated constituent" of the representational content "it is raining"; that is, a constituent of the representational content of their report that is neither verbally articulated by any utterance, nor mentally represented.

Now Perry's claim that Z-land is an unarticulated constituent of the content of Z-landers' weather reports is disputable. He supports his claim that, in such cases, the "argument role" is an unarticulated constituent of the content by arguing that the content of a thought would otherwise be incomplete, in the sense of being a proposition without a determined truth-value.

However, this last argument is also questionable. Within the framework of Kaplanian semantics (1989), a sentence  $S$  is true in its context of use  $c$  if the proposition  $p$ , expressed by  $S$  at  $c$ , is true at the default circumstance of evaluation, as determined by  $c$ . The default circumstances of evaluation are pairs of a world and a time, so proposition  $p$  is true for a given circumstance if the proposition is true in the world and time of that circumstance. If we are not afraid of incomplete contents, nothing prevents us from thinking of Z-land as a *further aspect of the circumstance of the evaluation* of the placeless content of Z-landers' reports, rather than as an unarticulated constituent of the content.

In opposition to Perry's account, I see no compelling reason against considering "the argument role that never changes" as an aspect of the wider circumstance of evaluating an incomplete, relative, and placeless proposition. There is also a simple argument against Perry's idea that "the argument role that never changes" is an unarticulated constituent of the content. It seems unlikely that they (the residents of Z-land) would have an idea or concept of Z-land in the first place. So in accounting for their communicative exchanges about the weather in Z-land, it would be more logical to assume that they are not implicitly referring to Z-land at all.

Perry's own further examples substantiate the same point. Time zones certainly are argument roles in any time report. However, before the Europeans' great discoveries of new continents, the argument roles of time reports never changed. Therefore, people never implicitly referred to time zones as unarticulated constituents of their time reports, because they did not have a concept of time zones in the first place. The most parsimonious part of the account of the Z-landers' weather report is the assumption that the concept of Z-land is an aspect of a wider circumstance of evaluation, rather than an unarticulated constituent of the placeless content itself.

Let us now suppose that anthropologists find the Z-landers. As usual, there are exchanges of gifts, and Z-landers receive cell phones from the anthropologists to communicate with their new acquaintances outside Z-land. Now things change. When they communicate the weather conditions in Z-land to the anthropologist outside Z-land, they must refer to Z-Land. I see no

reason why the new reference to Z-land must be verbally or mentally articulated in such a way as: “It is raining *in Z-land*.” The reference to Z-land in their new reports can be implicit: “It is raining.”

However, there are two crucial points that Perry does not mention in his famous paper. First of all, in order to refer to Z-land in reports, Z-landers must acquire a concept of Z-land. Without a concept of Z-land, Z-landers cannot refer to their land. In this regard, the reference to Z-land as the reference to a time zone is quite different from the reference to objects and properties within the subject’s perceptual field. For one thing, like entities that are postulated by science (quarks, atoms, energy, photons, etc.), Z-land is never given as an object of perception (without a concept of Z-land, Z-land is ubiquitous; it is both everywhere and in no specific place at the same time). In these cases, references rely on, and are created by, concepts. Second, we must assume that the Z-landers are now referring to Z-land because this is the best available explanation for their intentional behavior of communicating with their new friends outside Z-land, reflecting their way of grasping the world.

Now let us apply this reviewed framework to our case in point: the phenomenological idea of an intransitive self-consciousness. First, as I have already suggested, the intransitive self is best understood in the adverbial fashion: the first-personal way that the subject entertains the content of her experiences without necessarily self-referring in that content. In that sense, the intransitive self is also “an argument role that never changes,” and hence the subject does not have to worry about herself when she experiences something with certain content.

Now my proposal is as follows. Even though the content of experience is selfless in the sense that the subject is not represented, the subject is always present as the one who is entertaining the content of her own experience. This fixes the subject, the time, and the location where the experience takes place as the context relative to which the selfless content of experiences is meant to be evaluated: a world centered on the subject and the time and space when and where her experience takes place. I describe this view as intransitive self-concernment without self-reference.

However, as in the case of Z-landers, things change when the subject starts to communicate her experience to someone else with a different viewpoint. Let us suppose that someone asks the subject, “My dear, I am without my glasses. Do you see a cat in the tree over there?” Now the subject cannot help but refer either implicitly or explicitly to her own viewpoint in her answer to the person’s question: “Yes, *I* do see a cat over there.” Now in the face of this communicative exchange, the self, which was merely involved as the subject for whom there is something that is like “to be in a certain state,” also becomes an essential part of the *de se* content.

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