Independent Intentional Objects

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Intentionality is customarily characterised as the mind's direction upon its objects. This characterisation allows for a number of different conceptions of intentionality, depending on what we believe about the nature of the objects or the nature of the direction. Different conceptions of intentionality may result in classifying sensory experience as intentional and non-intentional in different ways. In the first part of this paper, I present a certain view or variety of intentionality which is based on the idea that the intentional object of a sensory experience must be Independent; that is, an intentional object must be such that its existence doesn't depend on being experienced (except in some very special cases). This means, for example, that sense-data understood as mind-dependent objects are not intentional objects, because their existence depends on the occurrence of an experience. In the second part of the paper, I will sketch a view of how sensory experiences can acquire an Independent object.

1. Moore and the 'Act-Object' Model

When I declare my interest in intentional objects whose existence does not depend upon being experienced, I want to set aside an alternative suggestion that detecting some 'objects' in experience is in itself sufficient for intentionality. I shall now look at a certain theory, which holds that we can discover an 'act-object' structure in (a certain class of) experiences prior to any commitment about the nature of these objects—the objects can turn out to be mind-dependent, mind-independent, mental, physical or neither.

A philosopher who famously defended a version of the act-object model of conscious states is G. E. Moore. I am going describe this model based mainly on Moore's famous paper "The Refutation of Idealism" (1903).[1] There he writes:

> We have then in every sensation two distinct terms, (1) 'consciousness,' in respect of which all sensations are alike; and (2) something else, in respect of which one sensation differs from another. It will be convenient if I may be allowed to call this second term the 'object' of a sensation: this also without yet attempting to say what I mean by the word. (Moore, 1903, p. 444)

For example, the sensation of green and the sensation of blue differ in their objects—green and blue, respectively—but similar in that they are both acts of conscious awareness of these objects. Moore's particular examples involve visual sensations, and subsequent discussions of these arguments take place mostly in the context of the philosophy of perception. It is important to keep in mind, however, that Moore believes that the same analysis applies to all conscious mental events, including thoughts.

Of course, in saying that every conscious episode has an object, Moore doesn't claim that all conscious mental states are intentional. But in order to see what else would be needed to endow conscious states with intentional objects, it will be useful to get a better understanding of the act-object model. To proceed further in the argument, we need to introduce a distinction. When we say that something has mind-dependent existence, this may mean that its existence depends on there being a mind or minds in general, or it may mean that it depends on a particular mental act. We can illustrate this difference on a Kantian view: according to this view, the phenomenal world is mind-dependent in the sense that it has a structure and properties that make sense only with reference to our minds. If my teacup is next to my notebook, this state of affairs—since it includes, for example, spatial relations—is mind-dependent in this general sense. However, the state of affairs is not mind-dependent in the sense that it would depend on someone's particular mental act of perceiving it or thinking about it. I shall call this latter kind of mind-independence 'act-independence.'

[1]Perhaps this isn't the most charitable way of proceeding given that, in the preface of the collection *Philosophical Studies* (1922) where the "The Refutation of Idealism" was republished, Moore himself says the following: "This paper now appears to me to be very confused, as well as to embody a good many down-right mistakes" (Moore, 1922/2000, p. viii). I cannot but agree with this judgement, but my reason for relying on it is the same reason why Moore decided to include the paper in the collection after all: namely, that many references have been made to the paper by 1922 and ever since, and it will be instructive to see how certain ideas have been shaped in the course of this discussion.

It may seem that in the "The Refutation of Idealism," Moore is not entirely neutral about the nature of the object of experiences since he insists that "we can and must conceive the existence of blue as something quite distinct from the existence of the sensation. We can and must conceive that blue might exist and yet the sensation of blue not exist" (Moore, 1903, p. 446). The dialectic is a bit tricky here. Moore's main goal in the paper is to undermine the Idealist thesis that "*esse* is *percipi*," which he understands as the claim that an experience and what is experienced are the same: that a sensation of blue is the same as blue. The distinction between the two elements—the conscious act and its object—is part of the attack on the Idealist thesis. In one possible view, the argument against the Idealist thesis proceeds in two steps: first, we identify the act-object structure in the experience; second, we argue that the object doesn't depend on the act for its existence. In another understanding, the very distinction between act and object is sufficient to show the possible independent existence of the object. Certain paragraphs suggest that Moore promotes something like the latter line in "The Refutation of Idealism": he seems to question the very coherence of the claim that the object is not identical to the act, and yet necessarily connected to it (Moore, 1903, p. 446). Why such a claim should be self-contradictory is far from clear, and in a later paper, "The Status of Sense-Data" Moore clearly opts for the former understanding when he says that an *a priori* discoverable necessary connection between object and act is at least conceivable, even if he doesn't think that there is such a connection, because of further considerations (Moore, 1914, p. 366). Given the fact that Moore himself declared that "The Refutation of Idealism" contains mistakes (see footnote 1 above), I think we can safely take the attitude of the latter paper as a guide.

Therefore I will consider Moore's position as the position that we can detect an act-object structure in all conscious events even before forming any commitment about the nature of the object. This is consistent with a number of Moore's subsequent writings (including "The Status of Sense-Data") where the project is to find out what sort of things sense-data are. Sense-data are a subclass of the objects of conscious events, namely, the objects of sensory experiences. As it is familiar, Moore thinks that the existence of sense-data should be generally accepted before we try to decide whether they are mental, physical, or other kinds of entities.

What is the argument for the act-object model, understood in this noncommittal way?[2] The few sentences quoted above may suggest the follow-

[2] For an illuminating analysis of Moore's argument, see Hellie (2007).

ing line: different types of conscious events have something in common—their being conscious events—but they are also different, obviously. Let us call the respect in which they differ their 'object.' If this were the argument, the existence of objects in conscious acts would be uncontroversial. Of course, one could reasonably complain that calling the dimension of difference 'object' is tendentious; if we are just introducing terminology, why don't we call it, for example, 'quality'? Or even better, 'quale'? Indeed I do think that the introduction of 'objects' at this stage is tendentious, though to be fair to Moore, he doesn't rely on this simple argument. In "The Refutation of Idealism," he considers some alternative ways of accounting for the difference among various types of conscious events, but he declares that the object-view is superior to them.

The main competitor to the object-view is what Moore calls the 'content' view. This terminology is confusing when viewed from the contemporary perspective, but what Moore means is very simple: on the 'content' view of experiences, a blue sensation and a green sensation differ in a *quality*, namely, the former is blue and the latter is green. A blue sensation is like a blue bead or a blue beard: "The relation of the blue to the consciousness is conceived to be exactly the same as that of the blue to the glass or hair: it is in all three cases the *quality* of a *thing*" (Moore, 1903, p. 448).

So is blue a quality or the object of a sensation *of* blue? Is the sensation itself blue, or is it of blue? Moore claims that we can decide between these two options by appealing to introspection. Introspection reveals nothing to support the content- (that is, quality-) view, though it doesn't reveal anything to refute it either. However, introspection does offer a positive support for the object-view, and hence the object-view emerges as the overall winner.

> Whether or not, when I have the sensation of blue, my consciousness or awareness is thus blue, my introspection does not enable me to decide with certainty: I only see no reason for thinking that it is. But whether it is or not, the point is unimportant, for introspection *does* enable me to decide that something else is also true: namely that I am aware of blue, and by this I mean, that my awareness has to blue a quite different and distinct relation. It is possible, I admit, that my awareness is blue *as well* as being *of* blue: but what I am quite sure of is that it is *of* blue . . . (Moore, 1903, p. 450)

Moore warns that this exercise is not easy: it is actually quite difficult to discover through introspection that a sensation involves awareness of a blue object. The difficulty lies not in finding the *blue*; that's the easy part. What is hard to detect is the other element: the 'act,' that is, the awareness relation to the blue object. This is where we find the famous sentences frequently quoted in recent discussions on the 'transparency of experience':

> . . . the moment we try to fix our attention upon consciousness and to see what, distinctly, it is, it seems to vanish: it seems as if we had before us a mere emptiness. When we try to introspect the sensation of blue, all we can see is the blue: the other element is as if it were diaphanous. Yet it can be distinguished if we look enough, and if we know that there is something to look for. My main object in this paragraph has been to try to make the reader see it; but I fear I shall have succeeded very ill. (Moore, 1903, p. 450)

He had good reason to fear: I do not think that Moore made a convincing case for the introspective evidence in support of the object-view. I shall try to explain this in the next section.

2. Transparency and Independent Objects

I will now put aside the case of a blue sensation for a moment, and propose to consider another example: feeling dizzy, or dizziness. It is usual to classify dizziness not as a perceptual experience—since it doesn't involve one of the five external senses—but as a bodily sensation. But Moore claims the act-object model to be valid for all conscious episodes, and so it should apply to dizziness too. On what Moore calls the 'content' view, dizziness is an experience with a certain dizzy quality, which distinguishes it from another experience with, say, a nauseous quality. In contrast, on the object-view favoured by Moore, dizziness involves awareness of a—dizzy?—object, and this distinguishes it from another experience involving awareness of a nauseous (?) object.

What I find difficult here is to decide, through introspection, between these competing views of the ontological structure of dizziness. I have met people who honestly assured me that when they focus on a bodily sensation—dizziness, or pain, or nausea—they can clearly detect an *object* of which they are aware. I'm afraid I simply don't see this. Of course, I grant that in the introspective act, one is in a second-order mental state, whose object is another mental state. When I am reflecting upon an experience, I am in a state which has an object: the whole of the original experience. This, however, doesn't show that the original experience itself involved a separate act of awareness and object. I myself am much more inclined to say that when I reflect on dizziness, I simply find an experience with a certain quality. But—not unlike Moore—I don't feel very optimistic that I can convince the doubtful just by encouraging them to reflect more on their experiences. The debate here reaches an impasse.

To move things further, I suggest that we compare Moore's discussion of the sensation of blue with more recent considerations on the issue of the

'transparency' of experience. Michael Tye also shares with us the results of his introspecting a perceptual experience of blue:

> Standing on the beach in Santa Barbara a number of summers ago on a bright sunny day, I found myself transfixed by the intense blue of the Pacific Ocean. . . . It seems to me that what I found so pleasing in the above instance, what I was focusing on, as it were, were a certain shade and intensity of the colour blue. I experienced blue as a property of the ocean not as a property of my experience. My experience itself certainly wasn't blue. Rather it was an experience that represented the ocean as blue. What I was really delighting in, then, was a quality *represented* by the experience, not a quality *of* the experience. It was the color, blue, not anything else that was immediately accessible to my consciousness and that I found so pleasing. This point, I might note, seems to be the sort of thing G. E. Moore had in mind when he remarked that the sensation of blue is diaphanous (see Moore, 1922/2000, p. 22). When one tries to focus on it in introspection one cannot help but see right through it so that what one actually ends up attending to is the real colour blue. (Tye, 1992, p. 161)

Tye thinks he makes the same point as Moore, but after what's been said in the previous section, we can see that there are a number of differences. For one thing, we saw that Moore didn't think that introspection shows that blue is not a quality of the experience (though it doesn't show the contrary either). Further, Moore thought that one can, after all, bring into focus the act of awareness, if only one tries hard enough.[3] But the most important difference is the following: Tye proceeds by first identifying an act-independent object for his experience, the Pacific Ocean; he then observes that he experienced blue *as a property of the ocean*, not as a property of his experience. This move is missing from Moore's procedure. Moore seems to suggest that we can first identify blue as the object and then ask whether this is part of the physical object or a mental particular (or something else).

This is a crucial difference, because, in my view, this feature of Tye's procedure makes his introspective exercise much more convincing than that of Moore. I complained above that we may find it hard to choose between a dizzy quality and a dizzy object on the basis of introspection. But the case of blue is different. In the case of dizziness, there is no easily identifiable object such that we experience that object, and experience dizziness *as* the property of that object.[4] In the case of blue, there is: for example, the ocean.

[3] See also Hellie (2007) for the difference between Moore's argument and the more recent discussions of transparency.

[4] It may be suggested that the 'object' we experience to have the dizzy quality is the *subject* herself. Perhaps there is a development of this idea that eventually works, but at a first

It seems to me very clear that the way things seem in my experience, my experience is not blue, because if there is anything that's blue, it's the ocean. It is in this contrast—experience *versus* ocean—that it becomes manifest that something characterising the phenomenal character of this episode, namely an awareness of blue, is presented to me as an awareness of a feature of an object, rather than as an awareness of a feature of my experience. And to anticipate the conclusions of the second part of the paper, this is what convinces me that seeing the Pacific Ocean is an intentional episode, whereas feeling dizzy isn't.

It has been objected that Tye is too quick in moving from the observation that he experiences blue as a property of the ocean to the claim that the experience *represents* this property. Maybe other accounts are available for the initial observation (see Martin, 2002). In any case, it seems to me that all phenomenologically convincing appeals to something like the transparency observations proceed in the same way as Tye does: first they identify an act-independent object that one seems to perceive, and then note that the features that we would offer in a characterisation of our experience are experienced as properties of this act-independent object.

In Gilbert Harman's example, the object is a tree: "When Eloise sees a tree before her, the colors she experiences are all experienced *as features of the tree* and its surroundings" (Harman, 1990, p. 39, my emphasis). In M. G. F. Martin's example, the object is a lavender bush: "I attend to what it is like for me to introspect the lavender bush through perceptually attending to the bush itself while at the same time reflecting on what I am doing. So it does not seem to me as if there is any object apart from the bush for me to be attending to or reflecting on while doing this" (Martin, 2002, pp. 380–381). In all these cases, the phenomenological observations are committed to the apparent act-independence of the object and its properties.

How does this all relate to the issue of the intentionality of sensory experiences? Intentionality, as I said, is the mind's direction upon an object, and this characterisation may suggest that once we find an *awareness of an object*, we have intentionality. This isn't the sense of intentionality I am after when I raise a question about the intentionality of sensory experiences. The alternative in which I am interested is a special variety of directedness,

glance, it won't do. The defender of the 'content'-view (that is, the 'quality'-view) can agree that dizziness is a quality of the subject, by being a quality of her experience. In a reflective second-order mental state, we may see that the experience involves an exemplification of a quality by the subject. But there is still no introspective evidence for thinking that the subject somehow doubles in the original experience, by being both the subject and the object of the experience at the same time.

which is directedness at something else, at something *beyond*. The point is not simply that the object is not identical to the experience—this is true on theories which regard sense-data as mental particulars, because the object is only a constituent of the experience, not identical to it. Rather, as I shall say, in a genuine act of directedness, the object is 'Independent,' in the sense that its existence doesn't depend on the occurrence of the experience. This also applies to nonexistent objects: they don't exist, and hence *a fortiori* their existence doesn't depend on being experienced. The formulation here is not equivalent to saying that the object could exist independently of the experience, because we may want to accommodate impossible objects. The following holds for impossible objects: it is not the case that whenever they are experienced, they exist.[5]

Of course, to a certain extent, the point is terminological. 'Intentionality' has been used in different senses, and no sense is given independently of what we make of it in particular theories, nor can I claim a special right over the term 'intentional.' However, there are fruitful and less fruitful questions that one can ask about the nature of sensory experiences. As I tried to explain, there is a question that I don't find particularly fruitful: this the question of whether the phenomenology of sensory experience reveals an *object* in the case of every sensation—even when there is no mind-independent object—or whether the phenomenal character is better characterised in these cases as the experience having some quality. But I do find another question fruitful: this is the question of whether we are inclined to characterise the phenomenal character of some of our experiences with reference to properties that we experience as mind-independent properties of mind-independent objects. I think the answer to this question is yes, for some experiences, though not for all, and this is very significant in accounting for the nature of sensory episodes.

3. The Independence of the Experienced Situation

Intentionality is the mind's direction upon its object, and as I explained in the previous sections, I am interested in a specific variety: when the mind is directed upon an Independent object, i.e., when an experience has an ob-

[5] There are exceptions in some very special cases. Suppose physicalism is true, and consider the experience of looking at some device which shows the image of your brain having precisely this visual experience. But here the act-dependence of the object is not due to some general connection between experiences and their objects (like in the case of sense-data), but simply to the coincidence between the object and the brain-state that realises the experience.

ject whose existence doesn't depend on being experienced. Which sensory experiences are intentional in this sense? By 'sensory experiences' I mean perceptual experiences associated with the five senses, and bodily sensations like pains, itches, hunger, dizziness and all sorts of introceptive experiences. Under 'perceptual experiences' I mean to include both veridical and non-veridical (illusionary or hallucinatory) experiences.

In a perceptual experience, things appear as being in a certain way. Let's call things being in a certain way a 'situation.' A perceptual experience is directed at a situation, or we might say that the situation is the intentional object of the experience, where 'object' in this instance is not meant to be a specific ontological category, but simply whatever the experience is directed at. If the situation is the object of the experience, and intentionality requires Independence, then the *whole* situation has to be Independent. This means that not only *what* is experienced—the object in the narrower sense, that is, the individual or particular—but also *the way* it is experienced as being, must be Independent. The requirement of Independence entails that neither the existence of the individual, nor its having the experienced properties depend on being experienced.

I take it that the nature of a sensory experience is given by its phenomenal character. Now the question is: how much of the nature of a sensory experience is given by its intentional properties? And this question now translates as: how much of the phenomenal character of a sensory experience is given by features that are experienced as act-independent properties of act-independent particulars?

The most plausible version of the view that pain is an intentional episode holds that the object of, say, a pain in the ankle, is the ankle. As Tim Crane (2003) points out, the main argument for the intentionality of bodily sensations like pain is that they have a felt location in one's body: the experience appears to be directed at a certain region of one's body, for example, the ankle. The ankle is Independent: its existence doesn't depend on the occurrence of the pain experience, it could exist even if didn't hurt. However, there is a further element in the phenomenal character of the experience: the ankle is not merely experienced, but it's experienced as *hurting*. And this aspect of the situation, I claim, is act-dependent. Something couldn't hurt without being experienced: there are no unfelt pains. If you don't feel it, it doesn't hurt. Once the experience ceases, so does the hurting.

One option for analysing the structure of the pain-experience would be to say that the experienced situation consists of a body part hurting, that is, the body part is experienced as hurting. This seems to be, for example, Alex Byrne's view: he says that the content of a certain pain experience is "that there is a pain in the toe" or that the toe is hurting (Byrne,

2001). This situation is not entirely Independent as we have just seen: though the ankle or the toe are Independent, the way they are experienced as being—i.e. hurting—is not. This would contrast with the case of seeing the blue ocean, where both the ocean and the way it is seen as being—blue—are Independent. This is compatible with the view that colours are response-dependent properties. The relevant sense of mind-dependence in Independence is act-independence, and this would be granted by response-dependence theories as well.

Crane has a somewhat different view. He holds that an intentional episode has intentional content, which is a matter of some object being presented under certain aspects. Besides, there is a further element that he calls the 'intentional *mode*,' which refers to the relation of the subject to the intentional content. Believing, desiring, visually experiencing, for example, are intentional modes. In the visual experience of the blue Pacific Ocean, the blue ocean—or the ocean being blue—is the content, and the visual experiencing is the mode. In Crane's view of bodily sensations, the *hurting* in pain can be regarded not as part of the content of the intentional episode, but rather as the mode. So if we compare the experience of the ankle with that of the Pacific Ocean, the hurting would be analogous not to the blue, but to the visual experiencing. This analysis means an explicit acknowledgement of the act-independence of the hurting aspect of the experience: intentional modes cannot be exemplified outside mental episodes.

There is a further alternative intentionalist account of pain: that pain is the experience of damage in a body part (Tye, 2002). If this were right, then both the experienced particular (the ankle) and the way it is experienced as being (damaged) would be Independent, because one could have damage in a body part that is not experienced. However, I find this account of pains completely implausible. If we want to do justice to the phenomenal character of pains, one cannot leave out the essentially experiential feature of *hurting*.

The phenomenal character of a pain episode is best described with reference to a combination of Independent and non-Independent elements. In pain, an intentional object makes its appearance: the body part that hurts. But the way the object is experienced as being—that it's hurting—is essentially dependent on the subject's having this mental episode. Hence it is not intentional: it isn't directed at something beyond the experience, but rather it is a matter of the experience having a certain quality. Now I want to say that once we realise that some experiences are not entirely intentional, this opens the way to asking whether there are some that are entirely non-intentional. It seems to me that the answer is yes, and a certain type of dizziness can plausibly be regarded as such a case. Sometimes dizziness is described as

one's 'head spinning,' but I don't think that in every case, the sensation has to have an obviously locatable region in the body: sometimes it really is just the way one feels, that is, the qualities that characterise the experience are all attributed to the experience or to the subject of the experience, rather than to any object. In other words, dizziness is a pure *quale*; simply a modification of the subject's consciousness.[6]

There are two separate questions here. One is whether we agree on the analysis of the particular case of dizziness. The other is whether there is any general reason to think that an experience couldn't be a pure quale, without an intentional object; because if there is no such reason, then even if I am wrong about dizziness, there may be other cases. I'm not sure who has the burden of proof here, but I don't see such a general reason. Here again it is important that we are interested in the Independent variety of intentional objects. Famously, Brentano makes the following claim:

> Every mental phenomenon includes something as object within itself, although they do not all do so in the same way. In presentation, something is presented, in judgement something is affirmed or denied, in love loved, in hate hated, in desire desired and so on. (Brentano, 1924/1995, p. 88)

Superficially, this applies to sensations as well. One could say that in every feeling, something is felt—one feels pain, dizziness or nausea, and so on. But whatever kind of object 'dizziness' is, it is certainly not Independent. Just pointing out that a feeling of dizziness is a feeling *of something*—i.e., of dizziness—is not sufficient to show that the sensation has an Independent object: dizziness couldn't exist without being experienced. In fact, at the time of writing the above lines, Brentano himself held that intentional objects were immanent to the intentional act, which can arguably be understood as the denial of the Independence of the object.[7]

Alex Byrne (2001) defends the claim that all bodily sensations, as well as all perceptual experiences, are intentional, but Byrne has a much more

[6] I want to put aside a certain issue: by claiming the existence of a pure quale, I don't mean to take sides in the dualism/physicalism debate. For all I say here, the characteristic modification of the subject's consciousness which constitutes the phenomenal character of dizziness may be a completely physical event.

[7] As well known, Husserl criticised Brentano for holding that intentional objects are immanent, arguing instead that they should be regarded as *transcendent* (for Husserl's notion of transcendence, see Zahavi 2003, pp. 16 ff. I am tempted to say that my proposal is along the same lines and in the talks which preceded this paper, I talked about the transcendence of the intentional situation. However, without wanting to go into exegetical details, I started to suspect that my notion of Independence is not quite the same as Husserl's notion of 'transcendence,' and hence I decided that I better avoid using the same term.

liberal conception of intentional objects than I do. He holds that if afterimages, phosphenes or pains-as-objects turn out to be mental particulars which cannot exist independently of being experienced, they can still serve as intentional objects. He argues that even if objects are conceived in this way, the sensations can be characterised as 'things seeming in a certain way'—it seems to one that her toe is hurting, or that there is an afterimage before her—and this means the sensations have intentional content. There is indeed a sense in which when one feels dizzy, 'things seem in a certain way' or rather 'feel in a certain way,' but the 'things' in this case need not be Independent objects at all, they may just be placeholders for the grammatical subject of the sentence. As I said before, we are hard pressed in these cases to say exactly which Independent objects are the objects of the experience. In any case, the point is this: even if Byrne is right that every sensation has some object, Independent or not, it would require a separate argument to show that every sensation must have an Independent object. And my point here is that I don't see a general reason to assume that they do.

4. The Acquisition of an Intentional Object and the Projection of a Property

Some sensations may lack any intentional object, but I believe that this feature of a sensation is not stable; it can change. Let me give an illustration of what I mean. Some people are prone to sudden drops in their blood sugar level. The symptoms are very characteristic: sudden dizziness or faintness, feeling hot, weak and shaky. I occasionally have this experience. When it first happened, I didn't realize what it was. In the course of time, I learnt that the cause is low blood sugar level, and that the best thing to do is to eat something sugary, which makes the symptoms disappear quite quickly. Nowadays, if this happens to me, I might say to someone "I feel that my blood sugar is dropping, I have to have a biscuit." And to my mind, this is indeed *what* the feeling is: it is *the feeling of my blood sugar dropping*. The idea of blood sugar has an immediate presence in my mind when I have the experience; there is no apparent inference at all, the very feeling seems to have the character that is best described in these words. The case is similar to other cases when I describe a feeling in terms of its object: the feeling of something cold touching my skin, or the feeling of a vein's throbbing in my leg. And just as the other feelings are *about*, or *directed at*, the cold touch on my skin, or the vein in my leg, the presently discussed feeling is *about* blood sugar. At least this is how it strikes me.

The general possibility suggested by this case is the following. There is a sensation, which is regularly caused by a certain event. A subject may first identify the sensation on the basis of its characteristic feel, without being aware of its cause. When she learns about a cause, she becomes able to infer the presence of this cause from having the experience. After a certain time, the experience in truth becomes a 'sign of the cause' in the consciousness of the subject; that is, the experience starts to feel as a feeling of its cause. We might call this 'the process of an experience acquiring an object through interpretation.' It is clear that being about the level of blood sugar is not an intrinsic feature of the experience (at least not as the subject feels it initially). One needs the interpretative process to endow the experience with this object. However, after the interpretative process, it seems that the cause becomes a genuine intentional object of the experience. It is an object, because its presence in the experience is completely immediate—or in any case, as immediate as the presence of the ankle in the experience of one's hurting their ankle. And it is a genuine intentional object, because it is Independent: it is possible for the blood sugar level to drop without the subject feeling it, for example, during sleep.

The experience, at this stage, is similar to the case of pain, in the following respect: it involves an Independent intentional object—the event of the blood sugar dropping—but the other element that characterises the phenomenal nature of the experience, the way this feels, is not Independent. However, in some cases a further development is possible. Hurting, as I said, is not experienced as a property that the ankle could have without being experienced. But in theory, we could form the idea of a *different* property: a property of being disposed to cause a certain kind of sensation. Wittgenstein considers the following possibility in §312 of the *Philosophical Investigations*: "The surfaces of the things around us (stones, plants, etc.) have patches and regions which produce pain in our skin when we touch them. . . . In this case we should speak of pain-patches on the leaf of a particular plant just as present we speak of red patches" (Wittgenstein, 1953/2001, p. 37).[8]

If we conceived the pain-patches analogously to the red patches, then having a pain-patch would be an Independent feature: the leaf would have pain-patches even if no one touched it. 'Pain' in 'pain-patch' would refer to a different property than in 'pain in one's ankle.' The latter is a property that only conscious creatures can exemplify, the former can be a property of inanimate objects. If a certain kind of object or event is seen as a potential

[8] Thanks to Alex Byrne for calling my attention to this example.

regular cause of a certain kind of sensation, we can move to the idea that it remains a potential cause of the sensation even if no one is actually having the sensation. An unfelt sensation is a contradiction in terms, but an unfelt regular type of cause of a certain kind of sensation is not. We may call this process 'the projection of a property upon an object,' but we need to keep in mind that the projection results in a different property.[9]

Here, again, we need to remember that the sense of mind-independence relevant to Independence is act-independence. Even if the property of having pain-patches is mind-dependent in the sense that it makes an essential reference to the experiences of sentient creatures, something's exemplifying this property would not depend on a particular act of experiencing it.

Notice that in this case the pain is projected onto an external object, rather than onto the body part where the pain is felt, so in addition to the change of the property through projection, the intentional object of the experience changes. This would be a variation of the process described above: a *change*, rather than acquisition of intentional object through interpretation. In fact, someone may think that the blood sugar case was similar; if the original sensations—feeling dizzy, shaky, etc.—already had an object, then the process of interpretation changed the object, rather than introduce it. The principle is the same though: something becomes an object of the experience by being associated with it as its regular cause.

The pain-patch in Wittgenstein's example is imaginary because, as a matter of fact, we usually don't project pains on external objects. There must be reasons for this which have to do with the conditions of projecting properties. I cannot go into details here, but one likely factor is that pains tend to linger even when their external cause is removed from the presence of the observer. Compare seeing a knife and being cut by a knife. If you throw the knife out the window, the visual sensation of the shape and colour cease, but the pain probably doesn't. This partly explains why we attribute shape and colour to the knife, and pain to ourselves.

If we did project pain on external objects, then hurting would become a form of external perception, in addition to sight, hearing, touch, smell and taste. The characteristic feature of perceptual experiences is that their basic nature is given by an intentional situation: in the normal cases, both the object, and the way it is experienced as being, are Independent. However, there are often non-Independent residues in the experience. What strikes me as the most natural account of blurry vision is the view that the blurriness is

[9] This is the kind of distinction that Christopher Peacocke (1983) makes between *red* and *red'*, where the former is a property of objects, the latter is a property of sensations.

not experienced as the property of the mind-independent objects that I perceive; blurriness is something that is brought to existence specifically by the occurrence of the experience. Suppose I have a blurry visual experience, and I close my eyes. The impression is that the individuals, their colours and distances would continue to exist even when I don't have the experience. But for all I know, all blurriness might have ceased from the world when I closed my eyes. Blurriness is not Independent.[10]

5. Pure Sensations

Many sensory experiences involve a combination of Independent and non-Independent elements. But a further important observation is that even when the experience has acquired an intentional object through interpretation, and a property is projected onto an object, the fundamental sensory aspect of the experience is given by the original non-intentional sensation, or quale. It is true that this isn't how perceptual experience usually strikes us. The transparency observations have a significant force: the phenomenal character of a perceptual experience is often most naturally described by mentioning act-independent objects and their act-independent properties. The reason is that the processes of interpretation and projection are very natural and automatic. If we wanted to discover the purely sensory, we should inquire into the conditions that facilitate these processes, because we can expect to find the purely sensory where these conditions are missing.

The main reason for interpreting our sensations as providing a testimony of the mind-independent world is the highly organised and stable structure of experience, which responds in a uniform and predictable way to our movements and other actions. One seldom reflects upon this fact, but it really is very remarkable. If I only think about my present visual experience of the small coloured icons on my text editor program, it is rather amazing what a fine detail it offers, and how reliably these details seem to hang together.

Compare this experience, for example, with the fleeting impression of an afterimage. In an afterimage, several factors are missing that are present in my current visual experience. First, in an afterimage, there is no fine detail. Second, the details don't seem to be available for further investigation: it doesn't seem as if I could go and attend to the various aspects of

[10] Tye (2002) has an alternative account of blurriness, which is consistent with an intentional account, but I think it is less plausible than this one. See Crane (2006) for an effective critique of Tye's view on this point.

the image, because it changes with every second, and starts to evaporate before my very eyes. Third, the image has a certain way of moving as I move my eye, which gives the impression that my eye movement somehow drags the picture with itself. All these together give me the distinct impression that the afterimage is not an act-independent entity, and the properties that characterise my experience of the afterimage—colours, shapes—are not experienced as properties of act-independent objects. One has the feeling that once the experience of a blue-and-red afterimage is gone, for all we know, nothing may remain blue or red. Whereas if I close my eyes after seeing a tomato, I don't have the impression that all red has gone out of the world.

Some people say that the colours of the afterimage are experienced as features of the white surface against which the illusion occurs, and hence afterimages are simply hallucinations. But their afterimages must be very different from mine, because mine don't look like that at all. And neither do those of Ned Block, apparently:

> Afterimages—at least the ones that I have tried—don't look as if they are really objects or as if they are really red. They look . . . illusory. Try it out yourself. Don't get me wrong. I agree that an image experience and a tomato experience share something that one might call a color property. My point is that when one has an afterimage one has no tendency to think thereby that anything is really red . . . (Block, 1996, p. 32)

In the framework developed in this paper, the property of being 'really red'—which we are not inclined to attribute to anything in the afterimage experience—is a projected property, that is, a property that could be instantiated independently of any particular experience. Since the qualities that characterise the afterimage experience are felt as being instantiated only as long as the experience occurs, we are not inclined to attribute such a projected property to anything. Further, in terms of the proposal presented here, what is common to the afterimage experience and the tomato experience is the sensation-property red, which is different from, although has an intimate connection to, 'real red.'[11]

I said that we would have a chance to experience pure sensations when the conditions of interpreting them as giving a testimony of the mind-independent world are missing. So imagine sensations which have even less detail, stability and apparent independence of our actions than afterimages.

[11] I argued above that Moore fails to make progress in answering the question of whether a sensation *is* blue or is *of* blue. One reason for this failure is that the formulation of the question seems to presuppose that the *same* property is a candidate for being the property of the experience, and the property of its object. But this may not be the case.

Imagine a chaos of shapes and colours that change every time we blink, random ringing in the ear, fleeting impressions of strange tastes in one's mouth, and so on. These would be the pure sensations which are the building blocks of our perceptual experiences. It's only when impressions are organised into a structure that we form an idea of the experience-independent world that sustains them.[12]

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