

Why is there something rather than nothing? I don't know. And if there were *absolutely* nothing—not even potential logical structures or time or ... it's difficult to see how things could get off the ground. But it's simply not clear that that's the right question. It may be that it requires fewer (weaker) assumptions to allow that there are *possibilities*. If that's the case, we may at least consider the existence of such-and-such possibility.

Now, suppose we have the existence of the possibility p_1 , $2 + 3 = 5$, which is to say, if there were 2 things (physical, numerical, etc.) and 3 (other) things, then there would be 5 things. But this already gives us other information. For example, it rules out the existence of the possibility p_2 , $2 + 3 = 6$. So p_1 rules out p_2 .

We want to consider the possibility '(a particular shade of the quale) red exists'. The problem here is that this simply does not rule out that what 'red' means within the possibility is not what we would call 'green' (for example). The locution 'red exists' does not rule out that 'red' could refer to any particular quality whatsoever. Thus, 'red' cannot be part of the existence of the possibility, as the possibility does not mean what we want it to mean.

Instead, we have the existence of the possibility p_3 that

(1)  exists

which is to say, if there were  then red would exist.

(This is an example of what I have elsewhere called a qualation.)

Now, (1) rules out that the possibility in question *could* be talking about anything other than red qualia and (I would claim) it is the only way to do so. But notice that to merely specify the *possibility* of the existence of red *qua* redness, we had to give an *actual* red. Otherwise, the possibility does not know (so to speak) what is meant by 'red'. So in p_1 and p_2 we have it that the subjunctive 'if there were ...' does not require the actual existence of anything, but in p_3 we have it that the subjunctive 'if there were ...' *does* require the actual existence of some particular thing.

What I have been struggling to argue is that 'the possibility red' must itself contain actual redness, since otherwise the possibility cannot specify what it is a possibility *of*. If this possibility wants (so to speak) to rule out that it is the possibility of the existence of greenness, then it must specify 'red' in the possibility in such a way that it can be differentiated from 'green'. But a mere *name* for a color cannot do this. The only way to do this is to use the actual quale of redness.

The conclusion is that the mere possibility of the existence of *redness* requires the actual existence of redness. Otherwise the possibility cannot specify which quale it is the possibility *of*.

This argument evidently applies to any possible quale whatsoever. On the one hand that sounds bad. But on the other hand, it could turn out that physical laws and physical things can be understood as particular kinds of qualia.