

# Perceptual Acquaintance and the Seeming Relationality of Hallucinations

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In recent years, it has become popular again to endorse relationalism about perception.<sup>1</sup> According to this view, perceptions are *essentially relational* experiences and thus differ in nature from non-relational hallucinations. In this article, I assume that relationalism is true. The issue that I am generally interested in is rather which version of relationalism we should endorse, given that perceptions are relational. The standard answer to this question is *Acquaintance Relationalism*, the view that perceptions are relational in so far as they acquaint us with objects in our environment. But my contention is that this view cannot account for two important aspects of perfect hallucinations, namely their property of being introspectively indistinguishable from perceptions and their property of having the same motivational force as veridical perceptions. Which alternative form of relationalism should be endorsed instead (if any) is then an issue to be discussed at another occasion.

The article consists of three sections. In the first, I say a bit more about what relationalism about perception amounts to and distinguish Acquaintance Relationalism from its relationalist rivals, such as Russellian or Fregean Relationalism. To this end, I introduce three important distinctions: (i) between experiences understood as properties of subjects and experiences understood as parts of subjects; (ii) between token experiences defined by their numerical identities and types of experience defined by their essential mental kinds; and (iii) between acquaintance and representation as different candidates for perceptual awareness.

The second section spells out three desiderata that any satisfactory relationalist account of perceptions and hallucinations – including Acquaintance Relationalism – has to be able to meet. First, they should account for the fact that, from the inside, perceptions seem to be relational. Second, they have to explain how hallucinations can be introspectively indistinguishable from perceptions (i.e. from experiences that seem to be relational), even though hallucinations are not relational themselves. Third, they should be able to identify the feature(s) of hallucinations that ensure that these experiences possess the same motivational power as perceptions. These desiderata are defended on the basis of considerations about the distinctive characteristics of hallucinations (i.e. that they are introspectively indistinguishable from perceptions, despite not

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<sup>1</sup> See, among others, Campbell (2002), Martin (1997, 2002b, 2004a, 2006), Johnston (2004, 2006), Brewer (1999, 2004, 2006, 2011), Fish (2008, 2009), Travis (2004), Soteriou (2013), Genone (2014), McDowell (1986), Tye (2007), Speaks (2009), Schellenberg (2010, 2011, 2014), Dorsch (2010b, 2011, 2013a) and Dorsch and Soldati (2016). I distinguish different variants of relationalism in § 1.

being perceptions) and the phenomenal character of perceptions (i.e. that they seem to be relational).

The final section presents two main arguments for the conclusion that Acquaintance Relationalism cannot meet the second and the third desideratum, respectively. According to the Trilemma Argument, the view fails to account for the introspective indistinguishability of hallucinations from perceptions, independently of whether it assumes hallucinations to involve representational awareness, or no awareness at all, or some unspecifiable form(s) of awareness. The Argument from Error, on the other hand, maintains that Acquaintance Relationalism can explain the shared motivational force of perceptions and hallucinations neither by reference to their common introspective indistinguishability from perceptions, nor by reference to their common involvement of a form of experiential awareness that attributes perceivable properties to objects. Both arguments show that Acquaintance Relationalism has difficulties to accommodate hallucinations and should therefore be rejected as a viable variant of relationalism about perception.

## **I Acquaintance Relationalism and Its Relatives**

On the assumption that direct realism is true, relationalism about perception maintains that it is part of the essence or nature of perceptions that they are relations to the particular external (i.e. experience-independent) objects that are perceived.<sup>2</sup> But there are various ways of understanding this claim. And, correspondingly, different versions of relationalism can be formulated. Indeed, Acquaintance Relationalism is only one form of relationalism among many that have been defended in the debate. In order to get clearer about what is distinctive of Acquaintance Relationalism and how it contrasts with the alternatives, it will be helpful to take a closer look at three respects in which relationalist views may differ from each other: (i) whether they assume experiences to be properties or parts of their subjects; (ii) whether they endorse relationalism only with respect to particular perceptions or also with respect to their essential mental kind; and (iii) whether they take perceptual awareness to be an instance of relational acquaintance or of non-relational (or intentional) representation.

### **I.1 Experiences as Properties vs. Experiences as Parts**

To start with, relationalists may disagree about the ontology of experiences. On the one hand, they may conceive of experiences as *properties* of subjects. According to this *Property View*, whenever we perceive an object, we instantiate the property of perceiving that object. To say that our perception is relational means, then, to say that the property we instantiate is a relation, that is, a property which links us to a second relatum, namely the object perceived. In short, perceptions are relations between subjects and objects.

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<sup>2</sup> Sense data theories also endorse relationalism about perception. But they differ from direct realist forms of relationalism in that they take perceptions to be relations to internal sense data, rather than to objects external to the mind.

On the other hand, relationalists may understand experiences as *parts* of the mind of subjects that are bearers of properties in their own right. According to this *Part View*, whenever we perceive an object, there is, as part of our mind, a perception of that object. To say that our perception is relational means, then, to say that this part of our mind is itself a relatum that stands in a relation to another relatum, namely the object perceived. In short, perceptions, as parts of subjects, are related to objects.

Here is not the place to ask which of the two ontological views is to be preferred or, indeed, to which extent they really differ substantially.<sup>3</sup> I would just like to highlight that the Part View is as well placed as the Property View to make good sense of the idea that perception establishes a link – and, indeed, the primary link – between subjects and the world. For, if a certain part of a whole is connected to something, the same is true of the whole itself. Similarly, both views have no problem to accommodate the idea that perceptions are constituted by their objects. The Property View does so simply by conceiving of perceptions as genuinely relational properties, that is, relations with one permanent and essential relatum. The Part View, by contrast, maintains that the relational properties constituted by the objects are essential to, and hence themselves constitutive of, the perceptions. So, the object of a given perception constitutes the whole (i.e. the experience) because it constitutes an essential part of it (i.e. the relational property).

For our current purposes, it appears to be more natural to adopt the Part View of experiences; and this is what I will do, at least for most of the time. The main reason for this is that perceptions are not simply relational, but they are relational *in one or more specific aspects* – for instance, with respect to their phenomenal character, their type of awareness, their representational content, or some other feature. And the simplest way of describing this specificity of the relationality of perceptions is by saying that the perceptions themselves possess a relational property (e.g. a relational character, content, and so on). In any case, I do think that it does not matter for what follows whether conceive of experiences as properties or parts of subjects; and also that my preferred talk of perceptions as *having* relational properties can be translated without any loss of substance or justification into talk of perceptions as *being* relational properties.

## **1.2 Token vs. Type Relationalism**

Now, if we indeed treat perceptions as parts of the mind that bear properties in their own right, the claim that perceptions are essentially relational turns out to mean that they essentially possess a relational property, that is, a property constituted by an object. The relevant object is, of course, the particular external object that is perceived. That is, it is the object that the experience in question is about, or refers to. Accordingly, relationalism claims that perceptions essentially possess the relational property of having a particular external object as their referent. However, there is again an ambi-

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<sup>3</sup> The main dispute between the two views concerns the issue of whether subjects are best understood as bearers of experiences as proposed by the Property View, or alternatively as wholes containing experiences in the way described by the Part View.

guity in this claim, this time concerning whether the relational property is just part of what determines the *numerical identity* of the perception in question (i.e. its particular essence) or also part of what determines the *kind of experience* that it essentially belongs to (i.e. its qualitative essence).

Compare the case of animals. The property of having a mother (i.e. of originating in an egg provided by some other animal), for instance, is essential to any given animal both in that it partly defines the kind that all, and only, animals belong to and in that it contributes to the numerical identity of each of the animals. Being an animal just means in part having a mother.<sup>4</sup> And some individual being, that is *essentially* an animal, would not have been the very same individual, if it had not been an animal in the first place. By contrast, the property of having a *specific* mother is essential to an animal only in so far as it contributes to the animal's numerical identity, while it has no bearing on the kind(s) of thing that the animal essentially belongs to (e.g. animals, tigers, etc.). The reason for this is simply that not all animals (or tigers, etc.) have the same mother. Indeed, one important difference between the two essential properties is that, while the first pertains to all animals, the second is shared only by some (i.e. those that do have the same mother).

Returning to relational perceptions, since they can differ in which particular objects they refer to (e.g. we can perceive different objects on different occasion), their essential property of having a particular object as their referent is like the property of having a specific mother, and unlike the property of having a mother. In other words, relationalists about perception should acknowledge that the relational property of having a particular referent bears just on the identity of the perceptions, but not on their kind. Relationalism about perception thus basically amounts to the following claim:

*Token Relationalism* The numerical identity of token perceptions – but not necessarily their essential kind of experience – is partly constituted by the particular external object that is their referent.

This claim makes clear in which sense relationalism takes perceptions to be constituted by their external objects: perceptions would not have been the very same experiences, if they had had a different particular object as their referent, or none at all.

What is especially interesting about this clarification of the relationalist view is that it discloses that relationalism is compatible with the claim that relational perceptions and non-relational hallucinations share the same qualitative essence, that is, are experiences of the same mental kind. For relationalism is, first and foremost, a view about token perceptions and, as such, neutral about what is true of the kind of experience that these tokens essentially belong to. Indeed, some relationalists have explicitly argued that perceptions and hallucinations involve the same form of representationality and do

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<sup>4</sup> In scientifically slightly more adequate terminology, the existence of all actual animals is the result of reproduction; and reproduction involves at least one reproducing organism that provides the cell material, out of which the new living being can then develop (see, e.g., Michod 1995).

not differ in kind, despite differing essentially in their relationality. The most developed view of this kind takes perceptions to be representations in the Fregean sense:<sup>5</sup>

*Fregean Token Relationalism* Perceptions are essentially representations with a specific de re mode of presentation that implies that, *if* the experiences concerned do have a particular referent, *then* this referent partly constitutes their numerical identity.

The main point about this specific formulation of relationalism is that the noted conditional implication allows for failure of reference. Hence, the resulting Fregean Token Relationalism can permit that hallucinations involve the same type of de re modes of presentation as perceptions. However, it is much more common among relationalists to assume that the relationality of token perceptions is a direct result of the kind of experience that they essentially instantiate. That is, relationalists typically also accept:

*Type Relationalism* Perceptions are essentially experiences of a specific kind that implies that they do have a particular referent (whichever external object it is) that partly constitutes their numerical identity.

According to Type Relationalism, hallucinations could not be of the same kind of experience as perceptions because they lack a referent that could determine their particular essence. Type Relationalism is therefore stronger than Token Relationalism since it assumes that the relationality of perceptions does not only pertain to their numerical identity, but is also a consequence of their essential kind. It is important to keep in mind, however, that the kind of experience in question (i.e. the kind made up by perceptions) is not itself constituted by any external object, but merely entails that its token

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<sup>5</sup> Fregean Token Relationalism is defended by Schellenberg (2010, especially § 4). More specifically, she maintains that perceptions and hallucinations involve the same ‘potentially gappy’ de re mode of presentation, meaning that they possess the same *type* of content (or representationality). In addition, she claims that, in the case of perceptions, this de re mode of presentation is filled with the relevant external objects, thus rendering perceptions and their contents relational on the level of *token* experiences; while, in the case of hallucinations, the de re mode of presentation remains ‘gappy’, meaning that the hallucinatory *token* experiences and their contents are not object-dependent. In other writings, she describes the relationality of perceptions and the non-relationality of hallucinations rather in terms of object-directed concepts, employed both in perceptions and hallucinations, that either may pick out external objects or remain empty (Schellenberg 2011); or, more general, in terms of perceptual capacities that are involved in both perception and hallucination, but only establish a relation to external objects if employed in perception (Schellenberg 2014). She does not discuss, however, whether her view entails that what is relational about perceptions (i.e. constituted or necessarily caused by external objects), and non-relational about hallucinations, is their numerical identity. Besides, Schellenberg’s view has many structural similarities to that of Johnston (2004) and Johnston (2006), with the difference that Johnston takes perceptions to involve acquaintance rather than representation.

Fregean Token Relationalism has also been spelled out in detail by Soteriou (2000) and Martin (2002a, § 4). Without adopting the view themselves, both argue that representationalists about perception, who want to maintain that perceptions and hallucinations involve the same kind of representationality, should endorse Fregean Token Relationalism both in order to account for the phenomenologically salient particularity of perceptions, and in response to McDowell’s argument that non-relationalist representationality cannot properly count as object-directed (cite[§ 6]mcdowell:re and cite[§ 9]mcdowell:singular).

instances are so constituted. So, while Token Relationalism is the claim that the particular essence of perceptions is relational, Type Relationalism is *not* the claim that their qualitative essence is relational, but just the claim that their qualitative essence implies the relationality of their particular essence.

However, Type Relationalists may disagree on the nature of the kind that perceptions essentially belong to, and which is responsible for their relationality on the level of tokens. Some assume that what matters is that perceptions essentially acquaint us with (i.e. make us relationally aware of) the external objects that serve as their referents:<sup>6</sup>

*Acquaintance Relationalism* Perceptions are essentially instances of acquaintance, which implies that they do have a particular referent that partly constitutes their numerical identity.

Others take perceptual awareness to be representation, rather than acquaintance, and identify the kind of representation concerned as Russellian:<sup>7</sup>

*Russellian Relationalism* Perceptions are essentially representations with an object-involving Russellian proposition, which implies that they do have a particular referent that partly constitutes their numerical identity.

Again, a third group understands perceptions instead as a special kind of Fregean representations:<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> Acquaintance Relationalism has been endorsed, among others, by Campbell (2002, ch. 6), Martin (1997, 2002b, 2004a, 2006), Johnston (2004, 2006), Brewer (2004, 2006), Brewer (2011, ch. 5), Fish (2008, 2009), Travis (2004), Soteriou (2013, ch. 1) and Genone (2014). Although I focus here exclusively on our perceptual awareness of particular objects, it is worthwhile to note that, while some Acquaintance Relationalists take our perceptual awareness of instantiated properties to be relational, too, and thus rule out the possibility of illusory perceptions (Campbell 2002, ch. 6; Martin 1997), others do not (Brewer 2006, 2011).

<sup>7</sup> This seems to be the view that is defended in Tye (2007, § 2) (although he also assumes that perceptions involve a demonstrative element) and in Speaks (2009) (although he is only explicit about representational perceptions involving Russellian propositions that are constituted by the perceived objects, but not about their resulting relationality). Both are exceptions among representationalists about perception in claiming that the representationality of perceptions should be spelled out in terms of *object*-involving Russellian propositions. Most proponents of the view that perceptions involve Russellian propositions take the latter to contain only the perceived *properties*, but not any particular objects, thus resulting in a non-relationalist view about perception (see Chalmers (2004) and Siegel (2011) for discussion). One possible explanation of the relative dearth of Russellian Relationalists might be that Acquaintance Relationalism is a more natural alternative for relationalists who reject Fregean views about perception.

<sup>8</sup> This view is defended, for instance, in McDowell (1986, especially § 2) and Brewer's first book on perception (Brewer 1999, ch. 6), written before he switched his alliances to Acquaintance Relationalism. That *de re* modes of presentation (or Fregean senses) are object-dependent has also been defended in Evans (1981, 1982) and McDowell (1984). One of their main critics has been Burge who, while himself arguing that perceptions do involve a demonstrative element, rejects the object-dependence of such elements (Burge 1977, 1991, 2005, 2011 and cite[ch. 3 and 8]burge:origins). See Martin (2002a) for a detailed and critical discussion of this controversy. Schellenberg (2010, p. 36) and Soteriou (2014, § 3.6) seem to suggest that Evans agrees with Burge that perceptions – and not only perception-based demonstrative thoughts – involve demonstrative elements (although Evans and Burge disagree on whether these ele-

*Fregean Type Relationalism* Perceptions are essentially representations with a specific de re mode of presentation that implies that they do have a particular referent that partly constitutes their numerical identity.

The last three forms of relationalism are instances of what may be called *Referential Relationalists*, given that they argue that the referent of perceptions is essential to their numerical identity because of the way in which perceptual reference is established – due to either acquaintance, or Russellian representation, or Fregean representation. But Type Relationalists may also maintain that the relationality of token perceptions is due to a different aspect of the qualitative essence of perceptions, which is unrelated to how they refer. In particular, it may be argued that what matters for the numerical identity of (representational) perceptions is that they essentially provide us with justification for singular perceptual judgements (or beliefs) about particular external objects, and that perceptions could not do this without referring to exactly those objects. So, Type Relationalists may in fact prefer the following alternative to Referential Relationalism:<sup>9</sup>

*Epistemic Relationalism* Perceptions essentially possess a specific power to justify singular perceptual beliefs that implies that they do have a particular referent that partly constitutes their numerical identity.

There is no need here to adjudicate between the various forms of relationalism, given that our focus is exclusively on the prospects of Acquaintance Relationalism. But it is worthwhile to spend a bit more time on the main difference between Acquaintance Relationalism and its rivals.

### 1.3 Acquaintance vs. Representation

What distinguishes Acquaintance Relationalism from all other forms of relationalism – whether they are just instances of Token Relationalism or also instances of Type Relationalism – is that it assumes perceptual awareness to be an instance of acquaintance, rather than representation. For our purposes, the main difference between these two kinds of awareness concerns how it is determined which particular objects the experiences in question make us aware of – that is, which referents they have.

It is distinctive of *representational* experiences (and other mental representations) that they come with referential conditions that external objects may or may not satisfy.<sup>10</sup>

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ments are object-dependent). But this interpretation is difficult to square with Evans' non-relationalism about perceptions, given his information-theoretic account of perception (see Evans (1982, ch. 5); and Martin (2002a, § 5) for discussion).

<sup>9</sup> See Dorsch (2010b, 2011, 2013a) and Dorsch and Soldati (2016) for initial formulations and defenses of Epistemic Relationalism. McDowell's (ostensible) epistemic disjunctivism (cite McDowell: mind) also seems to come very close to this view (see Byrne and Logue 2008, Dorsch 2011 and Pritchard 2012 for discussion).

<sup>10</sup> Representation is usually defined in terms of veridicality conditions rather than just referential conditions (e.g. Dretske (1986); Soteriou (2000), Burge (2010, chs. 1f.); Siegel (2011, ch. 2); Genone (2014)). (Note that failure of reference is one way of being non-veridical.) I focus here exclusively on referential

These conditions may be established by how the experiences represent their objects as being, or by relevant contextual features (e.g. the causal origin of the experiences), or by a combination of both (and possibly other factors). Consider the case in which we have a perceptual experience as of a round and red object in the corner of the room. The referent of our experience (if it has one at all) may be that object in our environment which is round, red and in the corner (or which possesses at least some of these properties); or it may be that object which is causally responsible for our experience; or it may be that object which satisfies both these (and possibly other) conditions.<sup>11</sup>

By contrast, which external object is the referent of an instance of *acquaintance* is not determined by how this experience presents the object as being, or by what the context of the experience is like. That is, acquaintance does not establish referential conditions that may or may not be satisfied by external objects. Instead, it is a form of awareness that provides us with direct access to its object by having this object as its constituent. The referent of an instance of acquaintance is precisely that object which happens to constitute the experience's relational property of acquainting us with something (see footnote 6 for references). Of course, we might be unable to identify the referent of a given instance of experiential acquaintance without considering which object in our surroundings matches how the experience presents things as being, or which external object has caused the experience. But, in the case of acquaintance, these are at best conditions on our *knowledge of reference*, but not on *reference itself*.

Much more needs to be said about how an object's satisfaction of certain conditions or, alternatively, its constitution of an experience can actually establish reference. Here, it suffices to emphasise how the different ways in which acquaintance and representation determine reference lead to an important difference in whether they allow for reference failure. Given that objects become the referents of instances of acquaintance by partly constituting the latter, acquaintance could never lack a referent. It always requires the existence, and the presence in our environment, of the objects that we are acquainted with. If there is no object on the table in front of us, we cannot be perceptually acquainted with one when looking at the table.

Representation, on the other hand, does not generally imply reference, given that the relevant referential conditions need not actually be satisfied by any suitable object. For instance, the thought 'the present King of France is bald' is representational, but lacks a referent, because there is no object that satisfies the descriptive condition on reference (i.e. there is presently no King of France). But certain forms of representa-

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conditions for two reasons. First, the present article is concerned with the relationality of perceptions and the contrast with hallucinations, which are both linked to the presence or absence of a referent, rather than to whether experiences are veridical in how they present their referents (if they have any) as being. Second, it is unclear whether acquaintance and representation also differ in respect to attributional (or predicational) veridicality – that is, in how they make us aware of properties and, in particular, whether they allow for illusory perceptions. For it is possible to combine the idea that we are perceptually acquainted with objects with the idea that our perceptions may still mislead us about how they present these objects as being (see footnote 6 for references).

<sup>11</sup> See e.g. the contributions in Raftopoulos and Machamer (2012), especially the introductory first chapter.



tion may still entail reference, if they are linked to the right kind of referential conditions – for instance, conditions that require the referents to be constituents or necessary causes of the Russellian propositions or *de re* modes of presentation concerned. Hence, defenders of relationalism (i.e. the view that token perceptions cannot lack a referent) may take perceptions to be representational by arguing that the referential conditions for perceptual representation are such that they do ensure reference.

That representation, but not acquaintance, involves referential conditions and generally allows for reference failure is linked to the fact that, while representation makes us aware of external object with the help of some other elements (e.g. an object-directed mode of presentation, or an object-describing or object-involving proposition), acquaintance relates us to external objects without any such assistance. As a result, if we take away the object that we are acquainted with, nothing remains of acquaintance; while, if we do the same with represented objects, the elements involved in representation may still be left behind. This also illustrates why relationalists, who conceive of perception as representational, have to maintain that the elements in question are object-dependent (e.g. Russellian propositions that are partly constituted by the objects of experience, or *de re* modes of presentation that cannot fail to refer) in order to ensure that perceptual representation implies reference. But, even then, it still remains the case that representation – but not acquaintance – comes with referential conditions.<sup>12</sup>

## **2 Three Desiderata for Acquaintance Relationalism**

Given our clearer understanding of what relationalism about perception amounts to, we are now in a good position to move on to the issue of what a satisfactory relationalist account should be expected to achieve. According to relationalism, perceptions are essentially relations to a particular external object in so far as this object – in its function as their referent (i.e. the object that is perceived) – partly constitutes their numerical identity. We have seen that different forms of relationalism account for this relational nature of perceptions in different ways, depending on which relational property they assume perceptions to possess as part of their nature – whether they take perceptions to involve acquaintance, a Russellian proposition, or a reference-implying *de re* mode of presentation, say.

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<sup>12</sup> I return to this issue in § 5. Note also that Russellian propositions are not obviously the same as facts, although both include objects and properties among their constituents. For while the objects and properties contained in facts are linked to each other by means of instantiation, the copula that unifies the objects and qualities making up Russellian propositions is presumably of a different kind. In particular, we cannot make sense of the idea of false Russellian propositions if we do not allow for the possibility that the objects and properties unified in the proposition are not connected by the relation of instantiation (King 2012). As a consequence, even if the perceptual representation of facts is understood as being mediated by Russellian propositions, it still differs from the perceptual acquaintance with facts, given that the latter does not involve any such propositions. What might mask the fact that we are not perceptually acquainted with Russellian propositions is that philosophers sometimes describe our grasp of such propositions and of their constituents in terms of some form of non-perceptual ‘acquaintance’ (King 2014, p. 7).

But the identification of the specifically relational aspect of perceptions does not exhaust the expository tasks for relationalists. As we will see, they should also accept that we have access from the inside to the assumed relationality of perceptions. Hence, we should expect them to be able to explain how this access is possible. In addition, relationalists face explanatory expectations with respect to the possibility of perfect hallucinations. In what follows, I highlight two important aspects of such hallucinations which adequate relationalist views should be able to elucidate: the phenomenal character of hallucinations and their motivational impact. But, first, it is necessary to say a bit more about perfect hallucinations (or hallucinations, for short) and their relationship to veridical perceptions (or perceptions, for short), as well as to the phenomenal character of such perceptions.<sup>13</sup>

## 2.1 Perceptions and Hallucinations

*Hallucinations* are experiences that are characterised by two features (Dorsch 2010a). The first is that they simply *differ from perceptions*. More specifically, the two types of experience differ in that hallucinations are not connected in the same way as perceptions (or, indeed, in any interesting way) to relevant external objects. Even in cases in which how we hallucinate things as being actually matches how they are in reality, this match is entirely accidental; and the hallucination is in no interesting way dependent on the relevant part of our environment (Lewis 1980).

This feature of hallucinations forces relationalists of all types to conclude that, at least on the level of numerical identity, there is an essential difference in relationality between (veridical) perceptions and (perfect) hallucinations: while the former are essentially relations to particular external objects, the latter are essentially *no* relations to such objects. Moreover, given that proponents of Type Relationalism (including Acquaintance Relationalism) assume that this essential difference pertains not only to the token experiences, but also to the kinds of experience that they essentially belong to, they have to conclude that relational perceptions and non-relational hallucinations are experiences of different kinds.

One consequence of this is that, if Type Relationalists do accept the possibility of perfect hallucinations, they should endorse disjunctivism about that class of experiences which is made up of perceptions and hallucinations (as well as perfect illusions).<sup>14</sup> For

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<sup>13</sup> In what follows, I use ‘perceptual experiences’ to refer to the class that consists of veridical, illusory and hallucinatory experiences, while ‘perceptions’ is reserved for veridical perceptual experiences, and ‘hallucinations’ for hallucinatory ones. That is, I treat ‘veridical perceptions’ and ‘non-veridical hallucinations’ as tautologies. This terminology is, however, meant to be neutral on whether perceptions differ essentially from hallucinations – for instance, on whether veridicality or relationality are essential to the perceptual experiences that possess them.

<sup>14</sup> This class may be defined by reference to the second feature to be discussed in a minute: an experience is member of this class just in case it is introspectively indistinguishable from perceptions (citmartin:limits, martin:being; Dorsch 2010a, 2013a). Perceptions satisfy this condition trivially, given that we cannot discriminate (in kind) what is identical (in kind). But see also Siegel (2008) for critical discussion.

want of a better word, I speak of members of this class as *perceptual experiences*. Type Relationalism about perceptions and the possibility of hallucinations, taken together, thus imply disjunctivism about perceptual experiences. Only Token Relationalists can avoid accepting disjunctivism in response to the possibility of hallucinations.

The second characteristic feature of hallucinations is that they are, despite their non-veridicality, still *introspectively indistinguishable* from veridical perceptions. What this means is that we cannot tell just by reflecting on our introspective evidence that a given hallucination is not a perception. To recognise a hallucinatory experience as non-veridical, we need to acquire relevant evidence from the outside, namely through observation or testimony (or inference based on either).

Consider the case where it auditorily seems to you as if someone behind you has called your name, while in fact this has not happened. Just by attending to your experience (or your recollection of it) and reflecting on how it introspectively appears to be does not enable you to discover that your experience is not a perception, but a hallucination. Instead, in order to acquire this kind of knowledge about your hallucinatory experience, you have to ask the person next to you whether he has heard anything, or to turn around and check whether there is really someone behind you trying to get your attention. The relevant limits to introspection are thereby understood as being 'objective' or 'impersonal', in the sense that they pertain not to our individual introspective capacities or circumstances, but to the general possibility of whether any subject could ever introspect a difference.<sup>15</sup>

Interestingly, the introspective indistinguishability of hallucinations from perceptions is *asymmetrical*. We normally do not introspectively mistake our perceptions for hallucinations. This only happens, say, if our introspection is not working properly (e.g. because we are half asleep, or because we are intoxicated), or if our introspection is influenced by evidence that we acquire from the outside, and which casts doubt on the veridicality of our experience. So, while hallucinations are introspectively indistinguishable from perceptions, perceptions are not introspectively indistinguishable from hallucinations. The explanation of this asymmetry is that introspection is not neutral on whether perceptual experiences are veridical perceptions or not. Rather, both perceptions and hallucinations, by default, seem in introspection to be (indistinguishable from) perceptions. Only once we encounter further information about their possible non-veridicality do we start to question this prima facie introspective evidence and consider the possibility that the experiences concerned are non-veridical.<sup>16</sup>

Importantly, if introspection were neutral on whether a given perceptual experience is a perception, our judgement that it is a perception (rather than a hallucination) could not count as an introspective judgement, given that it would have to be inferentially based on the introspection of our perceptual experience and our ancillary belief that perceptual experiences are probably, or normally, perceptions (and perhaps also

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<sup>15</sup> See Williamson (1990, ch. 4), Martin (2004a, 2006) and Dorsch (2010a, 2013a). See also Siegel (2008) for discussion.

<sup>16</sup> See Dorsch (2010b) for a discussion of the asymmetry and its explanation. See also Dorsch (2013a).

that normal conditions obtain).<sup>17</sup> Moreover, assuming introspective neutrality would be in tension with the observation that we typically judge our perceptual experiences to be perceptions in a non-inferential way. When asking yourself whether your current perceptual experience of this text is a perception or a hallucination, you are able to – and typically do – conclude that it is a perception without engaging in any conscious inference. The best explanation of this fact is that you do have introspective evidence for the perceptual nature of your experience (even though your evidence might be misleading, namely if you merely hallucinate the text).

In addition, it is important to note that the introspective *indistinguishability* of hallucinations from perceptions does not imply their phenomenal *sameness* (i.e. their possession of the same phenomenal character). The features of an experience that are introspectively accessible make up its *phenomenal character* – or its *character*, for short. In perhaps more familiar terms, the character of an experience is identical with what this experience is like from the inside. If we acquire knowledge about our experiences by introspectively attending to them and reflecting on how they seem to be from the inside, then we acquire knowledge about their character.<sup>18</sup>

Accordingly, that *perceptions* introspectively seem to be veridical perceptions (rather than non-veridical hallucinations) thus means that they possess a phenomenal character which is characteristic of, or marks them as, perceptions. That is, they possess a *perceptual* character. Introspection is not neutral on whether perceptions are veridical precisely because it reveals to us their perceptual character.

Because of the noted asymmetry, the situation is different for *hallucinations*. That hallucinations are introspectively indistinguishable from perceptions means, first of all, simply that hallucinations possess a character which we cannot discriminate in introspection from a perceptual character, that is, from the character characteristic of perceptions. But this need not imply that hallucinations possess the *same* phenomenal character as perceptions. It just requires that the character of hallucinations is *indistinguishable* from the character of perceptions.

This point is a specific instance of the more general observation that the indistinguishability of two (sets of) properties does not by itself entail that they are the same. For specific forms of access to properties are usually limited in such a way that we cannot discriminate all differences among them. Just think of auditory perception. Most humans cannot discriminate sound frequencies that differ in less than 1Hz; and none can tell apart sounds that are merely 0.1Hz apart. But these frequencies are still distinct; and certain animals may be perfectly capable of hearing the difference between them. Similar considerations apply to other modes of perception – and, indeed, other forms of access, such as introspection. People differ in their introspective abilities; and they do so partly in respect of whether, or how well, they can discern phenomenal differences among their experiences or other conscious mental episodes or states. While some are

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<sup>17</sup> The standard view that introspection is non-inferential has been defended by Anscombe (1957), Shoemaker (1994) and O'Brien (2007), among others.

<sup>18</sup> This conception of phenomenal character can be found, for instance, in Nagel (1974), Williamson (1990, ch. 4), Martin (2004b, ch. 2) and Dorsch (2013a, 2016c).

able to distinguish between feeling angry and feeling disappointed, others may not.

Moreover, given that our capacities are generally limited and fallible, the default assumption should be that there are general restrictions on what we can discriminate – not only in perception, but also in introspection.<sup>19</sup> For instance, it may be impossible for us to properly compare our current experience with one that we had yesterday, say (e.g. with respect to the relative strength of their intensities, or the identity of the shades of hue presented by them). Indeed, what would be in need of further support is the contrary claim that introspection is a special and unusual form of access that is infallible or, at least, *not* subject to any limitations in discriminability (Martin 2004a, 2006).

The introspective indistinguishability of hallucinations from perceptions therefore leaves it open whether the two types of perceptual experience share the same character, or instead distinct characters that we cannot tell apart from the inside. What is crucial here is, of course, the issue of what the character of perceptions consists in, that is, how perceptions are like from the inside. As long as we do not know this, we cannot fully understand what the introspective indistinguishability of hallucinations from perceptions really amounts to.

## 2.2 The Phenomenal Character of Perceptions

So, let us turn to the issue of what perceptions are like from the inside. Of course, it is impossible to provide here a full description of the phenomenal character of perceptions.<sup>20</sup> For our purposes, it suffices to focus on one central aspect of the character of perceptions, namely that they introspectively seem to be relational and, more specifically, to possess a numerical identity that is determined or constituted by their particular external referents.

There is a very good reason for relationalists to believe that the relational nature of perceptions is phenomenologically salient, that is, accessible from the inside. As noted earlier, the character of perceptions is not neutral about their nature: they possess a characteristically *perceptual* character which marks them as perceptions (rather than as illusions or hallucinations). But if, as the relationalists assume, perceptions are essentially relational (whether only as part of their numerical identity or also as part of their essential kind), this should mean that their perceptual character reflects their relational nature: in seeming, from the inside, to be perceptions, perceptions seem to be relational. In other words, if Token (or Type) Relationalism is true, then there is introspective evidence for their relationality in virtue of the noted asymmetry between perceptions and hallucinations.

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<sup>19</sup> See Hinton (1967), Hinton (1973), Williamson (1990, cf. 3), Williamson (2000, ch. 4), Martin (2004a, 2006) for detailed defenses of the view that this should indeed be the default position with respect to introspection. Williamson also provides further examples.

<sup>20</sup> See Dorsch (2010a) and Dorsch (2016b) for more detailed descriptions of the phenomenal character of perceptions and, in particular, more thorough defenses of the phenomenological salience of the (putative) relationality of perceptions.

Many relationalists agree with this observation.<sup>21</sup> Some even have argued that their non-relationalist opponents, too, should accept that, from the inside, perceptions (rightly or wrongly) seem to be relational.<sup>22</sup> Indeed, the introspective salience of the (seeming) relationality of perceptions may be supported by phenomenological considerations that are independent of the truth of relationalism. What these considerations suggest is that, from the inside, the objects of perception seem to us to be external and existing constituents or determinants of our respective experiences.

It is nowadays a well-established commonplace in the literature that perceptions are transparent to the external objects that they make us aware of. What this, first of all, means is that, when we try to attend to our perceptions from the inside, we end up attending to their referents (Dorsch 2010b; Martin 2002b). For instance, we come to note the tree or the house that we are perceiving (as well as certain of their features) when focussing our attention on our respective perceptual experiences. But we do not just attend to the tree or the house. We also notice that they are *external* in the sense that their existence does not depend on our perception of them. For example, we have the impression that they will continue to exist even after we divert or close our eyes. In this respect, perceptions introspectively differ from after-images which lack this impression of externality.

But our perceptions present their objects not merely as something external to them. They also give us an impression of the *existence* (or presence) of their objects. When we see a tree or house before us, they appear to be part of our actual surroundings. For instance, we have the impression that they are in a certain distance from us, and that we could move around them or touch them. But this means that they seem to us be part of actual space, that is, the same space in which we actually are and move around. By contrast, when we merely visualise a tree or house, they do not – at least typically – appear to be present in our environment. They seem to occupy a different space, disconnected from ours, to the effect that we do not have the impression of being able to walk around or touch them.<sup>23</sup> Moreover, this difference between seeing and visualising is open to us in introspection: we can notice the presence of the objects of perceptions in our actual surroundings when attending to them from the inside (Dorsch 2010a, 2016b).

Finally, it is not just the case that the objects of our perceptions seem, from the inside, to be external and existing. They also appear to be *constituents* or *determinants* of our perceptions – or, perhaps more precisely, of the relevant relational property that is essential to our perceptions. This means that, to introspective reflection, our perceptions seem to be in certain ways dependent on their external objects. But which kind of dependence is central to the (seeming) relationality of perceptions?

One type of dependence concerns how our perceptions present their objects as be-

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<sup>21</sup> See e.g. Schellenberg (2010) and the references in footnote 22, among others.

<sup>22</sup> See Martin (2000), Soteriou (2000) and Dorsch (2016b). Compare also the idea that the relationality of perceptions can account for certain aspects of perception (e.g. their power to ground demonstrative judgements) only if the relationality is phenomenologically salient (see footnote 43 for references).

<sup>23</sup> See Sartre (1940–2010, pp. 8ff., 52, 86ff., 127ff. and 149), Wittgenstein (1984, §§ 622 and 628) and Dorsch (2012, chs. 3.6 and 5.3). The argument presented in Martin (2002b) and Dorsch (2010b) exploits this difference between seeing and visualising.

ing qualitatively. If one of our perception presents a book as blue, it does so precisely because the book is blue. It would have presented it as being red if it had been red instead. Moreover, we have introspective evidence for this type of dependence. When we reflect introspectively on our perception of the book (and perhaps also on some recollections of past perceptions), we do not merely observe the book's presence in our surroundings, but we may also notice that, other things being equal, our experience would have presented the book as having a different colour if the book had had a different colour. Both this aspect of seeing and its phenomenological salience are, again, lacking in the case of visualising. Which colour we visualise a book as having does not – and does not introspectively seem to – depend (at least not in the same direct way) on which colour a certain book in our environment might have (Dorsch 2017, ch. 5).

However, the dependence just discussed is not of much interest here since it may be accepted by non-relationalist views about perception as well. Rather, the type of dependence that is crucial for the relationality of perceptions (and which is thus denied by non-relationalists) is the dependence of the numerical identity of perceptions on the numerical identity of their objects.

According to Token (and Type) Relationalism, particular perceptions are relations to, and thus constituted by, particular external objects. This means that the numerical identity of token perceptions is partly a function of the numerical identity of their objects. If the perception had had a numerically distinct object as its referent, it would have been a numerically distinct experience. And if the object had not existed at all or only at a far away place out of sight, this very same perception would not have come into being in the first place (though a different one might have taken its place).<sup>24</sup>

Applying this relationalist picture to our example, it follows that if the particular book had not existed, or had not been there before our eyes, or had been replaced by something else, we would have had a numerically distinct perception. This would have been the case even if the replacement would have been qualitatively a perfect copy of the actual book. Indeed, all relationalists have to accept that, irrespective of whether we notice that the book, which we have been perceiving all along, is suddenly replaced by a qualitatively identical one, we begin to have a new perception distinct from the one that we had just before the exchange of books.

Now, when attending from the inside to our perceptions, we are able to note most aspects of this (apparent) dependence of particular perceptions on their particular objects – though not all. The last example shows that we may not always be able to tell which particular object we are perceiving, and thus also which particular perception we are having. When we do not notice the exchange of books, we will not be in a position

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<sup>24</sup> As Mattia Riccardi pointed out to me, relationalists might have to modify their view in order to capture cases in which we see far away objects (e.g. stars) that cease to exist shortly after they have emitted the relevant light rays, but before these rays reach our eyes. One possible modification is to say that perceptions and their referents need not be compresent in order for the latter to count as constituting the numerical identity of the former. Perceptions could then still be distinguished from episodic memories – despite both being experiences of objects from the past – in that only the second, but not the first, depend on prior experiences (i.e. the original perceptions). In what follows, I simply ignore these complications.

to recognise the transition from one perception to a numerically distinct one, too. So, introspection may actually fail to enable us to identify or discriminate our perceptions and their objects.

But it still does provide us with access to the (seeming) fact that the numerical identity of our perceptions depends on the numerical identity of their objects (see footnote 22 for references). When attending to and reflecting on an experience of looking at a book that is suddenly removed, we will normally have the impression that our initial experience has given room to a distinct one. Similarly, if we see someone quickly replacing the book with a qualitatively identical copy, it seems to us from the inside as if our perception after the exchange is not the same as the one before (despite there being no differences in how they present the two books as being).

In particular, our knowledge that our initial experience has been replaced with a distinct one is *not* inferentially based on our observation that a new book has been exchanged for the original one and our relationalist view that, if the objects of two experiences are distinct, then the experiences must be distinct themselves. Rather, we recognise that a new experience has come into being in a much more immediate way, in virtue of our non-inferential access from the inside. This is just due to the way in which books and other external objects are present to us in perception: namely as objects that appear to determine the nature and identity of the respective experiences (see footnote 20 for references).

Once again, this impression is lacking in the case of sensory imagination. The numerical identity of an experience of visualising a book neither is, nor introspectively seems to be, a direct matter of the numerical identity of any existing book. Certainly, there might be an indirect link of determination mediated by our desire or intention to visualise a certain existing book, or by our recollection of such a book which then provides the ‘sensory material’ for our imaginative project. But, in these cases, we are aware from the inside that how our imaginative experience presents the book as being is determined by our will or by our memory, rather than by some book in our surroundings.<sup>25</sup>

Hence, the phenomenological observation that the numerical identity of perceptions appears to be constitutively linked to their referents – that perceptions seem from the inside to conform to Token Relationalism – should form the core of the claim that perceptions possess a characteristically perceptual character. This conclusion holds in particular for proponents of Token (and Type) Relationalism, for whom the claim that perceptions introspectively seem to be veridical perceptions includes the claim that they introspectively seem to be relational. But, as the preceding considerations are meant to show, this description of the perceptual character of perceptions should also have considerable appeal irrespective of the truth of relationalism. Even if relationalism should turn out to be false, a good case can be made for the claim that introspection provides some *prima facie* support for Token Relationalism.<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>25</sup> See Dorsch (2009), Dorsch (2012, chs. 3,5f.) and Dorsch (2017, ch. 5) for more on this.

<sup>26</sup> Martin (2000, 2002b) presents two further arguments for the conclusion that perceptions *seem* to be relational from the inside (as well as for the conclusion that they *are* relational).



### 2.3 The Three Desiderata

In the light of the preceding considerations, we can now specify three desiderata for relationalist accounts of perceptions. While the first desideratum concerns the character of perceptions, the second is about the character of hallucinations. The third desideratum concerns both types of perceptual experience equally, given that it focuses on their shared motivational force.

Of course, relationalists about perception should be able to explicate which specific properties of perceptions render Token (and possibly also Type) Relationalism true and are thus responsible for the relationality of perceptions. This is indeed the core demand for any relationalist account of perception. But the desiderata considered here go beyond this basic explicatory task and address the compatibility of the relationality of perceptions with other important aspects of perceptions and hallucinations. The *first desideratum* questions how the relationality of perceptions can indeed be accessible in introspection:

(PER) How is it possible that perceptions introspectively seem to be relational – that is, seem to depend for their numerical identity on the numerical identity of their particular referents?

This requirement is especially pressing for variants of relationalism – such as Russellian or Fregean Relationalism – that take perceptual awareness to be representational. For representation is not, by default, a relational form of awareness. But the desideratum also needs to be addressed by Acquaintance Relationalism, even though (as we will see) this view is by its very nature much better placed to satisfy it.

The *second desideratum* switches attention to the character of hallucinations, and to how it compares with the character of perceptions. More precisely, what relationalists are asked to do is to provide an account of the introspective indistinguishability of hallucinations from perceptions. Since what we have access to from the inside is the character of the experiences concerned, hallucinations are introspectively indistinguishable from perceptions with respect to their character. Hence, what needs to be answered is the following question:

(IND) How is it possible that the character of hallucinations is introspectively indistinguishable from the character of perceptions?

This desideratum raises different challenges for relationalist views, depending on their stance on whether perceptions and hallucinations possess the same or distinct characters. Acquaintance Relationalism and Russellian or Fregean Type Relationalism entail that the two types of experience differ essentially in character (assuming that differences in perceptual awareness lead to differences in character). Hence, the task for these views is to elucidate how hallucinations can have a character that is distinct from, but none the less introspectively indistinguishable from the character of perceptions.

Fregean Token Relationalists and Epistemic Relationalists, by contrast, may maintain that perceptions and hallucinations share the same character, namely if they are

also said to share the same kind of representational awareness. What (IND) demands of these views is to spell out how it is possible that the essential difference in relationality between perceptions and hallucinations makes no phenomenal differences. In particular, what needs to be shown is that the relevant differences in, respectively, numerical identity or justificatory power are indeed not phenomenologically salient – and, more importantly, how this is compatible with the fact that the relationality of perceptions *is* accessible from the inside. So it might not be as easy as initially thought for a relationist to come up with an adequate answer to (IND).

The *third desideratum* concerns both types of perceptual experience and demands an explanation of the fact that hallucinations move us to belief (and action) in the same way as perceptions do (Fish 2008). This sameness in motivational power consists in the fact that, in the absence of contrary evidence from the outside, both perceptions and hallucinations motivate us to form identical perceptual judgements about particular objects, as well as matching introspective judgements about the experiences' (seeming) status as veridical perceptions.

Let us return to one of our previous examples. If it auditorily appears to you as if someone is calling your name and you have no reason to doubt the veridicality of your perceptual experience, then you normally will be inclined to judge that a specific person is calling your name (and this inclination will become operative once you consider the issue of whether someone is calling your name). Similarly, your auditory experience and the absence of any relevant defeaters also ensure that you normally will be disposed to judge that your experience is a veridical perception (and this disposition will manifest itself once you ask yourself what kind of experience you have). Whether your experience is thereby a perception or not does not directly matter for your motivational state.

Of course, experiences do not simply motivate us. Motivation is not a primitive aspect of experiences (or other mental phenomena, for that matter). Instead, some other feature or features have to be responsible for the motivational power of experiences. Relationists thus need to answer the following question:

(MOT) In virtue of which underlying feature(s) do perfect hallucinations possess the same motivational force as veridical perceptions?

It is noteworthy that the shared motivational impact of perceptions and hallucinations on our mind is implied by the introspective indistinguishability of hallucinations from perceptions. If hallucinations were to incline us to form other judgements, or none at all, then we would be able to recognise from the inside that they differ in this respect from perceptions. Imagine, again, that you have an auditory experience of someone calling your name. The motivational impact of your experience is open to introspection. Simply ask yourself whether there is someone calling you, or whether your experience is a veridical perception, and you will normally not only form certain judgements in response to your 'inner' question, but also be in a position to tell from the inside what these judgements are. Now, if you were to discover by introspection that your judgements negate the respective propositions (i.e. you judge that there is no caller and no

veridical perception), then you would be able to introspectively distinguish your experience from a perception, given that you know by introspection that perceptions normally give rise to opposite judgements (and given that you have no reason to doubt that normal conditions obtain). So, the introspective indistinguishability of hallucinations from perceptions requires that hallucinations move us to form exactly the same judgements (and beliefs) as perceptions (Martin 2002b, pp. 389ff.).

Opponents of Type Relationalism standardly account for this intimate connection between introspection and motivation by arguing that perceptions and hallucinations are essentially experiences of the same kind and, hence, share all relevant features that are responsible for both what they are like from the inside and how they rationally motivate us. Indeed, many critics of Type Relationalism assume that one central aspect shared by all perceptual experiences is their representationality (or content); and that this sameness in representationality – possibly together with some other common factors (e.g. a sameness in attitude or mode) – ensures both a sameness in character and a sameness in motivation (see, e.g., Sturgeon 1998). It remains to be seen whether Acquaintance Relationalists (as well as other Type Relationalists) can adopt a similar strategy in their responses to the desiderata – in particular, whether they can account for motivational sameness in terms of its close link to introspective indistinguishability.

### **3 Two Objections to Acquaintance Relationalism**

According to Acquaintance Relationalism, perceptual awareness consists in acquaintance. Given that acquaintance is a form of awareness that is partly constituted by the external object of awareness, it implies reference. As a result, hallucinations cannot involve acquaintance, since it is part of their nature that they lack a referent. If hallucinations involve awareness at all, it has to be distinct from perceptual awareness. In addition, as indicated earlier, perceptual awareness constitutes part of the phenomenal character of perceptions. Hence, if – as Acquaintance Relationalists claim – perceptions and hallucinations differ in awareness, then they also differ in character.

The resulting view has no problems with satisfying the first desideratum (PER). Since it maintains that perceptual acquaintance is both constituted by the perceived object and part of (or a contributor to) the character of the perception concerned, it is no big step to the additional claim that the features of perceptual acquaintance that are accessible from the inside include its constitution by its object. In a sense, this is just a specific instance of the more general case that being aware of a whole often involves being aware not only of its main parts, but also of the fact that they are parts of the whole. When we look at a brick house, we do not merely see the house and each of the bricks, but also the constitutive link between the two. However, the problems for Acquaintance Relationalists start once we move on to the other two desiderata.

### 3.1 The Trilemma Argument

The difficulties begin with the fact that Acquaintance Relationalism cannot account for the introspective indistinguishability of hallucinations from perceptions in terms of a shared phenomenal character. For the view assumes that the two types of perceptual experience differ in awareness and, hence, also in character. Therefore, Acquaintance Relationalists have to respond to (IND) in a different manner. More specifically, they face the challenge of explaining how it is possible that hallucinations introspectively seem to be indistinct from instances of acquaintance, without actually being instances of acquaintance. In other words, they need to explain how hallucinations can be introspectively indistinguishable from perceptions, although they do not involve the same form of awareness – and hence do not possess the same character – as perceptions. Acquaintance Relationalists may approach this issue in three different ways, depending on which form of awareness (if any) they take perfect hallucinations to possess. But since none of these approaches is very promising, Acquaintance Relationalists is left with a trilemma.

The first approach – the *Unity View* – claims that all hallucinations possess the same form of hallucinatory awareness (and, hence, the same character). This is the case, for instance, if they involve representational awareness with existential quantification, say, or, alternatively, relational acquaintance solely with uninstantiated properties.<sup>27</sup>

However, taking hallucinations to have a common form of non-singular awareness (whether representational or not) threatens to undermine the motivation for identifying perceptual awareness with acquaintance. If reference to hallucinatory awareness could explain why they are introspectively indistinguishable from, and incline us to belief in the same way as, perceptions, then it should be expected that treating perceptions as involving the same form of non-singular awareness would have the same explanatory power. So we would need another reason, over and above introspective evidence and motivational impact, for believing that perception does involve acquaintance with objects – and not just general representation or acquaintance with properties. And it is not easy to see what such a reason could look like.<sup>28</sup> So, a relationalist who insists on taking hallucinations to be either general representations or relations to properties should probably better adopt a Russellian or Fregean version of relationalism.

In addition, the Unity View has to make the problematic assumption that the difference between relational acquaintance and non-relational representation (or between acquaintance with both objects and their properties and acquaintance merely with proper-

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<sup>27</sup> While Johnston (2004) endorses the second option, I am not aware of any explicit endorsements by Acquaintance Relationalists of the first option.

<sup>28</sup> See Martin (2004a, 2006) and Nudds (2013) for formulations of this so-called ‘screening-off’ argument. Perhaps sceptical considerations might provide extra support for the idea that perceptual awareness is relational in being constituted by its objects (McDowell 1994; Pritchard (2012). Note that the same problem need not occur for attempts to account for (MOT) in terms of the property of being introspectively indistinguishable from perceptions (which both perceptions and hallucinations instantiate), namely if the explanatory power of this property is derived from the property of being a perception (which only perceptions instantiate). But this proposal about how to answer (MOT) has its own problems (see below).

ties) is not accessible from the inside, given that this view maintains that hallucinations are introspectively indistinguishable from perceptions. But, as the contrast between perceptual and imaginative experiences indicates, this difference is usually phenomenologically salient: while perceptual experiences seem to be relational from the inside (see §2.2 above), imaginative ones seem to be non-relational and thus representational. For example, when we visualise a green apple (without visualising any particular green apple), we are not inclined to take this apple to exist in our environment, or anywhere else. But this is possible only if visualising introspectively seems to us to be representational, that is, compatible with the non-existence of its object. For any putative introspective evidence for the claim that visualising does require the existence of its object would dispose us to judge that the object visualised does exist.

The second position – which may be labelled the *Eliminativist View* – maintains that hallucinations do not involve any form of awareness (or, indeed, any kind of character) at all. This view agrees with the first that the difference in character between perceptions and hallucinations consists in a difference in awareness. But, this time, the difference concerns not two different kinds of awareness (and character), but rather the presence or absence of awareness (and character).<sup>29</sup>

The main problem with this position is that it does not have the resources to explain how the *absence* of awareness is supposed to give rise to an experience that we cannot tell apart from a case in which awareness is *present* (i.e. in the shape of acquaintance). Indeed, it is difficult to see which feature other than some common form or aspect of awareness could explain why all hallucinations are introspectively indistinguishable from instances of perceptual awareness. It is still possible that hallucinations might share an intrinsic, non-presentational aspect of phenomenal character (i.e. a particular intrinsic ‘raw feel’ or ‘quale’). But the existence of such aspects is highly controversial (Tye 2015, especially § 8). Moreover, it is very unclear how the presence of a *non-presentational* aspect could render hallucinations introspectively indistinguishable from perceptions with a *presentational* character.

Besides, it also does not help to insist – as Fish (2008, 2009) does – that introspective indistinguishability is simply a consequence of motivational (or functional) sameness. For this does not resolve the mystery of how motivational sameness could have an impact on introspection (i.e. rendering hallucinations indistinguishable from perceptions) without also having a similar impact on character (i.e. constituting or engendering a shared phenomenal aspect), given that what we enjoy introspective access to are precisely aspects of character. Indeed, because the Eliminativist View denies that hallucinations are conscious experiences with a character, it is difficult to understand how this view could at the same time hold that hallucinations are still open to introspection.

Partly because of problems like these, some Acquaintance Relationalists have endorsed a third position – the *Agnostic View* – which acknowledges that there is no an-

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<sup>29</sup> This view has been defended by Fish (2008, 2009). Sturgeon (2006, 2008) (who is himself not a relationalist) argues that Acquaintance Relationalists – or, indeed, relationalists in general – should endorse this option, rather than one of the other two. But see Siegel (2008) for further criticism of this version of Acquaintance Relationalism.

swer to be had to the question of which form(s) of awareness different hallucinatory experiences involve or, indeed, whether each of them involves awareness in the first place.<sup>30</sup> As a consequence, there is also no systematic explanation of the introspective indistinguishability of hallucinations from perceptions to be had. Instead, this indiscriminability is just the result from the fact that introspection – like all other kinds of access – is limited in which differences among accessible aspects are recognisable by us. Simply by looking at a perfect wax replica of a tomato, we cannot tell that it is not a real tomato – and we cannot say anything about its true nature either (e.g. that it is made of wax). Similarly, by attending to a hallucination from the inside, we cannot tell that it is not a hallucination – and we also cannot say anything about its true nature and, especially, which character it possesses or which type of awareness it involves (if any).<sup>31</sup>

According to this view, although our introspective access to the character of hallucinations is limited to recognising that it is subjectively indiscriminable from a perceptual character, distinct hallucinations may still differ widely in their character (and forms of awareness, if any) without us being able to find out more about this. That is, there might be very different factors that can render an experience to be introspectively indistinguishable from perceptions, despite not being a perception. In comparison, there are also many ways in which we may create a perfect replica of a tomato (e.g. by using wax, wood, plastic, and so on). As a result, we cannot provide a uniform account of the nature of all things that look like tomatoes, but are not tomatoes. Similarly, hallucinations need not share a common kind of awareness and character, which we could refer to in explaining why we cannot tell apart hallucinations from perceptions in introspection.

It is still the subject of a lively debate whether Acquaintance Relationalists can, or should, construe their position in terms of the Agnostic View.<sup>32</sup> Here, I would just like to highlight a specific difficulty for the view which is only sometimes discussed, but pertains directly to the issue of accounting for the phenomenal character of hallucinations. The challenge may be spelled out by asking how the Agnostic View can, on the level of metaphysics, avoid collapsing into the Eliminativist View (while merely adding the epistemological claim that we have no introspective evidence for or against the assumption of such a collapse). In other words, it is unclear how the Agnostic View could ensure that hallucinations *are* conscious experiences with a character, given that the view entails that introspection is completely neutral on this issue.

For the limitations of introspection and other forms of access need not stop at the failure to recognise differences among certain properties. They may also concern the

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<sup>30</sup> See especially Martin (2004a, 2006), but also Soteriou (2013, ch 8) for endorsements of this view.

<sup>31</sup> Of course, we can discover that the replica is not a real tomato, but made out of wax by touching it, or by weighing it, or by cutting it into half. Similar options might not be available in the case of the character of hallucinations because it is unclear how we could access it other than by introspection. But perhaps the cognitive sciences could tell us more about what individuates and unifies the class of hallucinatory experiences. See Dorsch (2010a) and Dorsch (2010b) for further discussion.

<sup>32</sup> Apart from the defenses in Martin (2004a, 2006) and Soteriou (2013, ch 8), see the many objections raised against it by Sturgeon (1998), Johnston (2004), Siegel (2004, 2008), Sturgeon (1998), Pautz (2010, 2011), Fish (2009, ch. 4), Hawthorne and Kovakovich (2006), Smith (2008), Byrne and Logue (2008) and Dorsch (2010a,b, 2013a).

failure to distinguish between the presence and the absence of those properties. When looking outside into a foggy night and having the false impression that there is a man in the distance, say, we might not err concerning the actual kind of the object in question (e.g. that it is rather a stone or tree trunk), but rather concerning whether there is an object out there, to begin with. That is, we might just ‘see’ a shadow, but mistake it for a real object. Equally, when it wrongly seems to us from the inside that we are enjoying an experience that is indistinguishable from a perception, what we fail to notice might not be the true (i.e. non-perceptual) character of an existing experience, but rather the absence of any conscious experience in the first place. That is, we might not have any experience, despite the fact that we cannot tell apart our current state of mind from one in which we are perceiving something (e.g. a man).

As long as the proponent of the Agnostic View does not present considerations that rule out that the limitations on our introspective capacities do not extend to the potential inability to tell the difference between the presence and absence of experience, they have to acknowledge the possibility that some, or even all, hallucinations are not experiences – a concession which gives rise to the same problems as in the case of the Eliminativist View. Martin – perhaps the most prominent proponent of the Agnostic View – is in fact aware of this problem and tries to counter it by taking the property of being introspectively indistinguishable from perceptions to be sufficient for the property of being an experience with a character.<sup>33</sup> More specifically, his view can be understood as claiming that both perceptions and hallucinations possess a certain *determinable* character that is distinctive of perceptual experiences, and which is determined by the *more specific* character of acquaintance in the case of perceptions, but not in the case of hallucinations. Hallucinations are then introspectively indistinguishable from perceptions because both share the determinable character. But, because of the limitations to introspection, we have no introspective evidence concerning the nature of the determinate character(s) of hallucinations and should therefore remain agnostic about this nature.<sup>34</sup>

Martin’s proposal might be able to ensure that hallucinations are always experiences with a conscious character. Its success in this respect largely depends on the plausibility of taking introspective indistinguishability to be sufficient for experience. But this variant of the Agnostic View still cannot satisfy (IND). For, as long as it remains unclear which determinate character(s) hallucinations have, we have no explanation of why they share their determinable character with perceptions and, therefore, also no

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<sup>33</sup> Indeed, Martin identifies the two properties, given that he assumes other candidates for experiences – notably sensory instances of recalling and imagining – to be merely *representations* of experiences (Martin 2001, 2002b), similar to Hume’s understanding of ‘ideas’ as ‘copies’ of ‘impressions’ (Dorsch 2016a). Hence, for Martin, the class of *experiences* – and not merely the class of *perceptual* experiences – coincides with the class of situations that are, for the subject, introspectively indistinguishable from perceptions.

<sup>34</sup> Martin’s proposal is thus an instance of the Agnostic View. It does not count as an example of the Unity View since the determinable character common to perceptions and hallucinations – what Martin calls the ‘having a point of view or perspective on the world’ (Martin 2006, 378 and 404) – is not meant to be sufficient for awareness, meaning that perceptions and hallucinations do not share even a very unspecific form of awareness. In other words, in the case of hallucinating, occupying a perspective onto the world does not lead to actual awareness of anything.

explanation of why they are introspectively indistinguishable from perceptions. Martin sometimes seems to suggest that hallucinations possess only a determinable character, but no determinate one. But not only would it still be left unexplained why they differ from perceptions in not having a specific character. It would also mean that determinables could be instantiated without there being any determinations of them. And this seems to contradict the very nature of determinables (e.g. there could not be an instance of red without there being also an instance of a particular shade of red). To conclude, none of the three variants of Acquaintance Relationalism is in a position to provide an acceptable answer to (IND).

### 3.2 The Argument from Error

Let us now turn to the third desideratum (MOD), which asks for an explanation of how perceptions and hallucinations can possess the same motivational force. What a satisfactory account needs to do is to identify the underlying feature that is shared by both types of perceptual experience, and which is also responsible for their common impact on our judgements and beliefs (as well as actions, intentions, etc.).

All three noted variants of Acquaintance Relationalism assume that perceptions and hallucinations differ in *awareness*, given that hallucinations are said to involve either a form of awareness distinct from acquaintance, or no form of awareness at all. Hence, Acquaintance Relationalists cannot account for the sameness in motivational impact in terms of a shared kind of awareness. The same applies to *character*, given that a difference in awareness automatically leads to a difference in character. Indeed, the only property that Acquaintance Relationalists assume perceptions and hallucinations to have in common, and hence the only property that they could refer to in their explanation of the shared motivational force appears to be the property of being *introspectively indistinguishable* from perceptions.

This strategy, however, encounters two serious difficulties. The first is simply that Acquaintance Relationalists cannot explain motivation in terms of introspective indistinguishability, unless they have an adequate account of the latter – that is, unless they have a good answer to (IND). So, their fulfilment of the third desideratum seems already to depend on their highly problematic response to the second one.<sup>35</sup>

But even if Acquaintance Relationalists should have the resources to elucidate in virtue of which feature(s) hallucinations are introspectively indistinguishable from and thus motivationally the same as perceptions, they still face a second objection, namely that reference to introspective indistinguishability does not help to explain the mistake involved in the higher-order judgements that hallucinations incline us to form.<sup>36</sup> On

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<sup>35</sup> This might be partly why Fish (2008) and Fish (2009, ch. 4) insists that the order of explanation is the other way round: that hallucinations are introspectively indistinguishable from perceptions because they are motivationally and, more generally, functionally the same (see Soteriou 2014, § 4.1 for discussion). However, this does not help us to address (MOT), given that it remains unelucidated how it is possible that hallucinations can have the same motivational impact as perceptions.

<sup>36</sup> This objection originates in some of the points of criticism raised against Acquaintance Relationalism (or ‘phenomenal disjunctivism’) in Dorsch (2013a).



the basis of introspection, and in the absence of contrary evidence from the outside, we wrongly judge our hallucinations to be perceptions. The question is: at which level does this error occur, and why?

Acquaintance Relationalism cannot say that the error already originates at the *level of phenomenal awareness*, that is, on the level of simply undergoing a conscious experience, prior to inwardly attending to it. Undergoing a conscious experience means having an experience with a certain phenomenal character that is open to introspection, but need not actually be introspected. But simply having an experience with a certain character cannot mislead us about that character. Just by perceptually experiencing something as green, we cannot be deceived about whether we perceptually experience something as green (rather than experiencing it as red, say). At best, having a perceptual green-experience may lead us astray about whether there really is a green object in our environment. Similarly, simply undergoing an experience with a non-perceptual, hallucinatory character (or no character at all) cannot mislead us into believing that our experience is a perception.<sup>37</sup>

But it is also implausible for the Acquaintance Relationalist to argue that the error occurs only on the *level of introspection*, that is, only during our attempt at attending to, and forming a higher-order judgement about, our hallucinations and their character. The problem here is that any such account of our mistaken introspective judgement ‘this experience is a (veridical) perception’ would have to make reference to the fact that we *possess* introspective evidence for judging that the experience is a *perception*. But all that the introspective indistinguishability of hallucinations from perceptions implies is that we *lack* introspective evidence for judging that the experience is a *hallucination*. In other words, our evidential situation is only rich enough to explain why we are rationally moved to refrain from (falsely) judging that it is not a hallucination, but not why we are rationally inclined to (falsely) judge that our experience is a perception.

Compare again the example with real and fake tomatoes. That we lack any visual evidence for taking the object before us not to be a mere replica of a tomato does not imply that we have visual evidence for taking it to be a genuine tomato. Rather, our positive evidence to judge the object to be a tomato derives from its particular visual appearance and, more specifically, from the fact that this appearance is distinctive of tomatoes. The appearance is distinctive of tomatoes in so far as most objects in our environment that have this appearance are tomatoes. This contingent fact entitles us to take bearers of the appearance to be tomatoes, even if they happen to be merely perfect replicas.<sup>38</sup> By contrast, Acquaintance Relationalism has to accept that there is no comparable positive introspective evidence in the case of hallucinations, given that the view maintains that perceptions and hallucinations share no common phenomenal

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<sup>37</sup> Unless the character itself involves a suitable form of token-reflexive higher-order presentation. If an experience of seeing something green also presents itself as an experience of a certain kind (e.g. as a relation to, or a causal effect of, its object), error is possible on the level of phenomenal awareness. See Dorsch (2013a) and Dorsch and Soldati (2016).

<sup>38</sup> See Millar (2010, ch. 6). The situation would change, and we would lose this entitlement, only if we would move to fake tomato country, say (e.g. Pritchard (2008, § 3)).

character and, hence, no common ‘introspective appearance’.

Once more, Martin seems to be sensitive to the problems pertaining to having to choose between these two untenable options. He tries to avoid them by insisting that adopting an introspective perspective onto our experiences is identical with adopting a ‘perspective onto the world’, that is, with having a perceptual experience (whether veridical or not; Martin 2006, 404). What this means is that simply undergoing a conscious perceptual experience already comes with being aware of that experience from the inside. Indeed, this claim can be understood as a direct consequence of Martin’s earlier idea that the property of being introspectively indistinguishable from a perception is sufficient for – or even identical with – the property of being a perceptual experience (see § 3.1). If perceptual experience is indeed inseparably linked to introspective indistinguishability from perception, then the level of experience and the level of introspection are difficult to distinguish, too.

But even if there is no distinct level of introspection over and above the level of phenomenal awareness (i.e. perceptual experience), there is still the difficulty of elucidating how our error of taking hallucinations to be perceptions can have its origin at this single level of phenomenal awareness. In particular, equating our introspective perspective on our experiences with our perceptual perspective onto the world cannot mean that our error about the nature of our hallucinations reduces to an error about the world. In wrongly judging that our current experience as of a tree is a veridical perception, we do not merely err about their being a tree before us, but also about the kind of relation that we (do not) stand in to our surroundings. That is, we come to wrongly believe not only that there *is* a tree, but also that we *see* that tree. Given that the introspective error is not reducible to a perceptual error, Martin still owes us an explanation of what the origins of the first error are. And since he assumes that there is no distinct level of introspection, he is forced to accept that the mistake occurs already at the level of phenomenal awareness (or conscious experience), leading to the difficulties just noted.<sup>39</sup>

Furthermore, an Acquaintance Relationalist cannot reply that we receive the positive evidence for our false judgement that our hallucinations are perceptions by introspectively noticing that the experience in question is introspectively indistinguishable from perceptions (or, alternatively, by introspectively noticing that we actually fail to distinguish the experience from perceptions). For this would render our mistaken judgement inferential: we would be said to (wrongly) conclude that the experience is a perception on the basis of judging that it is introspectively indistinguishable from perceptions, and on the basis of believing that being introspectively indistinguishable from perceptions indicates, or renders likely, being a perception. But given that introspection is not a matter of inference, the resulting higher-order judgement would not count as introspective.<sup>40</sup> Hence, we would still have no explanation of our mistaken introspective judgement.

Equally, the Acquaintance Relationist cannot maintain that our false introspective

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<sup>39</sup> I discuss Martin’s view and its problems in more detail in Dorsch (2013a).

<sup>40</sup> See Anscombe (1957), Shoemaker (1994), O’Brien (2007) and Dorsch (2009) for statements and defenses of the view that introspection is not a matter of inference.

judgement that a given hallucination is a perception is simply reliably caused by the experience's mere (i.e. non-actualised) capacity or disposition of being indistinguishable from perceptions. For this would reduce the motivation of introspective beliefs to a purely causal and third-personal phenomenon. This is problematic because there are good reasons to assume that motivation is a normative and first-personal phenomenon.<sup>41</sup> For instance, when asked why we judge a given experience to be a perception, we do – and are expected to – refer to the fact that this judgement is reasonable in the light of the experience subjectively seeming to us to be a perception. A reliabilist account of motivation and entitlement by introspection could not pay justice to this normative and first-personal aspect of our rational practice.<sup>42</sup> In addition, Acquaintance Relationalists are very likely to reject reliabilism about introspection, given that their identification of perceptual awareness with acquaintance removes any reason for them to endorse reliabilism about perception. For them, perceptions justify beliefs about external objects because they are constituted by them, and not because they are reliably caused by them. But if they do not accept reliabilism about perception, it is difficult to see how they could endorse it with respect to introspection.

Very similar considerations apply to any attempt to account for the motivation of *perceptual* belief in reliabilist terms. Acquaintance Relationists cannot maintain that we form perceptual beliefs in response to hallucinations because the property of being introspectively indistinguishable from perceptions is reliably connected to the property of being a perception. For, although this reliable connection does probably obtain, Acquaintance Relationalism is incompatible with endowing it with the motivational force in question, for the reason mentioned at the end of the last paragraph. Equally, we normally do not engage in the kind of introspection and inference described two paragraphs earlier – this time with the conclusion that our experience is a perception and thus entitles us to form the corresponding perceptual beliefs – when we form perceptual beliefs on the basis of hallucinations.

### 3.3 Concluding Remarks: Motivation and Attribution

The preceding considerations show that Acquaintance Relationalism cannot explain why perceptions and hallucinations motivate us to form the same judgements by reference to introspective indistinguishability. In particular, the view cannot, in this way, account for the fact that hallucinations incline us to form false introspective judgements about them. But some Acquaintance Relationalists might insist that what matters for motivation is not introspective indistinguishability, but another feature that perceptions and hallucinations have in common, namely *attribution* (or predication).

Perceptual experiences involve attribution to the extent (or in the sense) that they make us experientially aware of certain perceivable properties of the objects experienced and present these properties as being instantiated by those objects. When we see a green

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<sup>41</sup> See, e.g., Kolodny (2007) and Wallace (2014, § 1).

<sup>42</sup> See Dorsch (2013b) for a similar argument concerning the motivation and justification of aesthetic judgements.

tree, say, the seen object visually appears to be a green tree as part of our experience of it. That is, our perception attributes the properties of being green and of being a tree to the object concerned.

Now, Acquaintance Relationalism might point to this feature when trying to account for the common motivational impact of perceptions and hallucinations. For example, the fact that both the perception of a green tree and the hallucination of a green tree normally lead to the perceptual judgement that there is a green tree might be said to be due to the fact that both experiences make us aware of the same qualities (i.e. greenness and treeness), albeit in a different way.

The first thing to note, however, is that only proponents of the Unity View can adopt this line of argument. The Eliminativist View denies that hallucinations make us aware of anything, while the Agnostic View maintains that we have to remain silent or agnostic on the issue of the nature of hallucinatory awareness. As a consequence, neither variant of Acquaintance Relationalism can contend that hallucinations do involve attribution and share this property with perceptions. Advocates of the Unity View, by contrast, are not necessarily limited in the same way, since they may assume that hallucinations involve the representation – and thus the attribution – of perceivable properties.

But even the adoption of the Unity View cannot save Acquaintance Relationalism in this case. First of all, the proposed explanatory strategy cannot be applied to the motivation of the *introspective* judgements that the experiences in question are veridical perceptions. For this property of perceptions – unlike the greenness of trees, say, – is not experienced by us in a perceptual (e.g. a visual) way. That is, perceptual experiences do not make us experientially aware of, or attribute to themselves, their own property of being veridical perceptions.

In addition, there is the problem that both perceptions and hallucinations motivate us to form *singular* perceptual judgements (e.g. ‘this is a green tree’), and not merely general ones (e.g. ‘there is some green tree’). Again, this aspect of motivation cannot be accounted for just by reference to how both types of perceptual experience make us aware of objects. On the one hand, neither the numerical identity of the objects experienced, nor the singular reference of the experiences themselves are among the properties that are attributed by perceptual experiences. On the other hand, precisely that aspect of perceptual awareness that is said by Acquaintance Relationalists to be crucial for explaining the singularity of the motivated judgements – namely the fact that perceptions relate us to particular external objects by acquainting us with them – is missing in the case of hallucinations.<sup>43</sup> Accordingly, Acquaintance Relationalists – even if they endorse the Unity View and take hallucinations to be representational – cannot make sense of the fact that non-relational hallucinations incline us to form singular perceptual judgements.

More generally, the Trilemma Argument and the Argument from Error provide strong support for the conclusion that all three forms of Acquaintance Relationalism fail to satisfy the second and the third desideratum, (IND) and (MOT). In other words,

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<sup>43</sup> This is, for instance, part of why Campbell (2002, 2005, 2011), Brewer (1999) and others think that non-relational perceptual experiences could not ground singular thought (e.g. demonstrative thought).

Acquaintance Relationalism has serious problems to explicate how perfect hallucinations can possess a phenomenal character that is introspectively indistinguishable from the character distinctive of veridical perceptions, and in virtue of which of their other feature(s) hallucinations possess the same motivational impact on our first- and higher-order judgements as perceptions. These difficulties suggest that relationalists about perception should probably construe their view in terms of representation rather than acquaintance – although it remains to be seen which representationalist variant of relationalism is, in the end, to be preferred.<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>44</sup> As mentioned in footnote 9, I have already started elsewhere (Dorsch 2010b, 2011, 2013a; Dorsch and Soldati 2016) to argue for Epistemic Relationalism as the best alternative. – I am very grateful to the editors, Mattia Riccardi and Frank Larøi, as well as Davor Bodrozic and to two anonymous referees for their detailed comments on an earlier draft. In addition, I would like to thank John Campbell, Fiona Macpherson, Mike Martin, John McDowell, Susanna Schellenberg, Gianfranco Soldati and Matt Soteriou very helpful discussions about the issues addressed in this article. My relevant research was generously funded by the Swiss National Science Foundation (PP00P1\_139004) and the Fundación Séneca (18958/JLI/13).

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