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**Authors' Addresses:** Prof. Dr. J. P. Moreland, Biola University, 13800 Biola Avenue, La Mirada, California, 90639-0001; Prof. Dr. Larry Lee Blackmann, Department of Philosophy, Welles 103, State University of New York at Geneseo, Geneseo; Prof. Dr. Andrew Newman, Department of Philosophy and Religion, University of Nebraska at Omaha, Omaha, NE 68182-0265; Vijay Mascarenhas, Brooklyn College CUNY, 129 Second Avenue #6, New York, NY 10003, USA; Dr. Dr. Christina Schneider, Fakultät für Mathematik, Informatik und Statistik, Universität München, Ludwigstr. 33, D-80539 München; Dr. Pawel Garbacz, Department of Logic and Theory of Sciences, Catholic University of Lublin, Al. Raclawickie 14, 20-950 Lublin, Poland; Prof. Dr. Christian Kanzian, Institut für Christliche Philosophie, Abteilung für Metaphysik und Philosophische Gotteslehre, Karl-Rahner-Platz 1, A-6020 Innsbruck, Austria.

**Editors' Addresses:** Dr. Rafael Hüntelmann, Bahnstr. 39, D-63303 Dreieich huentelmann@Metaphysica.de · Professor Dr. Uwe Meixner, Institut für Philosophie der Universität Regensburg, D-93040 Regensburg; meixner@Metaphysica.de · Professor Dr. Erwin Tegtmeier, Philosophisches Seminar der Universität Mannheim, 68131 Mannheim; tegtmeier@Metaphysica.de

**Editorial Office:** Dr. Rafael Hüntelmann, Bahnstr. 39, D-63303 Dreieich nr Frankfurt phone +49(6103)202781; fax. +49(1212)5-136-80-842  
e-mail: redaktion@metaphysica.de

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J. P. MORELAND

## Timothy O'Connor and the Harmony Thesis: A Critique

### *Introduction*

The vast majority of friends and foes of agent causal versions of libertarian freedom agree that it is either inconsistent or not plausibly harmonized with a naturalistic view of the world, including a physicalist depiction of particulars taken to populate the naturalist ontology. Thus naturalist John Bishop claims that

“the idea of a responsible agent, with the ‘originative’ ability to initiate events in the natural world, does not sit easily with the idea of [an agent as] a natural organism....Our scientific understanding of human behavior seems to be in tension with a presupposition of the ethical stance we adopt toward it.”<sup>1</sup>

Elsewhere Bishop explains that

“...the problem of natural agency is an ontological problem--a problem about whether the existence of actions can be admitted within a natural scientific perspective....[A]gent causal-relations do not belong to the ontology of the natural perspective. Naturalism does not essentially employ the concept of a causal relation whose first member is in the category of person or agent (or even, for that matter, in the broader category of continuant or ‘substance’). All natu-

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<sup>1</sup> John Bishop, *Natural Agency* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), p. 1. Bishop’s own solution eschews libertarian agency in favor of a compatibilist version of the causal theory of action.

ral causal relations have first members in the category of event or state of affairs."<sup>2</sup>

Moreover, as Robert Kane acknowledges, most people think that agent causation either entails or is best explained by some form of substance dualism:

"Perhaps the most popular traditional libertarian strategy for dealing with free will is to assume some sort of dualism between mind and body, as Descartes did. Many ordinary persons, as well as philosophers, believe the only way to make sense of undetermined free actions is to assume some kind of intervention of mental phenomena... in the physical order."<sup>3</sup>

In his excellent and penetrating development of an agent causal account of freedom, *Persons & Causes*, Timothy O'Connor acknowledges that this is the case: "A great many contemporary philosophers will dismiss [an agent causal account of freedom] as pointless since it blatantly contradicts 'the scientific facts'."<sup>4</sup> However, O'Connor is actually puzzled by the majority view on this issue, and claims that a robust version of agent causation, including his own, may be very plausibly harmonized with the emerging naturalist picture of the world, including a physicalist view of the agent. For O'Connor, agent causal power is an emergent property. To support this claim, O'Connor defends what I shall call the

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<sup>2</sup> John Bishop, *Natural Agency*, p. 40.

<sup>3</sup> Robert Kane, *The Significance of Free Will* (N. Y., Oxford University Press, 1996), p. 118. Kane himself develops a particular version of libertarian indeterminism that he takes to avoid the need for substance dualism. By contrast, Stewart Goetz argues that even nonagent-causal accounts of libertarian freedom require substance dualism. See his "Naturalism and Libertarian Agency," in *Naturalism: A Critical Analysis*, ed. by William Lane Craig and J. P. Moreland (London: Routledge, 2000), pp. 156-186. Central to Goetz' case is the claim that reasons function as irreducibly teleological ends and this is inconsistent with a material agent.

<sup>4</sup> Timothy O'Connor, *Persons & Causes* (N.Y.: Oxford University Press, 2000), p. 108. Hereafter, page number citations in parentheses in the text refer to this source.

Harmony Thesis: the emergence of agent causal power may be plausibly located within a widely accepted naturalist ontology, including a physicalist depiction of the agent.

I do not believe that O'Connor has adequately substantiated this claim. In order to explain my reservations, I shall describe features of O'Connor's model relevant to our inquiry and offer three lines of criticism of his position. First, I will expose problems in O'Connor's description of the agent. Second, I will show why a certain model of causation is crucial for O'Connor's project and argue that, given this model, it is not true that consciousness in general, and active power in particular, are emergent properties. Third, I will try to show that certain epistemic features that characterize O'Connor's own case for agent causation, if applied consistently, provide adequate grounds for rejecting the Harmony Thesis. I should say at the outset that O'Connor himself is no naturalist. He is a Christian theist and appears to embrace property dualism. Nevertheless, he is concerned to show that agent causation, including active power, may be plausibly located in a widely accepted naturalist ontology, and it is this claim that I wish to clarify and dispute.

### *1. The Logical and Epistemic Status of O'Connor's Thesis*

Before we examine the specifics of O'Connor's position, it is helpful to raise issues about the logical and epistemic status of his view. Clearly, O'Connor wants to say that in some sense agent causation, at least some version relevantly similar to his own (hereafter, AC), is consonant with "the emerging scientific picture of the world", i.e., a widely accepted version of contemporary scientific naturalism, including a physicalist depiction of the agent (p. xv) (hereafter, N). However, the precise nature of "consonant" is not clear. In some places O'Connor's view seems to amount to thesis L:

(L): AC and N are strictly logically consistent.

L is a strictly logical, conceptual thesis to the effect that there is no logical contradiction in embracing both AC and N, that is, no proposition that is part of AC contradicts a proposition that is part of certain aspects of N to be stated shortly. Thus, O'Connor says that it is false to think that AC is not *consistent with* N (pp. xv, 108), that AC *may be realized* by human beings as depicted by N (p. 107), that AC is not disallowed by N (p. 108), that N does not *entail the falsity of* AC (pp. xv, 121), that accepting naturalism does not *require us to accept things that render AC impossible* (pp. 109-110), that an essential component of N--the Causal Unity of Nature Thesis-- does not *require* the acceptance of another purported component of N--the Constitution Thesis--that would render AC *straightforwardly impossible* (pp. 109-110), that, given N, there is nothing *inconsistent with* the emergence of AC, and that the *appearance of incompatibility* between AC and naturalism is mistaken (p. 125).

Thesis L is a natural way to interpret these assertions. If L is O'Connor's thesis, then it is a minimalist one indeed, and a critic would shoulder a substantial burden of proof, one which I am not prepared to carry. A critic would have to show that there is a logical contradiction in the two sets of propositions, and that is a difficult task. However, construed as a conceptual thesis, O'Connor's thesis is not very interesting and little of substance would follow from granting his claims.<sup>5</sup> From the fact that "Water is not H<sub>2</sub>O" is strictly logically possible, it neither follows that water is not H<sub>2</sub>O nor that being H<sub>2</sub>O is not essential to being water. Similarly, given L, it does not follow that AC is or could be an emergent property exemplified by a physical agent or in some other way adequately harmonized with the ontology of N.

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<sup>5</sup> In the source cited in note 1 above, John Bishop accepts L, but claims to develop a compatibilist view of agency that (1) is "at home" in N and (2) adequate to fall under a libertarian concept of agency. If Bishop is correct, then L, indeed, is a minimalist thesis that allows for compatibilism to satisfy it.



In any case, I do not believe that O'Connor is advancing a conceptual thesis about AC and N, though as far as I can tell, he is not explicit about the matter. However, O'Connor *is* explicit about the status of his view of AC itself. O'Connor is quite clear that he is uninterested merely in providing a conceptual analysis of our prephilosophical intuitions about human agency. Instead, he wants to provide an account of human agency as it really is (p. xii). I assume he intends the same thing regarding the harmony between AC and N. Thus, his Harmony Thesis is straightforwardly ontological and amounts to the claim that there is no adequate reason to deny that AC (or, at least the properties central to its elucidation) could emerge in a universe with an ontology accurately captured by N, and moreover, it is most plausible to believe that, given the right physical conditions, active power must emerge in a world accurately described by N.

If this is correct, then there are important implications about the epistemic status of his view and the epistemic requirements of a critique. To see this, consider the claim that water is *de re* necessarily such that it is H<sub>2</sub>O. In assessing the truth of this claim, a proponent does not need to *prove* there is no possible world that has water but no H<sub>2</sub>O. Nor does a proponent succeed by showing that the proposition "water is H<sub>2</sub>O" is strictly logically consistent. An antagonist does not need to show that this proposition is strictly logically impossible or that N requires us to deny that water is essentially H<sub>2</sub>O. No, debates about the essence of water will be settled on the basis of what we may simply call an inference to the best explanation, and this is so irrespective of the *de re* modal status of the topic in question. Empirical hypotheses and philosophical arguments (e.g., for or against essentialism) will be evaluated and the most plausible position adopted.

Some assertions by O'Connor seem to show that he understands and accepts this depiction of the epistemic status of his Harmony Thesis. Regarding AC, he says that it is not *likely* that empirical work will undermine

it (p. xii). Regarding the Harmony Thesis, he talks about *the hypothesis of emergence* (p. 116), that while some think that the belief in emergent properties is *much less problematic than it once was*, it still has not been *empirically established* that there are no emergent properties with their own causal powers (p. 115), that the emergence of consciousness--a crucial fact for the emergence of AC--is a *good bet* (p. 121).

Again, according to O'Connor, though it may be difficult to do so, AC may be reconciled with the Causal Unity of Nature Thesis, but not with the Constitution Thesis (p. 109):

The Causal Unity of Nature Thesis: Macro-level phenomena arise through entirely natural microphysical causal processes and the existence of macro-level phenomena continues to depend causally on microphysical processes.

The Constitution Thesis: All macro-level phenomena are constituted by micro-level phenomena.

Since most naturalists accept both theses, they eschew AC.<sup>6</sup> O'Connor accepts the incorporation of the Causal Unity of Nature Thesis into N, but not the Constitution Thesis. O'Connor seems to think that the burden of proof lies with those who believe that acceptance of the former requires acceptance of the latter. According to O'Connor (p. 110), those who accept causal unity may employ two strategies to show that acceptance of it requires acceptance of the Constitution Thesis: (i) show that the Constitution Thesis follows from the Causal Unity of Nature Thesis. (ii) show that the Constitution Thesis has been empirically verified. For present purposes, I focus only on the second option. While it seems unduly stringent to claim that justification of the Constitution Thesis requires that it be empirically *established*, the important thing to

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<sup>6</sup> See David Papineau, *Philosophical Naturalism* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1993), pp. 1-137; Paul Churchland, *Matter and Consciousness* (Cambridge, Massachusetts, rev. ed., 1988), pp. 18-21; John Bishop, *Natural Agency*, pp. 10-48; Jaegwon Kim, *Mind in a Physical World* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT Press, 1998).

LARRY LEE BLACKMAN<sup>1</sup>

## Mind as Intentionality Alone

During a career that has spanned over forty years Panayot Butchvarov has advocated what amounts to a new theory of mind. Although the view was intimated by Hume, the "early" Wittgenstein, and Sartre among others, it is apparently found in its more developed form only in Butchvarov's works and in those of his former student, Dennis E. Bradford. I will argue that the position is interesting but encounters at least as many problems as its more traditional alternatives. Butchvarov's conception of mind is contrary to common sense, fails to provide a basis for morality, is sometimes inconsistent, and is hopelessly idealistic. I will furthermore try to show that Butchvarov's unremitting phenomenological approach is chiefly to blame. It leads to these difficulties.

His idea is to analyze mind as intentionality alone. What are sometimes called awarenesses or mental acts such as perceivings, imaginings, conceivings, etc., are construed by Butchvarov as monadic properties of *objects*, the things toward which, on the usual interpretation, the acts are directed. If I imagine a rhinoceros in my basement, the imagining is not something separate and distinct from the rhinoceros; rather, it is one of its properties. Thus, the view rejects a substantial self, and it consequently denies that awarenesses are either properties of selves or relations between selves and objects. Rather, they are properties of what Brentano dubbed "intentions." Butchvarov credits Sartre with the discovery that "if the intentionality of consciousness is taken seriously, then consciousness is seen to be nothing additional to its objects, it exhausts itself in the object,"<sup>2</sup> and he thinks of himself as bringing Sartre's theory to its logical

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<sup>1</sup> I wish to thank Dennis E. Bradford, Theodore Everett, and Walter Soffer for their criticisms and suggestions. They are not, however, responsible for errors in the paper, nor do they necessarily agree with my views. Bradford, especially, does not.

<sup>2</sup> Panayot Butchvarov, *Being Qua Being: A Theory of Identity, Existence, and Predication* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1979), 252.

conclusion. In short, we should say that

the mind is *in the things* we ordinarily describe as its objects, that it is nothing but the set of certain characteristics of objects in the world. These characteristics are very different from, say, colors or shapes . . . Yet they are quite familiar. They are such characteristics as being perceptual (including its species, being visual, being tactile, etc.), being imaginal, being memorial, perhaps being purely intellectual.<sup>3</sup>

Like Butchvarov, Bradford denies "two and three-term" theories of mind. While the former hold that awarenesses stand in direct relations to their objects, the latter interpose certain intermediaries between the acts and their intentions, but these views are inadequate. According to Bradford,

Introspection shows that there is no object that is the mind . . . . This pushes us toward accepting a one-term theory of mind. And that is exactly what I understand Sartre to be proposing. The notion of mind is the notion of consciousness. Consciousness is characterized by intentionality. And, given the nature of intentionality, consciousness can have no other qualities.<sup>4</sup>

For a more adequate understanding of Butchvarov's proposal, consider his distinction between objects and entities. In general, an object is any object of consciousness, that is, "anything that may be referred to, singled out for our attention, whether in perception, thought, or discourse."<sup>5</sup> Since, moreover, existence is a genuine concept-- one that classifies and sorts-- there are both existent and nonexistent objects. Anything that can be "singled out" is an object, such as the Empire State Building, numbers, or the golden mountain. Butchvarov denies Meinong's "impossible" and "defective" objects on the grounds of their *inconceivability*; they *cannot* be singled out. Otherwise, his notion is Meinongian. In contrast, an entity is an *existent* object. The class of entities is a proper subset of the class of objects, since to be an existent object,

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<sup>3</sup> Ibid., 255.

<sup>4</sup> Dennis E. Bradford, *The Fundamental Ideas* (St. Louis: Warren H. Green, Inc., 1986), 158-159.

<sup>5</sup> Butchvarov, *Being Qua Being*, 45.

something must, minimally, be an object. The main difference between entities and nonexistent objects is that the former, but not the latter, are "multiply identifiable." The Empire State Building is an entity, because it can be perceived, and hence identified, both by you and by me, and the book on my desk is an entity, because I can both see it and touch it. Likewise, my wife is an entity, because I correctly identified her this morning and may do so again this evening. But the supposed rhinoceros in my basement is nonexistent, since it is *not* indefinitely identifiable, though it is nonetheless an object.

Strictly speaking, then, awarenesses are properties of *objects*, not entities. Butchvarov admits it would be "absurd" to think that "being perceptual," say, is a monadic property of an entity. Even though the Empire State Building can be perceived by different persons at the same time or by the same person at different times, it would be odd, to say the least, to claim that its being perceived was one of its "constituents." As Butchvarov says, an entity "does not itself have any actual monadic, intrinsic characteristic such as being perceptual, memorial, or imaginal."<sup>6</sup> However, the species of awareness involved in the singling out of an object *is*, he maintains, "an actual monadic, intrinsic characteristic of the object itself."<sup>7</sup> Thus, a red square object that I remember has the property of being memorial. It might be *materially* identical, but not formally, with a red, square object that is currently being perceived by someone else. The latter object, though not the former, would have the property of being perceptual in addition to being red, square, etc. *Qua existent* object, however, the red, square thing would have neither of the two special qualities.<sup>8</sup>

An advantage of a one-term theory of mind is that it avoids the mistakes of two and three-term theories. Typically, two-term theories such as idealism or direct realism are unable to account for the difference

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<sup>6</sup> Ibid., 253.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid..

<sup>8</sup> For the distinction between material and formal identity, see Panayot Butchvarov, "Identity," *Midwest Studies in Philosophy, Vol. II, Studies in the Philosophy of Language*, ed. Peter A. French, Theodore E. Uehling, Jr., and Howard K. Wettstein (Morris, Minnesota: The University of Minnesota, 1977).

between veridical and nonveridical perception. Three-term theories such as representative realism may account for the difference metaphysically but are problematic in other ways. Often, the second term in the relation is mysterious-- a philosophic invention-- but, even worse, the position fails from an epistemological point of view: Since the mind has no direct access to the third term, there is no way of knowing whether judgments about it are true or false or, indeed, whether it even exists. For that matter, Butchvarov also rejects the first term, the self, interpreted as a simple, enduring substance or substratum that is somehow the bearer of properties, and for Humean reasons: Not only are we unable to experience such a thing, but we cannot even *conceive* what it would be like.<sup>9</sup>

A second benefit, as far as Butchvarov is concerned, is that, in contrast to the others, his theory is phenomenologically well-grounded. He regards the failure to take phenomenology seriously as a serious defect of much contemporary Anglo-American philosophy. We are urged to heed Husserl's admonition to return to "the things themselves." Leaving in abeyance both philosophical and scientific preconceptions, we should engage in a careful, detailed *description* of the things that enter into our experience. Phenomenology provides us with our only reliable starting point (which Butchvarov believes is appropriately Cartesian), and it functions as a touchstone to which we should return again and again. On the basis of their inability to measure up phenomenologically, Butchvarov rejects two-term theories that require "intermediaries" (for example, sense data, sensations, mental representations, ideas, images, etc.), not to mention the so-called "adverbial" theory of perception.<sup>10</sup> In contrast, a one-term theory of mind is as well grounded phenomenologically as anything could be. Intentionality is at the heart of our experience.

Butchvarov's phenomenological approach underlies his acceptance

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<sup>9</sup> Butchvarov, *Being Qua Being*, 251. Cf. Panayot Butchvarov, "The Self and Perceptions: A Study in Humean Philosophy," *The Bobbs-Merrill Reprint Series in Philosophy*, Phil-44. The article originally appeared in *The Philosophical Quarterly*, Vol. 9, No. 35 (1959). Page references are to the Bobbs-Merrill reprint.

<sup>10</sup> Panayot Butchvarov, *Skepticism about the External World* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), 13-20, 35 ff.



## Converse Relations, Vectors, and Three Theses from Armstrong.

### 1. *Three Theses from Armstrong*

The issues that I want to consider concern the explanation of what a converse relation is. The three theses from Armstrong are all to be found in his recent book *A World of States of Affairs*.<sup>1</sup> The first thesis from Armstrong concerns the instantiation of converse relations and can be called the ‘instantiation postulate’: if two particulars instantiate a non-symmetric relation, then necessarily they also instantiate its converse, which is a relation that is just like it but with the opposite sense. The main difficulty here is in knowing exactly what is meant by the sense of a non-symmetric relation. It is, in fact, possible to formulate two notions of the sense of a relation one of which can be called the *linguistic* notion of the sense of a relation and the other the *metaphysical* notion of the sense of a relation, though it is not always clear which notion a particular philosopher is working with. I shall argue that if we take the metaphysical notion of the sense of a relation then the *instantiation thesis* for converse relations is false for many kinds of relation, though true for some kinds of relation.

The second thesis from Armstrong is that a relation and its converse are identical, so that the instantiation of the converse relation represents no increase in being. This is the *identity thesis* for converse relations. In the context of Armstrong’s notion of supervenience, symmetrical supervenience implies identity, so that if two relations are necessarily instantiated together, they are the same. Therefore, if a relation and its converse relation necessarily occur together, they are the same in the sense that the instantiation of the converse relation represents no increase in being.<sup>2</sup> However, if a relation and its converse were identical in this way, there would be no objective metaphysical difference between them and a difference in sense would not be an objective

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<sup>1</sup> I am grateful to Charles Cross, Jerry Cederblom, Laura Grams, and Halla Kim for helpful discussions.

<sup>2</sup> D. M. Armstrong, *A World of States of Affairs* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), p. 11-2.



metaphysical difference. My view is that the situation is more complicated than Armstrong recognizes. He is right that a relation and its converse are the same relation. But when a relation and its converse are instantiated together it is the same relation instantiated twice, once going one way and once going the other. The instantiation of the converse relation does represent an increase in being and there is an objective metaphysical difference between a relation and its converse. It is the same relation instantiated twice in the same way that any universal can be instantiated twice. It is similar to the situation where the particulars *a* and *b* instantiate a non-symmetric relation *R* and two different particulars *c* and *d* also instantiate *R*; they are the same relation, but there are two instantiations of it.

The linguistic notion of the sense of a non-symmetric relation implies that there is no objective metaphysical difference between the instantiation of a relation and its converse, and is presumably the notion of the sense of a relation used by those who claim that a relation and its converse are identical in the sense that the instantiation of the converse represents no increase in being. But there is something counter-intuitive about the suggestion that the sense of a relation is not objective: if Cassio loves Desdemona, the fact that this relation proceeds from Cassio to Desdemona, and not vice versa, seems to be as objective as anything else about the relation. Moreover, I shall argue by considering certain kinds of vector that it is possible for there to be kinds of relation that are such that there is an objective metaphysical difference between a relation and its converse. But unfortunately for Armstrong, this metaphysical notion of the sense of a relation implies that not all relations are necessarily instantiated with their converses (though some are), so that the first thesis from Armstrong is false.

The third thesis from Armstrong is that states of affairs are independent of each other.<sup>3</sup> But if there are kinds of relation such that there is an objective metaphysical difference between a relation and its converse, then there are what we should normally regard as two different states of affairs that necessarily obtain together, the state of affairs of the two particulars instantiating the relation and the state of affairs of the two particulars instantiating the relation going in the other direction, commonly called its converse. It follows that this third thesis from Armstrong, the *independence thesis for states of affairs*, is also false.

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<sup>3</sup> Armstrong, op. cit., p. 139.

## 2. *The Definition and Postulates*

Armstrong explains a converse relation as follows: “It may be noted in passing that if  $a$  has a relation to  $b$ , then, by the usage of the logicians,  $b$  automatically has the *converse* to  $a$ . There is no increase of being here either.”<sup>4</sup> If ‘automatically’ means the same as ‘necessarily’, then he is claiming that associated with any relation that has a sense (i.e. a non-symmetric relation), there is a converse relation that has the opposite sense, such that necessarily the two relations are instantiated together. Russell, in *The Principles of Mathematics*, states what Armstrong presumably assumes, that the converse of a relation is just like it except for having opposite sense.<sup>5</sup> Formally, there are two distinct things here, the definition and the instantiation postulate:

*Definition of a Converse Relation:* the converse,  $R^{-1}$ , of a non-symmetric, dyadic relation  $R$  is a relation that is just like it except in having the opposite sense.

Exactly what the converse of a relation is depends on what the sense of a relation is; and it is conceivable that there be several possible meanings of the term ‘sense of a relation’.

*Instantiation Postulate for Converse Relations:* necessarily, if two particulars instantiate a non-symmetric relation  $R$ , they also instantiate its converse  $R^{-1}$ .

This is the first thesis from Armstrong under discussion.

Having stated what a converse relation is by means of a definition, it might appear that the next thing to do would be to formulate an existence postulate that says that for every non-symmetric, dyadic relation  $R$ , that there exists one and only one converse relation  $R^{-1}$ . But an existence postulate would be redundant, because the converse of a relation is not another relation that is just like it except in having the opposite sense; it is the same relation.

One could say that the expression ‘the converse relation’ refers to a relation as instantiated, in fact one instantiated in the other direction, and then add that when the relation is considered in the abstract apart from any instantiations, a relation and its converse are the same. I think that this way of speaking is helpful, providing that it is not thought to imply that there is an ontological distinction between a relating relation and an abstract relation, as

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<sup>4</sup> Armstrong, op. cit., p. 91.

<sup>5</sup> Bertrand Russell, *The Principles of Mathematics* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1903), p. 95-7.

Russell appeared to suppose.<sup>6</sup> It is the same relation whether it is thought of as instantiated by two specific particulars or whether it is thought of independently of any instantiations. The instantiation postulate says, in effect, that if two particulars instantiate a non-symmetric relation, then, necessarily, the same relation is instantiated a second time by those two particulars but going in the other direction: it is instantiated going one way and also instantiated going the other way.

Let us consider this situation from the point of view of the various theories of universals. Both sorts of realists about universals agree that a property, or a relation, is a single entity that can be instantiated by many particulars. And consequently, both sorts of realist will agree that a relation and its converse are the same relation. For the Platonists (or transcendent realists) the property or relation sits in the Platonic heaven and is participated in, or not, by many or few particulars, remaining exactly what it is however many times it is participated in. If a relation and its converse are instantiated by two particulars, then those two particulars participate in the same relation twice, but in different ways. For the Aristotelians (or immanent realists) the property or relation occurs as a whole at each particular that instantiates it, being exactly the same property or relation wherever it occurs. And if a relation and its converse are instantiated by two particulars, then the relation occurs as a whole twice at the same two particulars, going one way and going the other. For both sorts of realist saying that a relation exists is not the same thing as saying that the relation is instantiated. Even if Armstrong's instantiation requirement for the existence of a universal were granted, namely that a universal exists if and only if it is instantiated, the existence of a universal would be independent of any particular instantiation of the universal providing that it is instantiated somewhere.

For particularists, if a relation and its converse are instantiated by two particulars, then there are two numerically distinct tropes existing side by side and differing only in sense. If it were possible to prize off these two tropes and replace one with the other, then the converse relation would do the work of the relation and the relation could do the work of the converse, with no difference except that the same work is now being done by numerically different tropes. Particularists agree with the ordinary language statements that many particulars can instantiate the same property and that many pairs of par-

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<sup>6</sup> For a discussion of the twofold role of the relation, or the double aspect problem for relations, see Andrew Newman, *The Correspondence Theory of Truth* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), pp. 97-102.

particulars can instantiate the same relation; they just have rather complex ways of explaining them.

If two particulars instantiate a non-symmetric relation going one way and also its converse, the same relation going the other way, then Armstrong asks us to believe that those two relations are identical. Indeed, they are the same relation, but there are two instantiations of it. There will be an increase in being if there is something objective about the sense of a relation, and, if you believe in states of affairs, there will be two states of affairs.

### *3. The Linguistic Notion of the Sense of a Relation*

There is no mention in Armstrong or Russell of linguistic expressions in the passive voice, which are, however, frequently associated with converse relations. The sentence 'Cassio loves Desdemona' and the noun phrase 'Cassio's loving Desdemona' describe a non-symmetric relation from Cassio to Desdemona, while the sentence 'Desdemona is loved by Cassio' and the noun phrase 'Desdemona's being loved by Cassio' apparently describe a relation from Desdemona to Cassio. In the active sentence, 'Cassio loves Desdemona', the subject term is 'Cassio' and the object term is 'Desdemona', while in the passive sentence, 'Desdemona is loved by Cassio', the subject term is 'Desdemona' and the object term is 'Cassio'. The things that were subject and object in the active voice become object and subject in the passive voice. If the sense of the relation were regarded as proceeding from the linguistic subject to the linguistic object, then the sense of the relation referred to by 'loves' is from Cassio to Desdemona, while the sense of the relation referred to by 'is loved by' is from Desdemona to Cassio. On this account, the relations referred to by 'loves' and 'is loved by' are converses of each other, because they necessarily occur together, have opposite sense, and are otherwise alike.

The main difficulty with this approach is just that the notion of sense is linguistic, being founded on the linguistic notions of subject and object: the things that go into the slots of the relation are labelled 'subject and object', 'first and second', or 'reference and relatum' (Russell) on account of the order in which the terms that refer to them appear in the sentence. In effect, the slots of the relation itself are labelled 'subject and object', or 'first and second', merely on account of whether the linguistic expression used to describe it is in the active voice or the passive voice. In symbols the relation "loves" would be described by ' $L(x_1)(x_2)$ ', while the relation "is loved by" would be

described by ' $L^{-1}( )_1( )_2$ '. The sentence ' $a$  loves  $b$ ' would be represented by ' $L(a)_1(b)_2$ ', which describes the relation as proceeding from  $a$  to  $b$ , that is as proceeding from the first slot to the second slot. Whereas the sentence ' $b$  is loved by  $a$ ' would be represented by ' $L^{-1}(b)_1(a)_2$ ', which describes the relation as proceeding from  $b$  to  $a$ , that is as proceeding from the first slot to the second slot. The linguistic notion of the sense of a non-symmetric relation leads to the conclusion that the distinction between a relation and its converse is merely a distinction in mode of presentation.<sup>7</sup> The sense of a relation is not an objective feature of a relation and there is no objective, metaphysical difference between a relation and its converse.

But a relation, so I assume, is an objective thing existing in the world. And if a relation is something objective existing in the world, then the sense of a relation should also be something objective, a feature of something existing in the world. The sense of a relation, then, would either go one way or the other, and it would not be possible in one instantiation of a relation for it to go both ways at the same time, as the linguistic view seems to imagine; if this is what is implied by Armstrong's statement "There is no increase of being here either", then he has gone too far. Consequently, if one relation holds between  $a$  and  $b$ , then another relation with opposite sense that is also supposed to hold between  $a$  and  $b$  must differ from the first in more than mode of presentation; because if the difference is only one of mode of presentation there is no difference in the world. Changing a sentence into the passive voice is merely changing the mode of presentation of reality. The instantiation postulate for converse relations, says that for any non-symmetric relation there is instantiated a unique relation with opposite sense, not, that for any non-symmetric relation there is another way of presenting it.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> It could also be called a distinction of reason. It is difficult to avoid mediaeval terminology here. If two things do not necessarily occur together, so that they can be presented separately, the distinction between them is a *real distinction*. If two things necessarily occur together and therefore cannot be presented separately, and the distinction between them is nevertheless objective (*a parte rei*), then the distinction between them is a *formal distinction*. And if two things necessarily occur together and the difference between them is merely a matter of mode of presentation, then that distinction is a *distinction of reason*. For the linguistic notion of the sense of a relation, the distinction between a relation and its converse is a distinction of reason, whereas for the metaphysical notion of the sense of a relation, the distinction between a relation and its converse would have to be a formal distinction.

<sup>8</sup> For Russell the notion of sense of a relation is a fundamental notion not capable of definition, *The Principles of Mathematics*, p. 96.

It is instructive to note that when we talk about symmetric relations we use exactly the same linguistic forms, some in the active voice and some in the passive voice. But in this case most people would prefer to follow Armstrong, as opposed to Russell, in agreeing that metaphysical considerations dictate that a symmetric relation does not have a converse, since there is just one relation.

It is difficult to know what motivates the linguistic view of the sense of a relation. Someone who thought that relations were linguistic things, as opposed to things in the world, would, presumably, regard the sense of a relation as something linguistic, and would conclude that the passive sentence described a relation with opposite sense. And it is conceivable that someone who thought that the structure of the world can be inferred from the structure of language (syntactic priority thesis) might conclude that the sentence in the passive voice describes a relation with the opposite sense.<sup>9</sup>

#### *4. The Metaphysical Notion of the Sense of a Relation*

But there is something counter-intuitive about the suggestion that the sense of a relation is not objective: if Cassio loves Desdemona, the fact that this relation proceeds from Cassio to Desdemona, and not vice versa, because Cassio loves Desdemona and Desdemona does not love Cassio, is as objective as anything else about the relation. The most serious objection to the linguistic notion of the sense of a relation is that a metaphysical notion of the sense of a relation is available, and is, so I claim, the natural notion of the sense of a relation. If it is all a matter of satisfying the definition of converse relation, then we have an example of a converse relation that is not a matter of mere difference in mode of presentation. Moreover, if there were a relation  $R$  such that whenever the sentence ' $aRb$ ' was true, the sentence ' $aSb$ ' was also true, where  $S$  differed from  $R$  only in sense, with a difference in sense in this case being an objective difference in the world, then  $S$  would be the converse of  $R$  and the instantiation postulate would be satisfied.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> Many people think that the formalism of symbolic logic reveals the true logical form of language. But the passive voice has no place in symbolic logic and therefore, if such people are right, would not represent anything about the true logical form of language.

<sup>10</sup> Williamson also suggests, in effect, that there is a metaphysical notion of the sense of a relation and that is to be preferred to the linguistic notion of the sense of a relation. See Timothy Williamson, "Converse Relations", *The Philosophical Review* 94 (1985), pp. 249-62.

In the case of a relation like “loves”, there is a metaphysically active term and a metaphysically passive term that provide a metaphysical notion of sense as proceeding from the active term to the passive term, independently of any way in which the terms are presented in the sentence, and independently of whether the sentence is active or passive.

The relation “loves” can be represented by the symbol ‘ $L( )_L( )_B$ ’, where the subscript ‘L’ represents the slot for the lover and the subscript ‘B’ represents the slot for the beloved. Using this notation, the relation “is loved by” can be represented by the symbol ‘ $L^P( )_B( )_L$ ’, where the superscript ‘p’ stands for passive voice. The sentence ‘*a* loves *b*’ would then be represented by ‘ $L(a)_L(b)_B$ ’, while the sentence ‘*b* is loved by *a*’ would be represented by ‘ $L^P(b)_B(a)_L$ ’. Both the relation referred to by ‘ $L( )_L( )_B$ ’ and the relation referred to by ‘ $L^P( )_B( )_L$ ’ have the same metaphysical sense, since both proceed from the lover to the beloved. And since they have the same sense, one is not the converse of the other; they are in fact the same relation in every way and when it is instantiated only one relation is instantiated. The relation proceeds from the lover to the beloved, whatever kinds of linguistic expressions are used to describe it. This seems to be the natural meaning of the sense of a relation. From this point of view, transforming a linguistic expression into the passive voice makes no difference to the sense of a relation.

Some people are likely to doubt that intentional relations like “loves” are genuine or real relations. Intentional relations do have unusual features, but are nevertheless perfectly respectable relations. It is characteristic of intentional relations, such as loving, perceiving, thinking of, etc, that they involve a modification to one term only, namely the subject term, whereas the other term, the object term, is quite unmodified by the instantiation of the relation. But because the object term is unmodified is no reason to regard an intentional relation as anything less than a real relation — spatial relations, for example, do not involve modifications of either term.

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“Given the identity of converses, not only are the argument places of relations not intrinsically ‘first’ and ‘second’: they do not even naturally correspond from one relation to another in such a way that, although calling one argument place rather than the other of the relation first would be arbitrary, calling the corresponding argument place of another relation first would be a non-arbitrary consequence of this decision. Argument places in different relations can be associated only in terms of the content of the relation . . . These associations have no systematic significance for the theory of relations.” (p. 260) He regards his work as part of a larger project. “The identity of converses suggests a larger project, of explaining the diversity of linguistic forms from a tighter system of non-linguistic entities whose nature allows them to be represented in diverse ways.” (p. 262)

If a person is dreaming or hallucinating that person is in an intentional state and an intentional relation is not instantiated. However, when there is an object that the person perceives, an intentional relation is instantiated and an intentional state is not instantiated. It is not always possible for a person to know whether there is an object out there, and so it is not always possible for a person to know whether it is an intentional relation or just an intentional state. Because the person sometimes cannot tell whether he is in an intentional state or participating in an intentional relation, is no reason to regard an intentional relation as anything less than a real relation. Intentional relations are interesting and useful relations to consider in the context of the sense of a relation, because there is such a clear distinction between the subject term and object term. They are genuine relations and they have sense.<sup>11</sup>

In the case of an intentional relation like “loves” there is a clear sense in which the relation proceeds from one person, who is active, to another, who is passive. However, in the case of non-symmetric relations like “taller than” there is no sense in which one term of the relation is active and the other term of the relation is passive term, but there is nevertheless something at least analogous to a metaphysical notion of sense. There is a slot into which the taller particular goes and a slot into which the shorter particular goes, and we can, if we like, think of the relation as proceeding from the taller to the shorter, but it is really only a convenient way of thinking. In this case, the two sentences, ‘*a* is taller than *b*’ and ‘*b* is shorter than *a*’ describe the same reality and differ merely in the way they present it. It appears that how the slots are labelled will depend on the kind of non-symmetric relation that is being considered.

It is not the case that “shorter than” is the converse of “taller than”. The relation “taller than” is a typical relation with foundations in both terms, namely the heights of both terms, which are monadic properties. The symbol ‘>’ is standardly used to represent the ordering relation on the set of objects with height — a first order relation that takes particulars as its terms; and it could also be used to represent the parallel ordering relation on the set of height properties — a second order relation that takes monadic properties as its terms. There is something conventional about how we talk about the sense of relations of this kind. The sentence ‘*a* is taller than *b*’ could be symbolized by ‘ $a > b$ ’ or by ‘ $a < b$ ’. The first is chosen because it suggest *a*’s being taller than *b*. The converse of the relation “taller than” is a relation just like it

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<sup>11</sup> For a defence of this view of intentional relations, see Andrew Newman, *The Correspondence Theory of Truth*, pp. 124-7



but with opposite sense; considered apart from any instantiations, it is just the same relation. For relations of this kind, necessarily, the converse relation is not instantiated, because it is not possible for  $a$  to be taller than  $b$  and for  $b$  to be taller than  $a$ . But this is not true for relations of all kinds.

If Cassio loves Desdemona, it is of course quite possible that Desdemona should also love Cassio, but it is not necessary by any means, and, in fictional fact, would have been rather unlikely. The love relation from Desdemona to Cassio would be just like the love relation from Cassio to Desdemona but with the opposite sense. It is indeed the converse relation by the definition of converse relations. But because it is not necessarily instantiated, the instantiation postulate, the first thesis from Armstrong, is false.

Although not all pairs of relations that differ only in sense are necessarily instantiated together, there is no reason why there should not be pairs of relations that differ only in sense and are necessarily instantiated together, or to put it more precisely, there is no reason why a relation with sense should not be instantiated twice between two particulars, both going one way and going the other way. Whether the converse relation is instantiated or not depends on the kind of relation. In the case of *intentional relations*, the instantiation of the converse relation is entirely contingent. In the case of *order relations*, necessarily the converse relation is not instantiated. The next sections give an example of a kind of *vector relation* that is such that a relation and its converse are necessarily instantiated together.

### 3. Vectors and Relations

With all due respect to Heraclitus, who is supposed to have said that “the path up and down is one and the same”<sup>12</sup>, it does appear to the traveller, particularly to the traveller on foot, that the downhill journey from say Jerusalem to Jericho is different from the uphill journey from Jericho to Jerusalem, a distance of about 15 miles and a difference in height of about 3,600 ft. If the journeys are different, and there is something objectively significant about direction, then there is a sense in which the spatial relation in one direction is different from the spatial relation in the other direction. But, someone will argue: surely Jerusalem should be placed in the uphill slot of the dyadic spa-

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<sup>12</sup> G. S. Kirk and J. E. Raven, *The Presocratic Philosophers* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1963), Fr. 203.



## **Intentionality, Causality, and Self-Consciousness: Implications for the Naturalization of Consciousness.**

In his now famous article, “Facing up to the Problem of Consciousness,” David Chalmers divides the problem of explaining consciousness into “easy” and “hard” problems.<sup>1</sup> Easy problems concern abilities and functions such as perceptual discrimination, sensory integration, rational control of behavior, etc., while the hard problem is explaining why these mental abilities and processes are accompanied by consciousness, that is, why we are aware that we are performing a calculation or perceiving a tree while we are doing so. It is not clear, however, on which side of the easy-hard divide the problem of intentionality lies. On the one hand, it seems more difficult to handle than the easy problems, since the relation of intentional states to their objects strikes many (though not all) as something other than a natural relation. On the other hand, even if there is general consensus that intentionality is harder than some of the easy problems of consciousness, most philosophers working in the field try to isolate intentionality from the hard problem of consciousness, the fact that we are aware of our mental states. I would like to argue both that this separation is untenable and that the inextricability of intentionality from the hard problem of consciousness makes the former as intractable to naturalization as the latter.

### ***Intentionality and Causation***

The term “intentionality,” was first resuscitated from Scholasticism by Franz Brentano and he meant by it the “about-ness,” “of-ness” or “directedness” of thought. According to Peter Simons the term originates from the Latin rendering of an Arabic word which refers to the tension of a bowstring and, therefore, to the target of an arrow. Every intentional state, every believing, every fearing, every hoping, every seeing has its target, something it is directed at, its intentional object; every belief is therefore a belief *in* something, every fear a fear *of* something, every hope a hope *for* something.

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<sup>1</sup> *Journal of Consciousness Studies* 2 (3):200–19 (1995).

The concept “intentionality” goes back farther than the term itself. It goes back, as Brentano tells us, to Aristotle, who subsumes intentional relations under the general category of relation:

So it is with every other relative term; but the case we use to express the correlation differs in some instances. Thus, by knowledge we mean knowledge of the knowable; by the knowable, that which is to be apprehended by knowledge; by perception, perception of the perceptible; by the perceptible, that which is apprehended by perception.<sup>2</sup>

Here Aristotle treats knowledge and perception as mental acts—activities of the soul, as he would put it—that are related to intentional objects, characterized as “the knowable,” “the perceptible,” or “that which is to be apprehended by knowledge or perception.” These terms and phrases, however, are notoriously ambiguous. Do they refer to objects in the mind or in the world? Brentano and Husserl would opt for the former, Dennett and Searle, the latter. But the question itself arises only in the modern context. Aristotle never asks whether the perceptible is in the mind or in the world because he thinks it is in both: in perceiving, the mind accepts into itself the sensible form of a substance, leaving its matter behind, and in conceiving, the mind receives the formal essence of substance, again leaving the matter behind. There is then a kind of formal identity of mind and world for Aristotle.<sup>3</sup> The intentional arrow from mind to world strikes its target because, in a sense, the target strikes the arrow, i.e., its form arrives at the mind. Thus for Aristotle the intentional state is both caused by and “about” the object because both the object and the mind share the same form, and the form in the mind is caused by the form in the object. Intentionality and causation then go hand in hand, but only, I would argue, because both in sensation and intellection the form which is supposed to be transferred to the mind, and which guarantees the intelligibility of the intentional relation between mind and world, is already mentally inflected. The formal essences of substances as well as the sensible forms of objects are out there in the world but are pre-attuned to fit the mind.

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<sup>2</sup> Aristotle, *Categories*, 6b33-36. Trans. by E. M. Edghill.

<sup>3</sup> The mind, in grasping the formal essence of a tree, becomes tree-like; it adopts the form of treeness (minus the bark and leaves); in sensing a color, it becomes like the sensible form itself. Thus in *De Anima* Aristotle writes: “Moreover, even that which sees is in a way coloured; for each sense-organ is receptive of the object of perception without its matter” (425b23-25). The intentional relation between the mental act and the object of the act is quite clear here. It is one of identity.

There are, of course, problems with this account of intentionality. The exact manner in which the formal essence of a substance can cause its form to be adopted by the mind is fuzzy at best, even given the more expansive Aristotelian conception of causality. The problematic ontological nature of formal essences, together with their perceived redundancy in scientific explanation, is what led to their rejection by the New Science and Modern Philosophy. But in rejecting Aristotle, Modern Philosophy did not reject intentionality. Indeed, we did not need Brentano to revive intentionality in the modern period, since Descartes' "objective reality" is nothing other than the medieval concept of intentionality. Ideas, for Descartes, have a twofold existence: by their formal reality they are mere modes of the mind; by their objective reality they also have representational content, or are "of" or "about" something. Descartes' break with Aristotelianism consists not in rejecting intentionality per se but in stripping formal essences and final causes from objects in the world and relegating them to the mind. Minds have purposes and goals, matter does not. Minds have ideas with various objective realities (a kind of mentalized formal essence), but matter has only one formal essence: extension. This leaves Descartes unable to explain the objective reality of his thoughts, that is, their intentionality. He cannot give a naturalistic causal account since matter can only act by its size, shape and motion, and the representational content of a thought is not something that can be explained by that kind of causality. This is why Descartes must resort to a literal *deus ex machina*. God guarantees that the objective reality of the ideas in Descartes' mind relate to the external world, which he has reduced to the mechanics of matter.<sup>4</sup>

Now Descartes' rather impoverished view of matter and its causal powers clearly has not stood the test of time. In fact, it could not even account for Newtonian force. But even if we supplement Cartesian kinematics with dynamics, field theory, quantum mechanics, etc. we are still left with a natural world devoid of formal and final causes. And the type of causality that we are left with—very roughly equivalent to Aristotle's efficient causation—cannot explain intentional relations. The mercury of a thermometer expands simply and solely due to the increase in kinetic energy surrounding the bulb. That the meniscus of mercury may end up at 39° mark does not mean that it has an intentional state which refers to the temperature of the patient whose body caused the state of the mercury in the first place any more than lightning refers to thunder or a symptom is "about" or "of" the underlying disease. Any such intentional reference would have to operate through what Searle

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<sup>4</sup> Or, more subtly, only the contemplation of God allows Descartes to be confident that the actual existence of physical things can cause the particular contents, or objective realities, of his thoughts.

and others call “original intentionality.”<sup>5</sup> The meaning of the thermometer or of a fever is derived from the intentionality of the person who reads the thermometer or understands fever as a symptom of illness. If one says that a thermometer has an intentional state in virtue of its causal relations then one might as well say that an electron has an intentional state about the nucleus around which it “orbits” or that the Earth has an intentional state about the sun.

Daniel Dennett and others, however, would deny the derivative status of thermometers. In *The Intentional Stance*, Dennett seems to say that, while we cannot legitimately attribute intentional states to thermometers, there is no essential difference between human beings and thermometers and it is only the complexity of human behavior and functions—magnitudes greater than thermometers—that legitimizes adopting the intentional stance towards human beings. But if this is all that intentionality amounts to then it must be explicable on the same causal grounds as the relation of the mercury in the tube to the ambient temperature, except the causal route would be much more complicated, travelling as it were through billions of neurons in trajectories not yet completely understood by neuroscience and involving, if Stuart Hameroff and Roger Penrose are correct,<sup>6</sup> quantum mechanical effects. All this complexity tends to obscure, but not invalidate, the fact that the intentionality of intentional relations drops out and becomes epiphenomenal upon causal relations. Dennett, however, is at least tepidly realist about intentional states: he does not seek to eliminate them but merely to define them in functionalist and predictive terms. Thus he writes: “*all there is to being a true believer is being a system whose behavior is reliably predictable via the intentional strategy.*”<sup>7</sup> But functionalism, behaviorism, and what could be called predictivism, though all may claim to be more sophisticated than crude physicalism, must in the end rely purely on physical causality to explain how a system functions, behaves, or is predictable. What else could account for the intentional stance’s success in predicting the behavior of an intentional system other than the causal properties of that intentional system?

For example, Dennett claims the belief that snakes are slimy is a “property that snakes have,” a property, he says, “about as important ... as their

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<sup>5</sup> Dretske, Chisholm, Fodor, Burge, Kripke and others follow a similar tack.

<sup>6</sup> See Steven Hameroff, “Quantum Coherence in Microtubules: A Neural Basis for Emergent Consciousness?” *Journal of Consciousness Studies* 1:91-118 (1994); Steven Hameroff and Robert Penrose, “Orchestrated Reduction of Quantum Coherence in Brain Microtubules: A Model for Consciousness,” in *Toward a Science of Consciousness*, eds. S. Hameroff, A. Kaszniak, & A. Scott, (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1996); and “Conscious Events as Orchestrated Space-Time Selections,” *Journal of Consciousness Studies* 3:36-53 (1996).

<sup>7</sup> Daniel Dennett, *The Intentional Stance* (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1998), p. 29.

scaliness,” to which he adds, “it is an important ecological fact about snakes that many people believe them to be slimy; if it were not so, snakes would certainly be more numerous in certain ecological niches than they are.”<sup>8</sup> But what is left here of the belief that snakes are slimy other than its causal property to make humans beings kill snakes? And, in that case, would it not be better to drop down to the purely physical level of description so that we can talk of neurons causing muscles to move which cause feet to stomp on heads of snakes? Here it is extremely telling that where Dennett wants to give meat to his concept of intentional states, where he wants to say they are more than mere epiphenomena or mere shorthand for physical causes, he seems to retreat to Aristotelianism with regard to formal and final causes. The benefit of the intentional stance, Dennett claims, is that it alone “provides a vantage point for discerning... useful patterns,”<sup>9</sup> patterns of snake-killing behavior that cannot be captured by lower-level physical descriptions. But such patterns, I would say, look remarkably like Aristotelian formal essences, especially if they are to have causal significance. For Dennett then goes on to claim: “These patterns are objective—they are there to be detected—but from our point of view they are not *out there* entirely independent of us, since they are patterns composed partly of our own ‘subjective’ reactions to what is out there.”<sup>10</sup> But this seems strikingly similar to the Aristotelian formal essences of substances that are out there in the world but are already pre-attuned to the mental. Intentionality is surreptitiously introduced into the physical world so that it can be extracted again when it comes to explaining how it is that the physical world can give rise to intentionality.

As for final causes, Dennett’s defense of teleology in evolutionary theory—the optimality model denounced by the Stephen Jay Gould but espoused by other evolutionary theorists—is unabashedly Aristotelian in nature. Dennett strives to give meat to his notion of intentionality, again preventing it from collapsing into pure physical causation, the result of blind chance and random events, by his appeal to the optimality thesis which holds that natural selection, though mechanical in its details, tends towards optimizing organisms with respect to survival in their environments. Evolution is still blind in the sense that there is no intelligent designer; yet it is not blind in the sense of having no goal, purpose, or final cause. Optimality gives eyes to evolution. It supplies an end or goal. Only this allows Dennett to speak of the “free-floating” reasons of nature (always linked to the goal-driven character of evolution) as a kind of background unintelligent intentionality of which our own

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<sup>8</sup> Daniel Dennett, *The Intentional Stance* (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1998), p. 177.

<sup>9</sup> Daniel Dennett, *The Intentional Stance* (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1998), p. 39.

<sup>10</sup> Daniel Dennett, *The Intentional Stance* (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1998), p. 39.

is derivative. We are, as he puts it, “artifacts, in effect, designed over the eons as survival machines for genes,” to which he adds “our intentionality is derived from the intentionality of our ‘selfish genes.’”<sup>11</sup> In a sense, then, Dennett, treats all organic life, including human beings, as being in the category that Aristotle referred to as “artificial” as opposed to “natural.” For Aristotle, artificial substances have no internal principles of motion, and, more importantly for this discussion, their formal and final causes are imposed from without. To Dennett, then, we are *artifacts* of natural selection because our final cause, our “original *raison d’être*” as he puts it, is to be found not (originally) in ourselves but in our genes and in the evolutionary process. Dennett realizes as much as Darwin that the beauty of natural selection lies in its providing a mechanical explanation for apparent design, but then he lapses into Aristotelianism by declaring that design to be not merely apparent but something substantial enough to allow him to attribute intentionality, albeit of the mute and unintelligent sort, to natural processes. This intentionality without intelligence, design without a designer, is exactly what Aristotle refers when he attributes final causes to natural objects, final causes which, unlike those of artificial things, do not imply an intelligent designer: it is only that nature is the same *as if* it had been designed by an intelligent being.<sup>12</sup> But now it seems Dennett can only explain how our intentionality is derived from the mute intentionality of nature, because he has bestowed intentionality (in the form of the “free-floating” reasons) on nature in the first place. Strict evolutionary theorists would not countenance the attribution of reasons, of any sort, to natural processes; but then they may have a harder time explaining how we get our intentionality.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> Daniel Dennett, *The Intentional Stance* (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1998), p. 298.

<sup>12</sup> See Aristotle, *Physics* II, 8.

<sup>13</sup> While Dennett elsewhere is scrupulous in distinguishing between the lay definition of intentionality (as involving goals and purposes) and the philosophical definition of intentionality (as laid out by Brentano), here he obviously conflates the two, deriving the Brentanian intentionality of human minds from the goal-driven intentionality of genes striving to optimize their organic survival machines. In the above discussion of his treatment of intentionality and evolution, I follow him in this momentary conflation.



## Christina Schneider

### Relational Tropes - A Holistic Definition

In his book *Universals and Property Instances: The Alphabet of Being* J. Bacon [1995] offers a formal definition of what he calls "relational tropes". Relational tropes are tropes which make up the relational features of the individuals they constitute. His construction is intended to preserve three intuitions concerning tropes and relations:

- Tropes are the ultimate constituents (besides what he calls "metarelations" such as similarity, occurrence, etc.) of reality (and other possible worlds). Any other entities, viz. individuals or universals, are to be constructed out of them.
- Relations deserve a first order ontological status: they are real constituents of reality. (Cp. *ibid.*, p. 37).
- Relations take "ordinary objects" as their terms, not other tropes or "objects reconstrued as bundles". (*Ibid.*, p. 26).

From this it follows that relations, conceived of as *ontological* entities, must be a special sort of tropes, which coconstitute individuals and which bear the signs of their terms, "ordinary objects". Bacon calls these signs "aspects".

Bacon's formal elaboration of these intuitions runs, in a streamlined version, as follows (cp. Bacon [1995], p. 31f): Relational tropes have, as a sort of further structure, "aspects". This may best be captured by his own examples: A specific "loving" is a relational trope, as well as a specific "hating" and a specific "trusting"; their linguistic counterparts have two terms, for instance "Othello's loving Desdemona", "Iago' s hating Othello" and "Cassio' s trusting Iago", have Othello, Iago and Cassio, respectively, in subject position, and Desdemona, Othello and Iago, respectively, in object position. Now, the very specific "loving", which "joins" Othello to

Desdemona, splits in two aspects, in the first aspect,  $l_1$ , which coconstitutes Othello, *Othello's* loving Desdemona, and in the second aspect,  $l_2$ , which coconstitutes Desdemona, "Othello's loving *Desdemona*"; the analog holds for hating and trusting. To make coconstitution feasible, a specific concurrence relation has to be defined for each aspect relational tropes may have:  $C_i$  for collecting the  $i$ -th aspects.

Beyond any formal and technical details there is a problem which Bacon himself addresses (see *ibid.*, p. 32): As regards the trope expressed by the clause "Iago's being trusted by Othello", the problem arises as to whether it coconstitute Iago or Othello? Or: is it the first or the second aspect of that specific "trusting", which "joins Iago with Othello"? Bacon decides that this is "obviously arbitrary". He remarks: "The important thing is that *some* (his emphasis) order of aspects be laid down and consistently maintained. Whether that order is metaphysically rooted may be beyond our ken."(*Ibid.*, p. 32). From an ontological point of view, this conventional feature seems not to be acceptable.

In this article a different formal approach is pursued to do duty to "relations" within an ontology of tropes. Bacon's first intuition concerning the role of tropes seems to be the very core of any trope theory and is endorsed in this paper. The second intuition that "relations" deserve a first order ontological status is accepted also in what follows. But in contrast to Bacon's formal approach, "relational tropes" are not seen as special sorts of tropes, as is expressed by the adicity of their "aspects". Rather, "relations" arise from coordinated sets of tropes. In what follows there are no tropes in isolation, tropes are always tropes of a *trope space* It should be kept in mind that "space" in the present context bears no connotation of "physical space". It is used as in Mathematics and simply indicates that the ontological frame is not a mere heap of tropes, each of which could exist in splendid isolation, but that tropes enter a coordinated whole "by their nature". The whole structure is conceived of first. What may be called "relational tropes" are special pairs (or families) of sets of tropes depending on the structure of the trope space. This feature may be dubbed "holistic". It further makes it possible to avoid so called *Bradley Regresses*. Extra

coordinating items, as are similarity relations or compresence relations, to make up individuals which "start" these regresses can be avoided. This is due to the fact that holistic architectures do not start with a heap of entities of this or that category, as the ontology in question recommends, which -- "after being there as a pure crowd" -- are in need to be coordinated by some extra-items "superimposed" to make up an orderly world. Those extra-items tend to be in themselves entities of second or third order ontological ratings (as are relations for *Aristotle*), if their status could be made ontologically explicit at all. In this article, the holistic stance -- at least -- avoids the abovementioned pitfalls: vicious regresses when complex ontological entities are to be built and -- more specific for the topic in question -- conventional features in "forming" trope relations.

The third intuition that "relations take ordinary objects as their terms" seems to be ambiguous. Read as an intuition about tropes and taking "relations" as special tropes, it seems that "individuals" are presupposed or, with regard to the first intuition, that "individuals" are previously "constructed" out of tropes. But, since "relations" are special tropes, they should enter in the respective construction of "individuals". And here the metaphor of "taking" is misleading. Whether one conceives of a construct of tropes, viz. an individual, as a "bundle" or not seems to be a matter of taste in paraphrasing the individuals' character of being "constructed" within a trope frame. It will be used in the present article. Anyway, individuals are no further primitive entities within a trope frame. If the third intuition is read as a paraphrase of certain well-formed formulae in first order predicate logic as are  $R(a,b)$  or  $R(a_1, \dots, a_n)$ , an important ontological/semantical task becomes obvious: How should the ontological counterpart of a first order formula, like  $R(a,b)$ , say, be framed within a trope ontology? *Definition 11* of this article (section 3) is meant as a point in case. To make the distinction above visible, the term "relation" *tout court* is reserved for the linguistic sign in what follows. The ontological counterpart is informally called "*trope relation*". It will turn out to be a sub-structure of the *trope space* and not a "single trope".

This article is meant as a contribution to formalizing ontological frames by mathematical means. This has as consequence among other things that the entities and structures defined and bearing names from pretheoretic conceptions are more stipulative than descriptive in nature. Nevertheless, they attempt to scrutinize pretheoretic intuitions and may serve as "models" for these intuitions. They do not claim that any entity or paradigm of ontological interest or vague connotation of them is captured by the structures presented below. For instance, the feature of "change" is not formulated in what follows. The formalism below articulates "instantaneous aspects" only, but it can be extended to formulate this ontological notion also. It further takes a rather simple and abstract intuition of what "individuals" may be as paradigm. Individuals are seen under the paradigm of entities with clear "borderlines", at least instantaneously. The article attempts, however, to formulate an unambiguous frame and starting point for capturing more complex and refined intuitions about the ontological universe of discourse of trope theory. The intuition to be made precise in this article is the notion of "relational (tropes)" in a trope theoretic frame.

Last not least, a short comment on using mathematics, or a naive conception of sets, for framing an ontological conception is in place. To elaborate this topic, of course, would take an article of its own. From a practical point of view, mathematics allows for an unambiguous presentation of ontological intuitions. The same could be said of (predicate) logic (eventually with addenda and of higher order), which is far more common in philosophical literature. But there is a difference, which can be articulated by a slogan: "(Predicate) logic makes precise the *talk* about ontological frames, mathematics/set theory makes precise the ontological frame." Figuratively, one could say, mathematics/set theory draws an unambiguous picture of the ontological frame in question. It is more flexible in its expressing power (one could, for instance, refrain from using sets and turn to mathematical category theory, if adequate). Concerning trope theory specifically, predicate logic, by its very structure, having different sorts of signs -- for individuals and predicates --, makes a

## What is a level of a criterion of identity?

The present-day debate on criteria of identity has brought to the fore the problem of their proper logical form. Both main disputants, Edward Lowe and Timothy Williamson, agree that

- (1) A *criterion of identity* (a CI for short, CIs in the plural) is a relation which
- (i) is necessary and sufficient for identity,
  - (ii) is not circular with respect to identity.

Both also concede that at first blush there seems to be two types of CIs:

One-level criteria explicitly quantify over objects of the sort for which they supply a criterion of identity [...]. By contrast, two-level-criteria quantify over items of a *different* kind from that of the objects for which they supply a criterion of identity [...]. (Lowe 1998: 42)

In order to put it more precisely assume that a function  $f$  is defined on a set  $X$  of objects. For the sake of this paper I will adopt Lowe's definition of an object:

[...] to be an *object* is to be an entity possessing *determinate identity-conditions* [...]. By this account, if  $x$  and  $y$  are *objects*, there must be a 'fact of the matter' as to whether or not  $x$  is identical with  $y$ . (Lowe 1998: 37)

A one-level CI for elements of  $X$  is a relation  $R$  that satisfies 1 and 2:

- (2)  $\forall x, y \in X (x=y \equiv Rxy)$ .

A two-level CI for objects from the set  $f(X)$  is a relation  $R$  that satisfies 1 and 3:

- (3)  $\forall x, y \in X (f(x)=f(y) \equiv Rxy)$ .

The axiom of extensionality for sets is a paradigm of a one-level criterion:

$$(4) \quad x=y \equiv \forall z (z \in x \equiv z \in y),$$

and Frege's CI for directions of lines is a paradigm of a two-level criterion:

$$(5) \quad (\text{the direction of line } x = \text{the direction of line } y) \equiv x \text{ is parallel to } y.$$

Lowe argues that one-level CIs surpass two-level ones. The latter are of limited use because they 'tell wherein identity consists' solely for objects being values of some functions. Moreover, they may be reconstructed in terms of the former. For instance, two-level 5 may be reformulated in one-level style as:

$$(6) \quad x=y \equiv \forall z_1, z_2 (z_1 \text{ is a line} \ \& \ z_2 \text{ is a line} \ \& \ x \text{ is the direction of } z_1 \ \& \ y \text{ is the direction of } z_2 \rightarrow z_1 \text{ is parallel to } z_2).$$

Thus, two-level CIs are dispensable (Lowe 1991).

Williamson's reply consists of two parts. The major part challenges Lowe's reconstruction:

- (a) Lowe's construal does not permit the principled rejection of an intuitively unacceptable answer for the original question.
- (b) On pain of circularity, Lowe's construal uses conceptual resources ('Of' as primitive) beyond those of Frege [...]. (Williamson 1991: 194)

The minor suggests that every one-level CI is circular:

The idea of a two level criterion of identity has one obvious advantage. No formula could be more basic (in any relevant sense) than ' $x=y$ ', but some might be more basic than ' $ox=oy$ ' [it is my ' $f(x)=f(y)$ '] [...]. Non-circularity constraints make better sense for two level than for one level criteria. (Williamson 1990: 147)

And if one-level criteria are circular, they are no criteria at all. Thus, only two-level criteria are at our disposal.

I hope that this brief summary of the debate verifies the claim to the effect that the bone of contention is whether two-level CIs are renderable in a one-level language (cf. the sequence of arguments: Lowe 1989, Williamson 1990, Lowe 1991, Williamson 1991), which, in my

eyes, is a secondary issue. I suggest instead focusing our attention on the notion of ‘level of a relation’. It might be argued, for example, that the alleged paradigms of one-level CIs are not one-level. In order to see this define  $R_0$  as the CI for directions of lines:

$$(7) \quad R_0xy \equiv \forall z_1, z_2 (z_1 \text{ is a line} \ \& \ z_2 \text{ is a line} \ \& \ x \text{ is the direction of } z_1 \ \& \ y \text{ is the direction of } z_2 \rightarrow z_1 \text{ is parallel to } z_2).$$

Compare now  $R_0$  to Lowe’s one-level CI for numbers (Lowe 1998: 48). Let  $x, y,$  and  $z$  quantify over the set of finite cardinal numbers. The criterion is the relation  $S_0$ :

$$(8) \quad S_0xy \equiv \forall z (z < x \equiv z < y).$$

Clearly, two numbers  $x$  and  $y$  are identical iff  $S_0xy$ .

In my opinion  $R_0$  and  $S_0$  differ significantly as CIs. Although both are defined in terms of some other relation by means of logical constants, whereas the definiens of the latter involves objects of the same kind as identity does, i.e. numbers, the definiens of the former fails to meet this condition, because it involves directions of lines and lines, while identity involves only directions of lines.

To be sure, the free variables of the linguistic expression of  $R_0$  quantify over the same set as the free variables of the linguistic expression of identity of directions of lines. Nevertheless, I maintain that in this case, as in many others, the linguistic appearances are just appearances. After all,  $R_0$  involves not only directions of lines but also lines themselves, and therefore in order to establish that  $R_0xy$  you have to search for lines, identify them, and check whether they are parallel. If a CI is to be, as Lowe insists, ontologically significant, its range of quantification is to depend on its structure. One may determine this range by examining the structure of the adequate definition of the relation.

Lowe’s CI for sets is similar in this respect to  $R_0$  provided that we use Zermelo-Fraenkel set theory with *Urelemente* ( $ZF^+$ ). According to this theory elements of some sets are non-sets. Thus, the CI for sets quantifies over objects of two kinds: individuals and sets. On the other

hand, the CI for sets in pure Zermelo-Fraenkel theory ( $ZF^-$ ) bears more resemblance to  $S_0$  since ‘ $\in$ ’ involves only sets.

In what follows I will develop the idea from the last but one paragraph by clarifying the notion of ‘level of a relation’. As neither Lowe nor Williamson explicitly defines it, I feel free to submit my own package of definitions. They aim at providing a new distinction among criteria of identity.

Lowe (1989: 7-8) rightly emphasises that a CI should be embedded in a theory of objects which are claimed to be identical. Suppose that you are curious about identity of objects for which you have a theory  $Th$ . I will refer to  $Th$  as a *background theory* for those objects. If  $Th$  refers to an object  $x$  (a relation  $R$ ), it will be called an *object* (a *relation*) *of*  $Th$ . Assume further that  $Th$  is sufficiently elaborated to satisfy the following conditions:

- (9) (i)  $Th$  determines the non-empty set  $R_{Th}$  of primitive, i.e. undefined, relations,  
(ii) every other relation of  $Th$  has exactly one definition in  $Th$ ,  
(iii)  $Th$  is expressed in the first-order language  $L_{Th}$ .

I informally introduce the function  $Rel_{Th}$  on  $L_{Th}$ : for any  $\varphi \in L_{Th}$ ,  $Rel_{Th}(\varphi)$  is the set of all relations names of which occur in  $\varphi$ . Let ‘ $x \in INV_{Th}(R)$ ’ abbreviate ‘A relation  $R$  (of  $Th$ ) *involves in*  $Th$  an object  $x$  (of  $Th$ )’.

- (10) (i) If  $R(x_1, x_2, \dots, x_n) \in R_{Th}$ , then  $INV_{Th}(R) := \{x_1: \exists x_2, x_3, \dots, x_n R(x_1, x_2, \dots, x_n)\} \cup \{x_2: \exists x_1, x_3, \dots, x_n R(x_1, x_2, \dots, x_n)\} \cup \dots \cup \{x_n: \exists x_1, \dots, x_{n-1} R(x_1, x_2, \dots, x_n)\}$ ,  
(ii) If  $T(x_1, x_2, \dots, x_n) \equiv \sim R(x_1, x_2, \dots, x_n)$ , then  $INV_{Th}(T) := INV_{Th}(R)$ ,  
(iii) If  $T(x_1, x_2, \dots, x_n) \equiv R(x_1, x_2, \dots, x_n) \wedge S(x_1, x_2, \dots, x_n)$ , then  $INV_{Th}(T) := INV_{Th}(R) \cup INV_{Th}(S)$ ,  
(iv) If  $T(x_1, x_2, \dots, x_n) \equiv \forall y \varphi$  and  $Rel_{Th}(\varphi) = \{R_1, R_2, \dots, R_m\}$ ,



then  $INV_{Th}(T) := INV_{Th}(R_1) \cup INV_{Th}(R_2) \cup \dots \cup INV_{Th}(R_m)$ .<sup>1</sup>

The equivalences in  $10$  are supposed to be  $Th$ -unique definitions.

A level of a relation of  $Th$  is relative to kinds of objects of  $Th$ . Some theories, most notably of ontological provenance, specify explicitly what kinds of objects there are. If a theory remains silent on that, it needs an ontological interpretation. For instance, one interpretation of  $ZF^-$ , call it the *global interpretation*, specifies only one kind of objects, i.e. sets, while  $ZF^+$  interpreted globally specifies sets and individuals. Another interpretation, call it the *local interpretation*, makes both theories specify far more kinds. The local interpretation of set theory is based on the iterative concept of set. Roughly speaking, the iterative conception of set has it that sets are formed step by step in the following process:

- (i) At the first step the empty set is formed. In the case of  $ZF^+$  all sets of individuals are formed at this step as well.
- (ii) At every later non-limit step sets of all sets (and individuals in the case of  $ZF^+$ ) formed at the earlier step are formed.
- (iii) At every limit step sets of all sets (and individuals in the case of  $ZF^+$ ) formed at all earlier steps are formed.

Since a step at which a set is formed is not uniquely determined, we need two different notions of set formation, say  $formation_1$  and  $formation_2$ . Then, every set is  $formed_1$  at the earliest stage of the process of  $set\ formation_2$ :

- (i) At stage zero the empty set is  $formed_2$ . In the case of  $ZF^+$  all sets of individuals are  $formed_2$  as well.
- (ii) At every later non-limit stage all sets of sets  $formed_2$  at the earlier stage (and individuals in the case of  $ZF^+$ ) are  $formed_2$ .
- (iii) At every limit stage all sets of sets  $formed_2$  at all earlier stages (and individuals in the case of  $ZF^+$ ) are  $formed_2$ .

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<sup>1</sup> The conditions for other sentential connectives and for the existential quantifier may be determined along the lines of their classical definitions. For the sake of brevity from here on I will omit  $Th$ -relativization of the involvement relation.

For more details see Boolos 1971. One may then define: two objects are of the same kind iff they are formed<sub>1</sub> at the same stage; e.g.  $\{\{\emptyset\}\}$  is of the same kind as  $\{\emptyset, \{\emptyset\}\}$ , but of a different kind from  $\{\emptyset\}$ . In other formal theories it seems natural to interpret equivalence classes as objects of a different kind from their elements.

If  $Th$  specifies one kind of objects, all relations of  $Th$  will share the same level, hence all CIs of  $Th$  will be called *one-level*. Otherwise, I assume that for every pair of kinds there is a two-place relation  $S$  of  $Th$  that *separates* them: objects of one kind belong to  $domain(S)$ , objects of the other kind belong to  $range(S)$ , and  $domain(S) \cap range(S) = \emptyset$ . Given that  $INV(R) \subseteq domain(S) \cup range(S)$  a relation  $R$  is *homogeneous* relative to a separating relation  $S$  iff  $INV(R) \subseteq domain(S)$  or  $INV(R) \subseteq range(S)$ ; otherwise it is *heterogeneous*. If relations  $R$  and  $T$  are homogeneous relative to a separating relation  $S$ , then  $R$  is relative to  $S$  of the same level as  $T$  iff  $INV(R) \cap INV(T) \neq \emptyset$ ; otherwise it is of a different level. A CI is *one-level* relative to a separating relation  $S$  iff it is relative to  $S$  of the same level as identity. A CI is *two-level* relative to a separating relation  $S$  iff it is relative to  $S$  of a different level from identity. A CI is *mixed* relative to a separating relation  $S$  iff it is heterogeneous relative to  $S$ . It is evident that new one-level CIs still satisfy 2 and that new two-level CIs satisfy 3 provided that  $f=S$ .

In face of my previous remarks I claim that Williamson's binary distinction between one-level and two-level CIs should be replaced with my ternary distinction. Let us see how the latter works.

On the global interpretation of  $ZF^-$  the CI for sets is, as Lowe urges, one-level, since ' $\in$ ' is of the same level as identity. Sets with *Urelemente* are more cumbersome to deal with, because the collection of all objects of  $ZF^+$  is not a set in  $ZF^+$ , and for that reason we are not able to determine a level of the CI along the lines of our definitions embedded in  $ZF^+$ . We may then either resort to classes or restrict the CI to sets from a given family of sets. In both cases, owing to the axiom of foundation, it is always possible to provide a relation that separates sets from individuals that form these sets. Then, ' $\in$ ' is of a different

# Discussion

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Christian Kanzian

**Personen**  
**Philosophiegeschichte, Theoretische Philosophie, Praktische Philosophie**

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In vorliegendem Sammelband legt *Dieter Sturma* (H.) ein Kompendium von Beiträgen vor, die einen umfassenden Überblick über die wichtigsten Aspekte der philosophischen Person-Debatte geben. Nach einer Einführung von H. folgen die Hauptteile I. Philosophiegeschichte, II. Theoretische Philosophie, III. Praktische Philosophie. Ein Personenregister ergänzt die Edition der Beiträge.

In seiner Einführung weist H. auf die Aktualität der philosophischen Person-Debatte hin. Im Mittelpunkt steht die Krise des *traditionellen* Personbegriffes, nach dem „Person“ und „Mensch“, verstanden als biologischer Artbegriff, als extensionsgleich anzusetzen ist. Heute werden u.a. aus der Bioethik, aber auch aus der Künstliche-Intelligenz-Forschung Einwände dagegen erhoben, dass alle Menschen Personen, und alle Personen Menschen seien. Warum soll man nicht auch manchen Tieren Personen-Status zubilligen, insbesondere höheren Primaten? Warum sollte man manche Maschinen, insbesondere komplexe Computer, aus begrifflichen Gründen vom Bereich der Personen ausschließen? Legt man sich nicht auf eine einfache *speziesistische* Sichtweise fest, stellt sich aber die Frage, wie man „Person“ alternativ bestimmen kann, ohne den Begriff zu weit, und somit bedeutungsleer, oder zu eng, und damit zu speziell zu machen. Oder sollte man, angesichts vorliegender Schwierigkeiten, nicht gleich für eine Eliminierung des Begriffs plädieren?

Den ersten Hauptteil über die Philosophiegeschichte des Personbegriffs eröffnet *G. Mohr* mit einem einleitenden Überblick. Ethymologisch stammt „Person“ von „*prosopon*“, (griech., Maske, Rolle) und hat über das lateinische „*persona*“, insbesondere im stoischen Denken, allen voran bei Cicero und Epikur, Eingang in die Philosophiegeschichte gefunden. *M. Forschner* leuchtet gerade diese Epoche in seinem Beitrag „Der Begriff der Person in der Stoa“ genauer aus. In Ciceros *De officiis* steht „*persona*“ nicht für einzelne Lebewesen, sondern für verschiedene Funktionen, die Menschen im Kontext einer umfassenden kosmischen Ordnung spielen. So gesehen *sind* einzelne Menschen keine Personen, sondern *haben* (vier) „*personae*“: (1) allgemeine Vernunftfähigkeit, (2) individuelle Natur, (3) besondere Zeitumstände, (4) eigene Entscheidung oder Wahl (vgl. auch 26<sup>1</sup>). Im Mittelpunkt der mittelalterlichen Diskussion des Personbegriffs (siehe *J. Kreuzer* „Der Begriff der Person in der Philosophie des Mittelalters“) stehen die Auswirkungen der theologisch motivierten Streitigkeiten zwischen Vertretern eines relationstheoretischen Ansatzes nach Augustinus und einer substanztheoretischen Deutung nach Boethius (vgl. 63). Nach Augustinus steht „Person“ für wesenhafte (innergöttliche) Beziehungen; für Boethius ist eine Person „*naturae rationabilis individua substantia*“ (64, FN 24). In seinem Beitrag über „Person und persönliche Identität in der Philosophie des 17. und 18. Jahrhunderts“ stellt *U. Thiel* „John Lockes Revolution“ (79) in den Mittelpunkt. Locke verbindet die Frage der Bestimmung von „Person“ und von personaler Identität mit der Frage nach Selbstbewusstsein bzw. nach der Kontinuität desselben durch die Zeit. So wird die Person-Debatte nicht mehr ausschließlich Thema der Metaphysik, sondern auch Sache der Bewusstseinsphilosophie, heute würde man sagen, der „Philosophie des Geistes“. Die neuzeitliche Ausweitung dieser Diskussion auch auf die praktische Philosophie, insbesondere auf die Spezialdebatte der Ethik, kann man den führenden Autoren des Deutschen Idealismus anrechnen. Dies führt *G. Mohr* in „Der Begriff der Person bei Kant, Fichte und Hegel“ aus. Allen voran Kant kritisiert den „theoretischen“ oder „ontologischen“ Personbegriff und fasst Person und Personalität auf als „Kategorie der Freiheit“ (110ff). Personsein heißt unabhängig sein vom „Mechanismus der ganzen Natur“ (113). Daraus erwachsen Personen be-

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<sup>1</sup> Alle Seitenangaben beziehen sich auf die Seitenzahl der rezensierten Edition.

sondere Würde, aber natürlich auch ethische Pflichten. Den historischen Teil schließen ab *A. Pieper* mit ihrem Beitrag „`Person` in der Existenzphilosophie“, in der Kierkegaard, Nietzsche, Jaspers, Heidegger, Sartre und Camus behandelt werden, und *M. Herrmann* mit „Der Personbegriff in der Analytischen Philosophie“. Hermann gibt darin einen Überblick über jene Strömung der Person-Debatte im 20. Jahrhundert, der schwerpunkthaft auch die Erörterungen des zweiten und dritten Hauptteiles gewidmet sind. Im Detail referiert sie Peter Strawson, nach dem Personen jene Individuen sind, für die gilt, dass ihnen als denselben sowohl mentale als auch physikalische Bestimmungen zugeschrieben werden können. Für Harry Frankfurt hingegen sind Personen wesentlich durch die Struktur ihres Willens bestimmt. Nur Personen können sich willentlich auf ihre Willensakte selbst beziehen. Sie haben „second-order desires“ (173). Derek Parfit schließlich geht es um die Auflösung personaler Identität in bestimmte Relationen psychologischer Kontinuität. (CK)

Der zweite Hauptteil ist der Person-Debatte in der Theoretischen Philosophie gewidmet. In den dazu gehörigen Beiträgen werden die zentralen Themen der Person-Diskussion behandelt, wie die Frage nach der Identität von Personen durch die Zeit (*M. Quante, M. Nida-Rümelin*), Personen als Handelnde (*R. Stoecker, R. Wimmer*), sowie das Problem der Grenzen des Personbegriffs (*D. Birnbacher*). Wem oder was kann bzw. muss Personen-Status zugebilligt werden?

Gibt es ein allgemeingültiges Kriterium für die Identität durch die Zeit, die „diachrone Identität“ von Personen? Mit dieser Frage setzt sich *Michael Quante* in seinem Artikel „Menschliche Persistenz“ auseinander. Q. unterteilt dabei die gegenwärtigen Positionen in „einfache“ und „komplexe“, zeigt deren jeweilige Stärken und Schwächen auf, um dann schließlich einen eigenen Lösungsvorschlag vorzubringen. Laut der einfachen Position ist die personale Identität über die Zeit hinweg ein nicht empirisch beobachtbares Faktum, das einfach, grundlegend oder „basal“ ist. Dieses Faktum ist wesentlich an die erstpersönliche Perspektive gebunden. Demgegenüber steht die komplexe Position, welche die diachrone Identität von Personen durch empirisch beobachtbare Kontinuitätsrelationen als analysierbar und folglich reduzierbar ansieht. Hier wird die erstpersönliche Perspektive völlig ausgeblendet. Auf den ersten Blick mag die erstpersönliche Erfahrung (im Sinne der einfachen Position) als plausibles Kriterium für die diachrone Identität gelten: Jeder

Mensch nimmt sich als sich selbst wahr und nimmt es als selbstverständlich an, dass er/sie mit sich selbst zu einem früheren Zeitpunkt identisch ist. Jeder besitzt etwa die Fähigkeit, Pläne für *seine* (eigene) Zukunft zu schmieden. Problematisch aber wird diese Kriterium, wenn man z.B. Menschen mitberücksichtigt, die im Koma liegen. Diese können sich nicht erstpersönlich wahrnehmen. Ist personale Identität also eine Eigenschaft, die man je nach Situation besitzt oder auch nicht? Nach dem Kriterium der erstpersönlichen Perspektive läge bei komatösen Patienten keine personale Identität vor. Im zweiten Teil seines Artikels führt Q. Lösungsansätze komplexer Theorien aus, die er im Zuge seiner Ausführungen ebenfalls als nicht zielführend beurteilt. Die Problematik komplexer Theorien zeigt sich besonders an der ungeklärten Frage, welche Kriterien letztendlich wirklich für die Persistenz von Personen ausschlaggebend sein sollen. In weiterer Folge schlägt Q. einen Ausweg aus den angeführten Mängeln komplexer Theorien vor. Bei der Frage nach der diachronen Identität soll man den Personenbegriff als solchen ausklammern, und besser nach der Selbigkeit von Vorkommnissen einer natürlichen Art suchen, in unserem Falle von Individuen der biologischen Spezies des Menschen. Q.s Ansatz beruht auf der Annahme, dass man Persistenzbedingungen für Menschen durch biologische Gesetzmäßigkeiten festlegen kann, und zwar so, dass sie für die Spezies Mensch einschlägig sind. Diese Persistenzbedingungen werden nicht am Körper verstanden als Aggregat von Materie, sondern an der kausalen Kontinuität eines organisierten Leibes festgemacht. So können Bestandteile des menschlichen Körpers ausgetauscht werden, ohne die Persistenz des Organismus zu gefährden.

Q.s Vorschlag ist ein Versuch, im Sinne einer komplexen Theorie zu argumentieren: Er wird dem Anspruch der Beobachterperspektive gerecht, was sich in der Auffassung der kausalen Kontinuität des lebendigen Körpers äußert. Diese Kontinuität kann man „von außen“ beobachten. Desgleichen kommt er dem Anspruch nach, im Sinne der Biologie empirisch abgesichert zu argumentieren. Kritisch zu hinterfragen ist jedoch, ob Q. mit seiner Theorie allen acht selbst formulierten Adäquatheitsbedingungen (siehe 240f) an eine Theorie über die Identität von Personen gerecht wird. Einzuhaken wäre etwa bei der Forderung nach Verträglichkeit einer adäquaten Theorie mit unseren alltäglichen Intuitionen. Ist es tatsächlich intuitiv plausibel, die Frage nach der Identität

von Personen auf die nach der Kontinuität eines lebendigen Körpers zu reduzieren? Das wäre wohl nur dann der Fall, wenn wir in unseren alltäglichen Einstellungen unser Personsein tatsächlich als rein biologisches Faktum auffassen würden. Fraglich bleibt auch, ob die Verlagerung der Persistenzproblematik von der Frage nach der Identität von Personen auf die nach der Identität eines biologischen Organismus nicht zusätzliche Schwierigkeiten aufwirft: Welche physischen, v.a. auch psychischen Eigenschaften bestimmen und charakterisieren tatsächlich den Menschen als Vorkommnis einer biologischen Spezies, und sind so nach Q. maßgeblich für seine Persistenz? (NJ, MR)

*Ralf Stoecker* behandelt in seinem Beitrag „Die Bedeutung des Personenbegriffes für die moderne Handlungstheorie“ die Frage, „inwiefern man für ein Verständnis des Handelns auf charakteristische Merkmale der Persönlichkeit zurückgreifen muss“ (259). Zunächst charakterisiert er ein „handlungstheoretisches Standardmodell“, das s.E. vielen Theorien der Handlung zugrunde liegt. Es besagt, dass Handeln als intentionale gezieltes Verhalten erklärt werden kann und dass „intentionale Einstellungen ungefähr so weit verbreitet sind, wie wir sie in unserer alltäglichen Praxis zuschreiben.“ (259) Dieses Standardmodell erklärt somit Handeln, ohne auf den Personbegriff zurückzugreifen. Es umfasst auch Bereiche eindeutig nicht-personalen Tuns, etwa von Tieren etc. Sollte es eine Besonderheit personalen Handelns geben, wäre diese nur graduell verschieden von nicht-personalem Tun. Dem entgegen schildert S. drei Positionen, die dies bestreiten: Zum einen L.A. Harts Vorschlag, Handlungszuschreibungen als performative Sprechakte, durch die jemandem Verantwortung übertragen wird, zu interpretieren. Zweitens zwei Theorien der Agenskausalität, namentlich diejenigen von R. Taylor und R. Chisholm. Ihnen zufolge ist die Hervorbringung von Handlungen auf eine besondere Art von Kausalität zurückzuführen. Ursache von Handlungen sind nicht mentale Zustände bzw. Ereignisse, sondern handelnde Personen oder „Agenten“ selbst. Drittens die Ansicht D. Davidsons, Sprachfähigkeit sei notwendige Voraussetzung intentionaler Einstellungen und damit des Handelns. S. rekonstruiert diese Theorien und diskutiert Probleme, welche die einzelnen Vorschläge aufwerfen. Am ausführlichsten ist die Auseinandersetzung mit Davidson, dessen Auffassung S. auch bei seinen eigenen Überlegungen in modifizierter Weise fortführen möchte. S. versucht zu zeigen, „inwiefern tatsächlich ein wesentlicher Unter-

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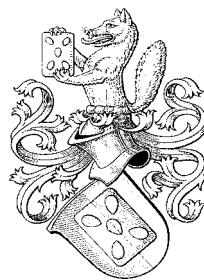
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