

DIAPHANEITY AND THE WAYS THINGS APPEAR

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§1. Introduction

One of the defining features of Markus Gabriel's work is its permissive attitude to existence. When introducing his approach in *Why the World Does Not Exist*, Gabriel writes: "In this book, I will develop the outlines of a new philosophy, which follows from a simple, basic thought, namely the idea that the world does not exist. As you will see, this does not mean that nothing exists at all. There are planets, my dreams, evolution, the toilet flush, hair loss, hopes, elementary particles, and even unicorns on the far side of the moon, to mention only a few examples. The principle that the world does not exist entails that *everything else exists*." (Gabriel, 2015a, p. 1) Gabriel goes on to argue for the robust existence of fictional objects, economic, social, and aesthetic objects, even falsehoods. In *Fields of Sense*, Gabriel further defends this view by developing a metaphysics on which existence is a property of a field of sense. As long as something appears, it exists in some field or other, and so, as expected, there are a vast number of distinct fields of sense. We cannot ask, then, which things *really* exist or not, we can only ask which things exist within a specific field.

A second theme that runs through much of Gabriel's work is a broad resistance to psychologism. This anti-psychologism takes center stage when Gabriel places the Fregean notion of "sense" at the heart of his metaphysics. Senses are Fregean modes of presentation and these senses, according to Gabriel, are "ways things are in themselves." (Gabriel, 2015b, p. 340) Arguing against a psychologistic understanding of the notion that distinguishes between an object and our cognition of it, Gabriel suggests that external objects are in fact constituted by the ways in which they appear, where these appearances are not, in any way, mind-dependent or subjective.

Mark Johnston, in recent work, has argued for a similarly radical anti-psychologism about modes of presentation. Johnston distinguishes between being producers of presence and samplers of presence. On the kind of psychologistic approach that Gabriel and Johnston are opposed to, the world in itself is devoid of appearances or presentations; perceivers, then, must serve as the producers of presence. When we experience the world, we enliven it with consciousness. In contrast, Johnston defends a view on which the world and its constituents present themselves in a variety of ways independent of any conscious minds. Conscious minds, on this approach, merely *sample* some of the modes that are available to them. Which ones they are able to sample is determined by their particular makeup and by contingent facts about their perspective. Johnston writes: "modes of presentation are

not mental; they are objective, in that they come with the objects themselves as the very features of those objects that make them available for demonstration, thought and talk.” (Johnston, 2007, p. 247) And again: “These modes of presentation are standing properties of objects themselves. It is because they have these standing properties anyway that the objects themselves are intelligible to the intellect, and available to be sensed in a variety of ways.” (p. 248)

In both Johnston’s and Gabriel’s work, there is a linking of the notion of a sense or a mode of presentation and something *appearing* some way (Gabriel) or something being *presented* in some way (Johnston). The key idea that both of them are committed to is that an appearance or a presentation can just be a property of a worldly object, one that it has entirely independent of being perceived or cognized. What this means is that the world can itself be the source of qualitative character. Our minds do not produce qualitative character; rather, our mental states inherit their qualitative character from the qualitatively rich world that exists out there. In this paper, I take these themes—the permissive attitude to existence and the anti-psychologism about modes of presentation—as inspiration, and offer an anti-psychologistic view of a certain class of senses – sensible appearances. Like the broader tendency to psychologize Fregean senses which Gabriel and Johnston criticize, there has been a pervasive tendency to psychologize sensible appearances in particular. What it is for a marigold to look orange, on a typical psychologistic view, is for the marigold to cause a certain kind of experience in a perceiver. The appearance property of looking orange is construed either as a property of the experience itself, or, at best, a dispositional property of the object. A dispositional account is yet another instance of psychologism, though, for despite the ascription of the appearance to a worldly object instead of an experience, it nonetheless specifies the nature of the appearance in terms of its relation to a perceiver’s experience.¹

I will motivate an objective view of sensible appearances from within a distinct debate about the structure of perceptual experience. For the purposes of this paper, I will assume that some version of naïve realism is true. Naïve realism is a view of perceptual experience that is motivated by an anti-psychologistic approach to phenomenal character. According to the view, sensory experience constitutively involves a subject being acquainted with mind-independent objects and their qualities. What it is like to perceive, according to the naïve realist, is not fixed by the intrinsic properties of a

¹ Johnston draws a distinction between a property and a quality and argues that one can give a dispositional analysis of color as a property while rejecting a dispositional analysis of color as a quality. I will not work with this distinction in this paper. But I will argue that certain properties have qualitative character and this point may line up with Johnston’s distinction.

mind; rather, it is determined by what the perceived objects and qualities are like. Like Johnston, naïve realists standardly argue that qualitative character is only a property of experiences derivatively. In the first instance, it is the world that is the bearer of character; our mental states come to have character in virtue of making us aware of a qualitatively rich world.

Having accepted a broadly naïve realist framework, there are still questions that arise as to the precise structure of our relation to the world. In this paper, I will argue that perceptual experience is best understood as a *two-place relation* between a perceiver and a set of presented items. I will suggest that it is only a two-place view that can give an object's qualities the right role to play in fixing the phenomenal character of our experiences. I will argue that versions of naïve realism that introduce a third place to the conscious relation fail to give the presented elements a substantive role to play in fixing the character of our experiences. That being said, in order for a two-place view to have the resources to accommodate the entire spectrum of visual experiences, we must broaden our conception of which properties can be presented to us to include not only the traditional sensible qualities like color and shape, but the class of sensible appearances as well. These sensible appearances, I will argue, à la Gabriel and Johnston, are just standing properties that objects possess regardless of whether anyone is around to perceive them. They are qualitatively imbued properties that we sample in experience, thereby resulting in experiences with rich phenomenal character. Appealing to mind-independent appearances as the primary bearers of qualitative character is, therefore, entirely in keeping with the anti-psychologistic spirit of naïve realism.

§2. Diaphaneity

2.1. Diaphaneity and Transparency

What is the structure of a visual experience? Does visual experience involve a subject's mind instantiating a monadic property, as a qualia theorist or an adverbialist argues? Or does visual experience have a relational structure which involves a perceiver being presented with certain items and their qualities, as sense-datum theorists and naïve realists assert? If we rely on our pre-theoretical verdicts about how experience *seems*, we find strong support for the latter view. Imagine seeing Leonardo da Vinci's *Saint Jerome Praying in the Wilderness* at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York. While observing the painting for several minutes, you attend to the intricate musculature of Saint Jerome's strained neck, the textured folds of the garment, the unfinished lion at his feet, and the patches of unpainted canvas in the top left corner of the painting. Having focused your attention on all of the features of the painting, you now think to yourself "I have experienced what the painting is

like in full detail, but let me now turn my attention to my *experience* of the painting.” If you try to engage in this activity, you will discover that you are likely to fail. If you try to pivot your attention from the *objects* of your awareness to your experience itself, you fail to find anything to attend to. All there is to attend to is the features that you are presented with.

G.E. Moore famously described the relational structure of experience as follows:

...the moment we try to fix our attention upon consciousness and to see what, distinctly, it is, it seems to vanish: it seems as if we had before us a mere emptiness. When we try to introspect the sensation of blue, all we can see is the blue: the other element is as if it were *diaphanous*. (Moore, 1903, p. 450.)²

When taken at face value, this pre-theoretical finding—namely, that the character of one’s experience seems exhausted by the objects of awareness—recommends a view of experience on which consciousness is like a perfectly transparent glass window. While a window is necessary for you to see what is happening outside—if you were in front of an opaque wall, you would fail to be able to see anything but the wall—so long as the glass is perfectly transparent or *diaphanous*, it does not itself contribute anything to the character to your experience.

Contrast seeing through a clear window with seeing through a frosted window. Viewing a scene through frosted glass affects the way in which the scene appears to you. Furthermore, so long as you are attentive enough to notice that the glass is frosted, you can typically separate the features of your experience into those that derive from the objects themselves and those that derive from the features of the window; that is, the features of the glass are themselves something you can come to attend to as such. If consciousness were like seeing the world through frosted glass, we would be able to focus on two aspects of our experiences: those features that derived from the objects experienced and those that derived from the features of consciousness itself. But, as Moore points out, we do not have access to any such features of consciousness over and above the features of the objects experienced. And so

² It must be noted that Moore goes on to state that we *can* in fact come to attend to consciousness. In the very next sentence, Moore writes: “Yet it can be distinguished, if we look attentively enough, and know that there is something to look for.” (450) One way to interpret Moore, here, is as pointing out that we can come to *know* that we must be conscious of the blueness even though the element of consciousness contributes nothing to the *character* of our experiences.

we should conclude that consciousness is indeed like a transparent glass window – it enables a subject to experience objects and their qualities without contributing anything to the experience itself.³

This passage by Moore has been cited as expressing two, quite different, theses. Mike Martin, in his discussion of Moore's work, describes Moore as committed to a thesis that he calls *Diaphaneity*. *Diaphaneity*, as defined by Martin, is the thesis that the character of acts of sensory awareness derives fully from the objects of awareness. If two acts of awareness differ in their character, they must differ in some respect in their objects. (Martin, 2015, p. 175)

It is crucial, at this stage, to distinguish between this thesis, and the closely related, though far more widely discussed, thesis called *Transparency*. Many contemporary philosophers of perception have argued that experiences are transparent in the following sense: introspecting on one's experience only reveals features of the worldly objects that are experienced; it reveals no features of the experience itself. Consider, for example, the following formulations of the thesis:

... all that perceptual experience even seems to present you with are worldly objects and their perceptible characteristics. You are never, so the claim goes, aware of features of your own experience, even when you introspect. (Smith, 2008, p. 197)

Focus on some object that you recognize, a blue disk, say. Now turn your attention inwards and try to pick out intrinsic features of your experience, inside you, over and above what it is an experience of... The task seems to me impossible. In turning one's attention inwards, one seems inevitably to end up focusing on external features one's experience represents the object as having... (Tye, 1996, p. 295-6)

Such passages from Smith and Tye are very similar to the original passage from Moore. But, there are two important differences between *Transparency* and *Diaphaneity*. First, *Transparency* states that

³ One could interpret Moore as merely making a claim about what introspection reveals, while leaving open the possibility that our introspective abilities are limited. For example, assume for a second that putting on rose-colored lenses makes the world look rose-colored. If we were systematically prevented from finding out that we were wearing such lenses, it might seem as if it was the objects of awareness that were rose-colored. In such a scenario, even though it would *seem*, on introspection, that the character of one's experience derived fully from the character of the objects perceived, features of the subject's condition would, in fact, partially determine the character of one's experience. But, given that we do not have evidence that our introspective abilities are systematically misled in this way, I will assume, for the purposes of this paper, that they are reliable as to the structure of experience.

experience only provides us access to worldly/environmental/mind-independent objects and their features. *Diaphaneity*, in contrast, takes no such stance on the ontological status of the items that are revealed to us in experience. One can accept *Diaphaneity* regardless of whether one thinks that the blueness that one sees is a robustly mind-independent feature of a physical object or a feature of a mind-dependent sense-datum. (Though, as we will see, a commitment to *Diaphaneity* can quickly lead one to a view on which the presented items must be mind-dependent entities). Sense-datum theorists, according to whom experience only reveals to us mental sense-data, and naïve realists who insist that experience only reveals to us mind-independent objects and their qualities, can both accept *Diaphaneity* but only the latter can straightforwardly endorse *Transparency*. This is because *Diaphaneity* is focused on the relational structure of experience, while *Transparency* is focused on the ontological status of the items perceived. Proponents of *Diaphaneity* are keen to emphasize that the character of experience is determined by the items presented—whatever the ontological status of those items is—whereas proponents of *Transparency* are committed to the view that only mind-independent objects seem to be presented to me in experience.

Second, *Diaphaneity*, as it is formulated by Martin, takes a stand on the metaphysical structure of sensory experience, whereas *Transparency* is often understood as leaving open what the underlying structure of experience is.⁴ Proponents of *Diaphaneity* are typically early sense-datum theorists or contemporary naïve realists who are committed to a relational account of the structure of sensory experience: on their view, the structure of sensory experience involves a perceiver standing in a diaphanous relation to actual items (typically, physical objects for the naïve realists, sense-data for the sense-datum theorists). Insofar as experience is a relation and the presented items constitute one of the relata, a change in the items presented amounts to a change in the relation, and therefore, a change in the resulting experience. Furthermore, given that the relation itself is diaphanous, *any* change in the character of the experience must amount to a change in the items presented.

Transparency, on the other hand, is typically interpreted as an introspective finding on how experience *seems*, which leaves open what the underlying nature of experience is. Different views of the metaphysical structure of experience offer competing explanations of the introspective finding. Naïve realists explain it by appealing to the relation of acquaintance that a perceiver stands in to a perceived scene. Representationalists—also strong proponents of *Transparency*—explain the finding very differently. They deny that experiences are constituted by relations to presented items. Typically,

⁴ Though see Kennedy (2009) for the suggestion that representationalism fails to do justice to *Transparency* and that, therefore, it is only naïve realism that is compatible with the thesis.

which item is presented to a perceiver is a contingent fact about an experience fixed by facts about which object caused the experience or which object best matches the descriptive content of the experience. The character of experience, according to a representationalist view, is fixed by the representational content of the experience which is itself fixed independently of which items the perceiver is in fact presented with on a particular occasion.⁵

2.2. Formulations of *Diaphaneity*

My focus in this paper will be the thesis of *Diaphaneity*. Controversially, I will assume that experience has a relational structure – that is, if experience is to have any qualitative character, it must present the perceiver with some item or other. In this paper, I am not interested in the question of *whether* experience is relational or not. I will take our pre-theoretical verdicts to settle that question. Rather, I am interested in *what kind* of relational structure experience has. In particular, the question I am interested in is whether experience involves a two-place relation such that the character of our experiences is *exhausted* by the character of the presented elements; or, alternatively, whether experience involves additional relata over and above what is presented to the perceiver, where these additional relata can also contribute to the character of our experiences.

Note that in our initial formulation of *Diaphaneity*, the term “objects of awareness” is meant to refer not only to concrete objects, but also to their qualities. The notion “object” here is meant broadly to refer to any presented element, and it seems obvious that we are presented not only with concrete particulars but also their colors, shapes, sizes and so on. That being said, it does not seem like *all* qualities of objects can be presented to sensory awareness. The exact number of quarks that an object is composed of is not something I can be aware of in perception. The property that a peach has of having a pit in its center is not a property that can be presented to me in an experience of an uncut peach. Colors and shapes, on the other hand, seem like paradigmatic examples of qualities that I can be presented with in experience. What it is like to experience a blue, round ball is fixed by what the properties of blueness and roundness are like. If you change the color of the ball to orange, you change the character of my experience in predictable ways.

Having made these clarifications, we can define *Diaphaneity* as follows:

⁵ There are some representationalists who argue that experience involves us being related to universals. See, for instance, Johnston (2004). This view, though relational in nature, is quite different from the relational views just discussed on which the items on the other end of the relation are concrete particulars like objects or property-instances.

Diaphaneity: The character of acts of sensory awareness derives fully from the objects of awareness. If two acts of consciousness differ in their character, there must be a difference either in the concrete objects that the subject is aware of or in their sensible qualities.

Let us, for the time being, focus on differences in the sensible qualities of objects, putting aside any differences in *which* object the perceiver is aware of. On a very natural reading of *Diaphaneity*, if two acts of consciousness differ in their character, then, assuming that there is no change in *which* object is being perceived, any difference in the character of these acts must be explained in terms of a difference in the color, shape, size, smell or taste of the presented object. On this reading of the thesis, we assume a prior understanding of which qualities fall under the category of “sensible qualities” and we use this prior understanding to get a determinate grip on which aspects of concrete objects can fix the character of our experiences.

There is, however, another way in which one can understand the thesis. This second understanding works with an alternative conception of sensible qualities that is reminiscent of how the early sense-datum theorists defined sense-data. Moore, for instance, defines a “sense-datum” as “whatever is given as the object of sensory awareness.”⁶ Such a descriptive definition of a sense-datum does not directly specify what the objects of sensory awareness are. This fact has often been highlighted to remind modern-day readers of Moore and other early sense-datum theorists that it is not typically part of the *definition* of sense-data that they are mental objects. If the term “sense-datum” just picks out whatever is given in experience, it is not definitional of a sense-datum view of perception that sense-data are mind-dependent entities. So even if most sense-datum views come to the conclusion that sense-data are mind-dependent, they must do so on the basis of *further* philosophical argumentation. If one can resist this further argumentation and show that ordinary material objects can be given as the objects of sensory awareness—as naïve realists have tried to do—then material objects can themselves be sense-data.

Just as Moore’s definition of a sense-datum does not directly specify its ontological status, we can also define the qualities of sense-data in a way that leaves open which particular qualities count as sensible. If we define sensible qualities as *whichever qualities are given to sensory awareness*, this definition leaves open whether color or shape are themselves sensible qualities. Concluding that color is or is not a sensible quality, then, is a further move that must be justified on either pre-theoretical or

⁶ G.E. Moore, *Some Main Problems of Philosophy* (1953, based on lectures given in 1910-1911).

philosophical grounds. It is not built into the definition of sensible qualities and is therefore not built into the definition of *Diaphaneity*.

So, we have two possible definitions of sensible qualities: the former defines sensible qualities just by listing the relevant qualities, the latter defines them via description:

Sensible quality_L: color, shape, size, motion, smell, sound, taste, heat, cold etc.

Sensible quality_D: those qualities of an object that are given in sensory experience.

These two ways of defining sensible qualities in turn generates two corresponding versions of *Diaphaneity*:

*Diaphaneity*_L: The character of acts of sensory awareness derives fully from the objects of awareness. If two acts of consciousness differ in their character, there must be a difference either in the concrete objects that the subject is aware of or in the object's color, shape, size, smell etc.

*Diaphaneity*_D: The character of acts of sensory awareness derives fully from the objects of awareness. If two acts of consciousness differ in their character, there must be a difference either in the concrete objects that the subject is aware of or in those qualities of the object that are presented in sensory awareness (whichever these are).

On the second version, we do not get a determinate verdict as to which qualities can contribute to the character of experience. All we know is that the character of a conscious experience is determined by those qualities that are given in sensory experience, whichever those qualities in fact are.

It is important to note that both formulations of *Diaphaneity* result in contentful and controversial theses. Both formulations are committed to the thesis that there can be no difference in the character of an experience that does not derive from a difference in which items the perceiver is aware of. If conscious awareness comprises a relation between a conscious subject and some item, both interpretations of *Diaphaneity* are committed to denying that there is a third place of the relation that can make a difference to the character of experience. The difference between the two versions of the thesis is that one includes within it a specification of which qualities can be presented to us in experience, changes in which would result in changes in the experience. The second interpretation

does not include any such specification, leaving that question to be answered either through pre-theoretical means or via further philosophical argumentation.

This difference becomes relevant when one tries to evaluate the success of a class of considerations that are typically levelled against *Diaphaneity*. Consider, for example, the following passage in which Martin expresses skepticism about the plausibility of the thesis:

After all, we not only suppose that we can know about objects through sense perception, but we know that the conditions for coming to know about objects vary, and hence our experience can vary too. One can see the bluish-white sample under rather less good conditions – under artificial shop lights, or in the fading light of a late afternoon; against one strong background colour, or another. All of these experiences will be different from each other... When we think of the variety of circumstances under which we can confront the colour or the shape of objects, then we are much less likely to assume that there is one distinctive way of experiencing the colour or the shape. (Martin, 2015, p. 175-176)

In this passage, Martin is pointing to the familiar fact that our encounters with colors and shapes take place under a variety of environmental conditions. We encounter colors in a range of lighting conditions and against a plethora of backgrounds, and these conditions can make a difference to what our conscious experiences of the colors are like. To extend the point to other sensible qualities, it is a commonplace observation that we can experience one and the same shape in multiple ways, resulting in a range of different experiences that involve the very same shape property. As Austin bluntly put it many decades ago, “Does anyone suppose that if something is straight, then it jolly well has to look straight at all times and in all circumstances?” (Austin, 1964, p. 29).

How do such observations pose trouble for the proponent of *Diaphaneity*? The intuitive idea here is as follows: we can have two very different experiences of exactly the same color or exactly the same shape, in virtue of perceiving the quality in different environmental conditions. If a commitment to *Diaphaneity* entails that there is only one way to experience a color or shape, then it is clear that these familiar considerations count as evidence against the thesis. Given the clarification of the thesis offered above, it should be clear that the kinds of evidence that Martin and Austin present do count against *Diaphaneity*_L. That is, if we take the thesis to be committed to the view that color, shape, smell, size, etc. are the only sensible qualities that can be presented in experience, then it does seem like a proponent of *Diaphaneity* must insist that there is only one way to experience a determinate color or

shape property. But, surely, I can perceive a coin's shape head on or top-down or from the side. These three experiences are all experiences of the coin's roundness and nonetheless they are different experiences. What explains the difference, then, cannot be which shape property I am presented with, for that is unchanged across the experiences.

Many early proponents of *Diaphaneity* did take the strong stance that the character of experience must be exhausted by a very limited range of sensible qualities including color, shape, size and motion. Consider the following response by Russell, for example, which Martin himself cites as further evidence of a commitment to *Diaphaneity*. In this passage, Russell is responding to the possibility that one and the same color can be presented in different *ways* to a perceiver: "Surely we cannot speak of a color "presenting an aspect". A color which presents a different aspect is a different color, and there is an end of the matter." (Russell, 1913, p. 79) Russell seems to be suggesting, contra Austin, that there really is *only* one way that a color can look, and that therefore, color experiences cannot fail to be diaphanous.

One way to reconstruct the reasoning here is as follows: Russell's commitment to the diaphaneity of color experiences stems from his prior views on the nature of color, and not solely from considerations regarding the nature of sensory awareness more generally. It is because Russell believes that colors are essentially tied to how they look that we must accept that there is only one way to experience a color, and that therefore, color experiences in particular are diaphanous.

It is not surprising that proponents of *Diaphaneity_L* are motivated by prior commitments concerning the nature of particular qualities. Given that *Diaphaneity_L* takes a stance on which qualities show up in experience, it is at least possible to argue in this way. If one were to take this approach across the board, one would have to consider each quality at a time and argue that for each of those qualities, there is only one way that the quality can appear. But this kind of argumentative strategy cannot work for *Diaphaneity_D*. Given that *Diaphaneity_D* is, by itself, silent on which qualities are actually presented in sensory experience, the motivations for the thesis must stem from considerations about the nature of experience itself, as opposed to the nature of any particular sensible quality that happens to show up in experience.

Typically, those who accept *Diaphaneity_L* respond to cases of conflicting appearances by insisting that even though there is no difference in the physical object, there is nonetheless a difference in which color and shape quality the perceiver is aware of. This is what leads the proponent of *Diaphaneity_L* to reject the view that we are directly aware of the colors and shapes of physical objects, and this in turn leads, very quickly, to a sense-datum theory that *does* take a stand on the ontological status of the items

experienced. Such sense-datum theorists conclude that experience must, in the first instance, make us aware of mind-dependent sense-data and *their* colors and shapes.⁷ It is quite reasonable to argue that it is their commitment to *Diaphaneity_L* that leads philosophers to deny that we are immediately aware of ordinary constituents of the mind-independent world. And so, in order to restore our perceptual grip on the external world, *Diaphaneity_L* must go.⁸

Crucially, though, the familiar facts about the perspectival nature of sensory awareness *only* count as evidence against the first specification of *Diaphaneity*, on which we have a determinate list of which qualities we can be said to be aware of in experience. The intuitive cases are cases in which there is no difference in any of those qualities, and yet there is a difference in the relevant experiences. If, on the other hand, we work with the *second* specification, *Diaphaneity_D*, on which the thesis is neutral on which qualities of the presented objects fix the character of our experiences, the mere fact that a particular color or shape may be experienced in a variety of different ways, does not by itself refute the thesis. For it is open to the proponent of *Diaphaneity_D* to respond to these intuitive facts by acknowledging that colors and shapes are not the only sensible qualities of an object that are presented in experience. Such proponents can agree that the experiences of a bluish-white patch in ordinary lighting, in harsh showroom lighting and in late afternoon lighting may result in rather different experiences, but explain those differences by appeal to other differences in *what is presented* to the subject.

In another discussion of *Diaphaneity*, Martin expresses the implausibility of the thesis in the following way: “why cannot the *ways* in which things are presented in experience make a difference to what the experience is like, in addition to what is presented?” (Martin, 1998, p. 175) Note that this expression of concern, taken in isolation, is also mildly ambiguous. Understood one way, the proponent of *Diaphaneity* is unlikely to take issue with this possibility. The way in which this dress is presented to me is as blue as opposed to green; the way in which the mug is presented to me is as smooth as opposed to rough. These facts alone do not threaten *Diaphaneity* because the color and shape that objects have are themselves part of what is given to the subject. This is, of course, not addressing the true import of Martin’s question. Rather, he is asking the following general question: for *any* element (or set of elements) that is presented in experience, why can’t it be the case that *that* element (or set of elements) can be presented in different ways. We have already seen, in our

⁷ It should be noted that early sense-datum theorists often treated sense-data as neither physical nor mental entities. Given our more restrictive ontology, we can conclude that if the colors and shapes we are aware of are not properties of physical objects, they must be properties of mental entities instead.

⁸ This is why the argument from conflicting appearances has such little influence over contemporary theorists of perception, most of whom reject *Diaphaneity* outright.

distinction between the two versions of *Diaphaneity*, that arguing this is true for specific elements like color and shape does not by itself prove that it is true for each element or for the total set of elements presented in a particular experience.

To make progress, we need to think about how one can acknowledge the undeniable fact that a color or a shape can be presented to a perceiver *in different ways*. There are two broad strategies one can adopt here. On one approach, which is inconsistent with *Diaphaneity_D*, these ways are not themselves presented elements; rather, they occupy a third place in the relation that a perceiver stands in to a presented scene. On this approach, *Diaphaneity_D* is false because the phenomenology of experience is determined, not by a two-place relation between the perceiver and a scene, but rather by a three-place relation between the perceiver, a scene and the way in which the scene is presented.

On an alternative approach, one which is *compatible* with *Diaphaneity_D*, just as an object can be presented as either blue or round, where the blueness and roundness of the object are themselves elements of the presented scene, just so, the way in which the object's blueness or roundness are presented can themselves be additional constituents of the presented scene. On the first strategy, we leave our specification of the presented elements unchanged but amplify the number of relata that constitute the phenomenal relation. On the second strategy, we amplify the list of presented elements while keeping the phenomenal relation a two-place relation between a perceiver and a set of presented elements.

These options may seem like mere formal variants of each other: what can hinge on the choice between introducing a new quality of the object and a new relatum of the experiencing relation? In the remainder of this paper, I will argue that there are, in fact, problematic consequences of adopting the latter approach that can be wholly avoided by the former. This will motivate the view that I introduce, in the final section, which analyzes experience as involving a perceiver being presented with, not only the colors, shapes and sizes of objects, but also a range of sensible appearances which are themselves standing qualities that objects possess independent of being perceived.

§3. Appearances as Ways Subjects Are: Beck's Neurocomputational Naïve Realism

In a paper titled "Rethinking Naïve Realism", Ori Beck develops a view he calls neurocomputational naïve realism (NNR). At the center of NNR is a rejection of *Diaphaneity*. Like Martin, Beck is committed to the idea that one and the same item can be presented to a perceiver in different ways, thereby resulting in different experiences. Beck is keen to argue that a naïve realist need not embrace *Diaphaneity*. On his proposed alternative, the character of a perceptual experience can still be

determined by a non-representational, “naïve” relation that the perceiver stands in to bits of the mind-independent world, even though the character is not *exhausted* by this relation.

On Beck’s framework, the character of perceptual experience is fixed by a perceptual appearance relation which is itself a three-place relation between a perceiver (S), an item that perceptually appears to S (x), and an appearance property (W). Crucially, the items that perceptually appear to a perceiver correspond to elements of the presented scene and can include mind-independent objects *and* their qualities. This is the naïve realist component of the view. Appearance properties, on the other hand, are instantiated by perceivers, *not* objects, and these properties are completely determined by the subject’s internal configuration. This is the neurocomputational component of the view.

How do these different components fit together? Beck writes:

When S stands in [the perceptually appearing] relation to some item x and to some appearance property W , not only is S appeared to in some way, but furthermore, x perceptually appears *that way* to S. For example, when you stand in this relation to both a particular ball and the appearance property of being appeared to in a roundish way, not only are you roundishly appeared to, but furthermore, *the ball* perceptually appears round to you. (Beck, 2019, p. 625, my emphasis)

There is much to be unpacked here. An initial source of confusion stems from an ambiguity in the use of appearance vocabulary. Appearance properties, as Beck defines them, are non-relational properties of subjects. But he also speaks of the perceptual relation of objects appearing certain ways to subjects. As we have seen, when a perceiver instantiates the appearance property of *being appeared to in a roundish way* (more on this relational formulation in a minute), if she is perceptually related to an object, x , x will appear round to her. Beck often writes as though the way I am appeared to can just be identical to the way the object appears to me. For example, as witnessed above, he writes “not only is S appeared to in some way, but furthermore, x perceptually appears *that way* to S.” But, in the very next sentence, Beck seems to take this back. For, on his view, while I am appeared to in a *roundish* way, the ball is said to appear *round* to me. Being appeared to roundishly is not identical to appearing round. “-ish” formulations are typically introduced by philosophers of mind to refer to a class of phenomenal properties that only minds can instantiate. Internalists about phenomenal character introduce such properties—reddish as opposed to red or red’ as opposed to red—to avoid the charge that they are

treating worldly properties like red and square as properties that a mind could possess.⁹ Insofar as Beck makes use of this vocabulary, it is clear that he, too, is committed to this distinction. So, despite the suggestion otherwise, it cannot be that when a subject is perceptually appeared to in a *W* way, the object she perceives appears “that way”—i.e. *W*—to her. “*W*” cannot refer both to the intrinsic property, that a subject instantiates, of being appeared to in a roundish way and to the relational property, that an object instantiates, of appearing round to a subject.

Here is a second, related question about the framework. Beck defines the appearance property that a subject instantiates as the property of *being appeared to* in some way (for example, in a roundish or bluish way). But what entitles this relational characterization of appearance properties? Characterizing the appearance property in the passive voice makes it seem as though there must be some entity that is *doing* the appearing if one is appeared to in a certain way. In other words, it makes it seem as though one must be appeared to *by something*. But this is a commitment that Beck rejects. He is clear that a subject can instantiate an appearance property without anything in fact appearing any way to her. In a hallucination, for instance, a subject instantiates the very same appearance properties that she instantiates in an ordinary perception even though there is no item that perceptually appears any way to her.¹⁰ Furthermore, describing the appearance property that a subject instantiates as being appeared to in a roundish way makes it seem as though the object that is doing the appearing is itself roundish. But as we have already seen, objects cannot be roundish.

I do not think these ambiguities are insuperable. I think we can clarify the use of some of these terms in a way that allows us to engage more substantively with the essence of Beck’s view. Let us assume that talk of appearances is systematically ambiguous between talk of properties that a subject instantiates and talk of relations that perceivers can stand in to objects. And so, despite Beck’s use of “*W*” to pick out both properties of subjects and the ways that objects appear, let us stipulate that objects cannot appear *W* to subjects. “*W*” only picks out properties that subjects instantiate in virtue of their neurocomputational state. Furthermore, given that objects cannot appear *W* to subjects, let’s get rid of the unnecessary passive characterization of the appearance properties that subjects instantiate. Let’s just state that subjects instantiate roundish or bluish appearances.

We must now ask what the relation is between instantiating a roundish appearance and an object appearing round to a perceiver. Remember, on Beck’s view, which appearance property I instantiate is fully determined by which neurocomputational state I am in. Furthermore, as Beck makes clear, I

⁹ See, for example, Peacocke (1983) and Chalmers (2019).

¹⁰ This distinguishes Beck’s view from a similar view developed by Gupta (2019).

can be in this neurocomputational state without being presented with any item whatsoever, as in the case of a hallucination. So, merely instantiating an appearance property does not, by itself, mean that any particular object appears any way to me. It is only if I am *also* perceptually related to an object that my instantiating a particular appearance will result in *that* object appearing some way to me. So long as I am perceiving a ball while instantiating a roundish appearance, the ball will appear round to me.

How can intrinsically determined properties of a subject determine how a physical object in the world appears? How can it be the case that my instantiating a roundish appearance—a property that I instantiate solely on the basis of my internal neurocomputational state—makes it the case that the ball I am perceiving look round? In other words, what does instantiating a roundish appearance have to do with how a physical object appears? A common response to this question appeals to a causal connection between the mind and physical properties of the perceived object. On this response, there is no intrinsic or constitutive connection between a roundish appearance and the property of being round; rather, it is just the case that the latter typically causes the former. So, one can speak of the object looking round (or looking to be round) because the object being that way is typically what causes an instantiation of a roundish appearance in me.

I do not think this common response is available or recommended for Beck's purposes. Theorists who appeal to a merely causal connection between roundish appearances and worldly shapes (or "colorish" appearances and worldly colors) do not typically believe that the latter play a role in fixing the phenomenal character of one's experience. Typically, they argue that one counts as being aware of or being presented with an object's color or shape in virtue of instantiating a particular appearance because of the causal connection between the two properties, but which properties one is aware of does not matter to the character of one's experience. Given that the subject does not have access to the worldly causes of her experience, an object's color *merely* being the worldly cause of the subject's appearance properties is not sufficient for that to make a phenomenological contribution to the subject's experience. As a result, if one is committed to a view on which being presented with an object's color or shape is (at least partially) determinative of the character of experience—determinative of how things seem from the subject's point of view—one must posit a tighter connection between appearance properties and the sensible qualities of objects in the world. Insofar as Beck's view has it that phenomenal character is fixed by the perceptual appearing relation that perceivers stand in to worldly objects and their qualities, he *does* think that how an object looks is part of the phenomenal character of experience. And so a merely causal analysis of worldly appearances is inadequate for Beck's purposes.

The good news is that Beck *can* appeal to a more robust connection than mere causation. He can argue that even though appearance properties are in fact intrinsic properties of subjects, instantiating such intrinsic properties makes it *seem* to the subject as though there is an object present that looks some way. Proponents of phenomenal intentionality defend the view that there is an intrinsic connection between phenomenal properties and intentional properties. On this approach, in virtue of being in a certain intrinsic phenomenal state, it seems to a subject as if some state of affairs is presented to her. Instantiating a roundish appearance—which is itself an intrinsic property of the perceiver—can make it seem to the subject as if there is a round object present. Appearance properties, understood this way, cannot be instantiated without it seeming to the subject as though some worldly property is instantiated, even though those appearance properties are entirely fixed by a subject’s intrinsic state. This view distinguishes clearly between roundish and round appearances, but then posits an intrinsic connection between the two. If the former is instantiated, the latter will *seem* to be instantiated.¹¹

This view has the advantage of positing a *phenomenological* connection between the appearances that I instantiate and the way the world appears to me. We can also see how this strategy allows Beck to incorporate an element of naïve realism into the proposal. So far, I have interpreted him as committed to a view on which appearance properties are in fact intrinsic but can make it seem to the subject as if an object is presented as being a certain way. But merely instantiating an intrinsic property cannot make it the case that any *particular* object appears some way to her. First, we know that a subject can instantiate the very same intrinsic properties in a hallucination. Second, the mind cannot, just in virtue of its intrinsic properties, succeed in referring to any particular object in the world. This would amount to a magical theory of representation.¹² To avoid the charge of magic, Beck can appeal to the third part of the relation. While instantiating a roundish appearance can make it the case that it seems like there is a round object present, it is in only when the perceiver stands in a non-representational relation to a particular mind-independent object, *x*, that *x*, in particular, appears round to her.

On this view, both components of the relation contribute to the phenomenal character of the experience in a transparent manner. The neurocomputational properties I realize determine which appearance properties I instantiate, which in turn determine which worldly properties seem to be

¹¹ This proposal may be related to the relational view that Beck briefly explores in §7. For proponents of phenomenal intentionality, see Kriegel (2011) and Pautz (2013).

¹² See Putnam (1981).

instantiated. But *which* object in fact instantiates those properties is determined by which object I am in fact perceptually related to.

This latter component is genuinely an aspect of our phenomenology. Imagine a case of identical twins. An experience of each of them may result in my instantiating a tallish appearance property, but whether instantiating a tallish property makes it the case that Maya appears tall to me or that Naya appears tall to me is determined by which of the twins I am in fact perceptually related to. The role that the mind-independent object plays in fixing the phenomenal character of the experience, then, is to fix *which* particular the subject is aware of and which particular looks a certain way to the perceiver, where the way that particular looks is independently determined by the subject's neurocomputational state. If Maya is the person I know and am currently perceiving, then it *is* typically part of the phenomenal character of my experience that it is Maya who looks tall, and not Naya (even if Naya would equally well satisfy all the same descriptive content I associate with Maya). The naïve relation to the object is what secures the particularity of our perceptual phenomenology.¹³

This is where the problem arises, though. While it may be true that Beck can give mind-independent objects a constitutive role to play in fixing the phenomenal character of experience, he cannot satisfactorily extend this role to the sensible qualities of those mind-independent particulars. While a mind-independent object may fix *which* object appears round to a perceiver when she instantiates a roundish appearance, the object's *roundness* plays no role in determining *how* it is that the object looks. In our example of the twins, while my relation to Maya may explain why it is *Maya* that appears tall, her actual height plays no role in explaining why she appears tall. On the view I have attributed to Beck here, how Maya appears is fully determined by what appearance properties I instantiate.

So far, then, we have a strange version of naïve realism. Mind-independent objects may in fact be presented to the subject and play an essential role in fixing the character of a perceptual experience, but the objects' qualities do not seem to play any such role themselves. So contrary to Beck's initial promise, neurocomputational naïve realism cannot do justice to the full range of presented items discussed by Martin. When describing his view, Beck insists that "a particular ball can perceptually appear to you various ways. So can its size or shape." (624) But if the development of his view offered here is correct, while it does allow for a particular ball to be presented to you, it's not clear that its size or shape can be similarly presented. Remember that presented items are meant to be items that

¹³ Cf. Mehta, 2014.

contribute to the phenomenal character of our experiences; they are items that show up to a subject from the first-person point of view. The reason we could give mind-independent objects a role to play in fixing this character is that the intrinsic properties of the perceiver were not sufficient to fix *which* object appeared round. But there is no corollary work for the qualities of objects to do. For whether the object looks round or looks blue is fully determined by the subject's internal state and not by the object's actual color and shape.

At this point, Beck might suggest that the object's qualities are presented to us in the very same way, and do the same work, as the object itself. My coffee table's roundness is a particular instance of roundness and it is distinct from your coffee table's roundness (even if our tables are exactly the same shape). Just as the non-representational relation that I stand in to my table determines that it is *my* table (and not yours) that appears round, the table's shape can also be presented to me and thereby determine that it is my table's roundness (and not yours) that appears round. Being presented with my table's roundness does, on this approach, contribute to the phenomenal character to the experience. Just as Maya contributes by fixing which particular *object* appears some way to me, the table's shape contributes by fixing which particular *instance* of roundness appears some way to me. Experience seems to present to us not only particular objects, but also *instances of properties* (as opposed to universals). Beck can argue that it is the non-representational relation that I stand in to an object's actual property-instances that explains this component of phenomenological particularity.¹⁴

But is this a viable strategy? First, we must acknowledge the strangeness of a view on which it is not just the table that appears round, but the table's roundness that appears round. We don't typically describe shapes and colors as looking round or looking blue; it is objects that look round or blue. But perhaps this is just a quirk of our language. Part of Beck's insight, inspired by Martin's critique of *Diaphaneity*, is that for any item that is presented to us, we can conceive of it being presented in a variety of ways. This implies that if an object's color or shape can be presented to us, that color or shape must also be able to be presented in a variety of ways. Talk of how that color or shape looks, then, is perhaps just a slightly awkward way of capturing the different ways in which that color or shape can be presented.

¹⁴ Beck briefly considers the possibility that in virtue of instantiating an appearance property, one can be related to a universal like redness. This may allow Beck to insist that one can be related to an abstract object—a universal like redness—but this does not allow one to say that the subject is related to or presented with a particular object's redness.

Unfortunately, the linguistic peculiarity isn't *just* a linguistic peculiarity. The strategy that I have ascribed to Beck has the philosophical implication that an object's redness and roundness can look any number of ways. One and the same color—redness—can, on Beck's view, look red to one person and look green to another person. Beck's analysis of this case is that both perceivers are *presented* with the same color—redness—but they are presented with that color in ways that are fixed by their individual neurocomputational states. The strategy that I have explicated above grants him this response. It allows for the object's redness to play a phenomenological role by determining which *particular* instance appears to the subject—it's *that* object's redness—but it leaves how this instance looks—whether it looks red or green—to the subject's internal configuration.

I want to suggest that this view is not really compatible with the spirit of naïve realism. Why is it that naïve realists think that colors and shapes are presented to perceivers? They are typically motivated by the intuition that it is the qualities of mind-independent objects that determine the *qualitative* character of experience. Qualities do this, by themselves, *having* qualitative character.¹⁵ It is the qualitative character of these colors and shapes that then determines the qualitative character of an experience. As I suggested at the beginning, naïve realism is motivated by an anti-psychologistic understanding of the character of our conscious experiences. Our experiences get their conscious character in virtue of the rich character of the world that is experienced.

Note that this motivation is strictly compatible with the rejection of *Diaphaneity*. For one can hold the view that the qualitative character of experience is fixed by the qualitative character of the properties experienced, while also insisting that the character of an object's qualities does not *exhaust* the character of an experience of those qualities. In addition to the qualitative character of the color presented, for example, a naïve realist is free to make room for the different *ways* in which that color's qualitative character can be presented. But it is essential to the spirit of naïve realism that the qualities of objects themselves have qualitative character and that this character play at least *some* role in fixing the character of our experiences.

Is it possible for Beck's view to give an object's qualities a thicker role to play in fixing the character of experience; thicker, that is, than just providing the particular instance that the subject is aware of? Can his view accommodate the idea that the *qualitative character* of an object's properties plays some role in fixing the qualitative character of our experiences? I think this is ruled out for Beck. We should

¹⁵ This is related to Johnston's distinction between a property and a quality. The property of being red cannot stand in similarity relations of hue, saturation and brightness, to other colors, but the quality *red* can. That is because qualities have qualitative character. Properties do not.

not accept the verdict that the qualitative character of redness can be presented to a perceiver just as well by experiences in which that redness *looks red* and *looks green*. The qualitative character of redness must place *some* constraints on the variety of ways in which it can be presented to a perceiver, if it is to count as presented in the first place. What it is for a property to have qualitative character of its own is for it to look a certain way even when no one is looking at it. This is the key insight that Gabriel and Johnston press when they argue that the ways things *appear* are properties that things possess even when unperceived. So objects that are red have a certain appearance, just in virtue of being red. For the character of an object's redness to be presented to me in experience, that look must be what is presented to me. While one and the same look can perhaps be presented to me in daylight or in the setting sun, it cannot be presented by either looking red or looking green. For an object's redness to count as being presented to me by looking green would be for its qualitative character to be presented to me by way of a qualitative character that is associated with an incompatible color property, greenness. A red *object* can, of course, look green. This is indeed what happens in the cases that Beck is interested in. But the object's looking this way cannot constitute a way for us to be aware of the qualitative character of the object's *redness*.

Let us remind ourselves of the dialectic. We were considering ways to accommodate the very plausible intuition that one and the same color can be presented in different ways to the subject. I had suggested that this intuition could be accommodated in one of two ways: one can either reject *Diaphaneity* and insist that there are features of an experience that cannot be accounted for by appealing to any presented elements, or one can uphold *Diaphaneity* and insist that the set of presented elements includes more than just the colors and shapes of objects. I then explored Beck's neurocomputational naïve realism as an instance of the former approach. The consequence, however, of an approach on which the modes of presentation constitute a third relatum which is fixed entirely by the subject's intrinsic properties, is that these intrinsically determined modes of presentation entirely subsume any substantive work that the object's sensible qualities can play in fixing the qualitative character of our experiences. At best, the object's qualities can fix which *particular* instance we are in fact presented with, but the qualitative character of these properties is entirely irrelevant to the character of our experiences. What it is like for an object to be red or round is never part of what is presented to us in experience. In an attempt to make room for the object's color or shape to be presented in more than one way, neurocomputational naïve realism loses the ability to have an object's character be presented at all.

§4. Perceiving Objects Under Certain Viewing Conditions

We have now seen that trying to make sense of the different ways in which a quality can be presented in perception by appeal to properties of perceivers' minds is bound to exclude mind-independent qualities from playing a substantive role in fixing the character of perception. So let us briefly turn our attention to those accounts that try to make sense of the perspectival nature of perception purely by appeal to features of the mind-independent world itself.

On diaphanous versions of naïve realism, perception consists in a two-place relation of awareness between a perceiver and a set of perceived items. Beck rejects *Diaphaneity* by introducing a third factor—appearance properties that are instantiated by minds. But instead of a subjective third factor, one can also specify an *objective* third factor that explains how one and the same color can be presented in different ways. On the objectivist's view, perception should be analyzed as a three-place relation between a perceiver, a set of items that the perceiver is aware of and a set of environmental conditions or modes *under which* the perceiver is presented with those items. This proposal shares its rejection of *Diaphaneity* with Beck's neurocomputational naïve realism, but it differs from Beck's view insofar as the ways or modes of presentation are themselves fully objectively specifiable. These objective modes of presentation can include illumination conditions in the case of color experience, spatial location in the case of spatial experience and so on.¹⁶

On this kind of three-place view, when a subject perceives a red tomato, she perceives it under certain illumination conditions. Seeing a red tomato in daylight is different from seeing it at dusk. Similarly, when someone perceives a cubical object, she perceives it from a particular location in space. The location of the perceiver, or the kind of illumination, is not added to the list of items that are presented to her; rather, it occupies a third place in the conscious relation and thereby affects the character of her experience differently than the presented items. Perceiving a cubical object head-on results in a different experience from perceiving it at an angle but it is not as if the location from which we perceive the object is itself presented to me as an item of which I am aware. I am presented with the tomato's redness under certain illumination conditions; I need not be presented with the illumination conditions themselves. (Illumination conditions *can* be part of what is presented to me—when, for example, I attend to a source of lighting itself as opposed to any object that is illuminated—but they need not be.)

¹⁶ See, for example, Campbell (2009), Brewer (2011)

This account seems quite plausible for cases in which a difference in viewing conditions does not affect *which qualities an object appears to have*. Consider the following example. Imagine that you are sitting in your home office over the course of an afternoon working on a philosophy paper. There is a bowl of ripe tomatoes on the counter. As your focus repeatedly drifts away from your work, your attention falls on the fruit in the bowl. What your experience is like at the start of the afternoon, when the sun is still high in the sky, might be different from what your experience is like at the end of the work day. But despite the gradual change in illumination conditions, you continue to accurately perceive the color of the tomatoes in the fruit bowl. In the afternoon, you were presented with the tomato's redness and you remain aware of the tomato's redness in the evening. In this kind of case, the change in one's experience is quite plausibly accounted for, not in terms of a change in the qualities that you are presented with, but instead, in terms of a change in the illumination conditions under which you perceive those qualities. You were first aware of the tomato's redness in full daylight and later you were aware of the tomato's redness at dusk. In both cases, one can plausibly maintain that you are presented with the *qualitative character* of redness – it is just that this character can be presented under different lighting conditions. It is a difference in these lighting conditions that is responsible for the difference in your experiences.

This is the kind of case that the opponent of *Diaphaneity* wants to draw our attention to. We can surely be aware of one and the same quality—redness—under a variety of viewing conditions. Giving up *Diaphaneity* can accommodate the differences in our experiences by appeal to a difference in the conditions under which we perceive those qualities. But, while the objectivist's strategy may work to explain the kind of case just described—a case in which the change in qualitative character does not amount to a change in how the object appears—it does not work as well with other kinds of cases. Consider a case in which differences in the illumination conditions *do* affect how an object appears to the subject (regardless of whether the subject is conscious of the differences in the illumination conditions). Imagine viewing my bowl of tomatoes in crisp daylight and then under the kind of fluorescent lighting that is typical of showrooms and hospitals. This difference in lighting can lead to a fairly stark difference in how the tomatoes themselves look. Imagine that the lighting affects my experience in a way that tomatoes look to have a purplish hue; they do not look red. Even if the perceiver is aware of the fact that the lighting conditions are different, even if she knows that the tomatoes are red, the tomato will nonetheless strike her as looking purple. (Think about the change in experience when one comes into a dimly lit room after having spent a few hours in bright sunshine –

all the objects one encounters look entirely different even though one knows that their colors are unchanged).

On the account under consideration, such a case must be explained in exactly the same way as the first case discussed above. I am first presented with the tomato's redness in daylight and then with the tomato's redness in showroom lighting. In both cases, I am presented with the tomato's redness so the difference in the experiences can only be accounted for by a difference in the third relatum—in the case of color, the lighting conditions. The problem with this proposal is that it is unable to explain how the two experiences that I have differ with respect to how the *tomato* looks: in the former, the tomato looks bright red, in the latter, it looks purple. This difference cannot be explained just by stating that in the former I am presented with the tomato's redness in daylight, while in the latter I am aware of the tomato's redness in fluorescent light. For the mere fact that there is a difference in the illumination conditions does not by itself explain why this difference makes it seem like the object looks to be different colors at the two times. On the objectivist's proposal, I am, in both cases, presented with exactly the same features of the object. Merely adding in the specification that I'm aware of those features in different viewing conditions does not account for the phenomenological fact that it is the object itself—the *tomato*—that looks different. What is the connection between being presented with the tomato's redness in fluorescent lighting and the tomato looking purple?

The basic problem faced by the objectivist is that we cannot eliminate any talk of how the tomato *looks* and hope to fully account for the phenomenology of our experience by appeal to the tomato's actual color and a specification of the lighting conditions. The two components—the object's color and the viewing conditions—remain too disjointed from each other to capture the phenomenology of such illusory experiences. There is, in other words, a binding problem: the object's real color and the lighting conditions are not bound together in the way that they need to be in order to explain why it is that the object looks purple. A red tomato in fluorescent light can look purple but a purple eggplant can look exactly the same way in ordinary daylight. If we merely have the three-place analysis offered above, these two cases involve entirely distinct analyses: in the former, the subject is presented with a tomato's redness in fluorescent lighting; in the latter, she is presented with the eggplant's purpleness in ordinary daylight. We lack any explanation of why experiences with entirely different components should nonetheless lead to the subject having qualitatively identical color experiences.

Beck's view made sense of the tomato looking purple by appeal to subjective properties of experiences. But we have already argued that this approach makes it impossible for the character of an object's color or shape to contribute to the character of our experiences. The objectivist approach

we are now looking at accounts for the character of our experience by eliminating appearances altogether, and replacing them with a subject's awareness of an object's color or shape under different viewing conditions. But the problem with this approach is that it fails to explain how the differences in viewing conditions can make the *item presented* look different. It also fails to account for why two experiences that involve the perceiver being aware of different colors in different viewing conditions can nonetheless be phenomenologically identical.

§5. Appearances as Ways Objects Are

We are finally at the point where I can introduce a third option. The view I develop here restores a commitment to *Diaphaneity*—what our experience is like is, on my view, entirely fixed by the items presented—but it also makes sense of how one and the same color or shape can look different in different circumstances. Like Beck, I will introduce a class of appearance properties to explain how one and the same color can appear different ways, but, unlike Beck, I will argue that these appearances are mind-independent properties of objects. Like the objectivist who denies *Diaphaneity*, I will argue that the character of experience is entirely fixed by mind-independent elements, but unlike the objectivist who is committed to experience being a three-place relation, I will argue that appearances can themselves be part of the presented scene. The view is compatible with *Diaphaneity*_D: differences in the character of two experiences will be explained either by a difference in which object is presented or a difference in its presented qualities. But it is not compatible with *Diaphaneity*_L. The view does not require that all differences in character must amount to a difference in the presented color or shape or size of the perceived object, as *Diaphaneity*_L insists. Two experiences can differ in character despite involving the same color, shape and size etc. The differences, in such experiences, will be accounted for by a distinct set of presented elements; that is, a difference in the appearances that I am presented with.

5.1 The Semantics of Looks Statements

Consider the following statements:

1. The couch in the furniture store looks blue.
2. Caesar's Palace in Las Vegas looks ancient.

The above statements are statements concerning the appearances of things. We often speak of how something looks or how something appears in order to assert that we have sensory evidence for a proposition regarding how the object is. I might say that the couch looks blue in order to indicate that

I have visually grounded evidence that the couch is blue. Such uses do not ascribe looks to objects, they ascribe ordinary perceptible qualities to them. “*o* looks *F*”, when used in this epistemic sense, can typically be translated as “it looks as if *o* is *F*.” or “*o* looks to be *F*.” On the epistemic use, the “looks” locution merely serves as a way of describing the kind of evidence one has for the proposition that *o* is *F*.

There are other uses of looks statements that are best understood comparatively. When, for example, I say that Caesar’s Palace in Las Vegas looks ancient, I need not be suggesting that I have visually grounded evidence for the proposition that the building in question is ancient. Assume that its common knowledge that no currently standing buildings in Las Vegas can be traced to antiquity. In stating (2), then, I do not assert that I have evidence of the real age of Caesar’s Palace. Rather, my statement is intended to ascribe a certain way of looking to the building. What I intend to communicate is that Caesar’s Palace looks the way ancient things typically look (even though it is not in fact ancient). Perhaps it has peeling paint; perhaps it has Corinthian columns of the sort that ancient Roman palaces possess. In saying “*o* looks *F*”, I assert that *o* looks the way that things that *are F* typically look. Notice that on such a comparative use, despite it being the case that we are describing how a thing looks, we are not predicating *F*-ness of a look. That is, we are not saying that a way of looking is old. Rather, we are saying that buildings that *are* old look some way and Caesar’s Palace, also, looks *that* way.

Neither the epistemic nor the comparative uses of looks statements force us to introduce any new class of appearance properties, over and above the standard set of sensible qualities. When we use the locution “The couch looks blue” epistemically, the only property that we ascribe to the couch is blueness. When we use “Caesar’s Palace looks old” comparatively, we compare its way of looking to the way that old things look. But how do old things look? One can fully describe their way of looking by describing how old things have peeling paint, washed out colors, columns with certain architectural flourishes and so on. If this is right, then, all that is required for Caesar’s Palace to look the way old things look is for it to instantiate some subset of these familiar qualities. To make sense of comparative uses of looks statements, then, we are not required to introduce any additional appearance properties.

There is a huge philosophical literature on whether there is an additional use of looks statements that cannot be analyzed comparatively or epistemically. Sense-datum theorists like Jackson and Chisholm have tried to argue for a distinctive “phenomenal” use of looks statements, the interpretation of which require us to posit a class of special appearance properties. They then go on to argue that these appearance properties are best thought of as properties of mental entities, i.e. sense-data. In response, philosophers like Mike Martin have argued that we can adequately explain all of the

purported examples of phenomenal uses in comparative terms. The key point that Martin presses is that for there to be a genuinely phenomenal use of looks locutions, we need a class of predicates that can be intelligibly ascribed, not to physical or mental objects, but to looks themselves. Martin suggests that there are such predicates. For example, the statement “The conference meal looks splendid” can have a phenomenal use on which “splendid” is not modifying a meal, but a particular look itself. Looks can themselves be splendid or glittering. “Blue” or “red” or “square” or “round”, however, are not predicates that can sensibly be ascribed to looks. And so the classic examples that Jackson and Chisholm appeal to, involving sentences that contain standard sensible predicates, are not genuine examples of phenomenal uses and are best analyzed comparatively.

In this section, my goal is not to defend one analysis of looks statements over another. Rather, I will argue that introducing a class of objective appearance properties allows us to make sense of a certain class of experiences that all of us have enjoyed; experiences that the alternative views we have considered so far cannot satisfactorily explain. My strategy then is to defend the view that appearances are mind-independent properties of worldly objects that are distinct from the colors and shapes of those objects on philosophical, rather than semantic grounds. It is considerations about the nature of experience that lead to positing such properties, not considerations having to do with how we speak.¹⁷

5.2 The Metaphysics of Appearances

If appearances are a legitimate class of properties, what are they properties of? The natural view is that objects are the primary bearers of appearances. It is the couch that looks blue. Furthermore, it is plausible to think that the couch would look this way even if no one were around to look at it. When you leave the room, the couch doesn’t change in any way. Similarly, it is a fact about Caesar’s Palace that it was built to look old, and, if built successfully, it would have this appearance even if no one were to ever witness its splendor. As Austin points out, “I am not disclosing a fact about myself, but about petrol, when I say that petrol looks like water.” (Austin, 1962, p. 43) Taken at face value, then, how an object looks is a fact about the object that obtains independent of whether anyone is actually perceiving it on any particular occasion.

¹⁷ For a discussion of the semantics looks statements and possible metaphysical implications, see Chisholm (1957); Jackson (1977); Travis (2004); Byrne, (2009); Martin (2010), Brogaard (2018). For a view of objective appearances that is related to the view I develop here, see Schellenberg (2008). Schellenberg is also committed to the existence of situation-dependent objective appearances that are distinct from the colors and shapes of objects. We disagree, however, on how closely these appearances are tied to how things look and the role that our perceptual mechanisms can play in the specification of the relevant situation.

Many have assumed that the only way to treat objects as stable bearers of appearances is to treat appearances as dispositions that objects have to cause certain experiences in us.¹⁸ On such an approach, an object can be disposed to cause an experience in someone even if it is not in fact causing such an experience on a particular occasion. Even when no one is in the living room where the couch is, it can still have the disposition to cause a certain kind of experience. A dispositional view, however, still pegs the appearances that objects have to a set of potential experiences. What it is for an object to have a certain appearance is for it to have the tendency to cause certain experiences in perceivers.

Why have most philosophers assumed that a dispositional view is forced upon us if we want appearances to be properties of objects out there in the world? I think this restriction stems from a picture of the world on which qualitative character is something that can only reside in the mind. On this picture, qualitative character is essentially connected to consciousness and consciousness falls within the purview of minds. Therefore, if there is a link between how things look and qualitative character and if qualitative character can only be a property of conscious minds, then the only way non-minded objects can have appearances is if those appearances are dispositions to cause experiences with qualitative character in perceivers. This approach takes it to be the case that an object can look a certain way only if it can look that way *to a conscious subject*. On this view, objects out there cannot themselves *have* qualitative character; at best, they can have the power to produce qualitatively rich experiences in perceivers.

This picture of the world is not ours. Given that we are only working with relational accounts of phenomenology, we have already rejected the starting assumptions of this picture. Relational views locate the character of an experience partially or entirely on the far end of the conscious relation. What gives our experiences the character that they have is, at least in part, the character of the items presented. On *diaphanous* versions of relational views, the qualitative character of our experiences is *entirely* inherited from the qualitative character of the items perceived. On non-diaphanous versions, it is *partially* inherited from the character of the items perceived. Once we allow for the presented items to include mind-independent objects—as naïve realists do—we consider it possible for those mind-independent objects to have their own qualitative character, even when they are not constituents of a conscious experience. This is the radical reframing that Markus Gabriel and Mark Johnston recommend in their work. We *sample* appearances, we do not *produce* them. Appearances, then, are those qualities that objects possess anyway, in virtue of which those objects can be bearers of

¹⁸ See, for example, Shoemaker (1994).

qualitative character. When we become aware of appearances in perception, our experiences inherit this character from the character of the appearances themselves.

On this alternative view, qualitatively rich appearances are distinct from, but can serve as the grounds for, any dispositions an object may have to produce experiences in us. Why is a red object disposed to produce an experience in us with a particular qualitative character? The view being developed here grounds that disposition in the very qualitative character of the red object's appearance, a property that the red object possesses independent of anyone perceiving it. It is because a red object looks a certain way (in certain lighting conditions) that when I perceive it (in those lighting conditions), I have an experience of a certain kind. The character of my experience is fixed by the character of the appearances I am presented with. Note that on this view, appearances do not occupy some third place in a relation that a perceiver stands in to an object. Rather, these appearances can themselves be the objects of perceptual awareness. I can be presented with the look of an object just as much as I can be presented with its color or its shape. (I will return to how being presented with the former relates to being presented with the latter.)

Unlike color and shape properties, appearances are properties that objects instantiate *relative to* a set of viewing conditions. Given that a blue couch can both look blue in one kind of lighting and look green in a different lighting, appearance properties are distinct from the ordinary sensible qualities that the table has. The couch cannot both *be* blue and green, regardless of lighting, even though it can both look blue and look green in different lighting. The couch instantiates both appearances, but it instantiates each only relatively.¹⁹ Similarly, an object cannot both be round and elliptical (unless of course the object actually undergoes a physical change) but it can both look round and look elliptical relative to different spatial locations.²⁰ Furthermore, objects can share color or shape appearances without sharing a color or shape. A white table and a red table may share the property of looking red so long as they instantiate this property relative to distinct conditions. Similarly, a circular coin and an elliptical disc may share the property of looking oval relative to distinct spatial locations.²¹

¹⁹ On this view, objects will instantiate a potentially infinite number of appearances. This is one point at which Gabriel's permissive attitude to existence is helpful to keep in mind.

²⁰ If we think of higher-level appearances, it may not be evident that "looking antique" or "having the appearance of a Picasso" are relative properties in the way that "looking square" or "looking blue" are. But, higher-level properties of the former kind are ultimately understood in terms of lower-level properties of the latter kind, and therefore inherit their perspectival nature as well.

²¹ Note that appearances being relative or relational is compatible with their categoricity. Categoricity is opposed to dispositionality or hypotheticality, while relationality is opposed to intrinsicity. See Yablo (1992, 1999).

Let us introduce some basic technical vocabulary. When a couch looks blue, let us state that it instantiates a *B*-appearance. A blue couch in normal lighting or a green couch in strange showroom lighting both look blue, and therefore, both instantiate a *B*-appearance. I introduce this vocabulary so that we can become more precise about the relationship between color appearances and colors. On the view being described here, a blue couch can instantiate a number of distinct color appearances, each of which it instantiates relative to a distinct set of environmental conditions. We typically refer to these appearances *indirectly* with the help of our ordinary color vocabulary. An object looks blue, on this view, just in case it instantiates the appearance that blue objects instantiate in standard viewing conditions. This appearance—which we’re calling a *B*-appearance—is tied to blue objects only insofar as blue objects instantiate it in *standard* or *paradigmatic* conditions.²² So, what it is for an object to look blue in a certain set of conditions is for it to instantiate, relative to *those* conditions, the appearance the blue objects instantiate relative to standard conditions. We pick out this way of looking by appeal to objects that are in fact blue, but having picked out the property in this way, we can now ascribe it to objects that are not in fact blue. A green object can possess a *B*-appearance—and thereby look blue—but a green object can instantiate a *B*-appearance only in non-standard conditions. Our looks *statements* make use of ordinary color vocabulary because we do not have a rich, autonomous vocabulary of terms that specify appearances themselves. We therefore rely on an object’s non-relative sensible qualities to obliquely pick out appearances, but the appearances that we pick out are not to be identified with the colors themselves.²³

What this reveals is that colors are *definitionally* prior to color appearances—that is, we define color appearances by way of the colors. We define “looking blue” as “looking the way *blue* things look in normal conditions”. But this definitional priority need not imply a metaphysical priority. One can still

²² There are of course several challenges that arise when specifying what standard conditions should include, and much more work needs to be done here. These challenges are not unique to the view of appearances I develop here, but are faced by any view that appeals to normal or standard conditions. A couple of points of clarification are in order. What standard conditions are will depend on the appearance property in question. Standard conditions for color appearances may involve illumination conditions and background colors, while standard conditions for shape appearances may involve viewing angles and spatial locations. Also, the specification of conditions may indeed include a specification of a set of “standard” perceptual mechanisms as well. This will allow us to say that red objects instantiate a red appearance relative to the standard set of human perceptual mechanisms; but they may instantiate a different appearance relative to a distinct set of perceptual mechanisms. This does not convert appearance properties into subjectivist properties à la Beck, because the relevant perceptual mechanisms can be specified in fully objective, third-personal language.

²³ In terms of the strategies discussed in §5.1, I endorse a comparative analysis of looks statements but argue that ways of looking pick out appearance properties, not some set of sensible qualities that we are already familiar with.

ask what the metaphysical relationship is between looking blue and being blue or between looking square and being square. The answer to this question may indeed vary for the different pairs of sensible appearances and sensible qualities, and giving a full and systematic analysis of this relationship lies outside the scope of this paper. In the case of colors, specifically, I favor a view on which color appearances are metaphysically prior to the colors themselves. What it is for an object to *be* blue, on this proposal, just is for it to instantiate a *B*-appearance in standard viewing conditions. Objects can instantiate a *B*-appearance without being blue but an object cannot be blue without instantiating a *B*-appearance (in the right conditions).²⁴ While blueness is not part of the essence of a *B*-appearance, a *B*-appearance is part of the essence of blueness and so the appearance property is metaphysically prior to the color. That being said, it should be clear that an object that is not blue can instantiate a *B*-appearance in a certain set of illumination conditions; it just cannot do so in standard viewing conditions.²⁵

This view puts forth appearances as the ultimate bearers of qualitative character. Insofar as the essence of a color is defined in terms of color appearances—insofar as a blue object must instantiate a *B*-appearance in standard conditions—colors are essentially qualitative properties as well. But the nature of a color is not *exhausted* by its qualitative character. That is, there is more to being blue than instantiating a *B*-appearance. Being blue is a matter of having a *B*-appearance *in* standard conditions. One is not, therefore, acquainted with the complete essence of blueness just in virtue of being acquainted with a *B*-appearance. Experiencing a green couch in showroom lighting, for instance, does not fully acquaint one with the essence of blueness. It does acquaint the perceiver with *the qualitative character of blueness*—and this is a crucial aspect of the essence of blueness—but in order to fully grasp

²⁴ Given the fact that viewing conditions can include a reference to human perceptual mechanisms, this view turns colors into properties that are in some way dependent on humans. On this view, an object counts as blue only if it instantiates a blue appearance relative to human perceptual systems. Why are our arbitrary perceptual mechanisms privileged in this way? One way to understand this approach is to think of the colors as only one of many possible sets of chromatic properties that objects instantiate. Colors are the properties *we* care about. Aliens may care about a different set of chromatic properties whose essences are defined in terms of the appearances that objects instantiate relative to a very different set of “standard conditions”.

²⁵ This approach links the property of blueness with the appearance that blue objects possess in one set of viewing conditions. On an alternative approach, one could define blueness as the property of instantiating the entire range of appearances that blue objects instantiate in a variety of illumination conditions. Both views posit an essential, asymmetric link between colors and their appearances but they disagree about whether it is essential to an object being blue that it look a certain way in non-paradigmatic viewing conditions. If we encountered an object that looked just the way blue objects look in ordinary viewing conditions but then looked quite different from the typical blue object in non-paradigmatic viewing conditions, would we think of this object as blue? In this paper, I develop the view that results from a positive answer to this question. But an alternative approach would be to consider the implications of saying no.

the nature of blueness, I need to grasp that an object is blue only if it instantiates a *B*-appearance in a particular set of viewing conditions.

How does this framework handle the cases we discussed in the previous sections? Take the case in which a perceiver views a tomato, first in daylight and then in showroom lighting. The stark difference in illumination conditions makes the tomato look quite different to her on those two occasions. While it originally looked bright red, it now looks purplish. We know that there is no difference in the color of the tomato and so we cannot appeal to a difference in the standard set of presented sensible qualities to explain the difference in the character of these two experiences. We have also seen that describing the subject's experience in terms of an awareness of redness at daylight and redness in showroom lighting does not explain why it is the case that the *tomato* looks different to her; that is, why *it* first looks red and then purple. Nor does it explain why a tomato in showroom lighting can look just like purple eggplant in normal lighting. Now that we have the notion of objective appearances at our disposal, however, we can argue that in the two sets of illumination conditions, the object instantiates two distinct appearances. Relative to daylight, the tomato instantiates an *R*-appearance, but relative to the conditions present in the showroom, the tomato instantiates a *P*-appearance. So, there *is* a difference in the objects of awareness during the two experiences. In the first experience, I am presented with an *R*-appearance; in the latter, I am presented with a *P*-appearance. This strategy is compatible with *Diaphaneity*_D because the difference in character is explained by a difference in the presented elements.

When a red object looks purple to a perceiver, what can we say about which items the perceiver is presented with and how these items fix the character of her experience? Remember, in order to be presented with an item, that item must contribute to the phenomenal character of the experience in some manner. We have already argued that particular objects contribute to the character of an experience by fixing which particular object the subject is aware of. But what role do presented qualities play in fixing the character of experience? This was the point at which our alternative views floundered. Beck's view failed to give an object's qualities any thick role to play in fixing the character of experience. While his view could allow that the object's color fixes which particular *instance* the subject is aware, the object's color does not play any role in fixing how the object looks to the perceiver. That job is entirely done by the properties of the subject's mind. Relatedly, on the view on which experience involves a three-place relation between a perceiver, an object's color and shape and a set of viewing conditions, we lack a substantive explanation of why a red object in showroom lighting makes the *object* look purple.

On the view offered here, in contrast, a perceiver is typically presented with particular objects and those objects' qualities. Crucially, the perceiver is always presented with appearance properties, which are themselves qualitatively rich properties that objects instantiate relative to a set of viewing conditions. These appearances contribute to the character of experience in virtue of having a qualitative character that the experience directly inherits. An experience of a *B*-appearance involves my being presented with a *B*-appearance. What it is like to be presented with a *B*-appearance is wholly inherited from what a *B*-appearance is itself like.

What about the color of an object? Can *it* still count as part of the presented scene? The answer depends on the case under consideration. Consider an unimpeachable veridical experience of a blue couch – you look at it in daylight and it looks blue. Insofar as you are presented with the couch's *B*-appearance, you are presented with the qualitative character of blueness. Given that the couch is actually blue—that is, given that the couch instantiates a *B*-appearance in standard viewing conditions—being presented with the qualitative character of blueness is a way for the couch's blueness to contribute to the character of your experience. Therefore, you can be said to be presented with an object's color when the qualitative character you are presented with just is the qualitative character of the object's color. But consider a case in which a blue couch looks green. In this case, you are presented with a different appearance—a *G*-appearance. Being presented with a *G*-appearance is not being presented with the qualitative character of blueness. Rather, it amounts to being presented with the qualitative character that is part of the essence of a different color property—greenness. Being presented with a *G*-appearance, then, is not a way for the qualitative character of the couch's color to contribute to the character of my experience. In such an experience, then, the couch's color is not presented to me.²⁶

²⁶ What about the case we discussed in §4 where we perceive a tomato in different lighting conditions, and despite a difference in our experience, the tomato itself continues to look red? How does my view handle such cases? Here, I want to appeal to the fact that our language is far less rich than the rich content of our experiences. Redness as a property is a determinable that covers a range of determinate shades. This is true for all of our color terms, even those that are more determinate than “red”. I want to suggest that we can be presented with the qualitative character of *redness* just so long as we are presented with the qualitative character of any of the determinate shades of redness. (Similarly, we can be presented with the qualitative character of scarlet just so long as we are presented with the qualitative character of any of the more determinate shades of scarlet.) When the lighting conditions influence our experience so as to make it the case that we are presented with different determinate shades of the same determinable, we can still be said to be presented with the qualitative character that corresponds to the determinable. But if we are presented with a shade that is not a determinate of a determinable, we cannot be said to be presented with the determinable.

The fact that the couch's blueness is not presented to a perceiver when the couch looks green does not mean that the perceiver cannot be said to know, on the basis of her experience, that the couch is blue. Perhaps she works in the showroom that has this unusual lighting and so, she is constantly exposed to blue furniture looking this way. She could come to know, just on the basis of being presented with a *G*-appearance, then, that the couch is blue. This might even become an entirely non-inferential process for her; we might even be willing to say that she perceives the couch's blueness. But, I want to insist, that none of these facts warrants the further claim that she is presented with the couch's blueness, in the relevant sense of presentation under consideration here. In order to be presented with the couch's blueness, the qualitative character of blueness must be presented to you. When a blue couch looks green, this character is *not* presented to you.

§6. Conclusion

I have argued for a view on which experience involves a two-place relation between a perceiver and a presented scene. Crucially, I have suggested that for an element to be part of the presented scene, it must contribute to the phenomenal character of one's experience. Concrete particulars contribute to phenomenal character by determining *which* particular my experience is an experience of. Qualities, on the other hand, contribute to the phenomenal character in a thicker way. For an object's color or shape to be presented to you, the qualitative character of that color or shape must be presented to you.

In order to make room for this possibility while also accommodating the whole set of experiences in which one and the same colored object can look different to a perceiver, I introduced a class of mind-independent appearance properties that objects instantiate relative to a set of environmental conditions. A blue object can instantiate any number of appearances relative to different illumination conditions. This accommodates the obvious fact that blue objects do not always have to look blue. In harsh storeroom lighting, a blue object can instantiate a *G*-appearance and thereby look green. What I have insisted on, however, is that there is a particular appearance that blue objects must instantiate in standard conditions. That blue objects instantiate this appearance in standard conditions is essential to what it is for them to *be* blue. This leads to my further claim that we only count as being presented with an object's blueness if we are presented with the particular appearance that blue objects instantiate in standard viewing conditions. If we are presented with a different appearance—a *G*-appearance, say—then, even though we may know that this is how blue objects look in storeroom lighting and even if we can know this non-inferentially, we are not in fact presented with the object's blueness.

The goal of the paper was to see whether we could make sense of the full range of perceptual experiences without giving up *Diaphaneity*. In particular, could we make sense of the intuitive observation that one and the same color or shape can be presented in different ways, without giving up the view that experience involves a two-place relation between a perceiver and a presented scene? I have argued that a view that respects *Diaphaneity* is in the best position to account for this possibility while still giving worldly objects and their qualities the right role to play in fixing the phenomenology of experience. The key move a proponent of *Diaphaneity* must make to defend this claim is to introduce appearances as properties of objects that can themselves serve as the objects of perceptual awareness. What is distinctive to their nature as *appearances* is that they are properties that have their own qualitative character; properties that can, therefore, serve as the source of the qualitative character of our experiences. It is in virtue of the connection between these appearances and the nature of color and shape properties that the latter are also able to contribute to the character of our experiences as well. While more needs to be said about how exactly to understand the link between appearances and the traditional set of sensible qualities, I hope to have provided a preliminary illustration of Gabriel's tantalizing claim that appearances just are "ways things are in themselves", and to have demonstrated the explanatory potential of taking his idea seriously.

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