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DEFENDING (PERCEPTUAL) ATTITUDES

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ABSTRACT

In this paper, I defend a tripartite metaphysics of intentional mental states, according to which mental states are divided into subject, content, and attitude, against recent attempts at eliminating the attitude component (e.g., Montague, Oxford studies in philosophy of mind, 2022, 2, Oxford University Press). I suggest that a metaphysics composed of only subject and content cannot account for (a) multisensory perceptual experiences and (b) phenomenological differences between episodes of perception and imagination. Finally, I suggest that some of the motivations behind the rejection of the attitude component can be accommodated within the tripartite framework.

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1. Introduction

We commonly say things like Mary believes that Santa Claus wears red pants, Donald thinks he won the elections, and the dog believes that the cat is on the tree. We can identify three components of these standard intentional mental state ascriptions: the subject (Mary), the attitude (of belief) that they entertain towards the content, and the content that they believe (that Santa Claus wears red pants). For the sake of simplicity, I will refer to the content as the part of intentional attitude ascriptions usually (but not exclusively) introduced by the that-clause, and to the attitude as what makes a mental state the kind of state it is, for example, a belief rather than a desire.

Standard intentional mental state ascriptions thus suggest the following, tripartite, metaphysics:

> *Tripartite View*: for any intentional mental state M, the logical form of M is Rab, where R is the attitude, a is the subject, and b is the content.

In this paper, I am going to defend the Tripartite View against views that propose the elimination of the attitude component from the metaphysical structure of intentional mental states. These views support the following simplified metaphysics:

> *Dual view*[1]: for any intentional mental state M, the logical form of M is ab, where b is the content and a is the subject.

Against the Dual View, I will defend the claim that attitudes are a fundamental psychological and theoretical element of intentional mental states that cannot be reduced to the content of the state. In Sections 2 and 3, I will present the characteristics of the Tripartite and the Dual View in detail. I will then argue for my claim in two steps. First, I will show that the Dual View cannot address cases of multimodally integrated perception (Sections 4 and 5), nor can it properly distinguish between episodes of perception and imagination directed at the same content (Section 6). During this discussion, I will restrict my attention to the case of perceptual attitudes for the sake of brevity and focus; a thorough discussion of the Dual View for cognitive states would deserve a separate paper, but I will extend my objections to the cognitive domain whenever I see fit. Second, in Section 7, I will suggest that some of the motivations behind the rejection of the attitude component can be accommodated within the tripartite framework.

2. Tripartite versus dual views

On the Tripartite View, the following is true:

> Separateness: the attitude and the content of a mental state are two distinct and independent metaphysical kinds
>
> (Montague, 2022, p. 270).

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There are several versions of the Tripartite View, but the most prominent is certainly the Fregean picture of intentionality. The Fregean picture is one of the traditional motivations for the standard view of the nature of intentional mental attitudes. On this view, attitudes are relations between subjects and intrinsically representational abstract entities (Frege, 1956). These entities are typically taken to be propositions, which are essentially representational qua primary bearers of truth values.[2] This picture is likely the source of Separateness in the analytic tradition about the mind, and it thus deserves a closer look. However, this does not mean that there are no other reasons to hold the metaphysical independence of attitude and content of mental states, as we are going to see in this section.

The Fregean picture is a relational view of intentionality, according to which mental states do not intrinsically represent but represent in virtue of bearing a certain relation to items that exist independently of this relation (Mendelovici, 2018, p. 196). The Fregean picture thus accepts the following thesis about the nature of intentional mental states:

> *Abstract*: mental states acquire their intentional character in virtue of being related to some abstract, intrinsically representational content (typically, propositions) that exists independently of this relation

Within the Fregean picture, this thesis motivates a sharp distinction between the content of the mental state so identified, and the attitude that is directed at it (Frege, 1956, 1979; Hanks, 2007). The story is well-known: Fregean senses, which exist in the realm of abstract entities, are put into relation with states of the subject via an act of "apprehension" or "grasping" of the sense. Notice that this act of apprehension is not inherently intentional.[3] As McIntyre writes, "a thought or sense remains just as 'external' to an act of apprehending it as a physical object does to an act of perceiving it" (1987, p. 531). That Frege did not think of grasping/apprehending as an intrinsically contentful act is clear in the following passage:

> The expression 'apprehend' is as metaphorical as content of consciousness' [...]. What I hold in my hand can certainly be regarded as the content of my hand but is all the same the content of my hand in a quite different way from the bones and muscles of which it is made and their tensions, and is much more extraneous to it than they are
>
> (1956, p. 530, footnote 7).

Fregean senses are as extraneous to the subject's apprehending it as physical objects are extraneous to the act of perceiving them. It is also worth remembering that Frege locates the sense and the subject's act of grasping it onto two sharply distinct ontological plans, that is, that of the objective and that of the subjective:

> The apprehension of a thought presupposes someone who apprehends it, who thinks. He is the bearer of the thinking but not of the thought. Although the thought does not belong to the contents of the thinker's consciousness yet something in his consciousness must be aimed at the thought. But this should not be confused with the thought itself.
>
> (Frege, 1956, p. 307)

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In contemporary terminology, one might rephrase Frege's point by saying that the attitude (the act of grasping the content) is not part of the content (the sense). This is the thesis I have called Separateness, and is one of the core tenets of Fregean anti-psychologism (see also Kusch, 1995, 2020, sec. 4; McIntyre, 1987; Rowlands, 2015). As mentioned in passing, Separateness can also be independently motivated by other relational views about the source of intentionality and the nature of intentional content. For instance, if one takes contents to be worldly objects, content and attitude will both be concrete but nonetheless separate, for one is a public, physical object, and the other a private, subjective item.

As acknowledged even by its critics (King et al., 2014, Chapter 1; Montague, 2022), the Tripartite View seems to easily accommodate several important features of intentional mental state ascriptions. Here is a non-exhaustive list. First, attitude and content seem to be independent and recombinable elements of intentional attitude ascriptions (e.g., thinking that p, thinking that q, desiring that p...). Russell, for instance, was a famous advocate of this view (see also Perry, 1994):

> What is believed [...] I shall call the "content" of the belief. [...] We must distinguish between believing and what is believed. I may believe that Columbus crossed the Atlantic, that all Cretans are liars, that two and two are four, or that nine times six is fifty-six; in all these cases the believing is just the same, and only the contents believed are different.
>
> (1921, pp. 232–234)

Second, the Tripartite view accommodates valid inferences of the sort that if Mary believes P and Adam believes P, then there is something that they both believe. This inference is valid also across different attitudes: if Mary believes P and Adam desires P, then Mary believes exactly what Adam desires, namely P. Third, different attitude types have distinct functional profiles, so that the difference between believing P and desiring P can be cashed out in terms of how each state acts within the system (e.g., "belief" and "desire" boxes). Fourth, different intentional attitudes appear to have different "directions of fit," depending on their "conditions of satisfaction," that is, conditions that such-and-such is the case (Searle, 1983); propositions thus provide the means to evaluate different attitudes.

One way to challenge Separateness is by rejecting Frege's distinction between the content and force of an assertion. Content and force are clearly separated in Frege's philosophy of language, in that

> [...] the propositional contents of speech acts are supposed to be bare, forceless representations that are put forward in different ways in different speech acts. The force of a speech act is the way in which a proposition is put forward.
>
> (Hanks, 2007, p. 142)[4]

Act-theorists offer instead a unified view, in which the force of a speech act or a mental state "corresponds to the way in which a subject has combined together objects, properties or relations" (Hanks, 2007, p. 152; see also Hanks, 2011; Soames, 2013, 2019; Davis, 2021). States with assertive force thus involve a subject applying a property or relation to some objects; states with interrogative force involve a subject asking whether a property or relation holds of some objects; states with

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imperative force involve a subject wanting to bring about that a property or relation holds of some object. As a result of this view, the act-theory rejects the Platonic view of propositions as abstract entities that have representational powers independently of the subjects that represent them. The order of representation is, so to say, inverted. Propositions are acts or states of thinking beings, such as the act of asserting that F is a (Davis, 2021, p. 67). Mental states do not gain their representational power through being directed at propositions; rather, propositions inherit their representational features from being types of concrete tokens of mental actions performed by subjects.

As we can see from the example of the act-theory of propositions, challenging Separateness forces us to rethink the role of attitudes and contents, thereby abandoning Abstract. This strategy can also run backward, that is, from the rejection of Abstract to the rejection of Separateness. This kind of strategy, I believe, is at play in Montague's recent defense of the Dual View (2022). Like the act-theorist, Montague endorses the claim that a state is intentional not in virtue of being related to some abstract content, but at least partly in virtue of some intrinsic properties of the subject. To be more precise, Montague holds the Phenomenal Intentionality Thesis (PIT), that is, the claim that phenomenal consciousness grounds a basic, narrow, kind of intentionality, that is, phenomenal intentionality.[5] While it is true that they can fulfill more than one role, attitudes are often essentially defined in relational terms; one might then wonder what role is left for them to fulfill, if not that of relating the subject with some independent content. Montague's answer is: none. Attitudes are redundant: "In being in an intentional state the subject is simply in a complex contentful state rather than being related to something else, a content" (2022, p. 272).

I shall now move to discuss versions of the Dual View concerning perceptual states more in detail.

3. The dual view for perceptual states

> The phenomenal difference between seeing an aeroplane overhead and hearing one is partly a matter of the content—what is experienced—but also a matter of the mode of apprehending this content, the intentional mode in Searle's[6] sense.
>
> (Crane, 2003, p. 51; orig. emph.)

Crane's quote is an example of how the Tripartite View can account for phenomenal differences between sensory modalities. Crane is a self-acclaimed strong intentionalist: he holds that all phenomenal differences between states are differences in representational features; strong intentionalism contrasts with weak intentionalism, according to which not all phenomenal differences between states are accounted for by representational differences (see Block, 1996). According to Crane's view, these differences are the result of two representational components of the state: the content and the mode. The content is "what one puts into words, if one has words into which to put it." The mode is what relates[7] the subject to the content and makes a state the kind of state it is (see also Chalmers, 2004). This relational structure serves to accommodate the

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phenomenon described in the quote, namely that the same content can be presented under various modes, as well as different contents under the same mode. This version of representationalism is also known as intramodal representationalism.[8]

According to intramodal representationalism, the phenomenal character of perception is fixed by two representational components of the state: the mode and the content. A supporter of the Dual View would disagree: all differences between conscious perceptual states can be fully explained in terms of differences between the respective representational contents. I distinguish between two versions of this thesis, a representationalist and a nonrepresentationalist one. The representationalist version holds that sensory phenomenal properties supervene or are identical to properties of the content of the mental state; vice versa, the non-representationalist version holds that the content of the state is determined by sensory phenomenal properties.

The representationalist version of the Dual View corresponds to what Byrne (2001) calls intermodal representationalism. The view has it that for each sensory modality there is a type of content such that if the experience represents it, then the experience is ipso facto in the relevant modality. For instance, an experience involving colors is ipso facto a visual experience; and an experience involving sounds is ipso facto an auditory experience. Dretske (1996) and Tye (1995, 2000) are intmodal representationalists; see also Bourget (2017a) for a recent argument in favor of the view.

A non-representationalist variant of the Dual View has been recently put forward by Montague (2022). This is in fact a phenomenal intentionalist variant, according to which to undergo a given perceptual experience of type T is to experience a certain type of phenomenology T that determines its T-type intentional content; these two elements alone exhaust any phenomenal differences between perceptual experiences of different types (p. 278). To give an example, "the most one could mean by 'visual attitude' [...] is that all visual experiences share a certain kind of distinctive phenomenology, for example what it's like to see colour/shape" (p. 279). Likewise, all there is to auditory experiences is that they all share the same distinctive kind of phenomenology, that is, auditory phenomenology. Hence, the difference between visual and auditory experiences is exhausted by their instantiating different phenomenological types which in turn determine different intentional contents; attitudes are simply redundant. Here are some examples of perceptual states rewritten to fit the Dual View's ab (where a is the subject and b the content) structure:

1. A visual experience of a red round ball à red–round–object a.
2. An auditory experience of quiet clarinet middle C à middle C–clarinetish–quiet a.
3. A tactile experience of a smooth round rock or ball à smooth-feeling–round-feeling–object a. (p. 277)

In what follows, I will mostly focus on the phenomenal intentionalist version of the Dual View, as this is a novelty in the philosophical debate. Notice that it is crucial for this type of Dual View, as for any view of this sort, that one can successfully accommodate all the relevant differences between different experiences in the content alone. This task looks particularly difficult in two cases: (a) multimodally integrated perception, where the very same property is apparently perceived in

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different ways; (b) differences between attitudes whose phenomenology is quite similar, as for instance imagination and perception. I shall discuss each case separately.

4. First objection

It is usually argued that intramodal representationalism is better equipped to deal with cases of the same object being perceived in different sensory modalities, such as seeing and hearing an airplane overhead (see Section 3). My first argument against the phenomenal intentionalist version of the Dual View proceeds along the same lines: I will argue that the view cannot deal with multimodally integrated experiences, such as that of seeing a red ball while also toying with it.

These experiences should be distinguished from non-integrated multimodal experiences such as hearing someone bouncing a ball on the concrete while holding a toy ball in your hands. In this case, we can isolate two components of your overall sensory experience: an auditory experience (of a ball bouncing on the concrete) and a tactile experience (of holding a toy ball in your hands). The two experiences are different constituents of your total sensory experience at a given moment. In the original case, by contrast, you are looking at your hands that hold the ball. In this case too we can discern at least two components of your total sensory experience: a visual component (of seeing the ball) and a tactile component (of holding the ball in your hands). However, there seems to be a substantial difference in the way the components of your experience are related in the two cases. While in the first case the two components "are not integrated in any substantial sense" and merely "co-exist as part of your total experience," in the second case they are so to say "bound together" (Brogaard & Chudnoff, 2018, p. 322).

O'Callaghan (2012) argues that the overall phenomenology of the subject in the two scenarios reflects this difference. In the first case, the phenomenology that results from binding the two separate experiences can be fully accounted for by appealing to the phenomenology of the individual sensory modalities, that is, auditory and tactile. In the second case, the overall phenomenology reflects the fact that the two experiences are bound together beyond mere co-consciousness, as presenting multiple aspects of the same thing.

It is this type of experience that I believe the phenomenal intentionalist version of the Dual View cannot properly account for.

According to the phenomenal intentionalist version of the Dual View, V- and T-roundness are determined by the instantiation of two different phenomenal types. In (V), the phenomenal content round tokens a visual-type phenomenology. In (T), the phenomenal content round tokens a tactile-type phenomenology. At the same time, the subject undergoing the multimodally integrated experience of the ball is aware of V- and T-roundness as instances of the same property, that is, roundness. The question that I want to raise is how one could recover the representational commonality between (V) and (T), namely the fact that in both cases one is presented with two instances of the same property (that of being round). For if phenomenology determines content, and

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(V) and (T) are experiences of different phenomenal types, then V- and T-roundness are different types of representational properties. At first glance, it seems that V- and T-roundness, on the Dual View, should have nothing in common—no more than instances of redness and warmth, or beliefs and desires, have.

Montague seems to be accepting this conclusion, as she writes that it is a "plausible" result that experiences of the same object in different sensory modalities "cannot have exactly the same (total) content" (2022, p. 280). The reason why she does not take it to be a serious issue is that she allows for the modality-independent property of roundness to be "also" attributed to the ball within the same intentional content:

> one can perfectly well allow that the modality-independent property of roundness is also attributed to the ball; that it's also part of the intentional content of the experiences in question. This is completely compatible with the existence of the modality-specific intentional content. When congenitally blind A feels and congenitally "tactless"/"feelingless" B sees the ball, both attribute the same geometrical property.
>
> (2022, p. 280)

However, it is not clear how this suggestion is to be implemented. In particular, it is not clear whether the geometrical, modality-independent property of roundness is perceived as belonging to the ball or judged to be so. I will address the first case in the rest of this section and the second in the next section.

In order to assess the first case, we should first ask what it means to perceive modality-independent properties. One idea is that the relevant recognitional concept (ROUND) is activated and thus deployed in feeling/seeing the ball. Given that Montague is committed to the view that cognitive phenomenology is the phenomenology of deploying concepts (as she clarifies in her 2023; for an introduction to cognitive phenomenology, see Bayne and Montague 2011), the suggestion is that in feeling/seeing the ball, the subject's state instantiates some sensory phenomenal property associated with the sensory apprehension of the ball's roundness plus some cognitive phenomenal property associated with the deployment of the geometrical concept ROUND.

However, this suggestion is implausible on several grounds. First, it does not seem to us, phenomenologically, that when we see and touch a round object, we perceive modality-dependent roundness and, in addition, modalityindependent roundness. It also does not seem a parsimonious and efficient way of perceptually experiencing the world around us to represent each property twice. Second, the solution seems committed to the fact that one cannot retrieve the common content of different perceptions if they do not possess the concept for that property. This move seems to unnecessarily complicate and intellectualize the contents of experience. Third, and most importantly, the proposed solution does not address the problem in the right way. The issue was that it seems to us that the very same property we can see we can also touch, and vice versa. But the proposed solution introduces a new property, commonly represented in a neutral way in both experiences, alongside the old property, for which the problem arose.

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To sum up, it is simply not clear what the relation between old V- and T-roundness and the new modalityindependent roundness is, and thus how the addition of this modality-independent content is supposed to solve our initial problem. If, on the other hand, the geometrical property is judged to belong to the ball, then the act of recovering the common property between (V) and (T) is inferential. I will address this move in the following section.

5. Reply to the first objection: abstraction

A possible defense of the phenomenal intentionalist version of the Dual View is to argue that the tactile experience and the visual experience of the ball determine different types of content whose "common factor" can be recovered via inference or association. This move acknowledges the incommensurability of different types of contents in virtue of their respective sensory phenomenology; V-roundness and T-roundness are in some substantial sense not alike. At the same time, it also explains how, when touching and seeing a ball, one seems to be presented with the very same property, and does so by postulating a successive identity judgment based on the distinct perceptual experiences of V- and T-roundness.

This suggestion is not off-track. Montague does resort to abstraction to dissolve the problem of cognitive attitudes that seemingly have the same content, such as the desire and the belief that it snows now. As for the case of perception, the Dual View will succeed if differences between cognitive attitudes can be explained as differences between contents. She proposes that "once the full intentional content of beliefs and desires is explicitly and fully spelt out," it will be shown that beliefs, desires, and other basic attitudes "can't in fact have exactly the same content" (p. 268). For instance, suppose that belief essentially amounts to accepting that things are in a certain way, that is, that one or more properties or relations are instantiated by one or more items; the belief that it's now snowing will be thus specified:

> For example, a subject who believes it's now snowing takes it that the property of falling snow is now instantiated. Since beliefs require the possession and deployment of concepts, in having this belief, the subject deploys the concept SNOW, the concept FALLING, the concept NOW, and the concept INSTANTIATION
>
> Substituting into the general form Ca:
>
> [4] SNOW-FALLING-NOW-INSTANTIATION α.
>
> (pp. 281, 282).

If we suppose that desires essentially involve "pro-attitudes" toward the possible instantiation of a certain property or properties, a full specification of their content will involve a commitment to the goodness of such possibility; for instance, the content of the desire that it snows now will be SNOWFALLING-NOW-GOOD a (p. 283). Through this kind of analysis, any similarity in content between states of different kinds is revealed to be only superficial.

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There is however room for some bridging, as "this is not to say that we can't recover (by 'abstraction') common 'factors' among the contents" (p. 286). She moreover speculates that this sort of abstraction gives us a clue as to how the content/attitude distinction came about in our Folk Psychology. As it is plausible to suppose that the best candidates for the highest genera of mental states are things like states with instantiation-content, with goodnesscontent, and so on, "one might then come up with names for these types of content; that clauses may then be used to further specify which particular mental state we wish to talk about" (p. 287).

I will argue against the objection from abstraction in two steps. First, I will show why recovering the common content between the two different experiences is problematic by discussing a similar case made by Evans about Molyneaux's problem. Second, I will argue that the inferential model suggested by the objection does not sit well with our phenomenological and scientific evidence of multimodally integrated experiences.

Let us start with Leibniz's and Thompson's responses to Molyneux's question as discussed by Evans (1985). Molyneux famously questioned Locke about the following problem: whether a man born blind, whose sight is restored, would be able to recognize a sphere from a cube placed before him before touching it. Thompson (1974) replies that the blind man would be able to "work out which visual shape corresponds to which tactile shape, on the assumption that he knows that some such correspondence exists" (Evans, 1985, p. 378; orig. emph.). Similarly, Leibniz maintains that the man can realize that the pointy shape must "fit" his tactile concept of a square better than the sphere (Evans, 1985, pp. 379, 380). Evans points out that Thompson and Leibniz add an extra condition to Molyneux's original puzzle that invalidates their answers. The original puzzle asked whether the formerly blind man, confronted with a visual instance of his already existing tactile concept of a cube, would be disposed to apply it "without any additional information or instruction at all" (pp. 378, 379). But Thompson and Leibniz add the condition that the formerly blind man knows that there is a correspondence between his antecedently existing tactile concept of a cube and some visual content. According to Evans, this addition leads to the conclusion that

> [...] the one [the tactile cube] represents the other [the visible cube], rather than being both instances of a common concept. It remains the case, that is, that there is an intelligible and separable [my emph.] conceptual capacity whose range is restricted to the set of tactually perceived squares.
>
> (p. 380)

More precisely, Evans's point is that according to Leibniz and Thompson there is no unitary concept of a square that applies to both the tactile and the visual experience of squareness. Rather, there are "two genuine, i.e. simultaneous, concepts of a square" that "apply to arrangements of simultaneously existing objects" and "rest upon two separable and conceptually unconnected abilities"—like "two genuine concepts of between, straight line, etc. each set of concepts generating its own geometry" (p. 374). In this sense, the tactile and the visible cube are not instances of a common concept, but two different concepts between which the subject institutes a representational, that is, indirect, relation.[9]

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By contrast, Evan's position is that there is one unitary concept of squareness that is represented once haptically and once visually. If the blind man genuinely possesses the concept of roundness and successfully applies it to his tactile experience, then if presented with something that falls under the same concept (and has a visual experience of the same character that leads the normally sighted person to apply the term),[10] he will be disposed to apply the term in the new case. To strengthen this point, Evans develops the following alternative version of Molyneux's problem. A man born deaf is taught to apply the concepts of "continuous" and "pulsating" via stimulations on his skin; when he gains his hearing, he is asked to apply these concepts to a continuous and a pulsating tone. Few people, writes Evans, would doubt that he would immediately be able to do this; and if the man failed to do so, we would question his understanding of those concepts (pp. 371, 372). However, Evans later acknowledges that his deaf man case is not like Molyneux's case in all respects. The properties "continuous" and "pulsating" in fact apply to the experiences themselves, and not to their representational content, as is the case with experiences of spheres and cubes. The deaf man case and the red ball case thus do not quite align. However, although the ball case is, like Molyneux's, about the representational content of two different sensory modalities, my position is that our knowledge of the identity of the two properties is more accurately represented by the deaf man case.

To elaborate on this point, my claim is that Montague's position is closer to Leibniz's and Thompson's replies to Molyneux than Evans's, and thus suffers from the same problem. There are obvious differences: while Evans talks about two different concepts being represented by the two experiences, the phenomenal intentionalist version of the Dual View claims that the experience of touching and seeing a ball involves two distinct tokens of two distinct phenomenal types that determine two different representational types. But the gist is the same: what is the relation between these two phenomenal types? And how can the subject recover anything in common between them?

One idea is that one way in which the subject can tell that they are dealing with the same property in seeing and feeling roundness is constant association of these two experiences.[11] One would then judge on this basis that one is dealing with the same underlying structure (which need not be phenomenally present to you as such).

Against this objection, we should first point out that it does not seem to us as if we are moving from the experience of two different properties to a judgment, based on the experience, that we are dealing with the same property. It doesn't seem to us that there is an intermediate step that leads us to a different mental state about the identity; the awareness of the identity between the two properties comes to us directly and immediately. That is, there is no "phenomenology of indirectness," which seems to be present, by contrast, in cases like seeing that is cold outside, where the cold is not literally "seen," but learnt on the basis of a visual experience (Budek & Farkas, 2014, p. 363). Based on this phenomenological observation, one might conclude that the inference or association in question must be unconscious. In this case, we should ask whether the judgment follows or precedes the conscious experience of the two properties. But if the judgment were to follow, the awareness of the identity between the two properties would also follow the experience; and I have claimed that we do not seem to be aware of it in the way are aware that is cold outside.

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Furthermore, if V- and T-roundness were judged to be identical post experience, the experience in question would not be integrated as it is, but would rather resemble the experience of hearing someone bouncing a ball outside while holding one in one's hands. Because we do not know exactly when conscious experience emerges in the brain, we do not know exactly how much work is done by the perceptual and by later systems that contribute to our experience of the world as we know it; but some work is surely done, and so some inferences, such as the ones that determine ambiguous stimuli, precede the experience itself (see Budek & Farkas, 2014, pp. 363, 364). My claim here is that if there is an inferential judgment as to the identity of V- and T-roundness, this is likely to precede the experience for the reasons just discussed. And this would give rise to an experience in which the identity between the two types of properties is already given, contra the Dual View.

To sum up, if the Dual View is correct, we can never experience V-roundness and T-roundness directly as the same property; this is the consequence of postulating that the contents of different sensory modalities are incommensurable. My claim is that we do not have to recover any common factor between seeing and touching a sphere: the sameness is immediately, non-inferentially given to us. Rather, I have claimed that the judgment based on the constant association between the two properties need not proceed from the experience to another state (the judgment) that follows the experience, but might precede the experience. This hypothesis sits better with the absence of a phenomenology of indirectness (i.e., we do not seem to further judge that they are the same property based on our experience of them) and with the fact that the experience is a multisensory integrated one (so integration must precede conscious experience).

6. Second objection

The second objection involves the contrast between conscious experiences of different psychological kinds, whose phenomenal character appears nonetheless to be quite similar: perception and imagination. In what sense are they similar? One way to put it is to say that imagination "is perception-like but not quite perception" (Kind & Kung, 2016, p. 3). In claiming that imagination is perception-like, philosophers aim to stress the involvement of some kind of sensory content in imagination; not everyone believes that imagination is essentially imagistic, but it seems uncontroversial that at least some kind is (Nanay, 2016). In this section, I will consider two conscious episodes, an imagistic imagination and a conscious perception directed at the same object and show that the phenomenal intentionalist version of the Dual View is ill-equipped to account for their phenomenal differences.

Focus your gaze on a nearby red ball. Then close your eyes while holding its image in your mind. Let us call these two experiences respectively (V) and (I). There is something for which (V) and (I) differ and something for which they are similar. Their similarity seems obvious: they both represent the same object. How can the proponent of the Dual View accommodate their differences?

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The options seem to be only two (a) phenomenal differences between typical[12] cases of seeing and imagining are explained in terms of degrees of representation; (b) phenomenal differences between typical cases of seeing and imagining are fully explained by differences in content.

Let us start with (a). According to this option, typical cases of seeing and imagining are explained in terms of degrees of representation. Hume is a famous advocate of this view. According to Hume, all mental contents are in some sense imagistic or quasi-perceptual (Hume, 1987; see also Owen, 2003). Consequently, Hume saw no difference in kind between the products of perception and of imagination, but only in degree; images are merely "faint" copies of our "impressions," a term for "all our sensations, passions and emotions, as they make their first appearance in the soul" (1987, p. 8).

I call a Humean theory one for which there is no difference in kind between percepts and images but only in degree.[13] Can we accommodate the Humean view into the Dual View? This question raises the general worry that the Dual View might be ill-equipped to account for different degrees of intensity with which we entertain some mental content. This is true not only in the case of vivid and faint perceptions and images, but also of cognitive and affective attitudes. Some examples are one's degree of credence in P, one's degree of desire that P, one's degree of fear that P, and so on. Intuitively, the degree to which a given content is entertained pertains to the way in which it is entertained, and thus it is more naturally accommodated by the attitude. With the attitude component out of the picture, it is hard to see how the Dual View could account for this common feature of our mental states.[14]

To make this point more vivid, let us try to accommodate the vividness and faintness of an experience into the Dual View's schema. We can write the content of the imagistic experience (I) as follows:

(I) RED-ROUND-FAINT[15] *a*.

And of the visual experience of the same object thus:

(V) red-round-vivid *a*.

RED-ROUND-FAINT seems a legitimate content for the imagistic experience of visualizing a red ball; but so it is for the experience of seeing a red ball in dim light, or from afar, or without prescription glasses. The full specification of the content of a visual experience of a red ball thus fails to uniquely identify experiences of this kind.

This issue should remind us of an old argument against the Humean view, namely that it generates the problem that one cannot decide upon simple introspection whether a perception is an impression or an idea, for there can be vivid impressions and faint ideas, as well as faint impressions and vivid ideas (see, e.g., Ryle, 1949, pp. 250, 251). Yet, it is plausible that to see a red ball at the periphery of the visual field, or under a dim light, is phenomenally unlike visualizing a red apple, and thus that the Dual View's analysis is phenomenologically inaccurate.[16]

It can be objected that objects seen from afar or without prescription glasses do not look faint but blurry. However, the regular treatment of blurriness is as a property of the experience of objects and

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not of the objects of the experience. The Dual View, however, does not distinguish between the two categories, and would thus end up conflating the difference between blurrily seeing a non-blurry object and non-blurringly seeing a blurry object.[17]

Let us turn now to option (b), namely that phenomenal differences between typical cases of seeing and imagining are fully explained by differences in content. Under Montague's proposal, and for the attitude component to become redundant, (b) should be read as the thesis that seeing and imagining involve different kinds of phenomenology, which in turn determine different contents.

One straightforward argument for the claim that seeing and imagining have different contents is that perceptual content would incorporate a good deal of spatial properties, which are not part of the content of imagination.[18] However, the claim that imaginative contents are not spatially rich can be easily objected to. We do not always visualize objects "in our minds," so to speak. We often visualize objects in our egocentric space, for instance, a red ball on the table on my right; visualizations in the physical space are also helpful to solve everyday tasks such as figuring out whether the sofa will pass through the main entrance (Nanay, 2016, p. 215).

It can be objected that these are not cases of integrated experiences, and thus can be accounted for by separating the content of the perceptual state from the content of the imaginative state. Fair enough. But the same analysis cannot be performed on an experience of visualizing the way home from your old high school or the solution to a Tetris puzzle; in these latter cases, the attribution of spatial properties to objects that are not presently perceived is an essential part of the content of the experience (see Van Leeuwen, 2016).

A different argument according to which perception and imagination never have the same kind of content is proposed by Bourget (2017b). He argues that vivid perceptual experiences in ideal conditions represent precise colors, that is, pairs of perceptible properties that are minimally discriminable for a subject; were the properties a little more similar and they would be indiscriminable. But imaginative experiences do not represent precise colors, because subjects cannot memorize and reidentify colors thereby represented. Bourget also addresses the obvious objection that subjects can fail to memorize and reidentify colors perceived in non-ideal conditions. While this is true, Bourget also claims that perceptual experiences in non-ideal conditions are never faint in the same way mental images are; focus, illumination, attention, and other such factors "affect the representational contents of experiences without generating experiences that have contents identical to those of imagery experiences" (p. 678). Thus, for instance, color perception in peripheral vision is not "degraded" in the same way imagery is; thus, the two do not match in content (p. 678).

I agree that the phenomenology of color perception in non-ideal conditions does not match that of merely imagined colors. I defended this position against the Humean view. But as an account of the vividness of veridical perceptual experiences, I do not think Bourget's theory goes too far. Consider hallucinatory experiences. On the widely shared assumption that hallucinatory experiences are subjectively indistinguishable from veridical experiences, I take it that they are also vivid. Most importantly, they are vivid in a way that is subjectively indistinguishable from the way veridical

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perceptual experiences in ideal conditions are. Should we thus conclude that hallucinations instantiate precise colors? Given that subjects are presumably unable to re-identify color shades they hallucinated, however, we should presume that they do not. It thus seems that Bourget's view cannot offer a plausible explanation of the vividness of hallucinatory experiences vis-à-vis the vividness of veridical experiences.[19]

The discussion in this section suggests another possible solution for the Dual View. Instead of ascribing the difference between images and percepts to vividness, and explaining vividness in terms of instantiation, one could write this latter fact directly into the content. The view would then have it that, when seeing a red ball, the subject takes the content of the experience to be instantiated here-and-now, whereas in merely imagining a red ball, she takes it to be uninstantiated or unreal. This is a plausible move, yet it is unclear how to add this specification to the content of the respective mental states. One hypothesis is to include INSTANTIATION into the scope of (V) and UNINSTANTIATED or UNREAL into the scope of (I):

(V) red-round-INSTANTIATION a.

(I) red-round-UNREAL – alternatively: red-round-UNINSTANTIATED a.

I identify two problems with this solution. First, as mentioned above, one might doubt that the distinctive phenomenal character of imagination can be explained by its representing only uninstantiated properties. Second, the above analysis makes the content of (V) and the corresponding perceptual belief directed at the red ball (i.e., the belief that there is a red ball before one; call it [B]) identical.[20] In fact, according to Montague, when a subject believes something, they accept that things are in a certain way, that is, that one or more properties or relations are instantiated by one or more items (see Section 5).

Apart from the problem of distinguishing between the content of (V) and the correspondent perceptual belief (B), I believe the view in general to be implausible. The reason is that the view appears to be committed to the thesis that all beliefs involve the concept of INSTANTIATION. However, this is disputable in two senses. First, it may be objected that in beliefs of the form F is a, the copula "is" does not always obviously denote the property of instantiation but other properties such as identity or composition.[21] Second, some philosophers have argued that some beliefs are not of the form F is a. Candidates for non-propositional beliefs are beliefs-in (see Szabo, 2003) and beliefs with impersonal sentential content, such as the belief that it is snowing now.[22]

Montague acknowledges that her view faces the general problem of how to differentiate between the belief that there is a red round ball before one and the visual experience with the same content (2022, p. 280) but does not offer any explicit solution. One idea is to draw the distinction in terms of the conceptual/nonconceptual dichotomy. Perhaps, in seeing a red ball before me, I nonconceptually take the red ball to be here-and-now, instantiated, real, and so on; whereas in believing that there is a red ball before me, I conceptually take the red ball to be here-andnow. However, Montague explicitly rejects this possibility (pp. 279, 280; see also her 2023), for she believes that all perceptual experiences involve some basic concepts. Independently of this last take, I agree

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that we should avoid committing ourselves to any theory that makes it impossible for perceptual experiences to have conceptual contents.

7. Conclusions and return to the tripartite view (or something of this sort)

In this paper, I have argued that our practice of intentional attitude ascription correctly reflects a tripartite metaphysical structure that includes the subject, the content, and the attitude. The role of the attitude component is crucial in explaining how a subject can experience the same content as the same and at the same time as different across different sensory modalities (first objection) and different psychological attitudes (second objection).[23]

Before concluding, I would like to spend a few words to suggest that one can reject (a version of) Abstract without thereby being forced to reject (a version of) Separateness. In fact, I too think that we should be suspicious of Abstract. At the same time, I have argued that the Dual View cannot account for all representational and phenomenal differences between states of different psychological kinds. Given our discussion in Sections 2 and 3, the reader might think that these two stances are incompatible. In these last few paragraphs, I will show that this is not always true.

Remember that the initial motivation behind Abstract and Separateness was the Fregean picture of intentionality. Alternative views about the source of intentionality might then allow us to balance together the need to reject psychologism about mental content (that is, to guarantee the intersubjective character of intentional content) in a way that is alternative to Abstract, while at the same time acknowledging the central role of mental entities to the nature and study of intentionality.[24]

One such alternative view of the source of intentionality is Husserl's anti-psychologism. Husserl embraced an anti-psychologicistic metaphysics for much the same reasons as Frege. However, according to Husserl, mental states are not intentional because they are related to some abstract entities, but because they instantiate abstract senses (entities analogous to Fregean senses). The senses that are undetachable parts of each act are tokens of abstract types. Mental states have their intentionality "from within," so to speak, because they instantiate the abstract senses, and not because they are extrinsically related to them.25 Husserl also distinguished between content (which he calls the "matter") and attitude ("quality") of intentional mental states but writes that they are "moments," that is, non-independent parts, of the state (2001, Chapter 3, §22). The two moments are not independent of one another because they could not exist without one another; no attitude could exist if nothing were presented to consciousness, and anything presented to consciousness is always presented in a certain way (following Brentano, 2009, p. 62). Husserl illustrates this metaphysical relation of interdependency through the following analogy. Content and attitude play the same role in the structure of an intentional act as direction and acceleration in determining the motion of an object; together, content and attitude determine and modulate the direction of an

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intentional act towards its object and cannot exist independently of the act (Smith & McIntyre, 1984, p. 116). It is possible to consider the independent contributions of attitude and content when comparing different acts in which either of these components change; however, this is an abstraction from the unified mental reality.[26]

Husserl's theory of the source of intentionality thus rejects Abstract in that the relation between content and attitude is not extrinsic but intrinsic to the mental state. Husserl also rejects the version of Separateness in which content and attitude exist on two different ontological plans, while maintaining two separate roles for the two moments. In other words, this version of Separateness holds that attitudes and contents are two distinct metaphysical kinds that do not exist independently of each other. It might be objected that the view is not a genuine rejection of Abstract, as what ultimately explains how intentionality is brought about is some sort of relation to an abstract type. This objection raises a difficult metaphysical point. In defense of the Husserlian model, I would like to point out that being related (e.g., via apprehension or grasping) to an abstract entity is different from instantiating a type-token relation with such entity. While the first seems to be an abstract fact in so far as it involves the abstract entity itself, the second is not obviously so. The existing subject instantiating an abstract property (the relation with an abstract entity) is a here-and-now concrete fact that occurs in space and time (see French, 2022). The act (a concrete occurrence in the subject's consciousness) instantiating the sense is a fact of this type. The source of intentionality is thus ultimately not a relation to an abstract fact, but a concrete episode.

But if one was still unconvinced, here is a different model in the same spirit. In line with our discussion so far, Davis, who is also a proponent of the act-type theory of propositions, also identifies Frege's shortcoming in his overlooking the possibility that thoughts are psychological types. According to Davis, thoughts, being cognitive types, are abstract objects, which however do not exist in the third realm, but are mental events occurring in our natural world, whose tokens are "concrete events in the causal order" (2021, p. 680). One could then try to reverse the order of explanation and identify different types of mental states through abstraction of the common features between different concrete mental acts.

There is far more to say about Husserl's and Davis's views that I do not have the space to address in this paper. Yet this should suffice for my intention, which was to prove that there is a region in the logical space where one can coherently reject Abstract, or at least a version of it, while holding onto Separateness, or at least a version of it.

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CONFLICT OF INTEREST STATEMENT

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ENDNOTES

1. I borrow the labels "Tripartite" and "Dual Views" from Montague (2022).
2. Abstract can also be extended to sub-sentential items like concepts, properties, and relations. The problem for this option is that of explaining how sub-sentential entities can be intrinsically representational or at least determine the representational character of the states that have them as their content. A further problem with non-propositional relational views is that of "empty" attitudes, such as searching for the Fountain of Youth (Prior 1971, p. 130). See Buchanan and Grzankowski (2022) for possible solutions to these problems.
3. Fregean apprehension or grasping is not inherently intentional but, it can be argued, it should have been for his theory to work. To see this, consider the double function Frege assigns to abstract senses: (a) as the intentional object of mental acts themselves and (b) that which fixes reference to the customary object of the act. Frege does not specify how senses should perform (b). McIntyre speculates that "to play the second, and I think primary, role Frege gives to senses, senses must also be related in some more intimate fashion to acts in which objects other than senses are intended […] a sense must be "in" an act in a way more like bones and muscles are in the hand" (1987, p. 532); but Frege's account is not clear in this sense. Rowlands argues that the double function of Fregean senses leads to an infinite regress: "we must conclude that whenever the sense exists as an intentional object of a mental act of apprehension, there must, in that act, be another sense that allows it to exist in this way. And if this latter sense were also to exist as an intentional object of a mental act, there would have to be yet another sense that allowed it to do so" (Rowlands, 2015, p. 317). Both Rowlands and McIntyre (1987) argue that the tension between (a) and (b) cannot be resolved within the Fregean framework and point at Husserl's account of intentionality in the Logical Investigations as the place of possible dissolution. Thanks to an anonymous reviewer for pushing me to elaborate on this point.

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4. One of Frege's arguments for the content-force distinction is the fact that a sentence in the indicative form can be uttered without being judged or asserted, as the antecedent or consequent of a conditional (see Frege, 1979, p. 251).
5. For an introduction to the phenomenal intentionality theory, see Kriegel (2013).
6. However, Searle denies that propositional attitudes are relational. See Searle (1983).
7. Though Crane's modes are relational, not all forms of intramodal representationalism share this commitment. For instance, Bourget defines modes for the intramodal representationalist in a neutral way as "as functions from contents to phenomenal characters" that "determine how a content feels" (2017a, p. 253).
8. Following Byrne's (2001) terminology. The same distinction is also made by Block (1996), who calls it quasi-representationalism, and by Chalmers (2004), who calls it impure representationalism.
9. The occurrence of the term "represents" in Evan's quote is far from clear, and Evans does not further clarify in what sense the tactile concept of a cube and the visual concept of a cube "represent" stand in a representational relation. Based on the context, I can only speculate that it should be intended in a very loose sense, that is, as referring to two items that stand in an indirect, mediated relation of some sort. By contrast, Evans's view is that the relation between them should be as direct as the one between two instances of the same concept, as explained below.
10. This point is crucial to understand the answer Evans, or any Evans-inspired view, would give to Molyneux's question. Evans's answer to the problem is positive. However, the formerly blind man might not immediately be capable of applying his old tactile concept of square to the new visual experience of a square, because of his inability to interpret the visual information correctly. In this case, the experience he would have would not (yet) be of the type that leads the normally sighted person to apply the term. In other words, it might take him time to learn how to navigate the world visually. See Noë for a reply along these lines (2005, 100ff).
11. I thank an anonymous reviewer for this objection.
12. I write "typical" to exclude cases, such as the Perky effect, in which subjects seem unable to distinguish between episodes of seeing and imagining and that however seem to take place in extraordinary settings. For a recent discussion about the Perky effect (1910), see Nigel (2020) and Reeves et al. (2020).
13. I take Peacocke (1985), Noordhof (2002), Nanay (2016), and Phillips (2019) to accept this model.
14. To overcome this problem, one might claim that perception and imagination have similar phenomenology in that they use the same kind of representation, but that imagination requires only a "reduced use" (Nordhoof, 2002, p. 446). What this might mean, and whether it successfully explains the functional differences between images and percept, is not clear to me.

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15. I am here supposing that the contents of imagination are always conceptual; however, nothing of what follows hinges on this presupposition. In particular, it is not a viable solution for the Dual View to argue that what explains the phenomenal differences between imagination and perception is that the content of the first is conceptual. For (i) we cannot exclude that the contents of perception are at least some times conceptual (see Section 3); (ii) a fully conceptual visual episode of a red ball would nonetheless likely feel different from merely imagining a red ball.

16. Some, however, seem to deny this analysis: "an intriguing fact […] is that the phenomenal difference between what we foveate and what we visually imagine is much more pronounced than the phenomenal difference between what we see at the periphery of our visual field and what we visually imagine" (Noordhof, 2002, p. 446). Against the reduction of imagination to perception, see Cavedon-Taylor (2021).

17. Tye (2003) argues that, in seeing a blurry object, vision accurately represents blurry edges where they are; while in the case of blurrily seeing a non-blurry object, vision is "silent" on the precise locus of the edges. Blurry vision in this second sense is characterized by a loss of information. It can be objected that the loss of information does not account for the phenomenology of blurriness. Loss of information is a ubiquitous feature of our well-functioning visual system, and need not give rise to the phenomenology of blurriness. For instance, non-foveate areas of the visual field provide less information but are not accompanied by a phenomenology of blurriness (Pace, 2007; but see endnote 16).

18. Thanks to an anonymous reviewer for this helpful objection.

19. Someone might not think it helpful to appeal to hallucination cases, because imagination and hallucination are very different. Notice, however, that it suffices that my objection undermines Bourget's reason for thinking that veridical experiences (as opposed to imaginative experiences) are vivid in order to undermine his whole argument that perception and imagination never have the same content.

20. An anonymous reviewer noted that it is plausible that there will be a lot of phenomenological differences one could appeal to distinguish the content of beliefs from perceptions. That is correct, and it would be interesting to see whether these differences can be accommodated into the content alone, and whether they uniquely identify perceptions vis-à-vis beliefs. My bet is that they would not. However, this discussion goes beyond the specific issue raised in this paragraph concerning the identity of (V) and (B).

21. On the assumption that (i) instantiation is identity (see, e.g., Brown, 2017 for discussion) and (ii) identity is composition (see Wallace, 2011) are open questions.

22. The thesis that impersonal sentences are objectual beliefs is discussed by Brentano (1883). See also Brentano (2009). See Textor (2013, 2021) for discussion. On objectual attitudes more in general, see Grzankowski and Montague (2018).

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23. On the role of attitudes in distinguishing between perception and imagination, see Kriegel (2015).
24. See Crane (2014) for a similar appeal to a "good" type of psychologism.
25. See McIntyre (1982) for a critical discussion of Husserl's phenomenological conception of intentionality.
26. Notice that the Husserlian view of attitude and content also satisfies a possible phenomenological motivation for the Dual View. This phenomenological motivation is that consciousness "is itself an integral thing, not made of parts" (James, 1890, p. 177). One way of understanding Montague's radical thesis is thus as the attempt to make sense of James's datum. But the Tripartite-Husserlian View can also unproblematically fit James's datum.

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