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## Personhood, Consciousness, and God: How to be a Proper Pantheist

*'Then there occurred what I can neither forget nor communicate. There occurred unity with the divine, with the universe (I do not know whether these words differ in meaning).'* J. L. Borges, 'The Writing of God'

### 0. Introduction

I want to address a problem for pantheism, understood as the doctrine that the theistic God exists and is identical with (or is wholly realised by<sup>1</sup>) the universe, which is known as the *problem of God's person*. It concerns reconciling the two pantheistic conjuncts: Given that the theistic God is a person, how can God be the same thing as the universe—or: if God is the universe, how can God also be a person? Pantheism is often treated as atheism, or tantamount, and that is because asserting that God is the universe is viewed as incompatible with asserting that God is a person. For many theists, thus, pantheism's second conjunct displaces its first. But pantheism should not be construed as atheistic. In fact *pan-theists* can be taken at their word—God, the theistic God, is all, and all is God. The key to this acquiescence is to have a closer look at our conceptual expectations regarding personhood.

In this paper I develop a theory of personhood which leaves open the possibility of construing the universe as a person. If successful, it removes one bar to endorsing pantheism. I do this by examining a rising school of thought on personhood, on which persons, or selves,<sup>2</sup> are understood as identical to episodes of consciousness. Through a critique of this *experiential approach* to personhood, I develop a theory of self as constituted of qualitative mental contents, but where these contents are also capable of unconscious existence. On this theory, though we can be conscious of our selves, consciousness turns out to be inessential to personhood. This move, I then argue, provides resources for responding to the pantheist's problem of God's person. The main reason leading critics to deny personhood to the universe is its lack of consciousness. In other words, the

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<sup>1</sup> Fn. 52 explains why, unlike Johnston (2009), I feel free to associate pantheism with God's wholesale constitution by the universe.

<sup>2</sup> I employ these terms synonymously.

pantheist's problem of God's person is premised on the thesis that personhood is bound up with consciousness. I will challenge that thesis.

In §1 I explain the experiential approach, highlighting its considerable virtues. In §2 I set out its principal difficulty, the 'bridging problem'. The problem is that there are breaks in consciousness where we do not normally envision breaks in the existence of selves—e.g. during dreamless sleep. If the self is identical to consciousness, a lack of consciousness seemingly entails the self's non-existence. The challenge concerns how to 'bridge' episodes of unconsciousness, for the posited essentially conscious self. Proponents of the experiential approach propose various solutions to this problem, but I argue that these fail. In §3 I use this critique to motivate a closely related theory, but one on which consciousness is strictly incidental to personhood. My theory, I argue, inherits the experiential approach's strengths without its weaknesses. §4 applies this theory to the debate around pantheism and the problem of God's person, by linking it to a Russellian monist view of the universe known as panqualityism. §5 considers objections to the proposal.

### 1. *The Experiential Approach to Personhood*

The experiential approach to personhood, i.e. to the question of what a person is, is motivated by the insight that one's self is something of which one can be directly conscious.<sup>3</sup> Since my theory's power lies in co-opting this insight while overcoming the experiential approach's bridging problem, it is worth examining the case for it. Proponents often treat the Insight (as I'll term it) as an empirical claim, to be supported by appeal to introspection.<sup>4</sup> On one reading, this is what Hume is about when he declares that on entering most intimately into what he calls his self, he finds only sense impressions and ideas.<sup>5</sup> Hume can be read as identifying his self with the cluster of contents he finds in his stream of consciousness, on empirical grounds—a bundle theory of self. Of course, Hume is

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<sup>3</sup> The experiential approach is arguably exemplified by Locke *Essay*, James (1890), Hume (*Inquiry*), Evans, C. O. (1970), Strawson (2009), Dainton (2008), Winfield (2015).

<sup>4</sup> Cf. Dainton (2008: 26).

<sup>5</sup> Treatise XXXX.

more standardly read as denying that he finds *anything* corresponding to the self in consciousness. But this reading too, perhaps surprisingly, supports the Insight. For when read this way Hume is usually taken as denying, additionally, that there exists a self at all. The point these two Humes illustrate is that there would seem something odd about denying that there is any indication of the self to be found in consciousness, and *then* going on to propose a positive theory of self—i.e. attempting to identify it with some property or substance. If one proposes a theory of the self at all one ought to have some evidence for the existence of such a thing, and it seems that an obvious source of evidence will be consciousness. For if first-person life provided no evidence of the self, what could lead one to posit such a metaphysically heavyweight item? It follows that a theory of the self must make room for what experience reveals about selfhood.

The Insight puts traditional, non-experiential, accounts of self in a pickle, for on reflection they struggle to accommodate it. For example, a body-based account of personhood might well identify me with the dead husk left behind in the event of my brain and/or stream of consciousness being transferred to a new body.<sup>6</sup> On this theory it cannot be said that there is a close relation between the self and what is in consciousness, let alone that the self is directly experienced. Even assuming that consciousness is identical with some portion of brain activity, an account that identifies the self with that portion of the brain will not hold that one is *directly* conscious of one's self, in the relevant sense. For, undoubtedly, the stream of consciousness does not present itself as a portion of brain activity—hence the philosophical problem of consciousness. So this brain-based conception would not hold that we are directly conscious of the self, since the brain does not present itself in consciousness *as such*. The Insight, then, holds that one is directly aware of oneself *as such* in consciousness. What is experienced transparently coincides

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<sup>6</sup> Olson 2015.

with the being of one's self.<sup>7</sup> Theories that deny the Insight have a *prima facie* problem motivating the posit of a self at all.<sup>8</sup>

Proceeding from the Insight, the experiential approach identifies one's self with an episode of consciousness. There is nothing special about such episodes, you are having one of the relevant sort right now. Trivially, each of us is conscious of the contents of his or her own consciousness at a time. But what comprises those contents? This list is non-exhaustive, but the contents of consciousness include various sorts of *mental quality*—also known as 'qualia'—or *quality* for short, pertaining to our various sensory modalities—colours, smells, tastes, etc. Additionally, there are qualities pertaining to our conscious emotional states and moods, and, arguably, distinctively 'cognitive' qualities associated with our conscious thought processes. My present experience involves a painful lower-back quality, hunger, and the cognitive qualities of my philosophical thoughts. Another set of qualitative contents characterises your present experience. Thus, since the experiential approach identifies selves with conscious episodes, and the contents of consciousness—what is conscious—comprise a set of mental qualities, the experiential approach identifies the self with a set of mental qualities. Note that for the experiential approach mental qualities are limited to, indeed are constituted by, conscious episodes. They are always felt.<sup>9</sup> One's self is therefore identified, on the experiential approach, with a set of essentially conscious mental qualities.

Any useful account should aim to recover the distribution of selves we take for granted normally. Body-based conceptions do this easily, since we routinely count

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<sup>7</sup> A theory identifying the self with the ground of psychological capacities (e.g. memory) counts as experiential only if that ground is consciousness itself—arguably Locke's position. But if consciousness does not ground the capacities, if they are otherwise grounded or left groundless, it clearly follows that the self is not something of which consciousness provides direct indications.

<sup>8</sup> Compare Rosenthal (2005: Ch. X), who argues that self figures in consciousness only *indirectly*: the higher-order thoughts that make one's mental states conscious *refer to* a subject, but one is not conscious of that self, who may be, for all HOTS say, merely notional. One rather suspects this eliminativism (or an agnosticism) is Rosenthal's ultimate position—vindicating the Insight.

<sup>9</sup> Dainton 2006; cf. Kriegel 2009.

persons by counting animate bodies. The experiential approach appeals to co-consciousness to draw appropriate boundaries around sets of mental qualities—boundaries intended to answer to our everyday conception of where one self begins and ends, and a new self, yours, say, starts. The co-consciousness relation gives an intuitive means of identifying persons *synchronically*. The contents of your consciousness are co-conscious, or phenomenally unified—they are experienced conjointly, or ‘subsumed’<sup>10</sup> by a larger conscious state. Each of the different qualities of which you are aware is experienced together with the rest, and this ‘togetherness’ is allegedly a positive experiential feature.<sup>11</sup> That co-conscious set of mental qualities *is you*, according to the experiential approach. The mental contents of which I am conscious are also co-conscious: I feel them all together. But, crucially, your conscious contents are not phenomenally unified with my conscious contents, nor mine with yours.<sup>12</sup> Our respective sets of mental qualities exist in two discrete phenomenal ‘spheres’. The co-consciousness relation thus draws the right lines around selves at a time; the experiential approach identifies persons synchronically with phenomenally unified sets of experiences.

## *2. The Bridging Problem for the Experiential Approach*

There are two questions a theory of personhood ought to answer. The first is, what are persons—what sort of thing are they, what kinds of entities or properties comprise them. The experiential approach, we saw, answers this question by identifying the self with conscious experience—conscious mental qualities. The second question concerns identity conditions: What are the identity conditions of selves at a time and over time? The experiential approach answered the synchronic component of this question by adverting to the co-consciousness relation to bind sets of conscious experiences into recognisable unities, corresponding to our normal conception of the distribution of persons.

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<sup>10</sup> Bayne and Chalmers (2003). For co-consciousness see Dainton (2006).

<sup>11</sup> Dainton 2006, 2008.

<sup>12</sup> Dainton (2008: 278).

What of the identity of selves over time? Here the experiential approach faces its main difficulty. On this view a person exists for the duration of a single unified episode of consciousness. According to Strawson, such episodes typically last around fifteen minutes.<sup>13</sup> After this time the current stream of consciousness ceases, and is replaced by a new set of qualitative contents that does not overlap with the prior set. This break in the conscious stream might manifest phenomenologically, for example, as the taking up of a wholly new line of thought. It follows that on Strawson's view a subject such as one of us persists for only around fifteen minutes at a time. But, clearly, our everyday conception of personhood envisages that we survive longer than fifteen minutes! To claim otherwise jeopardises many routine claims we make about our selves (e.g. that I wrote this paper's first sentence and will write the last) and about others (e.g. that you read this paper's first sentence and will read the last), as well as attributions of praise or blame for past actions (on Strawson's view I cannot be straightforwardly criticised for how this paper got underway, nor applauded if it improves later on), and so on.

Proponents of the experiential approach might reject Strawson's claim. Perhaps there is a way to conceive of consciousness such that a single stream lasts all day, or so that each of several contributory streams runs, temporally speaking, into the next, providing an unbroken overall flow.<sup>14</sup> But there remains the problem of sleep. Descartes held that we are conscious throughout sleep, but most scientists and philosophers—not to mention non-scientists and non-philosophers—accept that sleep involves some periods of unconsciousness; i.e. the absence of *state consciousness*, times at which no experiencing, even dream-experiencing, is occurring. On the face of it, then, the experiential approach implies that sleep entails the ceasing to exist of the subject. Going to bed, what one craves at the end of a long hard day, really means annihilation.

But we should proceed more slowly with this line of objection. Let's start with the Cartesian thesis. For what it's worth, I sometimes find it possible to believe I am

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<sup>13</sup> Strawson (2009).

<sup>14</sup> Foster (1991).

conscious throughout sleep. It is striking that when one wakes in the night there is often (always?) an answer to the question, if one cares to ask it, 'What was I just thinking?' On this model sleeping would be a prolonged period of letting the mind wander, a soothing night's daydreaming. However, there is I believe a second, and decisive, phenomenological observation tending in the opposite direction: this is Locke's well-known rejection of the Cartesian thesis. The claim that we are forever conscious is refuted, Locke says, by 'every drowsy nod'.<sup>15</sup> All it takes for the Cartesian thesis to fail is one example where we lose consciousness. And if we focus on the period following each drowsy nod, it is hard to avoid the impression that *nothing was going on, consciously, with one* at that time. Nods seem to be followed by a blank. Of course, it is always possible for a Cartesian to plead that we *are* conscious even between drowsy nods, and throughout sleep, but systematically forget these experiences. There is little to be done against defences that invoke the unremembered. But it is puzzling that proponents of the *experiential approach* should resort to such a claim. Their position is rooted in the deliverances of experience, a kind of Jamesian radical empiricism is the spirit, and this would be to turn from that approach to an unconfirmable posit made solely to save the theory. That move is unacceptably *ad hoc*, and a methodological betrayal. On balance, therefore, we should accept that we are sometimes unconscious—or, more neutrally, since whether we can survive unconsciousness is at issue, that the stream of consciousness has breaks. Descartes apart, most proponents of the experiential approach indeed accept this is the case.

Having established this, we should note that there are in fact two sides to the problem for the experiential approach concerning unconsciousness. One side deserves the name 'bridging problem'. This is the need to somehow connect two streams broken by a period of unconsciousness, so we can say they belong to one subject. That is what is required for us to be able to make the agreeable statement that *you went to bed last night and awoke this morning*. And on this front advocates of the experiential approach can make headway. For example, Foster suggests two streams can be construed as 'consubjective' if the first could have run into the

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<sup>15</sup> *Essay* 2.1.13.



second. Foster imagines that instead of falling asleep one evening, he had stayed awake all night, listening to the Oxford traffic, and perhaps a party going on next door. This stream, had it so continued, would have lasted until his morning alarm sounded, which is when, actually, a second stream of consciousness associated with his body began. Thus, although actually the two streams were broken by the unconsciousness of sleep, counterfactually the first could have run seamlessly into the second. And that modal fact means we can treat the two actual streams as belonging to the same subject. Another proposal is to treat two streams as consubjective that share a material basis—i.e. are grounded in the same brain (assuming we have independent criteria for the sameness of brains over time).

One worry about such accounts is that they swap a metaphysical question for a practical one, aiming to vindicate certain *habits* rather than to sustain a metaphysical picture—this is suggested by phrasing that talks not of the self's *existence* but (e.g.) of our right to *ascribe* two streams to one self. My focus is firmly metaphysical. That complaint aside, these moves do not address the second side of the problem of unconsciousness, which is what to say about the subject *during* the unconscious period. Foster's account may succeed in establishing that one goes to sleep and wakes in the morning, but what can it say about one while dreamless sleep occurs? If somebody walked into Foster's bedroom at this time, and, indicating the sleeping body, asked 'Who is sleeping?', Foster's wife might straightforwardly say 'John is—be quiet or you'll wake him'. Such talk, which implies that we are asleep, hence exist during dreamless sleep, has a naturalness that refuses to dissolve on philosophical reflection. The experiential approach identifies the self with consciousness. So, where there is no consciousness there is, in any non-notional sense, simply no self in existence at that time. Thus the experiential approach does seem to imply that one's self ceases to exist during dreamless sleep. That there persist psychological capacities to re-ignite the stream of consciousness,<sup>16</sup> that the re-ignited stream can be *counted* a continuation of the pre-sleep one, that one can be *construed* therefore as having a gappy existence, all these points are irrelevant. The basic problem is that the

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<sup>16</sup> Strawson 1994.

experiential approach seems to imply that sleep entails literal non-existence. *You* are not there in the bed.<sup>17</sup> The psychological result of taking this seriously is that sleep takes on an undeniably frightening aspect.

Granted, common sense does not single-handedly arbitrate philosophical truth. So if there were good philosophical reason to hold that one's self ceases to exist during unconsciousness, we would just have to accept the discomfiting side of sleep (after all, even believing one persists through the night does not guarantee waking in the morning). But proponents of the experiential approach effectively offer no reasons to accept this apart from the Insight, which they believe leads to the experiential approach, which in turn has the unpalatable consequence about sleep. I argued that we should take the Insight seriously. But it is clear that if a theory can be found that preserves the Insight, *and* secures our continued existence during unconsciousness, it will have a distinct advantage over the experiential approach.

One might resist this line of reasoning by stressing philosophy's power to disrupt everyday modes of thought—and offer Descartes and Strawson, who bite the bullet of unconsciousness at opposite ends, in support.<sup>18</sup> Yet the experiential approach certainly prides itself on being able to recover our everyday *synchronic* classifications regarding personal identity, as explained above—and Descartes and Strawson are no exceptions to this rule. It is not altogether consistent to make that a virtue when it comes to the synchronic case, then to disregard it for the diachronic case. Hence, any theory that can better capture our normal sense of personal identity over time, while respecting the Insight, will be in a stronger position than the experiential approach—unless, that is, some modification can be made to the latter to reflect our common intuitions about diachronic personal identity.

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<sup>17</sup> Cf. Olson (2015): §4.

<sup>18</sup> I ignore Strawson's suggestion that 'I' is multiply ambiguous, such that I can say truly 'I sometimes sleep' while referring, roughly, to my body. I(I, I) find this proposal multifariously unacceptable. See Shoemaker 2009 for criticism.

Dainton attempts such a modification. He attempts to address the difficulty for the experiential approach by identifying the self not with occurrent consciousness, but instead with a persisting set of powers (presumably brain-based) to *produce* consciousness.<sup>19</sup> Selves are now marked off as sets of ‘experiential powers’, to produce co-conscious experiences. Taken synchronically we are different selves, on this account, because the cluster of experiential powers in your head produces experiences that are co-conscious among themselves but which are not co-conscious with the experiences produced by the experiential powers in my head, and vice-versa. So Dainton’s experiential powers theory recovers what we want to say about synchronic personal identity.

But its great payoff is supposed to concern diachronic identity. Dainton’s move does manage to ensure one’s survival during unconsciousness, since powers to produce consciousness can persist unconsciously. In general, powers can exist without manifesting—e.g. the vase’s power to shatter is only dormant, but no less existent for that, while the vase sits on the mantelpiece. On this model, those powers whose manifestation is to produce phenomenally unified episodes of consciousness can and do exist during periods of unconsciousness. Hence one’s self, as Dainton construes it, persists during dreamless sleep. Thus Dainton appears successfully to have modified the experiential approach to solve the difficulty around diachronic personal identity.

This appearance is deceptive. For in attempting to modify the theory to overcome the problem of diachronic identity, Dainton has abandoned what is distinctive of the experiential approach: its identification of the subject with consciousness, and the Insight that we are conscious of our selves. The fate of Dainton’s theory is, in this respect, comparable to the familiar experience when doing home improvements of breaking something in the effort to mend it. The experiential powers Dainton posits, though they produce consciousness, do not themselves become conscious thereby. Analogously, the vase’s power to shatter does not itself shatter when it manifests. The gap between a power—or disposition—and its

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<sup>19</sup> Dainton (2008).

manifestation is akin to that between a cause and its effect: clearly a cause cannot be its own effect. Likewise, a disposition does not have the relevant property that manifests. But Dainton identifies the self with (a set of) experiential powers—i.e. powers to produce consciousness. Hence it follows on Dainton’s theory that the self is never in fact conscious, since the experiential powers with which the self is identified are, to repeat, merely powers to produce consciousness, not properties that ever themselves become conscious. Therefore, for Dainton, what is *in consciousness* is not one’s self.<sup>20</sup> It seems, instead, that consciousness only *accompanies*, being *produced by*, the self, on Dainton’s model.

Dainton’s theory therefore loses its grip of the Insight. Its upshot that the self, as a set of powers to produce consciousness, is not something that ever becomes conscious makes Dainton’s theory a clear departure from the experiential view. He may have dealt with the problem of diachronic identity, but he has not provided a solution for advocates of the experiential approach, since he no longer advocates that approach. Given the Insight, Dainton’s theory is untenable. And it is certainly self-defeating, for its aim was to rescue the experiential approach.

Dainton is right to attempt to isolate a constitution basis for selves that can persist during unconsciousness. But what his theory’s failure makes clear is that whatever subsists during periods of unconsciousness to constitute selfhood must also be capable of consciousness. That is the only way to preserve the Insight. What we desire, therefore, is a theory that posits a *univocal* basis for the self with two key features: It must involve properties of which we can be conscious, to vindicate the Insight. But those properties must also be capable of unconscious existence, to meet the challenge of diachronic identity (i.e. of dreamless sleep). I offer such a theory below, built around the notion of *intrinsically unconscious mental qualities*.<sup>21</sup>

### 3. The Self as Constituted by Unconscious Mental Qualities

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<sup>20</sup> As Winfield aptly notes (2015: 144).

<sup>21</sup> See Coleman (2015a), (2016), Rosenthal (1991).

We have already mentioned mental qualities, among them sensory qualities and qualities pertaining to emotions and thought. We also mentioned the assumption by proponents of the experiential approach that mental qualities are essentially conscious. But that is disputable. One might speculate that the qualities of which we are consciously aware can also exist, in intrinsically the same form, when nobody is aware of them, i.e. unconsciously. A distinction is often drawn between two aspects of a conscious state: awareness,<sup>22</sup> and a qualitative, or content, aspect. The awareness aspect is what all conscious experiences share—all are equally episodes of awareness. Awareness is that feature of a state in virtue of which it is conscious at all. The qualitative aspect is that which varies among experiences of different kinds: tasting lemon is a different kind of conscious state to smelling molten tarmac. Both kinds of state display the awareness aspect in equal measure. What makes them different is the different qualities, qualitative contents, featured.

When proponents of the experiential approach claim mental qualities cannot exist unconsciously, they claim, in terms of this distinction, that qualities always come with awareness—the two aspects of a conscious state might be conceptually, but are not metaphysically, separable. Thus, to dispute this doctrine is to affirm that qualities can exist without awareness. Though it is widely upheld, positive arguments for the thesis that qualities are inseparable from awareness are surprisingly elusive. More usually, this *inseparability thesis* is taken for granted. I will not dwell on arguments for the inseparability thesis here; I only record that, as well as surprisingly thin on the ground, they are surprisingly weak.<sup>23</sup> Instead, I

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<sup>22</sup> Aka ‘for-me-ness’ or ‘subjective character’—see e.g. Kriegel 2009.

<sup>23</sup> When Strawson (2006?) endorses Shoemaker’s (19XX) claim that qualities can no more exist unconsciously than a bending occur without something (e.g. a branch) that bends, he seems to assume mental qualities must be experiential. Dainton (2008) argues that a contentless awareness contributes nothing to consciousness, so is not worth positing. But by hypothesis the awareness component contributes *awareness*, without which a state is not conscious. Searle (1992) claims unconscious qualities imply dualism, since all that exists unconsciously in the brain is brute neurophysiological processes. But the proposal is presumably that unconscious qualities exist *as part of* the aforementioned neurophysiological processes. And unless Searle says exactly this about his *conscious* mental qualities, his theory equally implies dualism.

will briefly canvass reasons for positing unconscious qualities. These derive from common sense, and from science, especially psychology.<sup>24</sup>

i. Armstrong's driver gets home intact, stopping at red lights and advancing at greens, despite apparently lacking consciousness of her car journey—for, her mind wandering, she does not recall it when she arrives.<sup>25</sup> One promising interpretation of this everyday occurrence is that she had the same red and green-representing visual states an attentive driver would consciously have had, only without being conscious of them. If it is the redness- and greenness-representing character of relevant visual states that does the main causal work, and explanation, of the attentive driver's navigation of the road, this is a role these states can play equally well, the suggestion goes, without the inattentive driver needing to *experience* their qualities.<sup>26</sup>

ii. Another everyday phenomenon is that of people being woken in the night by headaches—especially migraines. Being woken is being brought from unconsciousness to consciousness. And it seems that it is the migraine pain that causes this transition to occur (otherwise one is not woken by *headache*). A plausible reading of the situation, therefore, is that an unconscious pain quality causes the subject to become aware of it—i.e. to awaken. Only on this interpretation can we truly say, at least for periods of dreamless sleep, that pain woke the subject up—a staple complaint of medical advice *fora*.<sup>27</sup>

iii. It is also worth remarking in this connection on the naïve realist conception of perception, e.g. of colours. Under this conception it is natural to take it that colour qualities we perceptually experience are located on external surfaces, e.g. a tomato's redness. It is not part of this conception that the tomato ceases to be red, or loses its redness in any way, when no one is around to be aware of it. Thus

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<sup>24</sup> For more defence of unconscious qualities see Rosenthal 1991, Clark XXXX.

<sup>25</sup> Armstrong 1981.

<sup>26</sup> This, put in his own terms, is Armstrong's take on the case.

<sup>27</sup> Coleman (forthcoming) discusses unconscious pain further.

commonsense or naïve realism posits unconscious qualities, in the relevant sense.<sup>28</sup>

iv. Blindsighters have cortical damage resulting in a visual blind spot—stimuli shown to the spot fail to produce phenomenally conscious visual states.<sup>29</sup> Nonetheless, when prompted to ‘guess’, blindsighters excel in detecting many features of such stimuli, including colour.<sup>30</sup> This suggests they remain capable of visual processing of the stimulus’s properties. Again, a natural reading of the situation, notably when it comes to colour detection, is that the blindsighter has colour-representing visual states, which play something like the usual role in visual processing (since they can inform reports), only the state and the qualities in question are not conscious—are not experienced by the subject.<sup>31</sup>

These scenarios provide no knockdown-type argument for unconscious qualities. However, often the explanation that fits the data best or most naturally would posit such properties—e.g. as a way of preserving the claim that genuine *pain* woke the subject. As regards blindsight, when a conscious subject can distinguish between yellow and orange we certainly take this to be due to the differing qualitative characters these present. At the least, these cases serve to make the thesis of unconscious qualities fairly readily intelligible, and lend it some support. And that is what we need to survey the theory of the self as grounded in unconscious mental qualities.

Consider again the contents of your consciousness—a set of qualities pertaining to your sensory, emotional, cognitive experiences, *inter alia*. My theory takes such contents as literally constituting the self; hence we are conscious of our selves—as per the Insight. But my theory differs from the experiential approach in allowing that the qualities currently experienced can also exist unexperienced, i.e.

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<sup>28</sup> For naïve realism see Martin (20XX). Chalmers (2013) similarly explains unconscious qualities by reference to the ‘Edenic’ qualities of naïve realism.

<sup>29</sup> Rosenthal 1991, Weiskrantz 2005.

<sup>30</sup> Stoerig and Cowey 1992.

<sup>31</sup> Though he denies it, the states are plausibly *access conscious*, in Block’s (1995) sense. See Brogaard (20XX) for a contrasting view.

before and after the current conscious episode. The self is identified with a set of qualities that are experienceable, but to which experience is inessential. The conception of the self as grounded in intrinsically unconscious mental qualities departs from the experiential approach in but one respect: Agreeing that the subject consists of a set of mental qualities, it additionally holds that those mental qualities can exist, in exactly the same form, in the absence of awareness. With Freud,<sup>32</sup> the only difference between conscious and unconscious mental contents is the presence of consciousness.

This provides the theory's broad answer to the question of what a self is: an arrangement of intrinsically unconscious mental qualities. We next require criteria of synchronic and diachronic identity for this new theory. We cannot utilise the synchronic and diachronic unity of consciousness, since the aim is to capture a self that in principle outruns what is experienced. Instead, what distinguishes the mental qualities that comprise you, synchronously and diachronically, I suggest, is that they stand in *direct constitutive and causal qualitative relations*, as explained below.

In Foster's example of the unity of consciousness a musical phrase is heard. At a time, two consecutive auditory qualities are experienced as partially overlapping in the specious present. Over time, an extended series of such partially overlapping (co-present) auditory qualities is experienced as forming a unitary flow. These phenomena of co-consciousness, for the experiential approach, found the synchronic and diachronic unity of the conscious episode, hence of the experiencing subject/self. My theory's gambit is essentially to replace *experienced unity* with *qualitative unity*. Consider first an example of synchronic constitutive qualitative relations: A blue quality and a red quality in your mind can combine to constitute a purple quality. But a blue quality of yours cannot combine with a red quality of mine to constitute a purple quality *anywhere*.<sup>33</sup> Consider next a case of diachronic causal qualitative relations: Your pain quale can suppress your itch quale, say. But my itch can never be directly suppressed by any pain of yours. Your

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<sup>32</sup> 1915/2005: 52

<sup>33</sup> Except, on the ultimate account, in God's mind (§4)—but I bracket God here.



pain could *indirectly* suppress my itch; say, if your pain makes you lash out, causing pain in me that suppresses my itch. But what *directly* suppresses my itch is my pain. As concerns Foster's example, we should observe that two component auditory qualities in your mind can constitute a new qualitative *gestalt*: for two notes occurring together mutually modify and can create something new in certain characteristic ways—say, a chord. Over time, we should observe such phenomena as that a musical phrase in your mind can causally interact with your associations or memories—e.g. from when you first heard the music (Mahler's 5<sup>th</sup> conjures me up a panpsychism conference in Munich—I grasped neither papers nor music). Neither constitutive, nor causal, relations of these kinds—*among mental qualities*—can obtain between my mind and yours. Note that consciousness is not implicated in such interactions—we did not mention it in describing them, only mental qualities. According to the theory qualitative relations can occur as much without as within consciousness.

Hence there exist, it appears, bundles or clusters of qualities whose members bear direct constitutive and causal relations to one another, or have the possibility of bearing such relations—relations which issue in qualitative changes as a matter of quality-to-quality interactions. With respect to other such groups of qualities, the qualities in one given cluster have no possibility of bearing such direct relations to them. Where direct qualitative relations obtain, therefore, this marks a cluster of mental qualities as especially *tightly integrated* and *unified*—as a *system*, in contradistinction to other similar systems of integrated qualities. And such qualitative systems tend, in normal cases, to be in command of a single organism—e.g. a human body. These integrated qualitative bundles thus answer well to our conception of selves, meaning that *direct qualitative relations* can be used to delineate the boundaries of selves. In this way my account of self as constituted by intrinsically unconscious mental qualities recovers our everyday distribution of selves.

The coming and going of consciousness's light is immaterial to the intrinsically unconscious qualitative self—far less important than the Sun's coming and going to Earth's inhabitants. So my theory achieves the desired result: we can survive

unconsciousness—existing, in a literal sense, not only either side of dreamless sleep, but during it. The stream of intrinsically unconscious qualities flows day and night, regardless of one’s state of awareness.<sup>34</sup> As well as longer-lived, the self as grounded in intrinsically unconscious qualities is considerably more extensive than the experiential self.<sup>35</sup> Whereas the self on the experiential approach is restricted by consciousness’s ‘bandwidth’, on my theory there exist manifold qualitative mental contents of which you are currently unaware, including mental images, standing intentional states, and formative memories, that form part of your self. For common sense many such unconscious items figure constitutively into the person one is. My theory accommodates this thesis, since unaccessed contents are part of the self just in case they potentially stand in direct qualitative relations to the other qualities that are you. What is in consciousness, then, only partially constitutes the self. This vindicates the conception of selves embodied in how we actually live.

To summarise this view’s virtues: First, it manages to preserve the Insight that the self surfaces directly in consciousness—for unconscious qualities can become conscious. But it also allows our selves to survive unconsciousness—it is no problem for the tightly knit bundles of mental qualities that are selves if they are currently unexperienced. Evidently, it was the inseparability thesis that provoked the experiential approach’s main difficulty. Once this thesis is rejected, and we accept the possibility of unconscious mental qualities, the experiential approach’s central form and appeal can be preserved intact—consisting of the dual observations that our mental qualities are intimately related to who we are, and that these properties manifest in consciousness—but without its main drawback. A third benefit of incorporating unconscious states into the self is that the theory honours the manifest-image belief that there is far more to each of us than what happens to be conscious at a time.

#### 4. *The Problem of God’s Person for Pantheism*

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<sup>34</sup> N.b. unconscious qualities do not suffice for dreaming—dreaming is a kind of experience, corresponding to *sleeping phenomenal consciousness of qualities*.

<sup>35</sup> Cf. Strawson 2017: 69.

Traditional theism envisages a personal God. Theists suppose God to be both morally good and a suitable object of prayer, and it seems only a person could be morally good and worth praying to. Pantheism denies God's transcendence, by identifying God with the universe. But it appears to many philosophers and theologians that a God that (as they might say) merely comprises the universe is inevitably impersonal. Pantheism thus seems snagged on the horns of a trilemma:

1. God is a person.
2. God is the universe.
3. The universe is not a person.

Acceptance of any two claims plausibly entails negation of the third. Pantheism's distinctive claim is 2. From what they take as 3's evident truth, pantheism's critics infer that pantheists cannot assert 1, since 2 and 3 plausibly entail not-1. Thus, the reasoning goes, pantheism cannot accommodate a personal God. What is more, although pantheism purports to count itself a variety, or at least recognisable descendant, of theism, critics often allege that pantheism actually implies atheism. For them, identifying God with the universe is simply a way of denying there is a God at all.<sup>36</sup> Even those who do not attribute a vicious covert atheism to pantheists consider their doctrine a grave threat to theistic values. Since he agrees it cannot make sense of God *qua* person, Galloway—ostensibly without hyperbole—suggests that on pantheism 'spiritual values cannot be effectively maintained...the whole system of religious value is undermined, and the whole structure of human faith must ultimately collapse.'<sup>37</sup>

The stakes are high for pantheism! But why are critics so confident that the universe cannot be a person? Perhaps the most important reason that surfaces among them is the thesis that persons are essentially conscious entities, and the

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<sup>36</sup> Schopenhauer: 'to call the world 'God' is...only to enrich our language with a superfluous synonym for the word 'world' (18XX: XX). But see, as counterpoint, Borges's line at the start.

<sup>37</sup> 1921: 298.

universe, taken as the manifest image conceives of it,<sup>38</sup> is not, as a whole,<sup>39</sup> conscious. Hence the universe cannot be a person. For example, Von Hartmann judges that construing God as an unconscious entity abandons God's personhood. Similarly, Levine takes it that a person is *ipso facto* a conscious person, and infers that pantheists reject the divine person.<sup>40</sup> Galloway supposes that God's personhood requires self-consciousness, which requires, in turn, plain consciousness.<sup>41</sup>

A brief word about what we might call 'the pantheistic attitude' lends further weight to these critiques, and forecloses an obvious pantheist escape route from the trilemma. Pantheists are plausibly committed to taking the universe to be more or less *as we human beings find it*, particularly with reference to the deliverances of our primary collective investigative effort into its nature—science. Pantheists have a broadly naturalistic outlook. They take science seriously, and frequently display reverence for the natural world. It is against this backdrop that they go on to identify God with that world (or the world with God). This attitude, of course, is precisely what creates the problem for pantheism, as expressed by the trilemma: for this sort of naturalistic outlook seems in tension with a literal equation of the natural world with the Deity. And thence flow the accusations of sneaking atheism. It transpires that what makes pantheism an interesting doctrine is also the source of its primary difficulty. Matters would go far easier for pantheists if they dispensed with the naturalistic sentiment. For, clearly, an easy exit from the trilemma would be to endorse an idealistic or panpsychist conception of the universe, swiftly transfuse it with a global consciousness, and reject the critics' lemma 3 on that basis.<sup>42</sup> My point is that this facile solution is unavailable to pantheists. Ascribing a consciousness to the entire universe is a

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<sup>38</sup> N.b. Sellars's (e.g. 19XX) manifest image is *scientifically informed*, not mere common sense.

<sup>39</sup> The universe might be said to be *partly* conscious, since we are conscious and part of it.

<sup>40</sup> 1994, Ch. 3.

<sup>41</sup> 1921: 303. Cf. Hartshorne (1965: 301).

<sup>42</sup> Goff (this issue), Pfeifer (2016), Bauer (2018).

step too far for naturalism, and that is exactly why pantheism is in a bind regarding the Divine person.

The dialectical situation is this: If persons are essentially conscious entities, then, on the assumption that the universe of the manifest image is not conscious, the universe cannot be a person. From this the trilemma for pantheism arises, and the threat to its viability. However, if persons are not essentially conscious, then pantheists may escape the trilemma by rejecting claim 3—the universe, though lacking in consciousness, might nonetheless qualify as a person.

It can now be seen how my theory of personal identity enables pantheists to address the problem of God's person. On that theory, persons are identified, at a time and over time, with suitably integrated sets of intrinsically non-conscious qualities. Though these qualities are of the broad kind we meet in consciousness—a genre including sensory, emotional, and cognitive qualities—consciousness is not essential to these properties. The hypothesis was that the majority of the qualitative contents making up one's self at a time exist outside consciousness, and that even those qualities of which one is now conscious are due to spend most of their lifetime unexperienced. On this theory, consciousness is not obviously required for personhood. And if consciousness is not required for personhood, it will not follow that the universe cannot be a person, hence cannot be God, because it lacks consciousness.

It will be objected that even if the complexes of qualities making up our selves are not intrinsically conscious, nonetheless it is essential to personhood that we at least be *capable* of consciousness of them. After all, subsets of these qualities are conscious much of the time. Thus, it might be said, even on my theory of personhood it is necessary that a person at least be capable of consciousness. And on the plausible assumption that the universe as a whole is not even capable of consciousness,<sup>43</sup> the difficulty for pantheism remains.

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<sup>43</sup> 'Capable' is loose: Might not the universe be *re-arranged* into a 'cosmic brain', making it (now) capable of consciousness, in that sense? The right sense must be that *as it stands*

But this objection ignores the true purport of my theory of personhood. On the experiential approach the current contents of consciousness comprise the person. On my theory the current contents of consciousness also (partly) comprise the person, except they do so not in virtue of being conscious. Since the view separates awareness from qualities, its full upshot is that *consciousness has nothing at all to do with personhood*. The necessary and sufficient basis for personhood lies in the integrated qualitative contents of our minds. But these contents need not be conscious. Hence personhood does not depend on consciousness, not even on the capacity for consciousness. The theory's real implication is that a creature that wholly, even permanently, lacked consciousness could still perfectly well be a person. What matters is whether an appropriately integrated set of qualitative mental contents is in place. Whether that set, or any subset, is, or could be, an object of awareness is beside the point.

To legislate that a being lacking awareness cannot be a person is chauvinistic—frankly *parochial*.<sup>44</sup> Perhaps *Star Trek's* Commander Data is this sort of person, or *2001's* HAL (the theory has applications to artificial intelligence). Closer to home, one might consider the case of a loved one who is no longer capable of consciousness, but whose cognitive functions are significantly intact. For that matter, if somebody became (or was somehow born) a philosophical zombie,<sup>45</sup> must we perforce judge them a non-person, whatever they said? For all we know for sure, this is the situation of some of our best friends!

With this clarification made, it is obvious that the universe's lack of consciousness need be no bar to its personhood. Hence the pantheist can, if she endorses my account, assemble resources to reject trilemma claim 3. With that rejection made, pantheists can consistently claim that God is a person and that God is the universe, while accepting that the universe is not conscious.

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the universe could instantiate consciousness; being conscious is a capacity it could exercise *as currently configured*—like a sleeping brain.

<sup>44</sup> Compare the chauvinism leveled at physicalist type-identity theory: the charge is that local features of the human condition are illegitimately universalised.

<sup>45</sup> Chalmers (1996), (2013).

There is a little more to say. In the case of human personal identity, it was not too great a leap to posit a constitution basis of qualities that could exist unconsciously, since we began from the experiential approach, which identified persons with sets of qualities of this broad sort already, albeit accompanied by the thesis—which we rejected—that qualities are essentially conscious. But to apply this theory to the *universe* clearly requires that qualities of the kind we experience occur far beyond the context of complex biological creatures. For those creatures are few and far between. If qualities only exist where such creatures are, it could not be said that God is the entire universe—God would at most amount to some kind of, incredibly sparsely distributed, ‘group mind’. What the pantheist requires, therefore, is a theory to integrate qualities into, and *throughout*, the natural universe. Fortunately such a theory exists, in the form of *panqualityism*, a ‘Russellian monist’ theory of mind.<sup>46</sup>

On panqualityism the universe is fundamentally constituted of qualities akin to those we experience, e.g. sensory qualities such as blue and red, but in their natural state these exist non-consciously.<sup>47</sup> Panqualityism is, if you will, panpsychism-minus-awareness. Though the panqualityist’s universe, like the panpsychist’s, is bedecked with qualities, awareness of those qualities is restricted, for all we know, to living brains. The qualities constituting all else are ‘unfelt qualia’, the sort of properties possessed by Russell’s ‘sensibilia’.<sup>48</sup> Non-conscious qualities are to conscious qualities somewhat as celluloid is to film-reel actually being projected: what they lack is the light of awareness.<sup>49</sup> As a form of Russellian monism, the panqualityist claims that these qualities fit into the natural order by providing categorical natures to the fundamental dispositional

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<sup>46</sup> For Russellian monism see Alter and Nagasawa (2012). For panqualityism see Coleman (2015), (2016), Chalmers (2013).

<sup>47</sup> These are often called ‘phenomenal qualities’, but on panqualityism their being phenomenal—experienced—is not intrinsic; they are only potentially phenomenal.

<sup>48</sup> ‘sensibilia [are] those objects which have the same metaphysical and physical status as sense-data, without necessarily being data to any mind’ (1917/1951: 110). Cf. Johnston’s (2009) ‘objective modes of presentation’.

<sup>49</sup> This image is Stubenberg’s (1998).

properties physics describes.<sup>50</sup> It is widely held that dispositional properties require such grounding, but (as Russell influentially noted in *The Analysis of Matter*) mathematical physics is strikingly, perhaps necessarily, silent about the natures of the relevant categoricals. Aside from a motivation to explain consciousness,<sup>51</sup> this silence provides the Russellian monist in general, and the panqualityist specifically, with an additional motivation to make her posit.<sup>52</sup>

Unlike panpsychism, panqualityism respects the manifest-image belief that awareness pertains to brains—brains thus have a capacity absent elsewhere in nature. Panqualityists, like their neutral monist brethren, construe awareness as a special *relation* to qualities. Russell (at one point) understands this relation as irreducible ‘acquaintance’. I adopt Feigl’s suggestion that in awareness one cerebral area ‘scans’ qualities in another area, elaborating it via a higher-order theory of consciousness.<sup>53</sup> The details of panqualityist theories of awareness are not paramount, however. What matters is that on panqualityism a brain is a system of qualities, some portion of which is conscious at a time thanks to the posited special relational property. A group of brain-qualities is within the spotlight of awareness, we may say. The rest are unconscious. Thus a broader

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<sup>50</sup> This move makes God, following Johnston, ‘in no way at odds with the form of the natural world as disclosed by science’ (2009: 119). See also fn. 52.

<sup>51</sup> Chalmers 2013.

<sup>52</sup> Goff and Coleman (forthcoming). Now I can explain (as fn. 1 promised) why a view on which the universe merely constitutes God can count as pantheism. Johnston (2009) frames pantheism as strictly an identity view, and the thesis that the universe only constitutes God as not pantheism, but panentheism. The ruling idea of Johnston’s panentheism—traditionally the view that the universe does not exhaust God, who in some way transcends it—is that *God’s nature goes beyond what is captured by the descriptions of science*. But the universe could merely constitute God even while God’s nature failed to outstrip the complete scientific description. This issue depends on how we construe the semantics of scientific descriptions. On panqualityism (and Russellian monism generally), these descriptions can be taken as referring only to the physical dispositional properties they overtly describe (e.g. ‘mass’ picks out the massy dispositions, such as resisting acceleration), or, obliquely, to the categorical properties posited as grounding these dispositions—qualities, for the panqualityist. On this latter interpretation, and assuming the qualities wholly constitute God, God’s nature will not *referentially* outrun the scientific descriptions. Hence a mere constitution view of God is compatible with pantheism.

<sup>53</sup> Feigl (1971: 305), Coleman (2015a), (2015b), (2016), (forthcoming a). See Rosenthal (2005) for the *HOT theory*.



panqualityist metaphysics provides a natural home for my theory of personal identity.<sup>54</sup>

What picture of God's person do we derive by conjoining my theory of personal identity with panqualityism? A person on this view is a suitably integrated set of intrinsically non-conscious mental qualities, such as to form a mind. Personhood is merely revealed by, not dependent upon, consciousness. This allows the person of God to span the great mass of non-conscious qualities that, on panqualityism, *form* the physical universe by providing its categorical basis. Though massively distributed, what God's personhood requires at root is that direct causal and constitutive qualitative relations, as described earlier, obtain between *cosmic qualities*—the qualities spread across, and on panqualityism ultimately constituting, the universe. But that the universe, including its most far-flung regions, is deeply and surprisingly causally and constitutively connected is a thesis strongly suggested by our best science, notably by quantum field theory, which posits non-locality as a key feature of universal mechanics. In this view, God's person comprises the interrelated qualities of the whole (perhaps entangled) universe, while we exist as locally coherent systems of qualities. Our persons thus exist in God's person. So do all the mountains, seas, and nebulae, which on panqualityism are effectively qualitative contents in God's mind. Admittedly, God may be, to *our* minds, a strange and alien kind of person: but this is surely the upshot of any serious theism.<sup>55</sup> In this way, the current theory vindicates the key pantheist tropes: the identification of a personal God with the universe, a veneration of nature, and a respect for the account of the cosmos constrained by scientific investigation. By grounding our own personhood in our unconscious minds in the panqualityist way, we are free to conceive of God as both an unconscious universal mind and a person.

## 5. Objections

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<sup>54</sup> The two are logically independent; but the pantheist who avails herself of the theory of personal identity must embrace panqualityism.

<sup>55</sup> See Johnston's (2009) worries about views that make God's person too human-like, and §5.

My goal was to remove a bar to pantheism—the association of personhood with consciousness that blocks identification of the universe with the Divine person. A natural reaction is that this is insufficient aid—for it remains obvious that the universe cannot be a person, or cannot be God, or both. The objector will adduce further properties she considers essential to personhood, or Godhood, besides consciousness, alleging that the universe lacks some member of this set. Though not my primary business, I wish briefly to examine this area of debate, with a view to weakening the natural reaction. This examination should have the effects of i. enhancing the dialectical power of the case against consciousness as a requisite of personhood and ii. refining the relevant conception of God. This refining involves a distancing from some of the traditional theistic attributes. I thus see myself in the same line of work as Johnston, with his rather radical vision of the divine. But I am midway between Johnston, whose God is of doubtful personhood,<sup>56</sup> and the traditional theistic vision: I wish to sketch a *somewhat* alien—non-anthropomorphic—view of minds, such that the universe could have one.

*i. Is the universe insufficiently unified to count as a person?*

Of course it is hard to know what sort of unity is at issue. It might be mental unity, but what is this? If consciousness is not required for personhood, then it cannot be the unity of comprehension by a single conscious perspective. What remains is unity of *content*—the self-standing integration of a single mind's contents. This is captured in my theory by the direct causal and constitutive relations systems of qualities stand in. These relations are what drive the internal evolution of a mind's contents over time—what associationism aimed at modeling. But the causal integration of the universe as a whole is widely noted—not for nothing does Mackie wonder whether the causal chain for each event contains every other event.<sup>57</sup> It is worth remarking, moreover, that the universe as a whole is presumably a possible mental content for some possible being, quite independently of my view. That will be so, for instance, on a pantheism that construes the universe as God's body, and the Divine mind as transcendent. But

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<sup>56</sup> See Rudder-Baker's punchy remark about penguins, in reviewing Johnston (2009).

<sup>57</sup> Mackie 19XX. Thanks to Jeanine Diller here, and for discussion of this section.

then such a theorist cannot deny that the universe has, in itself, the requisite integration of a single (i.e. unified) mental content. My picture of a mind—or self—is, in essence, of such an integrated mental content, with consciousness at best an extraneous feature.<sup>58</sup> Who are we to talk of unity, at any rate, whose material substrates bleed out so vaguely at their edges?

ii. *Without consciousness, is the universe insufficiently mental to count as a person?*

To prevent this objection begging the question against my theory of personhood, let us reframe it as a request for clarification about what mentality comes to on my view. It has been widely suggested that intentionality suffices for mentality.<sup>59</sup> The addition of the thesis that physical dispositionality involves intentionality has led philosophers of dispositions to worry that panpsychism is true. Conversely, some pantheists have gleefully embraced this suggestion.<sup>60</sup> Unfortunately for them, it seems implausible that sheer intentionality suffices for mentality. But it may well be its basis. If there is mentality, then a mind is instanced—this point is trivial and important. A mind, arguably, more than a matter of brute intentionality or content—of something merely standing for something else—involves *organisation* of content. What seems right in Russell’s mnemonic criterion is that a mind is a grouping of contents such that it can *be something to itself*, in principle and over time. Consciousness is clearly one way for a series of contents to be something to itself—hence consciousness suffices for mentality. But another route to *something to itself-ness* is memory, which requires in turn a stable organisation and integration of contents—e.g. based on the aforementioned direct qualitative causal/constitutive relations. But all this the panqualityist universe has in abundance.<sup>61</sup>

iii. *Persons have purposes—notably, the Divine person. The universe has no purpose. Therefore the universe is no person, and straightforwardly is not God.*

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<sup>58</sup> Another option, shorn of its useless panpsychism, is Bauer’s (2018) ingenious use of a powers ontology to portray a suitably unified universe.

<sup>59</sup> Influentially by Brentano (1895).

<sup>60</sup> Pfeifer (2016), Bauer (2018)—this is wrongheaded of pantheists, I suggested earlier.

<sup>61</sup> Cf. Hartshorne (1965: 293). Especially when one grounds intentionality in qualitative character, as per my consciousness-free version of the phenomenal intentionality thesis (Coleman MS, Kriegel 2011, Pitt 2004).

Yet even theistic accounts wherein God transcends the universe often hold that the left-behind universe has a teleology. A pantheist can adopt this idea, while dragging God back into the world. It might be objected that in such cases the teleology is *external*: transcendent God provides the universe with an end that, in itself, it lacks. So an intrinsic teleology is needed. Berkeley seems to hold that the universe possesses an intrinsic order, since he has Euphranor argue that we can read a literal Divine *language* in the world and its carefully arranged causal laws—those conducive to the flourishing of subordinate beings like ourselves.<sup>62</sup> The pantheist could take hold of this idea while shaking off any commitment to God's transcendence. Nagel argues,<sup>63</sup> from an atheistic perspective, that the universe features an irreducible teleological element, to account for evolutionary progress. Again, this is an idea worth exploring for pantheists. And if, as I have maintained, the universe may well be a mind, then this teleology implicates *a mind's ends*.

iv. *Persons act. The universe cannot act. Therefore the universe is not a person.*

Yet is it so clear that a person must act, must be capable of acting, even of thinking of acting? Strawson's weather-watchers are completely inert persons, to whom the idea of overt action never occurs.<sup>64</sup> True, they have mental-action dispositions—notably, to think about the weather. But we can imagine them as wholly passive perusers of the weather, and their thoughts, if any, as involuntary. *None* of this threatens their personhood. More broadly action—perhaps also consciousness—may be the accretions exclusively of minds who are *less than all*. Only in contradistinction to a—possibly hostile—environment might it be necessary to intervene in that environment, which may in turn require an executive level of awareness of one's mental contents. We might see God, tranquilly, as above such things. Instead of *acting upon* it, God sustains and develops the universe by the more elegant means of *being* it.

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<sup>62</sup> *Alciphron*. Cf. Johnston (2009: 117).

<sup>63</sup> Nagel 2012.

<sup>64</sup> Strawson 1994.

v. You stressed naturalism in rejecting panpsychist aid for pantheists. But your own 'panqualityism' spreads qualities like those we experience throughout the cosmos. Is that not equally non-naturalistic?

There is this much truth in pantheism's 'problem' with God's person: if the universe is taken as *exhaustively* characterisable by the purely structural descriptions of science, no room remains for the divine person.<sup>65</sup> This parallels the observation, in philosophy of mind, that if the brain is taken as exhaustively characterisable by the purely structural descriptions of science, no room remains for qualitative consciousness. Fortunately, physics's overt structurality precisely invites the insertion of a metaphysical supplement—a ground for physical dispositions. The question only concerns how immodest a posit to insert. Now, whatever panpsychism's credentials as a theory of consciousness, I say the pantheistic line of sober naturalistic wonder is crossed once we attribute consciousness to the universe *en masse*. One cannot then look at a sunset the same! By contrast, naïve realism attributes qualities to the perceptible physical world while retaining impeccable naturalistic credentials. Panqualityism is thus more restrained than panpsychism, hence more appropriate for pantheists.

vi. Dilemma: *If your 'intrinsically unconscious qualities' are mental properties, then this is panpsychism after all. But if they are not, they do not constitute a mind, hence no divine mind.*

As stressed above, mentality is a matter of a certain, roughly memory-subserving, organisation, which I have underpinned using direct qualitative relations. The way through the dilemma is that qualities are not intrinsically mental (hence no panpsychism) but are so only as suitably organised. On the hypothesis that the universe features the relevant sort of organisation, it is a mind, though not *irreducibly*—even if eternally—mental.

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<sup>65</sup> In the first sense of fn 52.

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