

# Our Epistemic Access to Intrinsic Properties

*Towards a Compromise between Epistemic Humility and Panpsychism*

Mohit Varma



MA thesis in Philosophy, FIL4090

Associate Professor, Sebastian Watzl

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# Summary

The MA thesis takes on the task of asking the question whether we can have knowledge of the identities of intrinsic properties in substances. First I look at why we should even question our knowledge of the intrinsic properties in objects. And then, I inquire into what it would mean to have knowledge of an intrinsic property. The main two views I consider in the context of this question are epistemic humility: The view that claims we are ignorant of the intrinsic properties in objects. And, panpsychism: The view that we can know the intrinsic phenomenal properties through introspection.

I weigh on the arguments that the two main defenders of the epistemic humility theses propose up against our ordinary conception of having epistemic access to intrinsic properties. Then, I propose that there may still be a way out of the predicament that Langton (1998) with her Kantian Humility and Lewis (2009) with his Ramseyan Humility puts us in. By inquiring into knowledge of properties of qualia through introspection, we may be able to save ourselves from being in principle ignorant of these intrinsic properties.

I consider what other philosophers such as Raamy Majeed (2013), (2017) have to say in this debate and try to weigh up the arguments given for both sides of the debate. I propose to offer a way of compromise between the two views that may solve some of the problems that both epistemic humility and panpsychism may face, both in the department of metaphysics and in philosophy of mind. Hopefully, there is something to be gained by such a compromise.



# Acknowledgements

I would like to thank my mentor Sebastian Watzl for helping me throughout the semesters since Fall of 2016, and guiding me to form my thesis question. I am indebted to the countless meetings and comments that helped improving the content and quality of the thesis by a great margin, and for showing great patience in helping to form my ideas and arguments throughout the reading and writing process. This could not have been made possible without him, and for that I am grateful for having him as my mentor.





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# Introduction

In this Master's Thesis I ask the question whether we have knowledge of the intrinsic properties of objects or not. I will more specifically focus on the view known as Epistemic Humility. And, I will mainly consider panpsychism as a view that can offer a way to avoid the conclusion epistemic humility proposes. More will be said about these two views later on. Now, Rae Langton (1998) and David Lewis (2009) who propose two variations of an epistemic humility thesis have cast doubt on our knowledge of the intrinsic properties in objects. And the literature has recently increased in this area of discussion. Expanding with Langton (2004), Schaffer (2005), Whittle (2006), Locke (2009), Kelly (2013), Raamy Majeed (2017) and Yates (2018). Epistemic Humility is basically the view that offers silence on the identities of the intrinsic properties in objects. But, that doesn't mean we cannot know there are intrinsic properties in the world, rather, we do not know which intrinsic property is had by what object. Therefore, the conclusion is that if we do not know the identities of the intrinsic properties in those objects. Then there is something we are missing out on regarding the reality of this world in our everlasting quest to quench our thirst for more knowledge.

What does it mean to have knowledge of the identities of intrinsic properties? It means that we not only know that there exist intrinsic properties in the world, but we have epistemic access to the identities of those properties. In other words, knowledge of intrinsic properties requires – by the aforementioned understanding – knowledge of a token intrinsic property. Knowledge of a token intrinsic property simply means we have knowledge of the identity of a particular intrinsic property. This means that we know the identity of 'this' or 'that' intrinsic property of a particular thing or object. Also, I will implicitly use the sentence 'knowledge of intrinsic properties' or similar to mean 'knowledge of the identities of intrinsic properties'. The two sentences will be understood as equivalent.

Our epistemic access to the identities of intrinsic properties is exactly what the epistemic humility thesis claims we do not have. The following question that arises is: why we should believe we are ignorant of those intrinsic properties in the first place? Given, we intuitively conceive mass or shape as intrinsic for instance, properties which we clearly have epistemic access to.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> I do not mention the properties of color because of their ambiguous status as a property to begin with. One can understand color as intrinsic because it's something an object has in virtue of itself, and yet it can be understood

I will therefore in Chapter **I** consider what the definition of an intrinsic property is (as understood by Langton and Lewis). Then, in section **2**, I will go on to look at views such as structuralism that question whether there may even be intrinsic properties to begin with. After that I will consider several other distinctions between the term intrinsic (as defined in the first section) in relation to other terms that may be conflated with intrinsic. In section **4**, I will consider the three main possible answers to our question about whether we have epistemic access to the identities of intrinsic properties in objects or not.

In Chapter **II** of this thesis I will present Langton's Kantian Humility in detail, and look at what her arguments are for interpreting Kant the way she does. In section **1** I will offer my rough reading and presentation of Kant's transcendental philosophy in a general outline. Section **2** will introduce the reason for why Langton offers her interpretation of Kant, and what her motive for doing so is. Then, I will dedicate a section each for each of the three main premises for the Kantian Humility thesis she provides us with. At the end in section **6**, I will look at her conclusion and its implications.

Chapter **III** will look at David Lewis' Ramseyan Humility. I will in the first section present the premises for the Ramseyan Humility. Then, in section **2** and **3**, David Lewis' arguments will be considered and explained. In section **4** I will see how he tries to spread his epistemic humility thesis of fundamental intrinsic properties to account for all types of intrinsic properties.

Then, in Chapter **IV**, I will consider some terminology and present the metaphysical view known as panpsychism. Section **1** will inquire into how we are to understand Introspection, and why introspection may offer us a way to know the intrinsic properties in substances through non-ordinary means. And section **2** will consider the concept of qualia. I will offer a first approach to the concept of qualia in section **2.1**. Then inquire into how this property may be intrinsic, and how its definition should be applied in this context in section **2.2**. And,

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as extrinsic because it is a property related to a light source. Then again – as a scientific property – color is essentially the property an object has, that has the ability to reflect light i.e. reflect electromagnetic radiation with a wavelength between 400-800 nanometers. So, that property exists intrinsically in the object regardless of whether there is a light source or not. And in a counterfactual instance where there is light and someone to perceive the reflection, there would be color. But – yet again – given that color is a causal property i.e. not the 'redness' or 'blueness' or any 'colorness' that we subjects would perceive. But, the scientific property that reflects electromagnetic rays in the interval of a certain wavelength, it would amount to an extrinsic property. Where, this extrinsic property is determined causally by other extrinsic properties i.e. spatial relations and energy levels in the atom and its constituents. This is the non-phenomenalistic way of looking at it. But any phenomenalistic knowledge of color would also render it to be an extrinsic property because it is related to the subject perceiver only. Meaning, it appears as red to the subject-perceiver because that property is wholly dependent on me perceiving it, not because the object itself has it intrinsically.

section **2.3** will try to offer the argument for panpsychism through the conceivability of a zombie. Section **3** will present what panpsychism is and the different variations of this view.

In Chapter **V**, I will list up the premises that I grant from the epistemic humility theses and show to some argument and literature from the materialist strands against the humility theses.. Section **2** will consider three arguments from the panpsychist's point of view against the epistemic humility theses. Section **3** will consider some replies from the epistemic humility strand against the arguments the panpsychist makes. In section **4.1** I will consider Raamy Majeed's 'representationalist' argument against panpsychism. And section **4.2.** will look at his argument for why we should accept epistemic humility instead of following in the footsteps of the panpsychists.

In the last Chapter, I will summarize the main points of this inquiry and the points of each chapter and what conclusions were inferred. And I will try to propose a possible compromise between epistemic humility and panpsychism by offering three options. Hopefully, it will provide the reader with a clearer understanding on the concept of epistemic humility and knowledge of intrinsic properties in general.

# Chapter I

Before I can answer the question of whether we have knowledge of intrinsic properties or not, there is a need for a clarification of the term ‘intrinsic property’. What does ‘intrinsic property’ actually entail? And why should it be defined as it is? A first approach to defining an intrinsic property will be by looking at Langton and Lewis’ notion of ‘intrinsicness’.

Then, I will look at the view called structuralism that offers a view on reality where there are no intrinsic properties at all. If structuralism is true, then the whole question of having epistemic access to intrinsic properties becomes trivial. I will argue against this.

The third section will have a look at several terms that may be conflated with the term intrinsic. And some intuitive notions of intrinsicness such as ‘internal’ or ‘inherent’ will be argued to not refer to intrinsic properties, but rather extrinsic properties. The last section of this chapter will briefly consider the three options we then have to answer the question about our epistemic access to intrinsic properties. The answers will be based on the definition analyzed in the three sections prior to the last one. My aim with this Chapter is to give an analysis on the term ‘intrinsic property’ before I inquire into our epistemic relation to it.

## 1. A Langtonian and Lewisian Definition of ‘Intrinsic’

If we consider the most intuitive understanding of what an intrinsic property is, then we can say that a property is intrinsic if an object has that property in virtue of how it is itself. An extrinsic property on the other hand is intuitively defined as being a property that a thing has in virtue of how it interacts with other things in the world. But, this distinction is too simple in providing us with a clear-cut notion of what an intrinsic property is.

The reason why the distinction is too simple is because of the terms ‘in virtue of how something is itself’ and how ‘something interacts with other things’. They may seem perhaps clear at first glance, but upon further inspection they become more and more ambiguous. For instance, something could have mass in virtue of how it is itself i.e. in virtue of a thing being an elementary particle such as an electron. But likewise, it would have – in virtue of it having mass – a certain potential energy. Yet, this potential energy only exists relationally. The elementary particle’s inherent ability to exert or become energy exists in virtue of how it interacts with others. But, if mass equals energy, and mass is had by a thing in virtue of how it

is itself while having potential energy by how it interacts with other things in the world, are intrinsic properties the same as extrinsic properties as well?<sup>2</sup>

Intrinsic property being equivalent with an extrinsic property is an apparent contradiction. And so, it seems that the distinction between intrinsic property being something an object has in virtue of how it is itself as opposed to the extrinsic property which is had by a thing in virtue of how it interacts with things seems to be lacking in providing us with a clear-cut distinction between the two concepts.

Langton offers us an explanation on how Jaegwon Kim for instance distinguishes the intrinsic properties from the extrinsic properties thusly:

an *intrinsic* property [is] ... a property that could belong to something that did not coexist with any contingent object wholly distinct from itself. Call such an object *accompanied* iff it does coexist with some contingent object wholly distinct from itself. So an intrinsic property in the sense of Kim's definition is a property compatible with loneliness; in other words, a property that does not imply accompaniment (Langton & Lewis, 1998, p. 333).

This means that a property is intrinsic when it is compatible with loneliness and doesn't imply coexistence with any other contingent objects wholly distinct from itself.

This definition given by Kim is rejected by Langton and Lewis in *Defining 'Intrinsic'* (1998) because "loneliness itself is a property that could belong to something lonely, yet it is not an intrinsic property." (p. 334). They analyze the term and consider the intuitive idea that an intrinsic property can be had by an object independently of whether it is lonely or accompanied. They also consider the intuitive idea that even if the intrinsic property is compatible with loneliness, it is not because a thing's being lonely that makes it have the intrinsic property. Essentially, this creates a tetragon of four non-necessarily related terms. The four terms here being intrinsic, accompaniment and the negations of those two.

They also put a qualification for the proposed definition which says that it is to be understood as restricted to only "pure, or qualitative, properties—as opposed to impure, or haecceitistic, properties." (p. 334). 'Pure or qualitative' properties here are properties that an object has qualitatively. So, properties such as certain spatial positions are non-qualitative as opposed to the property of being 'good' or being 'red'.

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<sup>2</sup> *Dispositional* properties are such relational properties that tell us how a thing *interacts* or will interact with other objects and properties. The property is determined by its dispositional 'powers' i.e. how it will interact with other things when others things would be present to it.

Impure properties are explained by Langton and Lewis to be properties such as “... voting for Howard (as opposed to the extrinsic property of voting for someone). [and] ... impure intrinsic properties such as the property of being Howard, or having Howard’s nose as a proper part (as opposed to the pure property of having a nose as a proper part).” (p. 334). Haecceity is essentially the property that identifies a particular token object i.e. ‘thisness’ to the object that no other objects like it have.<sup>3</sup>

The intrinsic properties considered here by Langton and Lewis are only pure qualitative properties. And they consider only qualitative properties because the aforementioned restriction disregards quantitative properties<sup>4</sup> to be ‘pure properties’.

They also consider the problem of disjunctive properties, and say that their definition offers only silence regarding those properties – it only divides the non-disjunctive intrinsic properties from the non-disjunctive extrinsic properties (p. 335). Because if we have the disjunctive property of e.g. “being either cubical and lonely or else non-cubical and accompanied.” (p. 335) we see that this property is not intrinsic even though it is independent of accompaniment or loneliness. And even if one picked a specific amount of cases from the four possible cases, and said that it is intrinsic iff those selected cases are possible, it would misclassify the disjunction as being intrinsic.

They apply the term of naturalness and say that disjunctive properties are properties that are less natural than their disjunctions.<sup>5</sup> With this they get the definition for the *basic intrinsic* property which “are those properties that are (1) independent of accompaniment or loneliness; (2) not disjunctive properties; and (3) not negations of disjunctive properties.” (p. 336).

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<sup>3</sup> But take heed, haecceity is not to be confused with haecceitism which is a metaphysical view that proposes the idea of trans-world-identity. David Lewis(1986) explains the distinction thusly: “(5) Despite its name, haecceitism is not the acceptance of *haecceities*: non-qualitative properties of ‘thisness’ which distinguish particular individuals” and continues on to say that “... you don’t have to be a haecceitist to believe in haecceities. I am no haecceitist [one that holds the view of haecceitism]; but I hold that there is a property for any set whatever of possible individuals.” (p. 225).

Haecceitism is the view that a thing that is identical across other possible worlds is the very same thing, which means that the object’s identity stays the same across possible worlds. The particularity or ‘thisness’ of the identity of an object is the same between multiple possible worlds where all its properties and attributes remain. That means, it is the one and the same object that exists in multiple realities, rather than there being multiple identical versions of that one object. See Cowling (2016) for more details on haecceitism.

<sup>4</sup> Quantitative properties are such as mass or spatial relations which can be ‘quantified’ i.e. measured. This means that they are relative to some form of measurement. And because of that, they are ipso facto not intrinsic properties by being measurable. Since, measurement itself is relational amongst distinct objects, a relation a property bears to a hypothetical standard of measurement that is applied e.g. the ‘perfect’ meter in France.

<sup>5</sup> Less natural here means that for instance the property of being ‘red or solid’ is less natural than the property of being either red, or solid. The property of being red occurs naturally (if we allow colours to be natural properties) and the property of solidity occurs naturally in objects, while the disjunctive property of ‘red or solid’ is a less natural occurrence, especially if the disjunction continues to infinite copulas in the form of ‘X<sub>1</sub> or X<sub>2</sub> or ... X<sub>n</sub>’.



Though these basic intrinsic properties that Langton and Lewis talk about are not all the intrinsic properties, other intrinsic properties they say “include disjunctions or conjunctions of basic intrinsic properties; and, indeed, arbitrarily complicated, even infinitely complicated, truth-functional compounds of basic intrinsic properties.” (p. 336). So the basic intrinsic properties are natural non-disjunctive properties that are parts to those disjunctive intrinsic properties that are *less* natural than the disjuncts.

In regards to duplication, they give two further steps towards their definition. The steps are as following:

Fourth step: two things are (intrinsic) *duplicates* iff they have exactly the same basic intrinsic properties. Fifth step: a property is *intrinsic* iff it never can differ between duplicates; iff whenever two things (actual or possible) are duplicates, either both of them have the property or both of them lack it (p. 337).

An example may perhaps clarify what these two steps actually entail. An object  $O_1$  has a set of intrinsic properties  $P_1$  which make out all the intrinsic properties in  $O_1$ . Now, there is another object  $O_2$  which has the exact same properties of  $P_1$ . Now according to the fourth step, object  $O_1$  and object  $O_2$  are duplicates. Because, following the fifth step, they both have a set of properties – that make out all the intrinsic properties in those objects – that cannot be distinguished between them; they are therefore intrinsic duplicates of each other.

They also mention that all other intrinsic properties supervene on the basic intrinsic properties.<sup>6</sup> Though I need not go into the finer details of their definition of basic intrinsic properties, we can quickly summarize what the definition entails. We have a distinction between basic intrinsic properties and intrinsic properties in general (that are non-basic). The basic intrinsic properties are understood as properties that are contingent, non-disjunctive, the negation of a disjunctive property and intrinsic (p. 341). The intrinsic properties in general are independent of loneliness or accompaniment i.e. it is not because of compatibility with or non-compatibility with either properties that makes a property intrinsic. There is also a distinction between haecceitistic properties and qualitative properties as well, or what they

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<sup>6</sup> To explain what supervenience entails, the definition I apply is the one of strong supervenience as defined by Jaegwon Kim (1984). He says that: “A strongly *supervenes* on B just in case, necessarily, for each x and each property F in A, if x has F, then there is a property G in B such that x has G, and *necessarily* if any y has G, it has F.” (p. 165). In other words, it means that a change in the properties of B in x implies a change in the properties A in x. An example can be how a crowd supervenes on the members of the crowd, such that if we change the number of people that are grouped, then that implies a change in the crowd.

call the distinction between ‘impure’ (haecceitistic) and ‘pure’ (qualitative) properties.<sup>7</sup> Our concern is how we may have knowledge of these properties.<sup>8</sup>

But, before I go on further inquiring into other terms that may be conflated with intrinsicness, I will consider structuralism. I will see how this view may very well render the question regarding our knowledge of intrinsic properties pointless, and how we may avoid this.

## 2. Structuralism as a Problem

Let us first look at the reason for the genesis of structuralism as a metaphysical view before we consider how it may pose a problem to our question. Structural realism commits us only to the mathematical and structural content of our scientific theories (Ladyman, 2016). The reason for this is it so avoid skepticism and anti-realism regarding scientific objects, while also not having to fully commit to scientific realism either. It is a way to deal with the argument of theory change which is as following: We know from history that previous scientific theories have been rebutted because they were inadequate in describing nature compared to newer scientific theories. Therefore, by induction, we know that one day our current scientific theories will have a paradigm shift of their own where the newer scientific theory will be a truer description of our nature.

Because of this problem, the argument for structural realism is as following:

The structuralist solution to this problem is to give up the attempt to learn about the nature of unobservable entities from science. The metaphysical import of successful scientific theories consists in their giving correct descriptions of the structure of the world. Theories can be very different and yet share all kinds of structure. The task of providing an adequate theory of approximate truth that fits the history of science and directly addresses the problem of ontological continuity has hitherto defeated realists, but a much more tractable problem is to display the structural commonalities between different theories. Hence, a form of realism that is committed only to the structure of theories might not be undermined by theory change (Ladyman, 2016).

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<sup>7</sup> They also talk about intrinsic relations and what not in their paper, but that is not our concern here though. See chapter VIII in Langton & Lewis (1998) for more on what intrinsic relations are.

<sup>8</sup> Also, the essential and accidental distinction is not actually part of the terminology here, and is therefore not mentioned or considered in the definition of what an intrinsic property is. I can only give a brief explanation why this distinction is not really relevant. Essential properties can be had by both intrinsic and extrinsic properties, and would therefore create a conflated distinction between intrinsic and extrinsic. For instance, the intrinsic property can be essential to an object’s existence or being ‘there’ in the world. An extrinsic property on the other hand could be an essential property by being essential to an object’s identity for instance. Hence distinguishing between intrinsic and extrinsic properties based on the essential and accidental distinction becomes inconvenient.

As Ladyman explains, structural continuity between older and newer scientific theories makes for an argument for the reality of the structure of scientific theories, if not, for the objects they claim to describe.

It is clear that we have to accept a basic form of realism at the very least if we are to continue our inquiry on whether we have knowledge of intrinsic properties or not without it being a triviality. Though, it may not be necessary for us to accept scientific realism. Because, whether we know or do not know the intrinsic properties of objects may be wholly independent of whether we can know the properties science describes.

If that is the case – where our epistemic access to intrinsic properties are not necessarily bound by our epistemic access to the properties scientific theories describe to us – then we have no problem with people being structural realists. Of course, if they choose to be structural realists, then the question may seem trivial. Because, it would be counterintuitive to claim that we may know the intrinsic properties in nature while also claiming that we do not know the less fundamental or extrinsic properties in nature that scientific theories claim to describe. Assuming science itself doesn't describe actual fundamental intrinsic properties.

The triviality of our epistemic access to scientific properties as a structural realist doesn't seem to affect the question regarding our access to the intrinsic properties in objects. It only does so, insofar we already accept the premise that the intrinsic properties aren't necessarily the properties science claims to describe. This means that if scientific properties such as being a 'quark' or 'being negatively electrically' charged are not intrinsic properties, then we may still be able to know the intrinsic properties regardless of whether we are structural realists or not. Meaning, regardless of whether we accept that scientific properties aren't necessarily real as described by today's science.

But let's say one is a structuralist to the very core, and that not only scientific properties, but everything in nature is structural; why does the question regarding our epistemic access to intrinsic properties interest them? David Lewis (2009) entertains the idea of "an infinitely complex world of "structures" all the way down." (p. 218). Because in that case, there are no fundamental properties that are instantiated, only near enough fundamental properties, since fundamental properties are never structural.<sup>9</sup> Such that:

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<sup>9</sup> To elaborate on why Lewis thinks a world of structures would have more fundamental types of structures is simply because it would seem intuitive. Given that our world is made out of structures only, then elementary particles are more fundamental structures than the structures that make up the chair in my room, because my chair is made up of those elementary particles to begin with. Why it would be an infinite complex structure is simply because of the fact that with an infinite possibility of causal relations that would occur in time – given that the timeline has no end – there would be an infinite amount of complex structures.

...some of the privileges otherwise reserved for perfectly fundamental properties can belong instead to the near-enough fundamental properties that are instantiated in infinitely complex worlds: for instance, the privilege of appearing in fundamental laws of nature, or the privilege of corresponding to universals or tropes, or the privilege if corresponding to universals or tropes, or the privilege of constituting a basis—not, however, a minimal basis—on which all else supervenes (p. 219).

So we would in a way have something acting in different instances as near enough fundamental properties even in a world of structures all the way down.

Though the idea of a world made up entirely of structures is perhaps somewhat a far-fetched view about how reality is; structuralism doesn't seem to necessarily undermine our question regarding our knowledge of intrinsic properties in objects. But, this is only insofar as having knowledge of intrinsic properties simply entails having knowledge of fundamental structures, given there are no intrinsic properties in a world wholly made up of structures. In any instance, a reality purely made out of structures would be an insubstantial world. If that was the case, where would we as subjects come into place? Unless we subjects were ourselves purely made out of structures, it seems unlikely the perceiving mind wasn't something other than a structure. Though, that might yield a type of view where everything outside the mind is structural, while only the mind itself is something substantial.<sup>10</sup>

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And if that is the case, we have no fundamental properties, only fundamental structures who act as near-enough fundamental properties as Lewis tells us. Because, it is in the concept itself that a property is not a structure – a property being something a substantial thing bears intrinsically or extrinsically, independently or relationally.

<sup>10</sup> I'll give an example of how the subject being made out of pure structures may be false, and therefore, why structuralism as a view may be false. We know that the subject is a thinking thing. We know a mathematical algorithm that describes how a system works or a simple formula that even describes how we may stock a card is not a thinking thing. The algorithm has no content of thoughts occurring; it simply describes the structure mathematically of how something works descriptively. If structuralism is right, then we would be equivalent to an algorithm in our thinking, because we could say a set of algorithms is essentially a type of AI that 'thinks'. But, that set of algorithms that constitute the AI does not have any thoughts with phenomenal or conscious contents. Yet, if what structuralism says is true, then humans subjects, the thinking 'I' is reducible to algorithms, the very same that constitute an AI program. But clearly that is false. The algorithms for a program are not equivalent with the contents of the thoughts in the thinking subject. The behavior of the thinking subject may be explained through algorithms alone, but the contents of the thoughts in the subject themselves transcends a simple mathematical formula, and is non-reducible and non-supervenient on them.

It is thanks to a most random discussion I had with a stranger who studied system-programming. His lecturer had said that "algorithms are the study of thinking". To which I denied this statement and argued it to be false. The study of thinking would entail a study of the contents of the thoughts or what thinking constitutes. The study of algorithm does not tell us the contents of the thoughts, it tells us only how the thinking may be done, or that the method to acquire the algorithm requires thinking itself. But, the formula will never provide us with any content or the identity of those thoughts, and hence, we will know as much about thinking as we would if we studied subsea-engineering or gastronomy.

Another problem that structuralism faces is regarding the insubstantiality of what physics describes in its theories. If the world was all structures, then the objects in our physical theories would simply be mathematical equations and theorems. There would be nothing to explain, because there would be no substantial physical thing to explain in the first place, only mathematics that describes the structures. There would be no distinction between the physical and mathematics, since an atom would essentially be reduced to some mathematical equation. Clearly, what we sense and experience in the physical world is something beyond abstract formulas, and hence, why structuralism would therefore be false.<sup>11</sup>

But let's say everything including the subject was structural, what then? Whether we could know reality was structural or not would be irrelevant in this case. So why is the question of this MA thesis of any interest? Well, as we've seen, the question could be asked about whether we have knowledge of the 'near enough fundamental properties' instead i.e. those structures that act as near enough fundamental properties. If that is the case, then as we've seen, there could be structures somewhat parallel to how there are fundamental properties in a substantial world. However, these fundamental properties wouldn't be *intrinsic*, because they would be fundamental structures that are non-intrinsic but still act as those near enough fundamental intrinsic properties. And, if that is the case, structuralism trivializes questioning our knowledge of any intrinsic properties, or in the case of structuralism, 'intrinsic' structures.

Again, if one actually holds the view of 'hard-core' structuralism, then there isn't much of a reply to those people regarding the reality of the substantiality of intrinsic or extrinsic properties. Lewis himself doesn't have a reply to someone who would actually hold such a view either.

And, if a structuralist views the world as being a field of lines connecting to certain 'dots' or 'nodes' which creates a sort of a causal nexus connecting things with each other, then we also have no other structures besides this one field or 'net' that is connected through these nodes.<sup>12</sup> Of course, one could argue that the lines between the dots themselves have a net of structures, and so on to an infinite regression of such net-like structures. But, for present purposes I shall not pursue this matter any further, and I'll leave structuralism behind us here.

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<sup>11</sup> Hedda Hassel Morch gives an argument like that: "If mathematics describes relational structures only, physics is formulated solely in terms of mathematics, and all other physical theories are reducible to physics or themselves mathematical, then it follows that science only tells us about relational structure." (Morch, 2014, p. 29-30). To see more on her arguments against structuralism and physicalism in general see section 2 in the Introduction p. 10-38 in Morch (2014).

<sup>12</sup> Thanks to my mentor Sebastian Watzl for providing me with this imagery for understanding the view.

### 3. Clearing Out Other Conflations

Besides the definition that Langton and Lewis provides us with, there are other distinctions that we need to take into account before we can talk about how we may or may not have knowledge of those intrinsic properties. One important distinction I will make is between intrinsic and internal properties. There are perhaps two main ways to understand what internal would mean regarding properties. It can be understood as something spatially internal, or it can be understood as internal in a metaphysical conception. Spatially internal properties would be properties such as being the nucleus of an elementary particle for instance. While metaphysically internal properties could be mental<sup>13</sup> properties for instance that are not conceived spatially or even necessarily temporally.

Let us consider spatially internal properties first. Spatially internal properties are not intrinsic because they are related spatially to something other than themselves. It is in a sense ironic given that – for something to be internal – it has to be related to something other than itself to begin with. It is in effect internal ‘to’ something, or as we may say, in relation to something distinct from itself in space. Essentially, its existence implies that there is something necessarily outside it ‘there’ that is not internal and, therefore, comes into a relation with that ‘something’ which is not internal.

The metaphysical intrinsic properties would be regarded as non-intrinsic in several ways. One way which depends on our preconception of the mind and mental properties would argue that these properties supervene on the physical neurological properties in the brain, and are hence not intrinsic.<sup>14</sup> Another way to conceive the mental properties as non-intrinsic is by understanding them as relational to something distinct from itself in the general sense. So for instance the mental property ‘an idea of a horse’ is such a property that would relate to the object horse, whether the concept is a token or a type. If mental properties are understood simply as primitive cognition or cognitive ideas had by the subject, then that again relates to

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<sup>13</sup> Keep in mind that I am not talking about *phenomenal* properties here, but only considering mental properties. I distinguish between the two and apply this distinction throughout the thesis. Phenomenal properties are to be understood as non-material properties that are also non-reducible to material properties. They are properties that have a qualitative *feel* to them. See especially section 1.2 and 1.3 p. 11-23 in Chalmers (1996).

<sup>14</sup> The reason why the neurological properties in the brain are not intrinsic is simply because they are physical extrinsic properties that exist internally in the body. Hence, if mental properties supervene on the neurological properties in the brain – then, by the fact that the neurological properties are extrinsic – the mental properties would also be extrinsic as well.

something distinct from itself, namely the object of that cognitive activity.<sup>15</sup> So, unless one was an ontological dualist, the conception of independent mental substances i.e. objects with only mental properties would seem like a far-fetched impossibility (meaning the mental substances being an object with intrinsic properties only i.e. mental properties).

Having made clear the conflation between intrinsic and internal to be a fallacy, we can also consider the distinction between intrinsic and inherent as well. I propose that we may define inherent to be those properties that an object has necessarily to its being or *general-identity* as I will call it. General-identity is to be understood as extrinsic properties that a thing has necessarily to its being identified in the category of that thing. So properties an object has that non-haecceitistically, but persist in the object or are essential to its being a thing in a general category would be ‘inherent’ properties.<sup>16</sup>

So, properties that are general and essential to a thing’s being are inherent properties. We can call these properties *general-essential* properties. A thought experiment should suffice to elaborate on this. Let’s say we have two wholly identical red cubes on the same table. Now, given that they are identical, the only thing distinguishing them from each other are the spatial properties in relation to their position on the table. But, given that those spatial properties are

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<sup>15</sup> What I mean by the idea relating to something else or the subject is that the idea is related to an object that the idea is about. Take for instance the example I gave about ‘an idea of a horse’. That idea as a property relates to the object horse and the subject having it. While for instance an idea about oneself would relate to the subject having the idea in a manner that may be considered this way: a subject *S* has an idea *I* which relates to the subject *S* objectively i.e. to the subject independent of that idea. Imagine yourself, if you had the idea that you were a Martian (which any person can have the idea of, and no person is, so this applies to any reader that may read this), then you right now would relate that idea as a property in you to yourself as independent of that idea. Meaning, not being you as you are now, but the Martian you would be if you were one. Some could argue that this is only a relation between an actual object and a possible object, where the possible object is the object of whatever the idea is about. But a relation between an actual object and a possible object should not make it any less relational. The relation is still between two distinct things.

You could also say that you have an idea of yourself in 5 minutes from now, and that would be a relation between two distinct things considered temporally. And if the possibility is actualized, then we have an actual relation between the person after the temporal relation and the idea occurring prior to what you are 5 minutes from now. Essentially, if the idea you have of how you are in 5 minutes is fulfilled, then the person 5 minutes after has an actual temporal relation mediated by the idea to your former self 5 minutes earlier who had the idea to begin with.

<sup>16</sup> An example to visualize what *general-identity* properties entail: consider grass as an object. Ignoring the obvious property of the color green that grass has (to avoid having to debate the metaphysical reality of colors), it has a particular spatial property related to other things around it. But where the token specific grass is positioned is not an inherent property to grass, even if that token specific spatial property was the only thing distinguishing between other strands of grass next to it. Rather, the inherent property that grass has would be whatever fiber properties that constitute grass to begin with, because without those fiber properties, grass wouldn’t be grass. However, these properties are general to all objects that are identified as *grass* or strands of grass. Hence, my term *general-identity*, which I introduce to label inherent properties, explains how we may conceive these kinds of properties. Inherent properties are properties that are *essential* to the object’s *general identity*.

the only thing distinguishing them, and hence are the only properties unique to their identity, they are still not inherent properties. Rather, the inherent properties are those properties of shape and color that the cubes have, and perhaps other cubes like them have. And the properties are exactly those *general* properties which are *essential* to them being *a red cube*, without any implication of any token object.

Let us consider the substance water for another example to show what an inherent property would be. For water to be identified as water, it is essential to its identity that it has the general properties of liquidity, contains a vast majority of H<sub>2</sub>O molecules and has an approximate neutral pH value. Without these inherent properties that persist in the water, it would no longer be water i.e. it would no longer be identified as water, though the object itself may have only changed properties, its identity would have changed as well with the inherent properties. This further strengthens the definition about why the inherent properties are had in an object since its general identity as that thing. Since, if those identity-necessary properties change, then the object is no longer the same thing, but a different thing entirely, as it would be if you chop down a tree and make paper out of it (it is clearly no longer a tree!).

So, we've now seen that the inherent properties are by no means intrinsic properties. At the very least, they are not intrinsic as we understand it here in this MA thesis, and as Langton and Lewis define it to be. So any conflation between internal and intrinsic or inherent and intrinsic will hopefully be clear from this brief analysis.

Yet, there is something else we need to briefly consider. In our definition of the term intrinsic, we need to exclude any epistemic presupposition or preconception i.e. defining our terms or concepts out from a pre-existing epistemic relation to particular objects of the concepts. What I mean by this is that our definition of what an intrinsic property is should not be determined by our quantitative knowledge of the token objects that the concept of an intrinsic property claims to describe. The reason for this is because intrinsic properties that we are to consider here are those purely qualitative or haecceitistical properties had by the object. And so, no epistemic relation to any particular quantitative property will ever give us any knowledge of an intrinsic property.

That's why mass wouldn't be an intrinsic property given that it's a quantitative property, which we acquire knowledge of by acquaintance<sup>17</sup> or being affected perceptually or indirectly

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<sup>17</sup> Knowledge by *acquaintance* can be understood as following: "it is a nonjudgmental and nonconceptual form of awareness. Judgments, thoughts and concepts are essentially intentional or representational in nature, i.e., they are about or represent other things. Acquaintance with something does not consist in forming any judgment or thought about it, or in having any concept or representation of it." (Ali & Fumerton, 2014). They also say that "it is a form of awareness constituting a real, genuine relation, a relation that cannot obtain without its relata (the



through scientific apparatuses. But, keep in mind that I am not claiming that there is no epistemic relation that exists between us subjects and the intrinsic properties. Since, if there was no such relation to begin with, then our question – of whether we could or couldn't have knowledge of the intrinsic properties of objects – would be redundant. The whole point is that there is something that *could* be had, perhaps something only a metaphysical being such as a God could have; something that we *do* not have. That is what epistemic humility claims.

A last thing to consider regarding intrinsic properties – which is taken as implicit in both humility theses as well as the paper from Langton and Lewis and Lewis' paper *Redefining 'Intrinsic'* (2001) – is that the intrinsic properties are material properties. But what does 'material' here actually entail? It is usually understood to be anything that is a 'substance' in general. However, are all substances physical? And, are all physical things equivalently material things? I do not equate physicalism with materialism here.<sup>18</sup> But, it is important to note that both Langton and Lewis are implicitly materialists *or*<sup>19</sup> physicalists.

My only suggestion is that the intrinsic properties may not perhaps have to be material properties, given our understanding of material or physical here. But to avoid any further intricacies or complications, I will merely consider intrinsic properties independently of it being material or non-material; if there are non-material intrinsic properties in the world. I have no actual suggestion to what a non-material intrinsic property could be, besides the obvious phenomenal properties.<sup>20</sup> But if phenomenal properties are non-intrinsic, then, we're back to wondering what a non-material intrinsic property would be. I will leave that thought here for the purposes of focusing on Langton and Lewis' notion of an intrinsic property.

The aim with this section has been to further clarify our terminology regarding our definition of an intrinsic property. I've tried to distinguish between what I see as two quite common connotations with 'intrinsic' and proposed alternative understandings of the term internal and inherent which hopefully seem intuitive enough. I have also briefly considered our pre-existing epistemic relation to the objects of the concept we are defining here i.e. the

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things or items related). One cannot be acquainted with something that does not exist." (Ali & Fumerton, 2014). This rough definition should suffice for our conception of what acquaintance here refers to. See section 1. in Ali & Fumerton (2014) for more on knowledge by Acquaintance.

<sup>18</sup> Generally in this thesis, I will understand physicalism to be exclusively a view in the field of philosophy of mind, while materialism will be exclusive to the field of metaphysics only. However, I am well aware that this is a poor way of distinguishing what the two views are actually about. But, I cannot go into a discussion about the semantics regarding the two views and what they should be labelled as and what department they should belong to in any case.

<sup>19</sup> The *or* here can be read either inclusively or exclusively, such that, Langton and Lewis are materialists *and* physicalists. Or, Langton and Lewis are materialists, or they are not materialists, but rather, physicalists.

<sup>20</sup> See footnote 13 in this thesis.

intrinsic properties. And I have argued that a definition of the concept of an intrinsic property determined by a pre-existing epistemic relation based on token quantitative properties in objects is a conflated concept of what an intrinsic property is (only purely qualitative properties are the ones we should consider). We should only define the concept of an intrinsic property on our epistemic relation to the concept directly, not to the objects of what the concept is about or defines.<sup>21</sup>

Next, I will consider briefly the three answers to our question about whether we have epistemic access to intrinsic properties or not.

#### 4. Three answers

So far, I have inquired into our definition of what an intrinsic property is to be understood as. Now, what remains to consider are the possible answers one can give to our question regarding our knowledge of the identities of intrinsic properties in objects. Our first intuitive answer to the question is to say that we do know the identities of the intrinsic properties. What this answer entails is that we have an epistemic access to intrinsic properties by way of being acquainted with them. So, by being acquainted with objects that bear intrinsic properties (in which every object always has at least one intrinsic property) we are in a direct epistemic relation to them and can know the identities of those intrinsic properties.

Views such as physicalism<sup>22</sup> – which is the view that claims that the fundamental reality of the world is physical – would be one view to answer our question with a yes. It tells us that phenomenal properties are reducible to physical properties and all other properties that there may be would also be reducible to physical properties. This is called physical reductionism, and such a reductionism would by implication define intrinsic properties to be physical properties. So properties such as mass would be intrinsic properties as they are the fundamental properties of nature.

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<sup>21</sup> What I mean by that is that our concept of an intrinsic property shouldn't be inferred from a token object that we come to be in an epistemic relation with through acquaintance or some other *direct* means. Our concept should rather be independent of those token objects, and rather *a priori* conceptualize the term intrinsic. That way, we may question our knowledge of that property without presupposing us already knowing its identity.

<sup>22</sup> Keep in mind that I take physicalists to generally accept the fact that we can have knowledge of the intrinsic properties through ordinary means. However, I'm aware that both Langton and Lewis are also physicalists or materialists who argue that we are ignorant of these properties. But, for the sake of showing to exemplar views, I am ignoring the materialists who endorse epistemic humility, given that they are sparse amongst the vast majority of physicalists and materialists.

Epiphenomenalism is another view that claims that phenomenal properties are simply caused by physical properties.<sup>23</sup> Phenomenal properties are therefore non-causal properties, but are existentially dependent on physical properties to cause them to occur.

Both these views have a type of epistemic presupposition which takes for granted that we – by implication of these views – already have knowledge of the intrinsic properties in things. But as I’ve briefly argued in the previous section regarding this type of presupposed epistemic relation,<sup>24</sup> the very definition of intrinsicness or an intrinsic property should be independent of any presupposed epistemic relation to the objects of the concept being defined.

It seems as though that if we claim that we have knowledge of some intrinsic properties in objects through ordinary means, then that would be presupposed by a metaphysical dogma on the nature of ultimate reality. By doing so, we conflate our concept of intrinsic with a predetermined epistemic relation to the objects of the concept. And I suggest that for a definition of what an intrinsic property is, we shouldn’t conflate the concept with our epistemic relation to properties that may seem intrinsic.<sup>25</sup> So with views such as physicalism or epiphenomenalism – given our definition of an intrinsic property and properties such as mass or shape being non-intrinsic (property of color being implicitly understood as extrinsic given its ambiguous interpretative nature) – we are left with no intrinsic properties then. Since matter would really only be the viable candidate for an intrinsic property for views supporting physicalism or epiphenomenalism only. I could mention several other views arguing for knowledge of intrinsic properties through ordinary means, but, these examples should suffice.

Still, there is perhaps another way one could epistemically have access to the intrinsic properties in objects. We could have knowledge of the intrinsic properties in objects through some non-ordinary means. Introspection offers us such a way. Introspective knowledge is a non-causal way of attaining knowledge of something without being affected by the objects we attain knowledge of. Essentially, you actively engage in acquiring knowledge from within your mind. So non-causal properties from within your mind could be attained through introspection, and they would be intrinsic properties.<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> See Robinson (2015) for a definition of Epiphenomenalism and the philosophical discussion around it.

<sup>24</sup> See pages 14-15 in section 3 of this MA thesis.

<sup>25</sup> The problem, as I mention about epistemic presupposition with views such as physicalism or epiphenomenalism, is that they already presuppose the concept of what an intrinsic property is by our epistemic relation to the things our metaphysical theory or concept aims to explain or describe. And, this is being done by inferring from token objects. Rather than conceptualizing what an intrinsic property is before even considering whether we already know them or not i.e. have epistemic access to the identities of token intrinsic properties.

<sup>26</sup> Some remarks on the brief approach made to the definition of introspection, this is the understanding I propose in chapter IV, section 1. I do also consider other definitions for the concept of introspection, and it should not be

Panpsychism is a view that relies on introspective knowledge for their thesis. Panpsychism is roughly the view that for every object  $x$  that has physical property  $M$ , there is a phenomenal property  $P$  had by  $x$ . There are of course several other views arguing for introspective knowledge, however, I will mainly consider panpsychism here.

So what does introspective knowledge actually entail? What are we actually acquiring knowledge of through introspection? Given that many would intuitively consider phenomenal properties i.e. ideas to be causal properties, introspective knowledge of them wouldn't entail knowledge of any intrinsic properties. So, there must be some other type of property that we gain introspective knowledge of which is non-causal and hence non-extrinsic.

Qualia could qualify as such a property. Qualia, which is plural of quale, is essentially defined as 'what it is likeness'. Both Thomas Nagel (1974) and Frank Jackson (1982) talk about qualia and the 'what it is like', and this understanding of qualia by Jackson and Nagel is the bare bone definition I apply to what quale would mean. One could also perhaps extend the definition of quale to pan over to non-subjects or non-conscious organisms, but also inanimate objects for instance such as elementary particles. Given that quale is what it *is* like and not what it *would* be like, we're talking about the subjective experience something other than us would have as it is, and not how we would experience something if we were a different animal for instance. If I were a horse, I would quite literally have to be a token specific horse to have the qualia a horse has, as opposed to imagining myself being a horse while retaining the sense of my own identity that is related to my human being.

But setting aside the definition of qualia, how is introspective knowledge of qualia i.e. 'what it's likeness' knowledge of an intrinsic property? Given that the subjective experience or what it is like something is non-causal – meaning it doesn't have any effect on other properties – it is itself an effect from something that causes it. Keep in mind that qualia is not perception or perceptive experience, it is a pure qualitative property that a subject or even an inanimate object has in virtue of their subjectivity. This is why it is non-causal, because it doesn't affect the subject i.e. any ideas that form from perceptive impressions à la Hume. Though they may be themselves caused by extrinsic properties, there hasn't been any constraint on whether intrinsic properties cannot be caused by extrinsic properties or not. And in the inquiry on the definition of what an intrinsic property would be, being caused by extrinsic properties was not mentioned as a constraint for not being an intrinsic property.

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taken as a given that one must necessarily even have a concept of introspective knowledge for the properties it gives us knowledge about. For now, it suffices with understanding introspection as a means to gain knowledge without being perceptually acquainted with the properties of the objects we come to know.

More about introspective knowledge and panpsychism will be inquired into in detail in chapter IV. I will also go into more detail about qualia and how it is to be understood as a qualitative property. But, if Panpsychism and introspective knowledge doesn't seem to hold in their claim about having knowledge of intrinsic properties, then we need to perhaps consider what epistemic Humility tells us in more detail.

Let us first clarify what epistemic humility is not. It is not the view that claims some type of agnosticism of any type between two extremes.<sup>27</sup> It does not claim that we are in no position to know the intrinsic properties because of some temporal or spatial constraint. It does not claim that there could be counterfactual instances where humans could have abilities that allowed them to know the intrinsic properties either. It does not claim anything close to a phenomenalist understanding of how we acquire knowledge is mind-dependent, and hence enclosed to a certain domain. Epistemic humility does not propose domain knowledge either, where we are simply ignorant because we're not part of a certain domain (even though domain knowledge is probably very close to something like epistemic humility, they are not entirely the same. Especially if we consider Kantian humility where the subject is part of both the phenomenal and noumenal domain,<sup>28</sup> but only has knowledge of things in the phenomenal domain). What epistemic humility claims is the subject's principled ignorance of the intrinsic properties in objects. A possible sixth sense or higher cognitive capacity could not give us epistemic access to those intrinsic properties according to epistemic humility.

In other words, epistemic humility tells us that we cannot know the intrinsic properties. This is the third answer to our question whether we can know intrinsic properties in objects or not. The question regarding epistemic humility is whether this is a cause for grief or not that we cannot know the intrinsic properties in things. And what let us on to the idea that we did know them if we cannot know them? These things will be considered in the next chapter when I go into detail about Langton's Kantian Humility thesis and look at its premises and implications.

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<sup>27</sup> Sven Rosenkranz (2007) offers a view where he argues for how agnosticism is a viable philosophical view that offers epistemic silence on the basis that we're either temporally or spatially in no position to claim knowledge about the given problem or subject at issue. But this is clearly no epistemic humility since Rosenkranz claims that we could eventually come into a position to have epistemic access to those things we didn't before. That means our epistemic access of those things is bound by space-time and related to space-time, but the intrinsic properties we are ignorant of according to epistemic humility is not bound by space-time.

<sup>28</sup> Phenomenal domain is not to be conflated with the word 'phenomenal property' or 'phenomenal' in general. The Kantian term: the *phenomenal realm* will be explained in the next Chapter shortly, and the same applies to the term *noumenal* as well.

## Chapter II

In this chapter I will take on the task of presenting Langton's Kantian Humility in detail. I will consider its main premises and arguments for those premises that Langton provides us with. The first section will therefore give an all too brief outline of Kant's transcendentalism.

The second section will consider the problem of Kant saying that "we have no knowledge of the things in themselves" (Langton, 1998, p. 7) and that therefore, we do not know that they exist. That makes the whole argument for the unknowability of the things in themselves untellable to begin with.

The third section will consider the premise that Langton calls *The Distinction*. This premise argues for the distinction between the phenomenal properties to be relations and relational properties that are related to other things causally, and the intrinsic properties that the substance bears i.e. the noumenal substance.<sup>29</sup>

The fourth section will look at the premise of *Receptivity*. Langton says that the thesis of Receptivity is something similar to the causal theory of knowledge. She ascribes this thesis to Kant and claims that he holds this view or an idea like it throughout his philosophical career.

The fifth section will concentrate on the third premise that Langton labels as *Irreducibility*. This premise rests on the idea that the extrinsic properties in objects are non-reducible to the intrinsic properties. So there is a form of non-supervenience between the extrinsic properties and the intrinsic properties. And the sixth section will look at the Kantian Humility conclusion and what it really entails. Now, let us begin by looking at a brief sketch of Kant's transcendental philosophy.

### 1. A Brief Outline of Kant's Transcendentalism

To briefly explain the Kantian project; we need to have an understanding of what Kant's transcendental philosophy entails. To do that, let us first consider Kant's view on phenomena and noumena. Kant tells us that the phenomenal realm is the world of bodies which are governed by the law of causality. Each cause necessitates an effect, and so there is an infinite series of cause and effects occurring in a deterministic manner.

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<sup>29</sup> Noumenal substance is here a substance that exists in Kant's noumenal realm. Such a substance is not affected by properties from what Kant calls the phenomenal realm which is the realm of bodies and causal necessity. More will be said about Kant's idea on the transcendental object known as the noumenon later on in this chapter.

We subjects are part of this phenomenal realm that is governed by the causal law, and as phenomenal beings we are therefore under the law of causality. But, if we are under the deterministic law of causality we are bound by necessity to act according to this law. And, one of the reasons Kant creates a metaphysical transcendental world called the noumenal realm is to provide the subject with free will. This realm is not bound by the law of causality, but rather the ideal moral law which all purely rational beings follow.<sup>30</sup>

The question is how we subjects are able to follow the laws of the noumenal world which transcends the physical bodily world? Kant answers this question by saying that all rational beings are not only part of the phenomenal world, but they are also part of the noumenal world. We are beings with the capacity of pure reason, or in other words, of being purely rational. This rationality transcends the phenomenal world by not being caused by any physical bodies or things existing in the phenomenal world. However, rationality alone cannot know the noumena i.e. the things in themselves, but, only know their existence.

Our rationality, being a part of the noumenal realm, acts from within the noumenal realm and is a first cause occurring in the phenomenal realm. So if we act rationally, without being affected by any phenomenal relations or relational properties in the phenomenal realm, we are thereby acting free from the deterministic causal law. This freedom is not freedom of choice as many Humeans would think. It is freedom in the sense that it is free from causal necessity.<sup>31</sup> The choice is between acting based on incentives which are caused in the phenomenal realm, or to act based on pure reason alone i.e. follow the moral law from the noumenal realm. And, Kant says in the Cambridge edition of the translated works of Kant's moral philosophy: "[The rational agent is]... free with respect to all laws of nature, obeying only those which he himself gives in accordance with which his maxims can belong to a giving of universal law (to which at the same time he subjects himself)." (1785, 4:435-436).

I could go into more details regarding Kant's moral philosophy, but the point of mentioning this is to show how Kant's transcendental philosophy is connected not only with his metaphysics and epistemology, but is the main proponent in his ethics as well. It also helps us understand what this transcendentalism entails.

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<sup>30</sup> This is clearly an all too simply way of explaining Kant's well known and intricate moral philosophy which is widely discussed amongst Kant scholar's and interpreted quite differently amongst the extreme ends. I cannot justify any explanation of his moral philosophy here given the all too brief space to explain it. But, the basic idea is roughly that we as moral acting subjects are rationally not bound by the causal deterministic phenomenal world, but rather follow the moral ideal world which *transcends* the phenomenal realm.

<sup>31</sup> Again, this matter is widely discussed and interpreted differently amongst different strands of Kantian scholars. See for instance Korsgaard (1996) for a rational reconstruction of Kant's moral philosophy terminology on autonomy and the source of normativity which bases itself on a non-transcendental interpretation.

Because if we now consider what the thing in itself is and that we do not know the thing in itself, Kant seems to tell us that although we are – as rational beings – part of the noumenal realm, we have no insight into the noumenal things. You can imagine that there is a one-way connection from the noumenal world to the phenomenal world through our rationality. But, this one-way points outwards towards the phenomenal world from the noumenal world; we cannot know the objects in the noumenal world, only make their existence intelligible.

To show what he says about his transcendentalism, Kant tells us that:

Those transcendental questions, however, that go beyond nature, we will never be able to answer, even if all of nature is revealed to us, since it is never given to us to observe our mind with any other intuition than that of our inner sense. For in that lies the mystery of the origin of our sensibility. Its relation to an object, and what might be the transcendental ground of this unity, undoubtedly lie too deeply hidden for us, who knows even ourselves only through inner sense, thus as appearance, to be able to use such an unsuitable tool of investigation to find out anything except always more appearances, even though we would gladly investigate their non-sensible cause (1781/87, A278/B334).

This passage shows what Kant's transcendentalism entails. And as with Langton's Kantian Humility, we are ignorant of the transcendental ground for the things that are appearances. But, for Langton, the specific reasons are somewhat different than the transcendental reasons give us in a transcendental interpretation of Kant's philosophy.

In other words, we do not know the noumena, simply because our perception does not transcend the phenomenal realm. That is the bare bone Kantian understanding that I have from his transcendental philosophy. Langton's interpretation of Kant – as opposed to my brief outlook – argues that Kant meant to say something like this. But, what he really meant to say was that we are ignorant of the intrinsic properties of the substances when he claimed we do not know the noumena. Let's now look Langton's rational reconstruction of Kant.

## 2. Kant's claim and problem of the unknowable thing in itself

Langton brings up the old problem that philosophers had in understanding what Kant really meant when he said that things in themselves cause appearances in the phenomenal world, but that we do not know the things in themselves. Because, this causes the problem of us not being able to claim that we do not know the things in themselves, and so, we do not know



whether they exist or not to begin with. It becomes redundant claiming I do not know something that I do not know exists.

Langton shows to Henry Allison in her pointing out that Kant is not wrong in making an empirical claim here from the premises that things in themselves exist. And then, claiming that the things in themselves are the causes of phenomena. Allison, according to Langton says that Kant is not interested in making existence claims, but rather cares about methodology. We are to understand the thing in itself and phenomenal appearances epistemologically. These are not two kinds of things, but rather two ways of considering a thing (Langton, 1998, p. 8).

This way of looking at the problem of not knowing the thing in itself has its downsides. Without taking up too much space, Allison's proposal that there are two ways of conceiving an object i.e. empirically (in relation to your sensibility) and transcendently (in abstraction from relations) faces problems regarding causality.

Langton says: "Allison's idea, if it worked, would make sense of the claim that things in themselves affect us. But it renders false the Kantian claim that things in themselves are the causes of phenomenal empirical objects. If a first thing is identical with a second thing, then it cannot be its cause." (p. 11) So Allison's suggestion seems to bow under to pressure from Kant's own claim about how the thing in itself causes the phenomenal. If the thing was only one object which was considered in two different ways, then those two ways of consideration would be identical to the object itself. Hence, one way of considering an object couldn't cause another way of considering the object as Kant here speaks of.

Langton offers her interpretative solution to Kant's thing in itself by saying that we can consider the thing in itself and the phenomena to be of one world. This is the so-called 'one world' theory. Rather, we can understand the thing in itself and phenomena as two non-overlapping sets of properties. As Langton says "There is one world, one set of things, but two kinds of properties: intrinsic properties, and properties that are 'in opposition' to the intrinsic, namely relational properties." (p. 12-13).

Instead of the previous premises mentioned in the first paragraph of this sub-chapter, Langton gives us a new variation that avoids the problem of the untellable tale.

M1 There exist things in themselves, i.e. things that have intrinsic properties.

M2 The things that have intrinsic properties also have relational properties: causal powers that constitute phenomenal appearances.

M3 We have no knowledge of the intrinsic properties of things (p. 13).

Now we aren't ignorant of the existence of the things in themselves, rather we are ignorant of the intrinsic properties in a substance that constitute the thing in itself. We are still able to know the non-intrinsic i.e. the phenomenal properties that causally interact with each other.

Let us look at what these premises are for believing that we would have no knowledge of the intrinsic properties in things to begin with.

### 3. The Distinction

Langton gives us the first premise which she calls *Distinction*. It tells us about the difference between relational properties and the thing in itself (the noumenal substance). She explains it thusly:

A phenomenon is an object in a relation to something else. The same object can be described both as phenomenon and as object in itself, precisely because the same object that has relations to other things also has an 'intrinsic nature'. If we keep the label 'phenomenon' for the general case of an object in a relation to something else ... then 'appearance' to a human mind can be thought of as a special case. An object that is in a relation to human sensibility is an object that is in a relation: and if we must *in general* distinguish an object as it is 'in a relation', from an object as it is 'in itself' (B307), then we must also in this case 'distinguish this object as appearance' from the object 'as object in itself' (p. 19).

So the 'Distinction' entails not an epistemological distinction between objective things, and things as appearance for us in a phenomenalist sense. But rather, it tells us about a distinction between a thing as existing independently of any relations or relational properties to other things, and relational properties.

Langton also considers Bennett who claims that Kant (as many other philosophers) has been confused and conflated two different distinctions between things and sensory states that are their appearances, and distinction between substrata and the properties they support (p. 25). But according to Langton, neither of those two distinctions is what Kant is promoting. Rather, Kant is arguing that there are two types of properties, the extrinsic properties that the substance bears in relation, and the intrinsic properties that the substance has independently of any relation whatsoever.

So, properties such as matter or dynamical properties such as force are also extrinsic properties. For instance, Kant calls matter for *Substantia phaenomenon*.<sup>32</sup> It may act as intrinsic to some phenomenal properties, but it is still an extrinsic property itself that the substance bears. Langton denies the ‘bare substratum’ reading of the thing in itself on the basis that the bare substratum reading wrongly tells us why we cannot have knowledge of the thing in itself. As Langton explains “The thing in itself is not unknowable in virtue of its ‘bareness’ of properties: it is unknowable in virtue of its having intrinsic properties that we cannot know.” (p. 32).

The reason for denying the bare substratum reading is because of this passage Langton sheds light on from Kant’s *Critique* “Substances in general must have some intrinsic nature, which is therefore free from all external relations. (A274/B330)” (p. 32). This is essentially the same as what is interpreted in the Cambridge edition of Kant’s *Critique of Pure Reason* (1999): “Substances in general must have something **inner**, which is therefore free of all outer relations, consequently also of composition.” (A274/B330). Langton tells us that Kant’s claim is that there is something out there to know that we cannot know; we are therefore missing out on something.

Langton tells us that Kant views matter as an extrinsic property, a *substantia phaenomenon* or in English a substantial phenomenon. This substantial phenomenon is again grounded on *forces*<sup>33</sup> which are properties of attraction and repulsion. Forces are the most fundamental or basic extrinsic properties that a thing bears, and they are causal properties which affect other objects that they are related to. What we are ignorant of is the thing in itself – the substance that has only intrinsic properties that grounds the extrinsic properties. By ‘ground’ Kant means that the thing in itself i.e. the object with only intrinsic properties is the fundament to the extrinsic properties that this ‘intrinsic object’ bears.

Langton mentions that Kant says the pure concept of a substance is something that can only be thought of as a subject, and not in relation to anything distinct from itself. We have no knowledge of the intrinsic nature of that subject because it is not shown to us “which properties belong to the thing whose role is to be a first subject” (p. 49). According to Langton, Kant makes a distinction between the general concept of phenomenal substance and the pure concept of substance. The phenomenal substance is only treated as a substance i.e. it is a substance only nominally and labelled by Kant as *phaenomenon substantiate* (p. 54).

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<sup>32</sup> It literally means a ‘phenomenal substance’ i.e. a substance of the phenomenal world in a sense. More will be said about this later on in this main chapter.

<sup>33</sup> Forces for Kant are roughly the type of properties that Newton has in mind when he talks about forces.

This is why matter is a phenomenal substance that works as a substratum to other extrinsic properties. But it is not an actual substance, because it is a property of an absolute subject a.k.a. the pure concept of a substance which is independent of any relations and can exist even if all other things with which it had any relation were to cease existing (p. 60).

To confirm this interpretation of Kant, Langton looks at passages not only found in the Critique but other works of him as well. The reason Langton explains that we cannot be acquainted with appearance as substances is because we are acquainted only with force. Forces are what grounds matter, but force is not a substance (p. 62). Yet by having the view of phenomenal substance as matter – that only fills in the role of acting as a substance without actually being one – conforms to the Distinction that Langton gave earlier.

Kant says that substance is what makes accidents (i.e. relations) possible. And so, as bearer of relations, the substance must have some independent existence which is free from relations. Therefore, accordingly, must the reality of that substance be distinct from the reality of the relations i.e. accidents it bears such as those of attraction or impenetrability (p. 64). Langton uses this to argue against the view that Kant's phenomena are something that has to do with how things look or appear to the mind, related to idealism. Rather, she argues that phenomena – i.e. relations – have a distinct reality from the substance a.k.a. the absolute subject.

In short, Kant makes an inference about the existence of the thing in itself from appearance or phenomena. Langton says "... relations, and relational properties, imply the existence of independent bearers: substances capable of existence in the absence of relations to other things, having properties capable of existence in the absence of relations to other things." (p. 22). And she interprets what Kant says further on that "Although we cannot know *how* a thing is in itself (*wie es an sich beschaffen sei*), we must none the less acknowledge the *existence* of things in themselves (*das Dasein von Dingen an sich selbst*)." (p. 22). This is to support the idea of how we can know *that* the thing in itself exists, without having knowledge of *how* the thing in itself is i.e. their identities.

So we have the first premise which says: "*Distinction*: Things in themselves are substances that have intrinsic properties; phenomena are relational properties of substances." (p. 20). The distinction simply entails that relations and relational properties are Kant's phenomena, and that the thing in itself is the substance that bears only the intrinsic properties and is therefore independent of any other substances or relations and relational properties.

Langton also considers Kant's own comparison with Locke's philosophy to give some further depth into the thesis of Distinction. She sees that Kant comparing his view to the

primary and secondary qualities from Locke may imply the traditional veil of appearance interpretation.

The traditional veil of appearance view is a type of idealism or phenomenalism where things in themselves are not the same as things appearing to the subject's mind. She says that it may seem as though Kant may be a Berkelian in disguise, saying that the primary and the secondary qualities i.e. color, taste and smell are on equal footing with shape and solidity. Such that these qualities are nothing but representations in us, and this supports a phenomenalist reading of Kant.

She says the phenomenalist reading of Kant is mistaken, that he could care less about what is manifested to the senses, and that the phenomenal realm is not a realm of sensory ideas. Kant is an empirical realist according to Langton, and a scientific realist i.e. that scientific properties are real and not instrumental.<sup>34</sup> Showing to some passages, Langton says that for Kant it is irrelevant whether we can sense objects for them to be empirically real. She says it is a mistake to think "that it is because we would have certain experiences that a thing counts as existing, and being a part of our world" (p.144), rather "it is because the thing exists, and is already a part of our world, that we would have certain experiences of it." (p. 145).

In a further inquiry on the primary/secondary quality distinction, she looks at what Locke's distinction entailed. The primary qualities are understood as non-perceiver-dependent, whereas the secondary qualities are perceiver-dependent. There are also tertiary qualities that are understood as powers that do not affect the perceiver directly but, other objects that can still produce in the perceiver distinct ideas of that object. Yet, the secondary and tertiary powers are not to be understood as subjective properties but more generally as relational properties (p. 150.). According to Langton, primary qualities are the intrinsic properties.

Langton says that the Kantian scientific properties are what the tertiary qualities are in the Lockean distinction. And the similarities between them are that properties such as impenetrability, solidity, repulsion or attraction are not intrinsic properties but, rather powers that are relations. Such that the Locke described here is not the one that has the veil of appearance view, but one that according to Langton shares the thought of Humility with Kant and is an empiricist. Kant's own comparison with Locke may make some sense after all, "but not at all in the way we first supposed" (p. 161).

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<sup>34</sup> Briefly explained, scientific realism tells us that the properties that science describes are really the properties that are *out there* in the real world. While scientific properties being instrumental would mean that the properties described by science are unreal. Rather, they are simply properties that do explanatory work of describing phenomena in the real world, but there are no such things as there really being things such as 'quarks' or 'electrons' in the real world.

Langton looks further into the primary and secondary quality distinction attributed to Kant. She considers Bennett's argument about a size-blind person which promotes the view that "secondary quality is a *power* to produce in *something else* an *idea*." (p. 164). Still, Langton remarks on the fact that Bennett implies that the primary qualities are dispositional and relational. She says that the distinction Bennett made is not between primary and secondary qualities, but rather between the secondary and tertiary qualities.<sup>35</sup>

Later on she looks at Kant's view on space to get a clearer picture on the quality distinctions. "Space provides a system of formal relations" (p.168) meaning that space without anything to fill it, is nothing on its own. Objects must coexist together in a community in this space, and that can only happen if they are interacting with each other dynamically. For Kant, a material thing is not a space-occupier but a space-filler, because a mere geometrical figure could in principle occupy space (p. 171). For Kant, the space-filling property is impenetrability and not solidity as it is for Locke and Newton.

Langton considers a passage where Kant makes a complaint against Newton's mechanism and holding solidity as an intrinsic property. Because as Kant has said, "... from the mere existence of a thing, with its intrinsic properties, no conclusions follow about how that thing will relate to other things." (p.173-4). Impenetrability does not follow logically from solidity. Either the connection between solidity and impenetrability is necessary or it is contingent. And Kant's point according to Langton is to show that the connection is contingent.

In contrast to the contemporary Humean orthodoxy according to Langton, it is not the intrinsic properties that are the causally active features of the world. Rather, it's the powers that have the necessary connection with its effect which are extrinsic properties. The problem though with the contemporary view on intrinsic properties is that they are supposed to explain something. They are the causes to the physical relations, yet the causes are non-physical that physics cannot explain (p. 180).

She also considers other philosophers such as Gareth Evans regarding their view on the primary and secondary quality distinction. This time to point out that for Kant according to Langton; "intrinsic properties do not have a role to play in science" (p. 184) which is to argue that the tertiary qualities can do all the work when it comes to scientific properties, because the tertiary qualities are in the phenomenal world. She concludes "that the *intrinsicness* of primary qualities seems to be quite irrelevant" (p. 185) when it comes to the task of fulfilling the role associated with science and objectivity.

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<sup>35</sup> For the whole argument from Bennett and the counter argument given by Langton (1998), see section 2 of Chapter 8 (p. 163-65).

The point with the comparison drawn between Kant and Locke and the distinction of impenetrability and solidity is to argue against the common modern view of scientific objects having intrinsic properties, and also the view that mass is an intrinsic property. With the understanding of Kant's distinction of primary and secondary qualities provided by Langton, we understand why properties such as mass or shape are not intrinsic.

Kant has already argued why mass is not an intrinsic property, and Langton argues here why shape wouldn't be an intrinsic property as well:

A proper part of a thing is not identical with the whole it is part of: so it is, in one sense, a distinct thing, even if not a wholly distinct thing. If the spatial properties of an extended object depend on the parts of the object, and if a part is a distinct thing for the purposes of Kant's notion of intrinsicness, then spatial properties are extrinsic properties (p. 38).

So given the mereology, a part of a whole is taken to be a distinct thing from the whole; the spatial properties are extrinsic because they depend on properties distinct from themselves (though not wholly distinct).

The shape of a certain object depends on extended parts that are partly distinct from the shape itself, thus making shape an extrinsic property accordingly. A shape basically supervenes on its extended parts, and is necessarily dependent on those non-wholly distinct parts i.e. various extended finite vectors in space that constitute the shape of a thing.<sup>36</sup> Next, we'll consider the premise of Receptivity and see what arguments Langton provides us.

## 4. Receptivity

The thesis for Receptivity is as following: "*Receptivity*: Human knowledge depends on sensibility, and sensibility is receptive: we can have knowledge of an object only in so far as it affects us." (p. 23). Roughly, it is the thesis that tells us our knowledge of things depends on our senses. And "To say that knowledge of things depends on the senses is to say that it

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<sup>36</sup> An example to illustrate this: We have ourselves a dice which has the form of a perfect cube let's say. The shape of the cube is made out of different parts which all have their particular extended finite vectors in space, and different positions in space. Each extended line that is part of the cube is a non-wholly distinct part, and is related to the whole i.e. the cube, thus making shape an extrinsic property as opposed to an intrinsic property as we'd intuitively understand it. For a further discussion regarding this look at chapter 2.1 in Marshall & Weatherston (2018). And, you may also check out Chapter 2 in Mereology in Varzi (2016). For an argument against shape as an intrinsic property, see Skow (2007).

depends on our being *affected* by things.” (p. 22). And to be affected by things is to have those things be in a causal relation to us in which we intuit them with our sense-perception.

Langton also mentions that for Kant “The basic fact about sensibility, in Kant’s view, is that it is *passive*, a capacity to be affected by things. His notion of sensibility is essentially a causal notion.” (p. 44). So for Kant, having knowledge of things is by being causally affected by them, and this is a necessary condition for knowledge.

But, Langton remarks that Kant’s idea of Receptivity that he shows us here is nothing like the phenomenalism which promotes the idea of the existence of sense-data where causality and the passivity of the senses are trivial matters or meaningless.<sup>37</sup> Langton says that:

Such a phenomenalism would admit that something is given to the senses, but admits no passive sensibility. It would admit that something is given to the senses without thereby admitting that something *affects* the senses. It does not go without saying that an empiricist presumption must express itself in a *causal* thesis like that of Receptivity. Kant’s endorsement of Receptivity, taken on its own, would yield a particular kind of empiricism: something that more closely resembles a causal theory of knowledge than phenomenalism (p. 45).

So, Receptivity is something close to what is postulated in the causal theory of knowledge.

The causal theory of knowledge is the theory that we acquire knowledge of things by being causally affected by the objects we are acquainted with. And for Kant according to Langton:

The most fundamental fact about our intuition is that it is receptive: our way of intuiting is dependent upon the existence of the object, and so it is ‘possible only if the subject’s faculty of representation is affected by that object’. Kant says that ‘our intuition can never be other than sensible, that is, it contains only the way in which we are affected by object’ (A51/B75) (p. 46).

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<sup>37</sup> For a phenomenalist, the question regarding the senses being active or passive becomes somewhat redundant when knowledge of things is mere sense-data, a sort of local idealism where knowledge of things is simply the appearances we perceive. So it is mere sense-data of those phenomena or appearances we have knowledge of, and we know nothing beyond the objects as they are in themselves or the objects with extrinsic properties as they are independent of a subject-perceiver.

This distinction here is an important one to notice, because what the phenomenalist would regard as a thing in itself is simply the thing being independent of a subject-perceiver, rather than a thing being independent of extrinsic properties i.e. relations and relational properties of any kind. So for a phenomenalist, we do not know what the sun is actually like, what our car is actually like, what the pyramids in Egypt are actually like independent of a subject-perceiver. But according to Langton’s interpretation of Kant, we know what all these things are; we simply do not know what their intrinsic nature is like, when we strip these objects of their extrinsic properties.



Essentially, we intuit objects distinct from ourselves by being causally affected by those objects that affect our sensibility.

Kant goes even further with his theory of Receptivity and says that the mind itself is causally affected, that we have knowledge of the mind itself in this fashion: “If the capacity of becoming self-conscious is the capacity of seeking out (apprehending) what lies in the mind, the mind must affect itself ...it then intuits itself ...as it is affected by itself, therefore as it appears to itself, not as it is (B69).” (p. 46). Langton’s aim is to show how committed Kant is to the thesis of Receptivity, though she herself doesn’t offer any thoughts on the implications and problems with what Kant says here.<sup>38</sup>

The principle of Succession further encourages the thought had by Kant regarding our mind. According to Langton “Kant says that properties intrinsic to a substance cannot on their own give rise to new and different properties of that substance.” (p. 105). Rather it is the extrinsic causal properties that make changes occur in the substance. This principle of Succession that Langton calls it is simply the principle of continuous change. Change is successive and the causal interaction occurs in this fashion.

Because with this principle of successive causal change, he can explain how the mind is to have thoughts by being causally affected by bodies. Langton explains how this also refutes any idealism ascribed to Kant:

As a matter of empirical fact we have a changing succession of ideas. This change would be impossible unless we were in real causal nexus with other things. This nexus of causes, of external relations of forces, is identical with the realm of physical bodies in motion. Hence our changing succession of ideas is the result of commerce with physical bodies. So idealism is false. Moreover, since thought requires a succession of internal states, if spirits are to think then they need ‘some kind of corporeal organism’; the human mind is thus ‘tied to matter in the performance of the internal functions of thought’ (p. 105-106).

The principle of succession ties the mental activity from the noumenal substance i.e. the subject to something physical or a ‘body’. That means, mental activity or thoughts in the brain

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<sup>38</sup> Let me try to elaborate on what Kant here says. The mind i.e. the subject as a noumenon – a thing in itself and a first cause as Kant calls it – is to have knowledge of the mind itself i.e. reflective knowledge. However, it can only have knowledge of it insofar as it is affected. The reason being that only the extrinsic properties are what cause appearances; these are the properties that causally affect other things. And so, they also affect us, our mind. But, though we causally affect ourselves i.e. the mind as a phenomenon affects the subject mind, we only acquire the extrinsic properties of what affects us. We do not acquire knowledge of our mind as it is in itself, the mind as a noumenon, even though we are as a subject part of the noumenal world itself according to Kant.

cannot occur without being causally affected by extrinsic properties, properties external to the thing in itself.

Langton closes the deal with the Principle of Succession regarding the premise of Receptivity when she says that:

... the Principle of Succession implies that ... knowledge must be *receptive*. A substance cannot have thoughts unless it is affected by another substance. ... If a substance cannot have thoughts unless it is affected by another substance, and cannot have knowledge without having thoughts, then we cannot have knowledge unless we are *affected*. Human knowledge is necessarily receptive (p. 106-107).

Even though our thoughts are affected and caused by extrinsic properties, there is another important point to the premise of Receptivity that Langton talks about later on.

She says that Kant's Receptivity "has the potential to yield an empiricism which has more in common with causal theories of knowledge than with phenomenalism" (p. 186). She says that for Kant, the question is what can affect us receptive creatures. Anything infinitely small is a possible something that can affect us, regardless of whether we are aware of them or could ever be. Kant's empiricism deviates from any other orthodox empiricism in that he rules out colours and taste, Newtonian atoms and things in themselves as objects of experience. By contrast, invisible forces are part of the experience; they are the things that causally affect us (p. 188).

Kant also says that there is no relevance to whether we can sense an object of possible experience or not. He draws a distinction between the contingently unobservable entities and the necessarily unobservable things in themselves (p. 190).<sup>39</sup> Kant even goes as far to say that tiny objects such as Newton's lamellae are represented in our empirical intuition, even though they have not been discovered 'yet' or been made directly conscious or aware of. But the main point is that Kant says these lamellae are already represented in our intuition, and rather, if our senses were finer we would be conscious of them.

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<sup>39</sup> This distinction between the contingently unobservable and necessarily unobservable entities consists in discerning between things that we do not know or experience because of our human faculties that create this constraint on us, and things we do not know in virtue of us being subjects. An example of what a contingently unobservable thing is could be dark matter and energy for instance. There are no human faculties that are capable of observing or experiencing these things that bear these properties. But, these properties are by no means intrinsic properties exactly because they could be experienced if our human faculties were such that we were able to perceive dark matter and dark energy. On the other hand, the intrinsic properties are unobservable to us by necessity i.e. in virtue of us being subjects; we are therefore ignorant of the intrinsic properties in substances.

Langton offers what she calls a “speculative hypothesis” to explain why Kant may be naturally inclined to accepting scientific realism. Because she explains that: “Kant’s thesis of Receptivity entitles him to the conclusion that things that could affect our sensory organs are in principle objects of possible experience; but that surely is not sufficient for their being *already* ‘represented in empirical intuition’, albeit unconsciously.” (194). By comparing Kant with Leibniz’s mirror theory,<sup>40</sup> she says that Kant has a similar notion although it’s a causal notion. She says “If all parts of matter register the effects of all other parts of matter, then any given part of matter will, in a sense, be a mirror of the entire physical cosmos.” (p. 197). This is because of the premise of community where each part of matter reciprocally interacts with other parts of matter, regardless of their size (p. 196).<sup>41</sup>

Langton says “Kant *is* like Leibniz, but like a Leibniz moulded in Kantian image.” (p. 199). This makes Kant’s reading of Leibniz to say that the monad’s intrinsic nature is not physical, but remains unknown to us. This explains the change in Kant’s physical theory, and him abandoning the substantial physical monad. Langton’s explanation is that monads are Kantian things in themselves. They are the substratum of appearances. As she says: “Kant always assumed the Distinction implicit in his early monadology ... and then came to endorse Humility.” (p. 203). Now, in the following section I will consider the third premise that Langton puts forth for the Kantian humility thesis. And we will see how it all fits together.

## 5. Irreducibility

Let’s consider Langton’s third premise which explains how Kant can come to the conclusion of his epistemic humility from the thesis of Receptivity and Distinction. She seeks to find

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<sup>40</sup> Leibniz’s mirror theory explained briefly is the idea that by having insight into a single monad, you are thereby able to have knowledge of all the monads in the universe. This extended knowledge through a single monad occurs because of the ‘mirroring’ between the different monads. So the theory explains how everything is interconnected and is essentially a single thing itself, because all of its parts are mirrors of each other.

Explained through a crude analogy, imagine the monads are an elementary particle like Ag also known as silver. By knowing a single monad i.e. a single silver particle, I know the rest of the monads are also silver particles. From there, I also know that the whole community of monads i.e. the universe containing these monads are all silver. So in a silver bar, I know from having knowledge of one of its Ag particles that the rest are all the same. In the same way, the monads in Leibniz’s mirror theory reflect each other in this fashion.

<sup>41</sup> The thesis of community tells us that extrinsic properties i.e. the relations and relational properties causally interact with each other reciprocally. In this reciprocal causal interaction, everything affects everything, and this creates a ‘community’ of causal properties that co-exist in reciprocal change. Langton says: “Everything that *can affect us* is in principle an object of possible experience. ... everything with which we coexist *does in fact* affect us. ... Everything with which we coexist is therefore an object of possible experience, and ‘if our senses were finer’, or ‘infinitely sharpened’, would be an object of awareness.” (p. 197). This is what community entails.

similarities and differences between Kant and Leibniz's view on the thing in itself and phenomena. She also considers Kant's own interpretation of Leibniz's monadology.

She argues that Kant's Humility does have something to do with reducibility and, that Leibniz is wrong about his view on relations. Even though Kant shares the same distinction between things in themselves and phenomenon with Leibniz, one can understand the distinction either epistemologically or metaphysically. The former understanding tends to give an idealist understanding of the distinction, while Langton says that what Kant had in mind was the metaphysical distinction (p.69).

According to Kant, Leibniz makes the mistake of taking the appearance of things as they are in themselves (p.72). To understand what this means Langton provides us with an explanation of what Leibniz' monadology entails. For Leibniz, the appearances or relations external to the monad are nothing over and above the intrinsic properties i.e. the things in themselves. The intrinsic properties of the monad are the 'foundations' or 'grounds' for the external relations (p. 72). And Leibniz not only takes appearances to be things in themselves, but he also claims that we can perceive through our senses – although confusedly – the nature of things in themselves.

Furthermore, Kant ascribes to his dynamical theory the similar idea from Leibniz that force is a fundamental physical property. By having this theory, Leibniz denies the doctrine of Newtonian mass and Cartesian extension as fundamental or intrinsic properties. Still, Leibniz himself doesn't view force as intrinsic properties, but relations. Kant also says that for Leibniz "since everything is merely intrinsic, the monads form the ... foundation ... for everything else that exists." (p.78). Force and all other relations are derivative to Leibniz; they supervene on the foundational things they derive from or are in relation to.

Further on, Langton looks at what type of reducibility Leibniz may have in mind and considers two types: bilateral reducibility and unilateral reducibility. Bilateral reducibility of relations and relational properties is understood to be between two points, so that at least two objects or things are implied e.g. 'being taller than'. While unilateral reducibility would be one point i.e. one only needs to consider one side of the relation, e.g. if 'being taller' was an intrinsic property, one could be so by only considering one side of that relation. And Langton makes it clear that unilateral reducibility is a stronger thesis and implies bilateral

reducibility<sup>42</sup> (p. 87). She considers Leibniz to hold both unilateral and bilateral reducibility theses.

Langton specifies that Kant's requirement for there being intrinsic properties is not the same as Leibniz's as other interpreters such as Lewis White Beck or Buroker share (p. 101-102). Rather, Kant says that without intrinsic properties, there would be no relational properties because there would be no subject in which those relational properties inhered (p. 102). Kant also says that the state of the intrinsic properties a substance has change when it stands in relations to other substances, where these relations are relations of change or causal relations. And those relations constitute what Langton calls the 'causal nexus', and if that is abolished, there is no time (p.104).

But, by having this view, Kant's principle of succession refutes idealism by the fact that "our changing succession of ideas is the result of commerce with physical bodies" (p. 106). Langton also shows what Kant says about the mind; it is a monadic substance, but not independent as intrinsic properties are from relations, since "The mind would not be thinking at all if it were to exist in isolation from other things." (p. 106). But the point of this principle is to imply Receptivity, since it shows that "A substance cannot have thoughts unless it is affected by another substance." (p. 106).

Kant's third premise which is the main point of this section is "*Irreducibility*: The relations and relational properties of substances are not reducible to the intrinsic properties of substances." (p. 109). Meaning, Kant views relations as something not determined by the power of the intrinsic nature of substances themselves, rather, these relations are superadded by God 'arbitrarily' (p. 108). But, Kant faces some problems considering that the criterion of superadding relations by God is not applicable for bilateral reduction.<sup>43</sup>

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<sup>42</sup> Langton explains thusly: "... if Simmias is taller than Socrates, then the relation ('taller than'), and the relational property ('taller-than-Socrates') are bilaterally reducible, since they supervene on the intrinsic properties of Simmias *and* Socrates." (1998, p. 87). And she says that if they were to be unilaterally reducible, one would have to be able to tell from Simmias alone that he's taller than Socrates, and from Socrates alone that Simmias is taller than Socrates. Or as Langton says "... more accurately, since the point is not epistemological but metaphysical, the intrinsic properties of Simmias alone would be sufficient to determine that Simmias was taller than Socrates; and likewise for Socrates." (p. 87). From this, she therefore tells us that "... if they *were* unilaterally reducible they would *a fortiori* be bilaterally reducible: if they were to supervene on the intrinsic properties of Simmias alone, then *a fortiori* they would supervene on the intrinsic properties of Simmias *and* Socrates." (p. 87). Hence, unilateral reducibility implies bilateral reducibility.

<sup>43</sup> Langton argues that there is no need for a special act of creation from God to add ordinary relational properties to substances bearing only intrinsic properties. Because: "The relational property of being taller-than-Socrates supervenes on the intrinsic properties of both relata, taken collectively: it is bilaterally reducible. So the failure of unilateral reducibility does not imply the failure of bilateral reducibility." (1998, p. 113).

To solve this problem, Langton introduces the term ‘causal power’ to the irreducibility argument. However, since the definition of this term is ambiguous, her initial approach is to say that Kant may view causal powers as conceptual. Meaning, something can have a causal power without pointing to an existing relation, but still point to a possible thing it would be related to counterfactually. However, the conceptual understanding of causal powers implies that it can be had by a single substance intrinsically. That is because it has no existential committed implication to other things or relations distinct from itself.

To amend this interpretation, she prescribes to Kant the metaphysical intuition that extrinsic properties could change while the intrinsic properties could still be the same. This metaphysical intuition rests on the assumption that the laws of nature are contingent as mentioned in the previous chapter. This means that the causal powers i.e. the extrinsic properties are contingent properties. As Langton says “... things could be just as they are with respect to their causal powers—in particular, that if the laws of nature were different, things could have the same intrinsic properties, but different powers.” (p. 118).

So, Irreducibility entails this metaphysical intuition about causal powers being contingent extrinsic properties governed by contingent natural laws. The extrinsic properties do not supervene on the intrinsic properties. The extrinsic properties are what cause changes in the substance, and therefore changes in the intrinsic properties. Irreducibility makes possible the conclusion epistemic humility tells us. In the next sub-chapter we will take a look at exactly what Kant’s epistemic humility implies.

## 6. Kantian Humility

Now, we’ve seen the premises for Langton’s Kantian Humility thesis and what the main arguments for each of them have been. Let us put these premises together and see what the whole picture looks like.

The Humility thesis that Langton applies to Kant goes like this: “*Humility*: We have no knowledge of the intrinsic properties of substances.” (p. 21). This thesis comes out of the premises of Distinction, Receptivity and Irreducibility. All three together implies our ignorance of the things in themselves – or as they’d be called with modern metaphysical terminology – objects bearing only intrinsic properties.

It is a generally intuitive based conclusion. This is so, because the intuitive premise of Receptivity i.e. that we have knowledge of things by being causally affected by them makes

us ignorant of the thing in itself. It rests on the idea that perception entails having perceptual experience of something by being caused by an object one perceives. So, when I see a red chair in front of me, it is because that red chair is causing a visual experience in me of a red chair that I therefore perceive.

But, given that we accept Receptivity on its strong intuitive basis, why is the thing in itself unknown, when the intrinsic part of a thing would also be a part of the causation in our perception? This is where the distinction and irreducibility come to play. The Distinction first tells us about a distinction between the thing in itself i.e. the object bearing only intrinsic properties, and relational properties and relations that very thing in itself bears to other things. Perhaps a picture of what this could look like would help the reader to comprehend what this actually entails. And the best way is if you draw this yourself on a piece of paper as I explain.

If you draw a simple circle on the paper, and call that the thing in itself or noumena, you have now a single substance bearing no relations or relational properties. You may add another substance not so far away from it which also has only intrinsic properties i.e. a single simple circle. Then, you also need to add a two-way arrow colored with whatever color you prefer. Simply use a color marker or something like it to draw that arrow between the two 'substances'. This indicates the relational properties between the two 'noumenal' things.

If you want, you may color the whole paper with these colored arrows between the two circles (but only use the same color you first used). If you draw other such circles and color arrows between the circles you may add so many that it covers the whole paper with colors (except the white insides of the circles drawn on the paper). This colored area is the 'causal nexus'. Every colored part plays a causal role, and it occurs in that space which is now all but colors. But, as you can see, the thing in itself is not colored, only the causal properties i.e. the extrinsic properties, or as they are on your drawing now, the colored arrows.

This pictured analogy regarding the thing in itself and relations and relational properties provides us with the understanding of the Distinction that we've looked at. But you could now ask from this very picture you've perhaps drawn, why is it that immediately when you draw another 'thing in itself' next to the first one, there has to be a colored arrow between the two?

This is where the Irreducibility premise comes in to play and it rests mainly on the metaphysical intuition regarding the contingency of causal powers or natural laws. If we look back on that picture that you've perhaps drawn, and see the color you picked to color most of the paper with. We can imagine the color to be the causal powers that exist because of the particular natural laws that are in this world (the world in the drawing being the whole paper). If you used yellow, then the laws are 'yellow', if you used red to color the paper, then the

laws are 'red' and so on. The type of color used to colorize the arrows is not something necessary to there being *something colored* on the paper. All I said was to color the paper, except the two circles. Now, what color you picked was an arbitrary choice, but the fact remains that you have it colored distinct from the white circle i.e. the thing in itself (given that the paper you drew on was white to begin with of course). And what color you pick is analogically a contingency, not a necessity as with the metaphysical intuition regarding the natural laws and the causal powers.

So, the colors are what the causal nexus consists of, and what color it is colorized in is an arbitrary contingent factor, where the inner circles i.e. the thing in itself on paper remain the same color of the paper you may have used. The fact remains, everything outside the primary circles have *some* color, what color it may be depends on what world we are in.

This explains – through the drawing – the argument for irreducibility, because the inner circle i.e. the thing in itself is not the same color as the rest of the paper which has been colorized. Even if you said that you color the arrows of the circle with the same color as that of the paper, then you may do this experiment hypothetically only, where you draw these circles in vacuum or somewhere with no colors, or simply on glass and so on. The point being that the circles are not colored, because they play no causal role in interacting with other objects, and they are hence not reducible, because you cannot reduce the colored area to a non-colored area or a different colored area entirely. Hopefully this has not made the reader more confused than enlightened with this practical thought experiment.

With everything in place now, we see how we may be ignorant of the 'white circles' on that sheet of paper. Because the last thing you need to draw on that paper is some eyes perhaps just on the outside of the primary circle, maybe some ears and a nose as well. These will be representing the senses in the subject. As you can clearly see now, they are on the colored sphere of that paper, and as Receptivity tells us, we sense and perceive in the *colored causal* area or nexus. With that, we may physically see from the drawing how we may be ignorant of the thing in itself. The drawing that you may have drawn – following my instructions – shows how we are to understand the Kantian Humility in simple terms. Next chapter will consider a different type of epistemic humility and see what the premises and arguments for that view are.



## Chapter III

In this chapter I will present a second epistemic humility thesis called ‘Ramseyan Humility’ by David Lewis. He provides with an argument for epistemic humility based on what he calls ‘Ramseyan’ premises instead of Kantian as Langton does. And the difference with the Ramseyan Humility is that it rests on modal premises unlike the Kantian Humility.

The first section of this will provide the reader with a brief preliminary context regarding the discussion about theoretical terms, in which Lewis’s argument is situated. The second section will introduce and explain David Lewis’ setup and terminology. The third section will look at his first argument for an epistemic humility. This is the argument through combinatorialism or the *permutation argument* as David Lewis calls it. It relies on some metaphysical intuition as well regarding how nature is and the natural laws that are in play in this world. The fourth section will consider Lewis’ second argument which he calls the *replacement argument*. The argument works through drawing on what Lewis calls ‘idlers’ and ‘aliens’ which will be explained in the first section. And the last section will look at how David Lewis extends his epistemic humility to all intrinsic properties and not just the fundamental intrinsic properties as he calls them. I will also look at the implications of his epistemic humility as well as what few words he gives regarding qualia.

### 1. The prior discourse regarding theoretical terms

Before we get to Lewis’s argument for humility, I will first introduce some of the background for the general discussion revolved around this topic. The topic being how we are to understand theoretical terms, how scientific theories change terms from old theories to new ones, and how previous theories are ‘bridged’ with a newer theory. So, we have two main views: Realism that claims objects of science are true descriptions of what there really is, argued by how well science works in practice and the success of it. And, instrumentalism that claims science is merely a tool for predicting phenomena, and that their worth is measured in their effectivity. They say science offers us no objective truth on the ontology of the objects that are described by it.<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>44</sup> There are several types of arguments for the scientific realist, but their core idea is that the objects of science described are the objects that really exist out there i.e. the ontological is epistemically accessed by the scientific

Carnap introduced what has come to be known as ‘Ramsification’ to avoid these starkly contrasted views between the epistemological values of the ontology described by science. Instead, he aimed at forming a neutral position in this debate. We’ve already seen that structuralism was a view that attempted to save some of the realism from the scientific realists, while also denying an outright anti-realist view. Carnap’s use of Ramsification is exactly a type of structuralism. Michael Friedman (2011) argues that Carnap is not concerned with whether the theoretical concepts postulated by science should be taken as real, “nor ... [is Carnap trying] to provide some kind of general “explanation” for the success of scientific practice on the basis of the “ontological reality” of theoretical entities.” (Friedman, 2011, p. 260). But rather, that Carnap offers a ‘structuralist’ neutral position between the two views.<sup>45</sup>

Carnap does this by ‘Ramsifying’ the sentence of a theory which has a set of theoretical terms. The theoretical terms are names for the objects i.e. reference to scientific objects a theory T describes. E.g. ‘electrons’ and ‘quarks’ are names for unobservable scientific objects. Let’s call these names T-terms like this ( $t_1, t_2, \dots t_n$ ). If we Ramsify the theory  $T(t_1, t_2, \dots t_n)$ , we will have it existentially quantified, which gives us  $(\exists x)T(x_1, x_2, \dots x_n)$ .

What Ramsification does is simply have a variable that applies for the object that is referred to by our ordinary language as a T-term. The point in the context of the topic of this discussion this occurs is to explain the relation between old and new scientific theories and how theory change occurs. Because, we have for instance the term *galvanic cell* which is a term referring to the property a battery has. But, battery is also a term that refers to this property. But, chemists tend to use the term *galvanic cell* or even *voltaic cell* to refer to the same thing. This term could be any other variable as long as it referred to the property of being a battery, and that is the main point of ‘Ramsifying’ the theoretical terms.

For instance, David Papineau (1996) remarks on the idea of scientific theory change to not be a change that is paradigmatic in the Kuhnian sense.<sup>46</sup> Rather, when a new scientific theory

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theories. For further explanation on the view of what Scientific Realism is see Chakravartty, A. (2017) section 1.1-1.3 for an explanation of Scientific Realism and section 4.1 for a brief outlook on instrumentalism.

<sup>45</sup> David Lewis (1970) argues for a similar neutral position and attempting to explain the connection between old scientific theories and new scientific theories. He also uses Ramsification in a similar vein to Carnap to deal with the ‘bridging’ between the *reducing theory* and the *reduced theory* (p. 427). Though Lewis’s attempt is to argue that the ‘bridge laws’ needn’t be made independently of the two theories being reduced and reducing. But, we needn’t concern ourselves with that here.

<sup>46</sup> Thomas S. Kuhn sparked a discussion in the Philosophy of science with his explanation of paradigm shifts in science. He roughly argued that a revolution in scientific theories is what shifts the whole paradigm completely and therefore the theory gains a completely new set of terms and offers a new outlook on the world described. These changes are explained as being ‘revolutionary’, so each paradigm shift is a type of revolution, and each change occurs in a sense as dramatically perhaps as a revolution would entail. For more, see Kuhn (1962).

comes forth, they keep most of the old terminology of their predecessors or have a completely new terminology involving sociological factors (Papineau, 1996, p.19). So, when scientists chose whether they wanted to keep the term for an electron to refer to that which plays the role of it, then it was simply based on sociological preferences.

A great example to this is how we tell a battery is charged. A positively charged battery sounds counter-intuitive in modern day physics when the battery is in fact charged up with electrons which are negatively charged. But the previous physical theory assumed that electric charge was 'positive', and that old tradition and term has remained even today. It is simply a mere continuation of the tradition those scientists wanted to follow, and leave the mark of that tradition that permeates time, until a new theory with other scientists would want to completely distance themselves from those terms. So, with the prior discussion regarding the use of the Ramsey sentence being presented here, the reader will hopefully have a sufficient grasp on what 'Ramsification' of a theory T is.

## 2. Lewis's Setup and Terminology

Now, Lewis summarizes his case for epistemic humility as such: "To be the ground of a disposition is to occupy a role, but it is one thing to know that a role is occupied, another thing to know what occupies it." (Lewis, 2009, p. 204). The predicament of epistemic humility is not that we do not know there exists something that occupies a role in an object, what we do not know is *what* actually occupies it.

David Lewis tells us that:

Being the ground of a certain disposition is only one case among many of role-occupancy. There are a variety of occupied roles, among them nomological roles and others as well. Quite generally, to the extent that we know of the properties of things only as role-occupants, we have not yet identified those properties. No amount of knowledge about what roles are occupied will tell us which properties occupy which roles (p. 204).

So, knowing what roles are occupied for extrinsic properties doesn't give us knowledge of what intrinsic property it is that is occupying that certain role.

Lewis gives us a brief explanation of what the fundamental properties and intrinsic properties he is considering here in general. The fundamental properties are to be understood as those perfectly natural non-disjunctive properties on which all other intrinsic properties

supervene (p. 204). And he considers these fundamental and maybe the near-enough fundamental properties to correspond to universals or tropes. By Occam's razor, he excludes all the abundant unnatural properties<sup>47</sup> for his argument for epistemic humility.

Another premise or condition David Lewis lays forth is that: Scientific theorizing and fundamental properties have gone hand in hand.<sup>48</sup> So, if there existed a true and complete final theory in science, then it should also give us a true and complete inventory regarding the fundamental properties that are actively engaged in the actual workings of this world (p. 205). The last thing he introduces is *idlers* and *aliens*. Idlers are the properties that are instantiated in the actual world but play no active causal role in the workings of nature, while aliens are those properties that are actualized in unactualized possible worlds but not the actual world. Having made clear the terminology here, Lewis goes on with his 'Ramsification'.

As we've seen now, Ramsification is basically applying the Ramsey sentence to a predicate or a sentence. And the Ramsey Sentence in its most basic form is an existential generalization of a set of terms to a higher order variable.<sup>49</sup> So what David Lewis essentially does is: He supposes that we have a true and complete 'final theory' T. He says "The language of T contains *T-terms*: theoretical terms implicitly defined by T. And there is all the rest of our language, call it *O-language*. 'O' stands for 'old'; it is the language that is available to us without benefit of the term-introducing theory T." (Lewis, 2009, p. 205-206).

Lewis continues on with saying that:

All fundamental properties, except for idlers and aliens if such there be, are mentioned in the theory T. if T is the limit (perhaps never reached) of a process in which theorizing and the discovery of fundamental properties go hand in hand, then the fundamental properties mentioned in T will be named by T-terms. I assume that no fundamental properties are named in O-language, except as

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<sup>47</sup> We have already looked at the intrinsic properties that are regarded as intrinsic natural properties in the first chapter of this paper. Here, Lewis says roughly the same by excluding the haecceitistic unnatural and disjunctive properties, we are left with the "fundamental" properties that are sparse in this world and which all other intrinsic properties supervene on. And, by considering the properties to correspond to universals or tropes would simply mean that they are not properties that an object has indexically. Rather, they are properties that are few, but universal in the sense that most objects stripped of their extrinsic properties would be identical to each other.

<sup>48</sup> An example for this is how physics has unraveled the building blocks of the physical world. The fundamental matter that all else physical is constituted of. These type of fundamental properties are the properties that have been discovered along with the accelerated technology and scientific theorizing. Before the Baroque, we had no periodic table, and now we know what the nucleus of the atom consists of.

<sup>49</sup> For a more detailed description of the Ramsey sentence and its implications see section 4.1 in Andreas (2017) and also see section 2.3 in Ladyman (2016).

occupants of roles; in which case T will name them over again, and will say that the property named by so-and-so T-term is the occupant of such-and-such role (p. 206).

This means that our O-language i.e. our old language and T-terms tell us only about roles being occupied by something, but never what fundamental properties occupy it.

Lewis also tells us that the *postulate* of T is a sentence that logically implies the theory of T. The postulate is written as “ $T(t_1, \dots, t_n)$ , where  $t_1, \dots, t_n$  are the theoretical terms of T” (p. 206). He says that we can assume these T-terms to be names for the properties, mostly the fundamental properties. Then, Lewis replaces the T-terms in the postulate with a variable so that the formula is in this form instead:  $T(x_1, \dots, x_n)$ . And, he says “An  $n$ -tuple may or may not satisfy this formula, with respect to the actual world and the fixed interpretation of O-language.” (p. 207). Where one of the  $n$ -tuples actually realize the formula is what Lewis calls an *actual realization*, and one that might for a *possible realization*.

The ‘Ramsification’ occurs, as Lewis says, when we prefix an existential quantifier to the formula we have just now considered with the higher order variables. And T has at least one actual realization. He tells us that “What we need to know about the Ramsey sentence is that it logically implies exactly the O-language sentences that are theorems of T. Equivalently: exactly those that are logically implied by the postulate of T.” (p. 207).<sup>50</sup>

Therefore, it follows, as Lewis tells us, that any predictive success for the postulate or ‘T’ is equally a predictive success for the Ramsey sentence of that postulate. And accordingly then, given the theory T has an actual realization, Lewis says that it also has multiple possible realizations. We will see the argument for this in the next section. So, Lewis tells us:

Then no possible observation can tell us which one is actual, because whichever one is actual, the Ramsey sentence will be true. There is indeed a true contingent proposition about which of the possible realizations is actual, but we can never gain evidence for this proposition, and so can never know it. If there are multiple possible realizations, Humility follows (p. 207).

We will see shortly in the next section regarding the idea of multiple possible realizations.

The last thing David Lewis introduces is the Carnap sentence. The Carnap sentence is basically a conditional that says that: If we have the Ramsey sentence of a Theory, then the Theory is implied. Together with the Ramsey sentence, we have this form where T is the

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<sup>50</sup> David Lewis shows us through first order logical deduction that if the Ramsey sentence implies a sentence S in O-language, then so does the postulate. And conversely, if the postulate implies a sentence S in O-language then so does the Ramsey sentence of that postulate. For the logical proof, see Lewis (2009) p. 219, footnote 6.

theory and  $T^R$  is the ramsification of it. The given *modus ponens* form becomes this when we put the Carnap sentence and the Ramsey sentence together:  $((T^R \rightarrow T) \wedge T^R) \rightarrow T$ .

The point with adding the Carnap sentence and having the conjunction of the two is to defend against the argument of why we should believe in the Ramsey sentence of a theory. Because the Carnap sentence and the Ramsey sentence together do the job of  $T$  itself, you can in theory just use the two of them without invoking  $T$  itself. Lewis explains: "... Carnap proposes to take the Ramsey sentence as the syntethic postulate of  $T$  and the Carnap sentence as the analytic postulate of  $T$ . They divide the labor of the original postulate, which both systematized  $O$ -sentences and partially interpreted the  $T$ -terms." (Lewis, 1970, p. 431).<sup>51</sup>

In other words, the Carnap sentence and the Ramsey sentence may well substitute the postulate  $T(t_1, \dots, t_n)$ . Given that their structure is the same, their empirical consequences are the same as well, and nothing is lost.

### 3. The First Argument for Ramseyan Humility

For his present argument which is the argument from combinatorialism, David Lewis endorses the view that natural laws are contingent laws and not necessary laws.<sup>52</sup> He tells us

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<sup>51</sup> I do not intend on engaging in the analytic vs synthetic discussion here, but it suffices to explain what it entails regarding the Carnap sentence and the Ramsey sentence. The Carnap sentence is clearly analytic because it says that the Ramsey sentence implies the theory it 'ramsifies'. So it would be equivalent with an analytic sentence in the form of: "all males are not females" for instance or "If Jason cuts himself, he will bleed". The sentence itself makes it intelligible by virtue of itself, by simply analyzing the terms we *know* them. So, the same goes for the Carnap sentence. However, the Ramsey sentence is synthetic exactly because it is interpreted when seen in context to the world it is applied in. Its truth depends on the "facts about the world that the sentence also represents" (Georges, 2017). An example of that would be: "Some people are irrational" or "Those who work hard do well in life". Neither of these may be necessarily false, and they may be true for some instances, but, it is not saliently implied that one term is the other necessarily. These are the intuitive distinctions at least, for more on the discussion on the analytic vs synthetic discussion see: Georges (2017).

<sup>52</sup> David Lewis talks about how one can show the laws of nature may be contingent and also mentions combinatorialism in his footnotes 11-13. But, one can view laws as mere empirically and inductively derived formulas or predicates that claim to predict future events to some form of accuracy. If one understands the natural laws as being statistical in the first place, then they will be contingent laws, not necessary deterministic laws. But, there are two ways to understand what necessary laws may mean here.

First way a law can be necessary is that it is necessary that the law exists in a given world. So for instance, it is necessary that Heisenberg's formula of the discrepancy relation exists in our world i.e. the actual world. There could not be an actual world like ours without this law existing in it, if this law makes our world the actual world, then it is necessary to that world. This is one way to understand a law being necessary.

The other way a law is necessary is in its prediction. The law itself makes it necessary by what it predicts that things occur in such and such a way. So given Newton's three laws, every instance where this law is applied, the objects in question will necessarily act accordingly to the law. This is perhaps a type of logical necessity than a

that combinatorialism preserves possibility through permutations of items that are more than one in the same category.<sup>53</sup> What this means is that we get more than one instance of a possibility through different combinations. Lewis explains this by an example as following: “If it is possible that  $\neg A\neg B\neg C$ , and if A, B, and C, are, say, all-or-nothing monadic properties, then it is also possible that  $\neg C\neg A\neg B$ .” (p. 209).

Still, Lewis questions the fact that since “The actual realization of T is a possible realization; we permute items within more-than-one-membered categories; and what we get is also a possible realization of T. But is it different from the one we had before?” (p. 209). To answer the question, he introduces the premise of “*Quidditism*” which tells us that the permutation itself is a different possibility. So that two different possibilities are different from each other in their permutation of their fundamental properties alone, independent of whether the realization of T is different or not or what we may observe.

But, we need to perhaps understand what quidditism here entails. I had already talked about the distinction between haecceitism and haecceity. David Lewis provides us with an analogy with haecceitism to explain what quidditism is. He says:

Quidditism is to properties as haecceitism is to individuals. If we start with a possibility and permute individuals, combinatorialism says that we get a possibility; haecceitism says that it is a different possibility. Haecceitism says that two possibilities can differ just by a permutation of individuals. I accept quidditism. I reject haecceitism (p. 209).

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type of nomological connection. In a way, the law necessitates the causal course of action between two or more objects, and that is how this second understanding of necessary law should be understood.

The former understanding of necessary goes against the view of combinatorialism because it presupposes that the actuality of our world i.e. our world being identified as the actual world hinges on there being particular natural laws in that world. While the latter understanding only tells us that if we have that law, then it necessitates the causal course of objects it describes. Though the latter understanding poses no threat, to which Lewis already gives arguments to why they may not in his footnotes mentioned above here. The former understanding of necessary laws seems less plausible, given the fact that there is nothing that forces the actual world to be actual because of its natural laws more than the fundamental properties that constitute it. It would be the same to ask whether the chicken came first or the egg? In our case, it would be to ask whether the necessary laws came first or the fundamental properties that supposedly the laws describe. Intuitively, the fundamental properties would predate the laws themselves, hence, the genesis (if there is one, or simply the instantiation) of the fundamental properties of our world would be the instantiation of the actual world. Though, we need not dwell too much on the matter here, that discussion would need to be dealt with elsewhere.

<sup>53</sup> Categories are simply those that Lewis says are for instance: “... all-or-nothing monadic properties.” (p. 205) or “properties that admit of degree, that is, magnitudes; more generally, there are scalar-valued, vector-valued, tensor-valued, ... magnitudes.” (p. 205). Clearly, properties of different categories cannot be permuted, just as I cannot permute the order of books in a shelf with clothes hanging in the cabinet, those are two different ‘categories’ analogically.

So, quidditism makes it so that the possible realizations of T are distinct realizations just by their intrinsic properties being permuted. Though Lewis doesn't explicitly argue for quidditism, it is accepted by implication of accepting the premise of combinatorialism.

Raamy Majeed explains quidditism neatly: “[Quidditism] ... is a thesis concerning property individuation, which states that properties are individuated by something other than the roles they occupy, e.g. by certain quiddities like intrinsic natures or suchness.” (Majeed, 2017, p. 78). Quidditism tells us that properties are individuated by something more than simply the roles they occupy in this world, a type of haecceity regarding properties, given these properties are uniquely identified by something beyond their simple function or structure.

David Lewis tells us that “To reject haecceitism is to accept identity of qualitatively indiscernible worlds; to reject quidditism is to accept identity of structurally indiscernible worlds—that is, worlds that differ just by a permutation or replacement of properties.” (Lewis, 2009, p. 209-210). What Lewis essentially tells us here is that he rejects haecceitism which says that there's no discerning between two qualitatively identical individuals.<sup>54</sup> While quidditism on the other hand says that worlds that are structurally identical differ (are discernable) by their properties being permuted.<sup>55</sup>

Lewis also argues why we shouldn't accept haecceitism by saying that:

... bilocated individuals are apt to have different intrinsic properties at their different locations. For instance, A may be standing and B sitting in  $W_1$ , whereas in the indiscernible world  $W_2$  it is B who is standing and A who is sitting. How can we make sense of an intrinsic difference between something and itself? (p. 210)

This tells us that we could have an intrinsic “difference” between two individuals who are supposedly trans-world identical according to Haecceitism. But if the person in world  $W_1$  and  $W_2$  exists supposedly as the very same person, how can that person's intrinsic properties differ between two worlds? And that is the problem Lewis highlights here.<sup>56</sup>

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<sup>54</sup> I have talked about what Haecceitism entails in footnote 3 in Chapter I in this paper.

<sup>55</sup> To perhaps elaborate on what this means, an example should suffice to show for our case here. Imagine you're building a tower with 50% grey bricks at the top part and 50% red bricks at the bottom part. Now, keep the structure of the Tower i.e. the size of it, the height, the length and width, and the form the same. Now, if we permute the bricks so that the bottom is grey and the top is red instead we have now made two structurally identical towers that differ in their bricks being “permuted”.

<sup>56</sup> This is an on-going discussion in metaphysics regarding trans-world identity, and Lewis's view is based on his own premise regarding trans-world identity where he looks at the same individuals in other possible worlds as ‘counterparts’. To see more on his arguments for that view, see chapter 4 in Lewis (1986).



Further on he considers a few possibilities that may argue against epistemic humility and the premises Lewis has for concluding epistemic humility. I will consider these arguments later on. But, to conclude this section, we have the argument through combinatorialism that we may be ignorant of the fundamental properties in objects because the roles they occupy do not tell us what property occupies that role. The fundamental properties behind those roles could be different by permutation between themselves, and the structure i.e. the roles being played would still be the same. Now, for the next argument, Lewis aims to spread his epistemic humility to count for not only the fundamental intrinsic properties, but also all intrinsic properties as well. Let's see what his second argument is.

#### 4. The Second Argument for Ramseyan Humility

The second argument Lewis says avoids some of the drawbacks that the first argument had. "The drawback is that it establishes Humility only for those fundamental properties that fall in more-than-one-membered categories." (p. 212), and as Lewis mentions, in the case that there were some fundamental properties where no two of them fell in the same category, they would not be able to be permuted, and we would not have epistemic humility. Plus, the first argument "... makes use of only the most unquestionable of fundamental properties.", but whether this second argument is an improvement or not, Lewis tells us he shall not remark on.

The second argument is what Lewis calls the *replacement argument*. This argument is based on the fact that we can replace the fundamental property that uniquely actually realize T with idlers or aliens. Rather than permuting the fundamental properties in the same category to create possible realizations. By combinatorialism, we get a possible realization (since we permute between idlers and aliens now), and it would be different because of the premise of quidditism (since each fundamental property is uniquely defined).<sup>57</sup>

The question remains, as Lewis asks himself, should we believe in the abundance of idlers and aliens? Considering aliens first, he gives two reasons why one should believe in aliens, given that one already accepts the premise that our world is one among many i.e. in the plurality of possible worlds. The first reasoning Lewis provides us with goes something like this: given the plausibility that it is a contingent matter which fundamental properties are

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<sup>57</sup> To use the tower example again, you have a tower made wholly out of grey bricks. Now, replace one of the bricks with a red brick. The structure of the tower and all else is kept the same, even its mass. The only thing changed was the one grey brick with the red, we've now created a possible realization of how that tower may be constituted, without having the structure of the tower ever change, analogical to the replacement argument.

instantiated, it should be possible that either fewer or more of those fundamental properties are instantiated. If that is the case, there ought to be a possible world where more fundamental properties are instantiated than in our world. And from that possible world's point of view, the same applies again and so on until there is a world where all fundamental properties are instantiated (if there is any such world).

The second reason Lewis gives is as following:

Start with our world. Any of the actually instantiated fundamental properties have been uninstantiated. So properties that are instantiated at our world are aliens at other world. But if there are worlds where some properties are aliens, and ours is not one of them, then our world has a special distinction that some other worlds lack. Why should the world we happen to live in be special in this way? Very likely it isn't (p. 213).

The argument simply asks the question why ours should be special that it couldn't have aliens from other possible worlds and vice versa, and hence that there must be alien properties in existence in some possible world.

The argument with idlers regarding replacement of fundamental properties is as following: Given the fact that the laws of nature could be different, the fundamental properties that play an active part in the workings of nature could be idlers instead. Therefore, idlers are possible. The conclusion is drawn based on the contingency of natural laws. And, we can consider that our world had no idlers and was special from other possible worlds, but, Lewis tells us that is very unlikely that our world of all possible worlds would be the non-idler world.

To defend against actualists who might respond with how we have little reason to believe in idlers, Lewis tells us that the same applies for questioning the actualists in how much reason they have to disbelieve it. Given, that it's a contingent question whether our world has idlers or not. Lewis says: "... can he [the actualist] claim to *know* that there are no idlers? I think not. To say they don't exist because we can have no reason to believe they do exist seems nothing better than an appeal to verificationism." (p. 213).

Towards the end, Lewis concludes that:

If we are irremediably ignorant about whether the replacement argument using idlers establishes Humility, then either the argument does establish it, and it is true; or else the argument does not establish it, but we cannot know that. In both cases alike, we are irremediably ignorant about the

identities of the fundamental properties that figure in the actual realization of the true final theory (p. 214).

So, it seems to rest on the fact that for all we know, there may be an abundance of idlers, and with the replacement argument, we may be ignorant of the fundamental properties. Yet, we may also not know there are idlers or not, and we may not know if the argument establishes Humility. But, then we are still ignorant of the fundamental properties because we cannot know whether the argument succeeds or not. To put it in other terms, we have a higher order ignorance in a sense. We may be ignorant of whether the argument for ignorance succeeds or not, and that just makes us none the wiser regarding the fundamental properties. Now let's look at what implications Lewis considers with his Ramseyan Humility thesis.

## 5. Further Implications of Ramseyan Humility

Lewis considers other properties in his case for applying the Ramseyan Humility to spread across non-fundamental properties as well. These properties are disjunctive intrinsic properties, qualitative properties, structural properties that are finite or infinite and truth-functional compounds. He considers three cases in which these are properties that supervene on the intrinsic fundamental properties themselves.<sup>58</sup> From there, he gives us an argument that shows how this Humility may be applied for other non-fundamental properties as well.

The argument is essentially this: imagine we have a structural property that is composed of a property F bearing relation R to G, where all these three are fundamental properties. Given that we do not know the identities of the properties 'F', 'R' and 'G', we are also ignorant of the identity of the structural property constructed out of them. Now, the properties of F, R and G might for all we know be either the properties  $F_1$  and  $F_2$ ,  $R_1$  and  $R_2$ , and  $G_1$  and  $G_2$  respectively. This creates 8 different possible ways they may be permuted, and we do not know which it may be, hence we are ignorant of the identities that realize the structural property.

David Lewis tells us that we may know these properties through scientific theories regarding what roles they play by what he calls "by lax and commonplace standards" (p. 215). However, we do not know their specific identities. And, regarding these non-fundamental properties, Lewis says that:

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<sup>58</sup> See Lewis (2009), p. 214.

But if they are structural properties and we don't know the recipe for their construction out of fundamental properties, or if they are certain truth-functional compounds of structural properties and we don't know the recipes for those structural properties (or we don't know even in a lax sense, what structural properties they are compounded from), or if they are unidentified fundamental properties, then in a more demanding sense we do not know what they are, no matter how familiar we may be with them (p. 215).

To put it in simpler terms: if we do not know what ingredients there are in the cake we eat, then we do not know whether we're even eating a cake to begin with. Meaning, what that thing identifies as (at the very least, we are ignorant of *all* the ingredients. So, a chocolate looking cake may very well be made out of charcoal to look black and other non-pastry ingredients to make it look substantially as a cake).

But, Lewis tells us there may be some exception to truth-functional compounds where Humility does not apply. For instance, in his own example, we may know the eight different disjunctive combinations that may constitute the structural property, but we cannot identify any one of its disjuncts. So, "even if we cannot identify the fundamental or structural property that actually occupies a certain role, we can identify the property of having whatever property it is that occupies that role." (p. 215).

Lewis goes one step further and considers Humility as a sort of 'ineffable ignorance'.<sup>59</sup> And, ineffable ignorance is in short the type of humility where we cannot even ask the question to what we are ignorant of. The reason being, if we ask the question of whether we know the fundamental property in something, then we need "... to ask in such a way that, apart from limitations of finitude, the addressee could list all the alternative possible answers to it. ... that is what we cannot do." (p. 217).

Lewis tells us that there are alternative 'answer-propositions, but that we lack the 'answer-sentences' that express the answer-propositions in such a way that we know which sentence expresses which proposition. So we may ask "which property occupies the role?", and simply answer "The occupant of the role, whatever that is" (p. 216). It does not tell us about the identity of the property that occupies the role, only that the role is uniquely occupied by something.

Lewis offers a possible way to deal with it by reference-fixing the answer-propositions and the answer-sentences by having the descriptions rigidified. So, in a hypothetical object where we only consider a world with fundamental properties that are parts of only one category and

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<sup>59</sup> For a more in depth discussion on exactly what ineffable ignorance may entail, see: Dasgupta (2015).

can describe the members of actual realization of T as the occupant of so-and-so role. But, if we use ‘actual’ as a rigidifier and ask the multiple-choice questions thusly: “Which property occupies the seventeenth role? Is it the actual occupant of the first role? Is it the actual occupant of the second role? . . . Is it the actual occupant of the seventeenth role? . . . Is it the actual occupant of the  $n$ th role?” (p. 216). We immediately see that the answer is the actual occupant of the seventeenth role.

But something is amiss here. Clearly, we do not know that the rigid actual occupant of the seventeenth role is the answer-sentence to the answer-proposition. The reason being, we rigidified contingent answer-sentence i.e. the fundamental properties that may or may not occupy that particular role. We only know that the answer-sentence ‘the actual occupant of the seventeenth role’ is true for our question, but we don’t know to which property this reference is actually fixed to, because as Lewis say: “We have fixed the reference blindly, not knowing which rigidified descriptions were rigid designators of which fundamental properties.” (p.216).

The second thing Lewis looks at is implications of Humility regarding qualia. He says that the “... friend of phenomenal qualia might speculate that all the actually instantiated fundamental properties are qualia.” (p. 217). And, along with the “*Identification Thesis*: anyone acquainted with a quale knows just which property it is.” (p. 217).<sup>60</sup>

Lewis replies to the friend of qualia by saying that “If the Identification Thesis is built into the very definition of qualia, there are no qualia. If not, there may well be qualia, but they are known to us only as role-occupants, and there are multiple possible occupants of the roles in question.” (p. 217). Because we cannot just tell by acquaintance which property occupies the role of the quale we have, be it neural properties or fundamental.

The last thing David Lewis considers is if God could have qualia of the fundamental properties. Indeed, if God was God and therefore omniscient, omnipresent, omnipotent, regardless of qualia or not, God could have knowledge of the fundamental properties. But, would God be able to convey this knowledge to us? The answer is no. The reason being, if God gained knowledge of the fundamental properties by acquaintance and conveyed it to us, we could not express any of the answer-propositions. Because, we would not know which of

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<sup>60</sup> David Lewis argues against the notion of having access to the essence of the property occupying the role in the qualia we are acquainted with. In a short article, he argues that the Identification Thesis just mentioned is false, and that we do still know the qualia we have, but “... in some not-so-demanding everyday sense.” (Lewis, 1995, p. 144). So, we may not know the essences of the qualia i.e. the identities of the properties that play the specific roles in the particular quale we have. But, we may know that their role is occupied by something that which we are ignorant of, and we know what relations of acquaintance we may bear to the qualia we have.

the propositions we are expressing i.e. what answer-proposition refers to which fundamental property. Lewis says that “If He [God] wanted to remedy our ignorance, His only recourse would be to impart on us His own power to identify properties by acquaintance.” (p. 218).

So, the conclusion here is that we may be ignorant in such a way that we are unable to express it ourselves even. And, we would be unable to attain knowledge of the fundamental properties by being told by someone who would actually have knowledge of them. Essentially, in virtue of being humans we are irremediably ignorant of the fundamental properties and most likely also the intrinsic properties that supervene on the fundamental properties. We would also be ignorant of the structural properties and truth-functional properties that are composed of these fundamental properties.

In this chapter, I have tried to explain the terminology that Lewis applies and look at his two main arguments for humility in detail. Then I have considered his arguments for how his Ramseyan Humility may exceed the fundamental properties and apply to non-fundamental intrinsic properties and structural properties and so on. We’ve also seen how Lewis somehow ends up with an ineffable ignorance and also how knowing qualia is no help either. In the next chapter we will look at what I grant the epistemic humility theses and how we are to understand qualia and introspection.

## Chapter IV

We've looked at two types of epistemic humility theses that claim we are in principle ignorant of the intrinsic properties in objects. Now I will consider what the response to the Humility theses would be from the panpsychistic point of view.

In the first section I will therefore inquire into the term 'introspection' and see how this may help us in acquiring knowledge of the intrinsic properties through non-ordinary means. In section 2 I will have a brief look at why qualia are intrinsic properties and offer a few ways to consider this term. I will also give some preliminaries to the panpsychist's claim of why all other substances may have phenomenal properties as well. Section 3 will introduce the view known as panpsychism and briefly consider the different types of panpsychistic views.

### 1. Introspective Knowledge

Introspection – as I briefly mentioned in the first chapter – is a way of acquiring knowledge that is generally understood to be different from perceptual knowledge. The distinguishing part is the fact that introspection is knowledge of internal properties or even phenomenal properties, while perception occurs externally to your own mind. If introspection can offer us a way to have knowledge of at least one intrinsic property, then it will falsify the claim of the epistemic humility theses. Our definition of what introspection entails can also be seen independently of whether we accept that perception is passive i.e. causally receptive or not.

But, to propose a definition of introspection that may be universally accepted is an obvious impossibility. My aim here is to simply sketch an outline of how I will understand introspection and introspective knowledge for the purposes of this thesis. And the much complicated debate about its definition and implications on epistemology and the philosophy of mind and consciousness shall be had somewhere else. Therefore, the proposed understanding that I offer will be taken as a given premise when I apply it in the arguments from panpsychism against epistemic humility in the next main chapter.

Some preliminary sketching on how we should understand introspection; the *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (2014) offers some good points to consider. There are three 'minimal' conditions that introspection must meet for it to be considered as introspection. The first condition is: "1. *The mentality condition*: Introspection is a process that generates, or is aimed at generating, knowledge, judgments, or beliefs about *mental* events, states, or

processes, and not about affairs outside one's mind, at least not directly.” (Schwitzgebel, 2014). The first condition explicates on the distinction between acquiring knowledge of something that is mental in nature, and not something that is acquired from something physically external. The second condition is: “2. *The first-person condition*: Introspection is a process that generates, or is aimed at generating, knowledge, judgments, or beliefs about *one's own mind only* and no one else's, at least not directly.” (Schwitzgebel, 2014). This second condition explains how introspection is gained only of the subjects' own mind, and not of other minds external to oneself. The last condition is:

3. *The temporal proximity condition*: Introspection is a process that generates knowledge, beliefs, or judgments about one's *currently ongoing* mental life only; or, alternatively (or perhaps in addition) *immediately past* (or even future) mental life, within a certain narrow temporal window (Schwitzgebel, 2014).

This third condition tells us about how introspection mainly occurs within a certain time interval, the present or the immediate past. Though there are discussions regarding how far back or even in future one can go about claiming introspective knowledge. For our purposes, I will simply apply the time interval of the immediate past and present to be the temporal proximity in which introspective knowledge may be gained.

But, Schwitzgebel also adds three other conditions which he says few philosophers would accept as introspective, unless they also met some of the other three conditions that he puts forth. The following fourth condition is: “4. *The directness condition*: Introspection yields judgments or knowledge about one's own current mental processes relatively *directly* or *immediately*.” (2014). The other two conditions proposed are somewhat less unanimously accepted, and they're for the purpose of this thesis not as essential on our crude definition of the term introspection here.<sup>61</sup>

With these four basic conditions, we get a grasp on what Introspection entails. But, people question the very foundation of what Introspection is intuitively recognized as. For instance, Jesse Butler says in his article *Introspective Knowledge of Experience and Its Place in Consciousness Studies* (2011):

Ordinary folks and academics alike often simply assume that introspection is a kind of inner observation, such that one's own mental states come to be known as observed objects through a

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<sup>61</sup> To see the last two remaining conditions, see section 1.1 in: Schwitzgebel (2014).



first-person process of ‘viewing within’. As William James famously stated, ‘Introspective observation is what we have to rely on first and foremost and always. The word introspection need hardly be defined — it means, of course, the looking into our own minds and reporting what we there discover. Every one agrees that we there discover states of consciousness’ (1890). This understanding of introspection as a kind of inner perception or observation is pervasive, yet upon close scrutiny it is not at all clear how this purported inner perception takes place. In fact, it is not clear that introspection really is a kind of observation at all (2011, p. 129).

What Butler is trying to argue against is the current dogma of how to understand introspection as a way of perceptual observation ‘inwards’ or of our consciousness itself. He explains how this ‘metaphor’ for understanding introspection leaves us with an ambiguous concept of what introspection actually entails.

The typical understanding of introspection which Butler is arguing against is the view that introspection is a way of ‘perceiving inwards’. Because this view distances the subject who’s introspecting the objects of one’s experience, many can argue from this standpoint that introspection may be unreliable. It may be so, because perception as we know it can be unreliable in some respect, and in several degrees. If introspection is more or less an equivalent to perception, then our knowledge of qualia through introspection could be very much false in many instances. If that knowledge can be easily false, then we may not necessarily have knowledge of the intrinsic properties through introspection. Because, we wouldn’t know whether our knowledge is true or false, and so we end up with being skeptical.

Butler’s proposal is to consider introspection in a direct way with the experience itself. He looks at another option before putting forth his own solution to the definition of the concept. He considers the philosophers who view introspection by means of a way of gaining knowledge by acquaintance with the mental properties in our consciousness.<sup>62</sup> But, he argues that this way of understanding introspection still creates the distance and distinction of being acquainted with an object analogically with the external world where we perceive things.

Declan Smithies (2013) also argues that the understanding of introspection in this manner is a misconception of what introspection entails. He argues for a similar understanding of introspection to Butler’s own definition. In Smithies argument against Schwitzgebel who claims that introspective knowledge is unreliable, he tries to show that introspection cannot be categorized into the same way of gaining knowledge as perception. Given that one can apply

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<sup>62</sup> See Chapter 5.5 in Chalmers (1996) for more on the acquaintance of experience theory.

the skeptical arguments against perception and perceptive knowledge, introspective knowledge is immune to those types of arguments.

Smithies offers a distinction between "... *brute errors*, which are justified false beliefs that are properly based on justifying evidence, and *basing errors*, which are unjustified false beliefs that are not properly based on justifying evidence." (p. 1180). Introspection does not have these brute errors such as the 'evil demon' case from Descartes. The reason why he claims that introspection would be immune to the brute errors is because perception is 'representational', because "... one's perceptual experience provides defeasible justification to believe that the world is the way that it is represented to be." (p. 1181).

Smithies offers another way to understand introspection through what he calls 'simple theory' which he explains thusly:

According to the simple theory, introspection is a distinctive way of knowing about one's experience that one has just by virtue of having that experience. Similarly, introspective justification is a distinctive kind of justification that one has to form beliefs about one's experience just by virtue of having that experience. There is no further requirement that one must *represent* one's experience in order to have introspective justification to believe that one has that experience. On the simple theory, the source of one's introspective justification to believe that one has a certain kind of experience is constituted by that experience itself, rather than any representation of that experience (p. 1181).

So, introspection of an experience is simply having knowledge of an experience by virtue of the experience itself. But, there seems to be a certain ambiguity in understanding what it means that 'knowing about one's experience is had just by virtue of having the experience'.

We also have the view that Kant holds from Langton's Kantian Humility on introspection. If you remember, Kant believes that the mind itself is affected in knowing about itself. So, you gain 'internal' knowledge by being causally affected. The mind knows itself through this manner, and that implies that introspection is knowing through being causally affected. However, the premise of Receptivity – which posits introspection to be a way of knowing mental properties by being causally affected – reduces introspection to perceptual knowledge.

It seems perhaps more so that the experience itself would constitute something of a fusion between perception with senses and the mind itself. So, an experience would be what you perceive, along with the mental state you were in. And, knowledge of that would entail a sort of actively engaging into the memory or some sort of reflection of the memory of that

experience you had. Given the terminology and the difference in the concepts of qualia and introspection, it would be incorrect to conflate introspection with qualia itself. Rather, qualia could qualify as the experience one has, the ‘what it’s likeness’ of something one experiences.

This is also where the acquaintance theory regarding introspection seems to bear fruit. Because, I propose that if we are actively acquainted with the qualia we have internally, we can gain knowledge of our qualia. For instance, we have qualia of the color red for the first time, we introspect on our vivid memory of this qualia and gain knowledge i.e. *know* ‘what it’s like’ to see red. The distinction here is that qualia is not knowledge itself, it is simply the property occurring of whatever external or even internal thing that has a ‘what it’s likeness’ to it (more will be said about qualia shortly in the next section). The introspective part is that there is an activity occurring by us, we are actively engaged in gaining knowledge of something, namely something within our consciousness, ourselves.<sup>63</sup>

Therefore, the understanding of introspection will be that of a way of being acquainted with the qualia one has in an active engaging manner. This means that there is no way that introspection is a passive faculty of knowing, one engages actively in knowing, and when one doesn’t introspect on their qualia, one simply has qualia without knowledge. It is not like one knows all the qualia one has, but rather focuses on things for introspection. But, I will leave the discussion about introspection here. There is a wide array of literature regarding the definition of this concept, but I cannot indulge into it any further here.<sup>64</sup>

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<sup>63</sup> What does it actually mean to gain knowledge by actively engaging with one’s qualia? Well, it would seem that there is a notion of intentionality involved in this concept of introspection. A type of determinate will and a choice on which the subject acts upon. So, say I have qualia of seeing grass. My qualia gives me no knowledge of ‘what’s it like’, I’m simply in the state of what’s it like to experience seeing grass. But, after I’ve had the quale, I may try to gain knowledge of the qualia by remembering the phenomenal experience I had. The active engagement with my memory is the act of introspecting, in particular, being acquainted with qualia I just had.

One can now question though, what is the difference between the qualia you have right now, as opposed to the qualia as a memory that you bring forth again after a certain interval or time? And, is introspection of immediate qualia as opposed to some later memory of qualia the same? As long as the subject introspects under a short interval of having had some qualia, it is plausible that the knowledge gained isn’t false by any standard. Even the knowledge of the memory of qualia which one introspects after a certain amount of time provides the subject with true knowledge of the memory of the ‘what it’s like’ to experience whatever one remembers. Whether the memory of the qualia is the same as the qualia there and then is therefore irrelevant. Introspection of either or gives you true knowledge – which is secured – of the qualia or the memory of that quale and so on.

The concept of an ‘actively engaging’ introspection is still a concept under construction which will most likely need more space to be elaborated and explained properly. For now, it suffices with the idea that it is compatible with the view that perception may be passive as the premise of Receptivity claims. It is also a non-causal way of acquiring knowledge of whatever properties one acquires by introspecting one’s mind. And, it is a way of – determinately by one’s own will – actively accessing the qualia, and reflecting on it or engaging with it, whatever the act constitutes to.

<sup>64</sup> For more on the discussion on introspection and self-knowledge in general, see Schwitzgebel (2014) and Gertler (2015).

## 2. Qualia

### 2.1. A first approach

I briefly mentioned that qualia is understood by most philosophers as ‘what it is likeness’. I named Thomas Nagel (1974) and Frank Jackson (1982) as the ones that introduced the idea of the ‘point of view’ of the first person subject in more modern literature in the philosophy of mind.<sup>65</sup> The general consensus on the definition of Qualia is that there is a particular qualitative phenomenality in experiencing something externally or perhaps also internally (whatever internal experience constitutes to). The general idea is that there is something to experiencing a quality that an object has that gives us *new* knowledge that cannot be had through a priori<sup>66</sup> means. As Frank Jackson points out, there is something Mary learns when she sees red for the first time, besides knowing all the theoretical facts about that color.

But, what we want to know is if this phenomenal property is an intrinsic property or not. And also, whether we can have knowledge of this intrinsic property or not. We have panpsychism which endorses the idea of qualia being an intrinsic property. While materialists and physicalists would argue that qualia is either reducible to some physical property or that some material property is what plays the ‘role’ of qualia. There is also the view known as functionalism which argues that mental states are just functional in a way how you have certain inputs which give certain outputs. Gilbert Harman explains functionalism as thus:

In its most general form, functionalism defines mental states and processes by their causal or functional relations to each other and to perceptual inputs from the world outside and behavioral outputs expressed in action. According to functionalism, it is the functional relations that are important, not the intrinsic qualities of the stuff which these relations are instanced (1990, p. 32).

In a sense, we can understand functionalism as a type of analog to how structuralism is as a metaphysical view. They’re both in a sense ‘formal’ in that what really matters are simply the relations, or the formal structure of things, rather than the intrinsic contents of those things.

But, considering our definition of an intrinsic property, how may qualia qualify as such a property? I mentioned in chapter I that we could understand qualia as a non-causal property. It

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<sup>65</sup> To see more on the definition on Qualia and its historical definition of the concept, see Tye (2017).

<sup>66</sup> A priori is simply meaning ‘prior to experience’ here.

would be a property that occurs by causal affection, but is itself non-causal in affecting other properties.

But, David Lewis for instance – as we saw in the previous main chapter – argues that those who agree on knowledge of properties of qualia uphold the Identification Thesis. And he argues that materialists should deny the Identification Thesis. His argument against the Identification Thesis is based on the premise of what the term qualia entails. And, he supposes that “... the concept of qualia is somehow built into the folk psychology.” (1995, p. 140). According to Lewis “Folk psychology says, I think, that we identify our qualia with experiences. We know exactly what they are – and that in an uncommonly demanding and literal sense of 'knowing what'.” (p. 141).

Given Lewis’s premise, it tells us: our experience with qualia – which can be identified with the physical properties that causes the qualia – directly gives us experience of the physical properties themselves. Then, qualia of pain would give us direct experience of the properties that are the events of C-firing which causes pain. But surely, doing neurobiology wasn’t that easy that we know by qualia alone what these properties are (p. 142). And, non-materialists as well may be affected as long as they accept the ‘folk psychology’ premise.

But, why should we draw in folk psychology in our conceptual analysis of qualia? The reason for invoking the folk psychological concept of qualia doesn’t provide us with any good reasons for accepting it. And what Lewis seems to do is to conflate the qualia with the actual objects that are perceived. From my prior understanding, qualia itself is not a term that invokes any type of epistemological claim, it simply tells us ‘what something is like’, not what something *is*. It also doesn’t tell us that we thereby have any type of knowledge either, because it simply is the state of being in that subjective perspective and *experiencing* the ‘what’s it’s likeness’. Rather, as we’ve seen, the introspecting of the qualia properties would provide the subject with knowledge of those qualia the subject had.

And, we need to take seriously the phenomenality of qualia if we want to have an explanation of the correlation between the mind and body, and avoid any type of physical reductionism or some type of epiphenomenalism. For instance, Michael Beaton tells us that:

Surely all the physical facts might have been exactly the same, and the phenomenal facts might have been different, or absent altogether? At least, if this is not so, physics can’t explain why it is not. As such, it looks to me as if Chalmers has been the most honest here, all along. If you start from the assumption that there is a pure (i.e. in both directions) a posteriori relation between the phenomenal and the physical, or if you start from the assumption that behaviourally undetectable

inverted spectra are possible, then you should end up where Chalmers ends up: you should accept that phenomenal properties, and any principles bridging them to normal physical properties, are fundamental facts about our universe (2009, p. 102).

It seems we need to take into account the phenomenal properties as fundamental in our scientific theories. That is, if our physical science is to not be in principle forever incomplete by having fundamental phenomenal properties such as qualia 'elude' it.

This takes us back to the problem of the premise of a scientific theory that's complete, true and final. If there are no fundamental phenomenal properties to account for in that scientific theory, then the scientific theory is either incomplete, or there is no 'what it's likeness' at all. And, denying our own subjective perspective, our being of 'what it's like' to be us as that token being would seem like a radical step to take. A functionalist account of consciousness is unable to account for the content of the qualia itself; we have a salient phenomenal qualitative property instantiated in virtue of our subjective point of view experience of some object. We cannot simply shrug it off or hide it under the rug and continue on our merry ways of trying to discover all the fundamental 'material' properties. We need to account for these properties being there.

## 2.2. Some conceptions on qualia

Before I head on to the argument for why qualia necessarily should be intrinsic properties, let me briefly consider two ways of conceiving properties of qualia. The common view is the well accepted idea of qualia as a pure qualitative property that is had by conscious subjects. This means, if person A perceives a red rose, and person B perceives that very same rose. Their quale of experiencing redness is the same, because the quale of the redness of that rose is the same. Anything having a 'what it's likeness' of experiencing the particular red hue of that rose will have the same qualitative property.

However, another way of conceiving properties of qualia is to view them as token particular. What this means is that properties of qualia in a subject differ amongst every individual that has them. It differs in virtue of the difference amongst individuals that have qualia of the same property or quality. Though, this needn't necessarily invoke quidditism unless you apply this to possible worlds with trans-world identity. But, imagine now two wholly identical beings differing only in spatial relations. Here, both subject  $S_1$  and  $S_2$  perceive the exact same property or quality. Then, according to the second conception of

qualia, their quale of that property or quality differs amongst them as well in virtue of them being two distinct subjects. Notice that they are not distinguished by any haecceities or quidditistic properties.

I endorse this second type of view on qualia. I endorse it because it becomes a property that is metaphysically dependent on the thing i.e. a subject having it. I have no definite conclusions on the merits of holding such a view; however, one can have this ‘token particularity of qualia’ view through invoking quidditism, or without. I myself do not see the point of appealing to quiddities. Otherwise, if the two subjects are not distinct on non-quiddistic grounds, then they are necessarily wholly identical and one and the same thing.

However, I assume the general definition of qualia to be applied in any case in this MA thesis. And that is the common view held by the panpsychists who promote the fundamentality or intrinsicness of qualia in general.

### 2.3. Panpsychist’s argument from conceivability

David Chalmers gives us a thought experiment with a conceivable ‘zombie twin’. This zombie twin is a wholly physically identical being who has all the properties we have. However, it only lacks conscious experience, the phenomenal feel and knowledge of that which we humans have. Chalmers tells us “... imagine that right now I am gazing out the window, experiencing some nice green sensations from seeing the trees outside, having pleasant taste experiences through munching on a chocolate bar, and feeling a dull aching sensation in my right shoulder” (1996, p. 94). This is what Chalmers experiences.

However, Chalmers asks:

What is going on in my zombie twin? He is physically identical to me, and we may as well suppose that he is embedded in an identical environment. He will certainly be identical to me *functionally*; he will be processing the same sort of information, reacting in a similar way to inputs, with his internal configurations being modified appropriately and with indistinguishable behavior resulting. ... He will be perceiving the trees outside, in the functional sense, and tasting chocolate, in the psychological sense. ... He will even be ‘conscious’ ... be awake, able to report the contents of his internal states, able to focus attention in various places, and so on. It is just that none of this functioning will be accompanied by any real conscious experiences. There will be no phenomenal feel. There is nothing it is like to be a zombie (p. 95)

What we have, that the zombie does not, is the phenomenal conscious experience. The zombie can be structurally and functionally identical. All its mechanisms may be identical to ours. In fact, it can be composed of the exact same particles as we are. But, it would simply be lacking in consciousness unlike us. It would have no phenomenal experience, only certain algorithms that copy our behavior wholly identically.<sup>67</sup>

What this thought experiment shows is that functionalism, epiphenomenalism, physical reductionists and materialists in general are unable to account for the content of the phenomenal experience when they deny the fundamentality of phenomenal properties. Now, panpsychism is able to explain this dualism between phenomenal and physical properties. It does so by claiming that these phenomenal properties are already pre-existent in the matter that constitutes our brain. Because of our brain's particular composition, consciousness of higher order occurs. But, the matter individually has these fundamental phenomenal properties themselves. And these properties are had intrinsically, just as the intrinsic physical properties that epistemic humility claims we cannot know. The brain – as an object and a composition of smaller fundamental parts – has consciousness intrinsically. And within this consciousness occurs qualia of things we experience. And, given that the brain composed of atoms and elementary particles all have these phenomenal properties intrinsically, we can infer that this applies to all other particles as well. If that be the case, we get the panpsychist's view where every physical thing also has a phenomenal property intrinsically.<sup>68</sup>

We have qualia as a phenomenal property occurring in us by us having experience of some property or quality. What instantiates that property to occur within us would have to be something that was intrinsically there to begin with. Now, as mentioned in the first Chapter, qualia itself isn't causally efficacious. However, it may itself be *caused* to occur, such as, when we experience some property or quality external to us.

This is how we may conclude that phenomenal properties are intrinsic. And also, we can plausibly say that the phenomenal properties extend over to all fundamental particles in the universe. Still, whether we may know the identities of those properties beyond the ones we subjectively have is another question. But, it suffices to remark on the fact that knowing at least one intrinsic property is enough to falsify the epistemic humility claim.

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<sup>67</sup> To an argument against the conceivability of zombies see: Dennett (1995). Also, for an attempt at the naturalizing of qualia in a Quinian manner, see Dennett (1988).

<sup>68</sup> It would be perhaps better to say that every 'material' thing – which implies anything that is substantial rather than actually being something that necessarily has a mass – has a phenomenal property.



### 3. What is Panpsychism?

Panpsychism – which I briefly mentioned in the first chapter – is roughly the view that the fundamental physical objects also have some phenomenal property. A phenomenal property is simply a non-physical property that has a certain *feel* or a ‘what it’s likeness’ to it. Now, there are of course several different panpsychistic views. David Chalmers explains most of those variations of panpsychistic views in his paper *The Combination Problem for Panpsychism* (2017). Let us look at what those different types of Panpsychistic views would be.

Chalmers explains:

Microphysical properties and entities are the fundamental physical properties and entities characterized by a completed physics. Phenomenal properties are properties characterizing what it is like to be a conscious subject. Microphenomenal properties are the phenomenal properties of microphysical entities. Macrophenomenal properties are the phenomenal properties of other entities, such as humans. Microphenomenal and macrophenomenal truths are truths about the instantiation of these properties (2017, p. 281).

Having defined ‘micro/macrophenomenal’ properties and ‘micro/macrophysical’ properties, we can apply this terminology to combine the different panpsychistic views Chalmers considers.

**Constitutive panpsychism:** Is the view that macrophenomenal truths are wholly or partially grounded<sup>69</sup> on the microphenomenal truths. **Nonconstitutive panpsychism:** Is essentially the opposite of constitutive panpsychism. Emergent panpsychism is such a view, where macrophenomenal properties strongly emerge from microphenomenal or microphysical properties “perhaps in virtue of fundamental laws connecting microphenomenal to macrophenomenal.” (p. 281).

**Russellian panpsychism:** Is the view that microphenomenal properties play the role of quiddities of the microphysical properties. Essentially, the quiddities of these microphysical

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<sup>69</sup> By ‘grounded’ I take it to mean that the microphenomenal properties are the basis or the fundament to the macrophenomenal properties. Though, defining it through these terms may seem like a tautology given the synonymous semantics. For instance, Raamy Majeed says “‘Grounding’ these days is a contentious term, which is sometimes taken to mean a non-causal form of metaphysical dependence. ... we can understand the term as being neutral between causal and non-causal forms of metaphysical dependence.” (2013, p. 107). There is a wide array of stances regarding what grounding *means*, for more on the discussion, see: Bliss & Trogdon (2014).

properties are themselves phenomenal according to the Russellian panpsychist.<sup>70</sup> You also got **constitutive Russellian panpsychism** which tells us that the microphenomenal properties are quiddities as well as constituting the macrophenomenal properties. On this view, microphenomenal properties become causally efficacious because they serve as quiddities to microphysical properties, and macrophenomenal properties are causally efficacious because they are grounded on the microphenomenal properties. **Nonconstitutive Russellian panpsychism** entails the opposite.

**Panprotopsychism:** Is the view that fundamental microphysical things have protophenomenal properties. These protophenomenal properties are not themselves phenomenal properties which have qualia i.e. what it's like to have that property, but rather, they constitute phenomenal properties when in conjunction. Chalmers also says that for panprotopsychism to not count as standard forms of materialism "... these special properties must be (i) distinct from the structural/dispositional properties of microphysics and (ii) their constitutive relation to phenomenal properties must reflect an a priori entailment from protophenomenal to phenomenal truths." (p. 282).

Chalmers also adds these different types of panpsychistic strands to yield other combinations explained thusly: "Constitutive panprotopsychism is the thesis that macrophenomenal truths are grounded in truths about the protophenomenal properties of microphysical entities. Russellian panprotopsychism is the thesis that protophenomenal properties serve as quiddities." (p. 282). Constitutive Russellian panprotopsychism is the last combination which would entail the conjunction of the two types of panpsychism just quoted here.

There are also other types of panpsychistic views which claim that the most fundamental physical properties have *experience* instead of something 'mental' or 'phenomenal'. Experience is here understood as a more basic property than 'mentality' or 'consciousness'. This is called **panexperientialism**. David Ray Griffin promotes panexperientialism in his book *Unsnarling the World-Knot* (2007). He explains what this view entails in his footnote: "It should be noted that I am generalizing *experience* to all individuals; *consciousness*, by contrast, is understood as a very high level form of experience, a way of focusing a light, as it were, on a few ingredients of experience ..." (p. 79). So, consciousness, or higher order mentality, is by Griffin's understanding compounds of individual things containing experience that together focus into or form them.

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<sup>70</sup> In a sense, Russellian panpsychism presupposes quidditism for microphysical properties, where the microphenomenal properties are the fundamental bases or 'role-occupiers' to those microphysical properties.

Although, experience for Griffin seems to be something distinct from mere phenomenality, it is safe to assume that experience still entails qualia. In another footnote, Griffin explains what the ‘pan’ in panexperientialism is to be understood as: “The ‘pan’ in the panexperientialism to be advocated here refers not simply to all *things* but only to all genuine *units* or *individuals*. This means that experience is *not* attributed to aggregational things, such as rocks and chairs, as such” (p. 78). So panexperientialism is distinct from a type of panphenomenalism or even a simple *panqualeism*<sup>71</sup>.

Another type of panpsychism that has been considered by some philosophers as an alternative route is **cosmopsychism**. A recent defender of this view is Philip Goff. His book *Consciousness and Fundamental Reality* (2017) aims to solve the combination problems that ‘smallism’ faces. Smallism being the type of panpsychism that argues for reduction of macrophenomenal properties to microphenomenal properties. He argues that:

... “priority monism,” [is] the view that there is only one fundamental individual. For the holistic supersubstantialist, material objects are identical with regions of space, and regions of space are aspects of space as a whole. Thus, all being is ultimately derived from the fundamental unity that is space considered as a whole (p. 224).

Goff also says that “For the priority monist, God created the world by creating the cosmos and giving it certain properties. Everything within the universe—particles, people, rocks, planets—exists and is the way it is because the universe exists and is the way it is” (p. 233).

So with priority monism, we seem to get a type of cosmopsychism where the universe itself is conscious. We may apply Goff’s terminology and concept of ‘subsumption’ where things are aspects or parts of a whole instead of the other way around. And, we can suppose that the universe is a fundamental subject. Now, if the universe itself has some form of consciousness where individuals are aspects of that universe with their own consciousness, a type of cosmopsychism follows.

There may be several other variations of panpsychism that I have not considered here, but that’s of little concern regarding our task at hand. What we’ve looked at is how we may understand panpsychism as a view. I hope this brief exposition may have shed some light on that before we go on looking at how panpsychism may make epistemological claims regarding intrinsic properties.

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<sup>71</sup> Panqualeism would simply be that *all* things have some property of qualia, similar to panphenomenalism.

# Chapter V

In this chapter I will consider the panpsychist's arguments against the epistemic humility theses, and the replies the endorser of epistemic humility can give us against those arguments. The first section of this chapter will therefore briefly consider the materialist's replies to epistemic humility first. And we'll see what I grant the epistemic humility theses. The second section will focus on the arguments panpsychism gives us on how we have knowledge of the intrinsic properties of substances, and why epistemic humility would have to be wrong. The third section will consider the replies epistemic humility has to give against panpsychism. The fourth section will look at Raamy Majeed's argument against panpsychism and his argument for endorsing epistemic humility over panpsychism. Let us then dive into what panpsychism is all about first.

## 1. What Should We Grant Epistemic Humility?

If we are to boil down the basic premises on which the epistemic humility theses hinges on, a sketching of the most essential premises need to be explicated and considered. For Langton's Kantian Humility, these are, as she explicates herself, the premises of "Distinction", "Receptivity" and "Irreducibility". For Langton's case, the case of there being a distinction between intrinsic properties and extrinsic properties is acceptable because of its strong intuitive appeal. Though, what this distinction entails is another matter which I briefly looked at in the first chapter when trying to sketch out what an intrinsic property should be understood as. I will grant Kantian Humility the premise of Receptivity only insofar it applies to perceptual knowledge only.<sup>7273</sup> Irreducibility, which tells us about non-supervenience of the extrinsic properties on the intrinsic properties, may perhaps face some problems in accepting it on face value alone.

Another premise which – at least Ramseyan Humility depends on – is the metaphysical notion known as quidditism. Now, I grant the premise of quidditism for Ramseyan Humility which automatically grants him the premise of combinatorialism given the acceptance of quidditism. There is a plethora of papers discussing the topic on quidditism, but for the sake

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<sup>72</sup> For an argument against the causal theory of perception and in return to an implicit argument against the causal theory of knowledge, see Lewis (1980).

<sup>73</sup> See the section on Introspection in Chapter IV for Kant's view on Introspection.

of brevity, I shall take it as a given that quidditism is already accepted.<sup>74</sup> And, the definition of quidditism will simply be the one Lewis applies in his article on Ramseyan Humility. What I will not take at face value from Lewis' epistemic humility is the argument against the Identification Thesis, or the application of it to account for qualia in general.

Now, there have been arguments against the notion of what a 'true and complete final theory' would entail. Especially regarding its ontological authority from which we assume a sort of physicalist positivist position, but, end up reversely with not knowing the intrinsic properties. Alyssa Ney has criticized both Langton's and Lewis' epistemic humility theses in her paper *Physicalism and our knowledge of intrinsic properties* (2007). Roughly, her argument is against the dichotomy between the scientific theories that reveal the fundamental properties to us which all 'seem' to be extrinsic. And, she argues against the metaphysical reason for why there is a distinction between the intrinsic and extrinsic properties.

Ney proposes a view – which she sympathizes with – that looks at the intrinsic properties as causal properties or the 'causal roles' themselves. She says that "If physical science is saying that these extrinsic properties like unit positive charge are the fundamental properties, then it is wrong to posit something more fundamental to serve as their grounds." (p. 46). Her main argument against Kantian Humility is that Langton supposes that science can supposedly give us knowledge about all the fundamental intrinsic properties. But, it only gives us knowledge about the extrinsic properties which themselves are not fundamental, and as we can see, this makes it in a sense self-contradictory.

The reason for this, Ney tells us, is that Langton holds the premise of *strong physicalism*. Strong physicalism is roughly the view that tells us that the empirical world contains exactly what is posited by a true and complete physics says it contains (p. 44-45). And so, Ney says "... if current physics is formulated solely in terms of extrinsic properties, the fundamental properties of reality are wholly extrinsic." (p. 45). But, according to Ney Langton also holds the premise that "(2) There is no scientific reason to posit intrinsic properties that would serve as the grounds of these properties." (p. 42). And, "(3) But substances do have intrinsic properties, since it is part of their nature that they must." (p. 42). Hence, Langton creates this problem for herself in a sense according to Ney.

And the same applies to Lewis's premise as well. Ney argues that the problem for Lewis's epistemic humility is that the extrinsic properties are what play the causal roles which we are acquainted with. But, the intrinsic properties are the properties that occupy those causal roles.

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<sup>74</sup> For more on the discussion regarding quidditism, see: Wang (2016), and also Schaffer (2005). And for an argument on non-quiddity quidditism, see: Locke (2012).

So, if the intrinsic properties are what occupies the roles, the very same causal roles that the extrinsic properties play, then intrinsic properties seem to causally instantiate the causal roles of the extrinsic properties. We end up getting a causal ‘overdetermination’ as Ney calls it.

She explains the problem thusly:

Given the fact that the intrinsic properties are the ones that are supposed to implement the higher order properties’ causal roles, there is reason to say that it is only the intrinsic occupants that have causal powers. But these are not the properties we learn about through physical science. So it looks as if the properties of physical science have been drained of their causal efficacy. This is indeed a strange version of physicalism to uphold, one which denies that all physical events have physical causes, and hence causal closure of the physical domain. Alternatively, one may uphold causal closure and instead say it is the intrinsic grounds that are drained of their causal relevance. But then it is fair to ask, why posit the existence of properties that do no causal work (p. 56)?

The same question about why we need to “... posit the existence of properties that do no causal work” (p. 56) is also asked about the Kantian Humility. Because Ney says Langton invokes the distinction and the irreducibility on the ‘causally inert’ intrinsic properties. It may be a metaphysical conception of the intrinsic/extrinsic distinction based on reasons Kant may have held. But, they offer no strong reasons to the common philosopher to accept that they are *necessarily* inert.<sup>75</sup>

Lucy Allais argues that Langton’s modal intuition regarding how the causal powers could be switched or ‘superadded’ by God while the intrinsic properties were fixed is “at most merely logically possible” (2006, p. 157). She argues that we have no reason to accept the criterion of Langton’s ‘second’ test for intrinsicness where the intrinsic properties could be lawless or lonely. So, because there is no strong necessity in the intrinsic properties being non-causal even if we did accept the non-supervenience criteria, we do not have to accept the distinction between causal powers or intrinsic properties. Rather, we may say the intrinsic properties are those very causal powers themselves.

Langton herself argues in her article *Kant’s Phenomena: Extrinsic or Relational Properties? A Reply to Allais* (2006) that this “contentious ‘modal intuition’” (p. 175) is really more interpretive than anything. Of course, this doesn’t explain why one should necessarily accept it. Nor does it give an argument for why we need to accept the Distinction with the

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<sup>75</sup> For more on Ramseyan Humility and an argument against Ney’s argument and other philosophers who’ve argued against the epistemic humility, see: Kelly (2013). For an interpretation of Lewis’ view on the supervenience on mind and a defense of Ramseyan Humility through that view, see: Yates (2018).

premises of non-supervenience, lawlessness and contingent causal laws. Of course, if we do accept these premises and Receptivity, then we end up with an epistemic humility. Yet, Langton's only answer to this is to say that these are two different metaphysical camps that claim two distinct things, and her impressions are "that the Humean view is, at present, still closer to being orthodoxy than its alternatives." (p. 176). For the purposes of the argument as a stand-alone, Langton offers a somewhat arbitrary reason for accepting the premise of the 'Humean view' as opposed to denying it. Then again, it is not my aim or intention to go any deeper into the discussion regarding the contingency of natural laws and the metaphysics surrounding that.<sup>76</sup>

There are also specific replies against Ramseyan Humility, such as from Langton (2004), who argues that we may apply Lewis' notion of 'contextual' knowledge<sup>77</sup> to avoid humility. However, Lewis' notion of contextual knowledge is meant to argue against skepticism. Dustin Locke (2009) argues against Langton's application of Lewis's contextual knowledge by appealing to Lewis's own *Rule of Resemblance* that tells us:

... why you do not know that you will lose the lottery, no matter what the odds are against you and no matter how sure you should therefore be that you will lose. For every ticket, there is the possibility that it will win. These possibilities are saliently similar to one another: so either every one of them may be properly ignored, or else none may. But one of them may not properly be ignored: the one that actually obtains (Lewis, 1996, p. 557).

What this tells us is that every possibility that resembles an actuality by being saliently similar cannot be ignored. Locke applies that rule to Ramseyan Humility.

David Locke tells us that if Lewis is right with his Rule of Resemblance where we may not properly ignore possibilities that saliently resemble actuality:

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<sup>76</sup> For more on the details about the arguments considered, see: Allais (2006), as well as: Langton (2006). For Ney's arguments, see: Ney (2007). For a comparison between Kantian and Ramseyan Humility theses and brief considerations of possible replies to these views, see: Langton & Robichaud (2010).

<sup>77</sup> Lewis's contextualist notion of knowledge is essentially this: "S knows that *P* iff S's evidence eliminates every possibility in which not-*P* – Psst! - except for those possibilities that we are properly ignoring." (Lewis, 1996, p. 566). So, Langton tells us that by applying this contextual understanding of knowledge, we are properly ignoring cases such as the argument for skepticism. So, we are effectively properly ignoring those possibilities where a demon is fooling us to believe this is all real. Analogically, we are properly ignoring those possibilities where we can permute the fundamental properties or possibilities with idlers or aliens. However, we may keep our knowledge of those intrinsic properties given the context of ignoring the non-actual possibilities.

... then it is difficult to see how there could be a context in which we are properly ignoring alternative realization scenarios. As before, suppose  $R_1$  is the actual realization of  $T$ , and  $R_2$  is just like  $R_1$  except that the first two members of  $R_1$  have been permuted in  $R_2$ . What could more saliently resemble actuality (the possibility that  $R_1$  realizes  $T$ ) than the possibility that  $R_2$  realizes  $T$ ? This case seems exactly parallel to the lottery case. Suppose the winning ticket is  $T_1$  and not  $T_2$ . Lewis explains that we cannot ignore the possibility that  $T_2$  is the winning ticket because it saliently resembles actuality (the possibility that  $T_1$  is the winning ticket). Since the possibilities here merely differ over which ticket realizes the winning-ticket role, and this seems to explain their salient similarity, I don't see why we shouldn't say the very same thing about the possibilities of  $R_1$  and  $R_2$  realizing  $T$  (Locke, 2009, p. 235).

The parallel with the lottery ticket is seemingly apparent and somewhat ironic that Lewis's own paper on contextualism again is applied to defend his Ramseyan Humility here. Yet, it seems quite intuitive that "... at least some realization of  $T$  other than the actual realization is going to be salient." (p. 236). But, Locke himself admits in a footnote that "... there might be some contexts in which we are properly ignoring possibilities in which  $T$  has some alternative realization. However, as soon as we even *mention* Lewis's thesis, we are no longer ignoring those possibilities and so it is true." (p. 241).

To briefly summarize this section; I have considered several materialist arguments against both epistemic humility theses. I have also mentioned which premises I accept and which I find questionable and why I find them questionable. Some of the things that were questioned will be considered in the next main chapter, but for now, it suffices to see that there is an existing debate amongst the materialists themselves regarding epistemic humility. However, my focus with this MA thesis is to consider the reply from the panpsychist's point of view through their claim of having knowledge of the intrinsic properties through introspection.

## 2. The Panpsychist's Reply to Epistemic Humility

I will consider three main arguments from panpsychism against the epistemic humility theses. The first argument against epistemic humility will only focus on the Kantian Humility. The second argument will be against epistemic humility's premise that the complete, final and true scientific theory (if there can be one) should explain all the fundamental intrinsic properties. Even though, it doesn't explain the fundamental intrinsic phenomenal properties. The third argument will argue how epistemic humility presupposes physical reductionism and a



functionalism regarding the mind and body and phenomenal properties in general. Let us begin with the argument against Kantian Humility and the discussion around it.

### *Kantian Panpsychism?*

Langton says that Kantian Humility faces a problem with the apparent idealism that Kant implies when he says in the *Critique of Pure Reason*:

Why do we have need of a doctrine of the soul grounded merely on pure rational principles? Without doubt chiefly with the intent of securing our thinking Self from the danger of materialism. But this is achieved by the rational concept of our thinking Self that we have given. For according to it, so little fear remains that if one took matter away then all thinking and even the existence of thinking beings would be abolished, that it rather shows clearly that if I were to take away the thinking subject, the whole corporeal world would have to disappear, as this is nothing but the appearance in the sensibility of our subject and one mode of its representations (1781/87/1998, A383).

The quote saliently implies a sort of ‘idealism’<sup>78</sup> that Langton tries to deny from Kant’s philosophy.

Langton’s own response to this possible problem for her Kantian Humility is as following:

‘To be a substance is to be a being that has thoughts; if I remove the thinking being, I remove the substance and *all* of its properties; if the substance has physical properties as well as thoughts, then if I remove the substance I remove its physical properties too. Therefore if I remove the thinking subject, the whole corporeal world must vanish.’ If the substratum of matter is a thinking being, then the vanishing of the substratum would be the vanishing of matter and the whole corporeal world—even if the properties constituting matter are *not mental at all*. ... Kant is usually more cautious than he is in the Second Paralogism, so this dimension to Kant’s idealism can, perhaps, be regarded as an unwise and atypical aberration. Humility should be sufficient to guard against idealism of this kind. For Humility counsels silence on the question of the intrinsic properties of matter’s ‘substatrum’ (1998, p. 210).

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<sup>78</sup> It would imply a type of idealism because Kant explicitly says that if one removes the ‘thinker’ then reality i.e. the ‘corporeal world’ vanishes. Such a statement seems to exhibit a notion of the idea that reality is what’s in the mind; while the ideal is what’s external to the mind, which appears to the mind, and is dependent on the mind.

She brushes off Kant's claim as "an unwise and atypical aberration" and claims that Humility counsels silence regarding the intrinsic properties of matter's substratum, yet she also accepts that a being that has thoughts i.e. a subject *is* the substratum of matter.

From what I can see, Langton distinguishes between the substance as a 'thinking thing' and 'mental' properties. When she says that matter doesn't have to be made up of anything mental at all, while still having the thinking being as its substratum; she means the 'thinking thing' is the noumenon. Such that, the noumenon is what is the substratum to matter. And that noumenon is the thinking thing in itself.

The question to be raised here is whether there isn't a misidentification between the 'thinking thing' and mentality? It is unclear what this 'thinking thing' actually is, besides being a noumenon. And it seems that if there is anything that is thinking, then surely it exhibits mentality. If mentality or mental properties are present, then they either supervene on the thinking thing, or they are causally related to the thinking thing. In both cases, it undermines the idea of the inertness of the intrinsic property, and epistemic humility of the thing in itself. But, most of all, it seems to imply a sort of panpsychism. Since, it would seem most apparent that as a thinking thing i.e. a substance or a thing in itself, we would be able to acquire self-knowledge. And therefore, we would know the identity of at least one thing in itself, namely us.

A defense against this argument could be to claim that when Kant says the 'whole corporeal world must vanish', it is not idealism he's implying. Rather, what he could mean to say is that the concept of the noumenon i.e. the thing in itself would vanish if you took away the thinking being itself. Because it's the thinking being that conceptualizes the noumenon, but, that doesn't take away the reality of the noumenon existing out *there* independently of the thinking being.<sup>79</sup>

If that's the case, then we are no longer talking about Langton's 'Kantian Humility' but a different interpretation entirely. Her whole thesis of epistemic humility based on an

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<sup>79</sup> To elaborate further, the thinking being which cognizes the concept of the noumenon vanishes, then the whole corporeal world which is grounded on the noumenon that is conceptualized vanishes as well, because there is no concept of noumenon in existence. Only we humans can conceptualize the noumena and phenomena, if we are not there, there are merely things which are not conceptualized, though those things that are conceptualized as noumena and phenomena still exist, their concepts are gone. Clearly, this possible way of understanding what Kant meant is to imply that what he said about the corporeal world vanishing if one takes away the thinking being is not literally meant, but rather a remark on the concepts of the boundary and the distinction between noumena and phenomena. Though, I am not claiming this is what Kant may have really meant to say, I am simply suggesting a possible reading of Kant's passage here.

interpretation of Kant would no longer have Kantian roots if she deviated away from her original interpretation.

But, this is no major problem for the thesis itself though if it isn't as Kantian as it makes out to be. The whole point is whether the epistemic humility thesis Langton puts forth holds up on its own, regardless of the exegetical aspects of it being correct or not.

However, if the exegesis of Kant's philosophy was unimportant, then Langton needn't invoke his philosophy to begin with. Nor did she need to attempt to save her epistemic humility thesis from an idealist or a phenomenalist interpretation of his philosophy. Clearly, the premises rest on a Kantian interpretation that is integral to her 'Kantian Humility' thesis.

Yet, that needn't necessarily have to undermine the thesis itself. Regardless of Langton's own intentions, the thesis as a stand-alone can be seen independently of Kant's own premises or some of his outdated metaphysical views. We needn't therefore concern ourselves with what interpretations may yield from his philosophy, because the 'Langtonian Humility' thesis itself rests on certain premises, namely Receptivity, Distinction and Irreducibility which may all be argued for on their own without invoking Kant himself. Though as we have seen, the premise of Irreducibility may at the very least suffer from some major issues with its convincing force which we've seen appeared to be lacking.

It would therefore seem unnecessary to invoke Langton's own attempt at 'saving' epistemic humility from any threats of idealism. If we simply take her epistemic humility on its own terms independently of any exegesis, we do not need to have to answer to what may seem as Kant 'biting his own tongue'. So, this Langtonian Humility faces no threats from ending up as a type of panpsychism. But, it still faces problems with its premise of causal inertness of intrinsic properties and the arguments given by Ney and Alais that we saw in Chapter IV.

### *The Problem from Science*

The second argument the panpsychist may make against epistemic humility is to point to the problem with claiming that all the fundamental properties in the universe are necessarily physical. And that, even fundamental phenomenal properties are reducible to these fundamental physical properties described by science. The problem occurs when we accept that there exist fundamental phenomenal properties in the world. But, why should we presume they do? I've briefly argued for that in the previous chapter; we saw that properties of qualia are saliently there, we have phenomenal properties occurring in our mind, by our very being.

These are properties whose contents are inexplicable through physical science alone. And the properties of qualia cannot be wholly reducible to the physical properties. Because, the contents of the qualia and the physical property it may 'supervene' on are wholly non-identical.

And if that's the case, the complete and true final theory should be able to account for the fundamental intrinsic phenomenal properties as well as all the fundamental intrinsic physical properties. If it doesn't, then the premise of a complete and true final theory is false, since it is not complete and final. But, if it accounts for the fundamental intrinsic phenomenal properties as well, and we can introspect the properties of qualia, then it would render the epistemic humility theses' conclusion false. In either case, epistemic humility appears to crumble if fundamental phenomenal properties are real and they're intrinsic.

Another thing to consider is the question why we should assume that all the fundamental intrinsic properties are those that a unified complete final scientific theory would explain? Why can't there be fundamental intrinsic properties that even a true and complete final scientific theory cannot explain, or are not in the scope of being possibly explained by it? If all the fundamental intrinsic properties are not necessarily the properties the final physical scientific theory explains. And, they're not necessarily physical, then, qualia are such properties that would qualify as intrinsic properties. Unless we presuppose a materialist position, we needn't assume that a true and complete final theory of science would tell us about *all* the fundamental intrinsic properties.

The materialists may reply by attempting to give a non-phenomenal account of qualia,<sup>80</sup> But, Lewis's account of the Identification thesis for instance conflated qualia with the perceived objects themselves, and was hence disregarded to account for properties of qualia. The reason was that Lewis presupposed a notion of 'folk psychology' to account for what the Identification Thesis entails in materialist terms. However, by already presupposing a materialist setting, he makes the job too easy for himself by denying the Identification Thesis on account for *phenomenal* qualia. Because, his setting denies the Identification Thesis for a materialist conception of qualia, but, it has no effect on the phenomenal concept of qualia. Since, the phenomenal concept of qualia tells us that the quale is really identified with that intrinsic property that is had in us when we introspect it.

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<sup>80</sup> We've seen that a non-phenomenal account of qualia would be something like what David Lewis tells us with his argument against the Identification Thesis. Otherwise, views such as physical reductivism, functionalism and epiphenomenalism either ignore qualia as a phenomenal property or reduce it to supervene on some physical property, either causally or explanatorily.

David Ray Griffin – which I mentioned in the previous section on panpsychism – says as well that the Cartesian intuition on the mind-body problem is the cause for materialism’s inability to explain properties such as qualia. He explains the problem as such:

The crux of the mind-body problem is that, given what is assumed to be the scientific conception of nature and therefore the human body, including the brain, it is impossible to understand how our conscious experience, which we know exists, could arise out of the body, and also how this experience could have the dual capacity for self-determining freedom and for employing this freedom in directing the body, which we all presuppose in practice. We are confronted by a paradox: What we in one sense know to be the case seemingly cannot be (2007, p. 117).

This paradox, as Griffin tells us, is created because of the ‘Cartesian intuition’. Instead of keeping the duality from the Cartesian tradition, we have only kept the materialist half in the scientific field. The other half about the ontology of mentality (phenomenality) has been left out of our story. And, this tradition which has been kept since Descartes’ age has created the unsolvable mind-body paradox with our current science.

### *The Argument from Introspective Knowledge*

#### *1*

In Chapter IV I mentioned that I accepted the premise of Receptivity, or something like the causal theory of knowledge regarding perceptual knowledge. The causal theory of knowledge argues that the senses and perception in general is passive. Such a view may very well be compatible with the definition of introspection that I provided in the previous main chapter. And, if we are to have knowledge of qualia as an intrinsic phenomenal property, they cannot be causally efficacious. The reason why they cannot be causally efficacious is that phenomenal properties of qualia do not causally affect physical properties. If they did, then we could directly causally affect physical objects with our qualia. But, that may seem

somewhat counterintuitive, or at the very least go against the idea of having knowledge of any intrinsic properties.<sup>81</sup>

Of course, one can argue that certain phenomenal feelings directly makes us act, and hence directly causally affects something physical. For instance, when you sting yourself on a thorn from a thorn bush, you immediately remove your hand away from it.<sup>82</sup> If that is the case, then the phenomenal feel of pain by getting stung causes you to remove your finger or hand away. But, it can be argued that these are simply the neurological physical properties that cause you to remove your hand. The pain the body feels and reacts from are only the physical properties. It can be argued that it is not the phenomenal ‘feel’ itself that makes you remove the hand. Since you can have qualia of the memory of ‘what it’s like’ to feel pain without that causing anything on the physical properties.<sup>83</sup> It may perhaps cause other phenomenal states in the subject i.e. certain emotive states or certain phenomenal ‘awareness’ states. But, it wouldn’t be a property that causally affected physical properties. However, I will not delve into those types of properties or the idea of the causal relation between different levels of phenomenal properties.

But, the idea is that, it seems intuitive to assume that in certain cases it would look as if phenomenal properties cause changes in physical properties. If that is the case, then qualia aren’t necessarily intrinsic. And if qualia aren’t necessarily intrinsic, then humility still holds. Yet, these properties of qualia which occur can be thought to cause other *extrinsic phenomenal* properties as I mentioned in the last footnote. These extrinsic phenomenal

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<sup>81</sup> We’re assuming here that intrinsic properties are non-causal properties of course. See chapter V, section 1 of this thesis on arguments against epistemic humility that assume or sympathize with the view of intrinsic properties being causal properties.

<sup>82</sup> I am not considering examples where one intentionally acts through some phenomenal cause. For example, when moving your hand to pick up that glass, or moving your legs to move towards that chair. These actions which may have prior *thoughts* and *ideas* which would be phenomenal aren’t properties of qualia, but intentional phenomenal properties which can be considered as non-primary properties. Such properties are therefore not intrinsically there, but, still internal. Qualia on the other hand – I argue – are intrinsic phenomenal properties that are primary and non-causal.

<sup>83</sup> Of course, one can argue that just because the memory of the qualia doesn’t causally affect physical properties, the qualia had in the moment could still do so. However, if we think about the qualia of *feeling* pain when stubbing your toe for instance, it would seem the qualia of pain makes you physically react. But, the same can be argued that this reaction is a mere neurophysiological causal reaction which is physical only. Or, that it’s an innate reflex. Yet, people who do not *feel* the phenomenal pain do not react to it, so it is still counterintuitive to suppose that the feeling plays no causal role. Then again, me feeling the pain of stubbing my toe simply gives me the feeling the pain of stubbing my toe. The fact that I would lie down in agony because of the sensation of pain is because I become *aware* of that pain i.e. by acquiring knowledge of that pain through introspection. The raw primary qualia doesn’t give me more than the ‘what it’s like’ to be in pain when stubbing your toe. The awareness comes after the qualia, an awareness that then causes my reaction to that pain in the first instance.

properties could then cause changes in whatever extrinsic physical properties. But, we could still come to know the intrinsic phenomenal properties nonetheless, namely our own qualia.

Now, in the section about introspection in the previous chapter we saw several views regarding what introspection is. I argued that a view that promotes a clear distinction between the property of qualia and knowledge of qualia should be considered seriously. The view I proposed for introspection was of an active engagement with the qualia itself. An activity that the subject itself wills to acquire knowledge of qualia. Such a view is perfectly compatible and coherent with the causal theory of perception and most likely also the causal theory of knowledge insofar it is applied to perceptual knowledge only.

I briefly mentioned the argument from introspection for panpsychism in the previous chapter. The argument which went as following: We know we have phenomenal activity occurring in us, from this salient fact, we know there must be something that causes this phenomenal activity to occur. If it is conceivable that we can have a zombie identical to us in all physically possible ways yet lack in consciousness, then there is something more to consciousness than just our physical constitution. If there is something more, the brain must already have it in its physical constitution. If our brain is to have consciousness as opposed to the identical zombie twin which doesn't, then the phenomenal properties must already be in the microphysical objects our brain is constituted by. Or at the very least, the macrophenomenal property must be in the brain intrinsically.

If the brain needs to have a phenomenal property that constitutes our consciousness beyond the physical properties it already contains. Then, the microphysical properties that constitute the brain as a physical object itself must contain some microphenomenal properties. Because, the brain consists of those microphysical properties which themselves need to have phenomenal properties if the brain as a whole is to have a phenomenal property.<sup>84</sup> Otherwise, we would need to explain again how the brain as an object has a phenomenal property if its microphysical constituents are taken to be non-phenomenal. We would end up appealing to a type of emergentism<sup>85</sup>, if we didn't also claim that the microphysical properties themselves intrinsically had the microphenomenal properties as well.

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<sup>84</sup> This is to simply argue for a phenomenal reductivism or the idea that one can reduce macrophenomenal properties to microphenomenal properties. Philosophers such as Chalmers (1996) hold this type of view.

<sup>85</sup> Emergentism is essentially the view that consciousness emerges out from some physical properties. Though it can also claim that higher order consciousness emerges out from simpler primitive microphenomenal properties. For instance, an aggregate of such microphenomenal properties may together have higher order phenomenal properties *emerge*. Such a view may be held by materialists as well as panpsychists. For an argument against the view of emergentism, see: Strawson (2006).

Yet, if we agree that the atoms which our brain consists of also have a phenomenal property, then all other atoms must have it as well in virtue of being an atom.<sup>86</sup> Even if there are different atoms, if we agree that the most elementary of particles – which constitute an atom – has a phenomenal property, then all elementary particles have a phenomenal property. So, objects such as quarks, leptons, mesons, electrons and so on are things with physical properties, then, they also have an intrinsic phenomenal property. So, by inferring that the brain – which is constituted by fundamental physical properties – must also have a phenomenal property, then, we accept that the brain also consists of intrinsic fundamental phenomenal properties. We now get our panpsychism by inference through introspective knowledge of our own phenomenal properties.

## 2

We've seen the steps taken to conclude with the view of panpsychism from knowledge of our own phenomenal property. Now, this view has the problem of explaining why the brain is conscious in our body while a composition of near enough similar atoms that the brain consists of may not constitute any higher order phenomenality. This is the problem of how panpsychism may explain the combination of microphenomenal properties to macrophenomenal properties. There are several ways panpsychism tries to explain this, and Chalmers in his article *The Combination Problem for Panpsychism* (2017) shows to the various types of combination problems. And, he considers the potential answers that the different panpsychistic views may offer. I cannot consider all the possible answers and views that Chalmers puts forth in his article. But, we may consider two possible answers that are the most promising types of panpsychistic views according to Chalmers, which may with further investigation be able to deal with the combination problems.

The first view is what he calls 'combinatorial infusion'. This view invokes a parallel with quantum physics in explaining how microphenomenal properties together 'merge' into a macrophenomenal property. Given quantum mechanics' explanation of how two particles

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<sup>86</sup> Roughly speaking, since we first accept that the brain in our body must necessarily contain some phenomenal property, we accept the existence of the phenomenal property. From there, since we *know* the brain is constituted by smaller physical properties, we infer that these objects must also have an intrinsic phenomenal property. This is because it would explain how the macrophenomenal properties come to be, exactly by being constituted by the microphenomenal properties.



may become ‘entangled’<sup>87</sup>, we can consider macrophenomenal properties in this same fashion. Such that, entangled microphenomenal properties together constitute a merged macrophenomenal property. Still, the problem with this becomes the apparent ‘quantum holism’ that would essentially make all particles entangled with each other in some way or another. If that is the case, then we end up with a type of cosmopsychism where we’re unable to distinguish between the phenomenal complex minds from the simple phenomenal property a quark may have.

The ‘phenomenal bonding’ view – which Chalmers considers next – is promising in that the microphenomenal properties are bonded in a causal spatiotemporal way similar to microphysical properties. If that is the case, we can distinctly distinguish between the microphenomenal properties and the higher order phenomenal consciousness as a property which is constituted by those microphenomenal properties. Then again, there is the question how the bonding relation occurs and what it actually is. Chalmers asks “... how could any phenomenal relation holding between distinct subjects (or between phenomenal states of distinct subjects) suffice for the constitution of a whole new subject?” (p. 24). But, then Chalmers considers co-consciousness as a way out, where we have two ways these bonding relations could occur. Transitive relation bonding is the first one considered. But if it is transitive, then:

... when one microphenomenal state stands in this relation to two other phenomenal states of two other subjects, all three will be jointly experienced by a single subject. If so, then given the ubiquity of spatiotemporal and causal relations, it looks as if the microphenomenal states throughout the universe may stand in this relation, yielding a single giant subject (p. 24).

So, a transitive type relation yields a form of cosmopsychism. And we end up being unable to distinguish between the primitive microphenomenal properties from the complex structure and contents of macrophenomenal consciousness.

But, if the bonding relation is non-transitive “... and one has distinct subjects for different instances of the relation, then one will have far too many subjects and it is hard to see how we

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<sup>87</sup> Quantum entanglement is simply the case of two elementary particles being in an entangled state, where by knowing the spin of one particle directly gives us knowledge of the spin of the other particle in that entangled state. In this sense, the two particles are no longer fundamentally distinct, but can be seen as a fundamentally ‘merged’ existence. Chalmers tell us “As Seager notes, when two particles become entangled, there is a sense in which neither exists any longer as a fundamental entity: instead they have “merged” into a fundamental entangled entity, of which the original particles are at best aspects.” (2017, p. 22). For more on how quantum physics may be combined to form a type of agential realism, see: Karen (2007).

will get macrosubjects.” (p. 24). If we consider relations that are ‘intermediate’ as Chalmers calls it, where they are just enough transitive to be in enough relations to yield a conscious mind, then the question becomes how and why the transitive relations stop there. But, we needn’t concern ourselves with the internal problems of panpsychism.<sup>88</sup> Rather, we have seen how a panpsychist may try to argue from the conceivability of a zombie or against the presupposed notion of the materialist unified true and complete final scientific theory. Now, let us consider what the endorser of epistemic humility may have as a reply.

### 3. The Materialist’s Reply

Given that the first argument against Kantian Humility being a type of panpsychism turned out to avoid this problem, we need only consider the last two objections instead. The second argument was an objection raised against the scientific theory only describing *physical* fundamental properties. The problem was that it presupposed to describing all fundamental properties, and that all those properties that were being described were necessarily physical. And, even if *physical* science only describes fundamental physical properties, why should we assume these are all the fundamental properties simpliciter? These were the ‘problems from science’ that panpsychism pointed out with epistemic humility and materialism in general.

A materialist reply to this problem can be the following: we have *physics* as a science to describe all the physical properties in the universe. So, there is a science to describe all the phenomenal properties in the universe too. Let’s call this science ‘psychology’ and assume that this science is non-reductive to physics. Then psychology is the science that describes all the phenomenal properties, but explanatorily reduces them to physical properties. Yet, these two sciences would be distinct and non-overlapping. So, we have a science to describe all the *physical* stuff, and a science to describe all the *phenomenal* stuff. But, the science that describes all the phenomenal stuff is explanatorily reduced to the physical. And, if we have a complete true and final theory of science that is unified, these two sciences would be unified in a non-reductive way.<sup>89</sup> Hence, all the fundamental properties would be physical either way.

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<sup>88</sup> For the purpose of this paper, it is sufficient to explain there exists an internal discussion amongst panpsychists and the combination of phenomenal properties to constitute consciousness. But, we only need to consider their arguments for acquiring knowledge of an intrinsic property, whether it be phenomenal or material.

<sup>89</sup> Non-reductive here would mean that the physical properties that are fundamental to the scientific theory of ‘psychology’ aren’t reducible to the physical properties that are fundamental in physics.

However, if that is so, then the phenomenal science would have to presuppose a physical science. And, it is empirically apparent that all the phenomenal properties that occur only do so when there are physical properties present i.e. there aren't substances with only phenomenal properties. Of course, we may think like Descartes did and conceive of a mind independent of any matter whatsoever, if the point is to remove any necessary relation between the phenomenal and physical properties. But, a mere idea may not have to necessitate even a metaphysical possibility.<sup>90</sup> Even if it did, we have no empirical reason to support the idea. Plus, given the conceivability of an independent ontological mind – and again implying a metaphysical possibility – does not necessitate it being the case for the actual world. Regardless of the conceivability problem, the argument is that if there ought to be a phenomenal science describing phenomenal properties through physical properties, it would presuppose a physical science. If it presupposes a physical science that lies at the foundation of what builds the phenomenal science i.e. 'psychology',<sup>91</sup> then we may as well reduce it to the foundation that builds the phenomenal science. If we simply Occam's razor it, then we need only have the physical science in the end anyway which describes fundamental physical properties.

Then again, this type of argument goes only as far as we consider phenomenal and physical properties as two distinct properties. What would the materialist or the endorser of epistemic humility say to the monist who proposes that there is only one thing that is both physical *and* phenomenal? The materialist option can be to apply a sort of Ramsification to solve this

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<sup>90</sup> This relates to the distinction between 'conceivability' and 'metaphysical modality' or 'possibility' in general. We could perhaps (at least some people maybe) conceive of a paradoxical world which didn't contradict itself. But such a world is not metaphysically possible, a world that is non-contradictorily paradoxical. The same way Descartes may quite 'clearly' and 'distinctly' conceive of the mind as an ontological independent existence. But, Descartes being able to conceive a mind independent of matter doesn't necessitate others having the same ability to do so. Neither does it necessitate in its application to the metaphysical possibility of mind being independent of matter. It would logically be possible, given certain logical premises that would imply an ontological distinction. But it is not the same as a possibility related to the actual world or other possible worlds. But this discussion cannot be exhaustively considered here, I will therefore not delve any further into it. For more on the discussion on the relation between conceivability and metaphysical possibility see: Chalmers (2002) and Mizrahi & Morrow (2015).

<sup>91</sup> Even though 'psychology' which was assumed to be non-reductive to physics and be materialistically explanatory, we would still have to accept the fact that physics would also describe the material properties 'psychology' would have as 'fundamental' to *their* theory. An example is for instance the fundamental properties of DNA and 'living' cells are what biology has as the most basic 'organic' properties. Yet, physics describes these fundamental properties again through elementary particles. Though physics may not explain anything about what 'organic' is or amounts to, it explains all the physical constituents of those fundamental properties of DNA in biology. And so, the same would apply to our case of 'psychology' as well.

problem.<sup>92</sup> If the monistic intrinsic property which consists of both the physical and phenomenal property instantaneously or monistically is had by the substance, then we may simply say that we're ignorant of whatever plays the role of that monistic intrinsic property.<sup>93</sup> So the substance monist can still be ignorant of the fundamental intrinsic properties if properties of qualia have some monistic intrinsic property behind it that plays the role of qualia.

For epistemic humility's purpose – qualia cannot be intrinsic properties. Because it is salient that we *do* know properties of qualia and we *should* know these properties when we introspect. But, if qualia are intrinsic, then epistemic humility needs to overcome this apparent contradiction and somehow propose a concept of qualia that makes it an extrinsic property. However, it seems difficult to conceive of properties of qualia as causally interactive. Given that qualia is caused in us phenomenally by our perception of whatever object, the quale itself isn't causally affective or causally related to other objects.

One possible way that I can see how the epistemic humility thesis may argue against this problem is that our introspection of qualia occurs in a causal manner. So, our knowledge of qualia has to come to us causally – where qualia causes us to be acquainted with those properties. It would essentially be the Kant's thesis of Receptivity which claims introspection itself to be causal, similarly to how we perceive by being causally affected as Langton says. Not only then would we have to accept a view on introspection as a way of being directly acquainted with qualia, but it would in turn also make introspection a passive way of

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<sup>92</sup> A Ramsification here would entail the same type of 'Ramsifying' the scientific terms for the monistic properties as it was for the intrinsic physical properties. The fundamental intrinsic monistic properties are unknown because we do not know which occupies which role for properties that are material or phenomenal. The monistic intrinsic properties are the same for both phenomenal and material causal roles, but, we are ignorant of the monistic property in either case.

<sup>93</sup> There are perhaps two ways to understand the type of monism I may be referring to. One understanding may be a *substance* monism in which there is ultimately only one reality to the object, but it may have other types of properties that it bears. So, a monistic substance may bear physical properties, or phenomenal properties, but not necessarily both together. Yet, its ultimate reality would be the same for an object having only physical properties to an object only bearing phenomenal properties (if there be such substances). The other understanding of monism I gather is to conceive of a type of property monism. This view entails that there exists only a monistic property that has both physicality and phenomenality to it. The fundamental properties themselves are both physical and phenomenal, and the reality of the substance itself becomes irrelevant in that regard (it doesn't necessarily have to be physical or phenomenal, perhaps there's a third *type* of reality for a substance bearing no properties at all i.e. no extrinsic nor intrinsic properties). But the second option is essentially reduced to the first view, because it seems counterintuitive to conceive of a substance having no intrinsic properties if we stripped away all its extrinsic properties. And the intrinsic properties would be those monistic properties the substance itself has, which constitute the substance. Hence, the first view and the second view may very well be understood as equivalent in this regard, as long as we're not open to the possibility of a thing existing without having any properties simpliciter.

acquiring knowledge. Furthermore, if introspection was causally passive and we would have knowledge of qualia by being ‘causally affected’ by them, then it could be reduced to simply being perception itself.<sup>94</sup> There needn’t even be a higher order or two-tier level of gaining knowledge or an invocation of introspection as a means of acquiring knowledge.

But, that is only insofar as one is willing to let go of introspection as a way of acquiring knowledge. Perhaps considering what other philosophers have to say about this will shed further light into the problem and a possible solution for the epistemic humility thesis.

## 4. Raamy Majeed’s Arguments

### I

In the article *A Representationalist Argument Against Contemporary Panpsychism* (2013) Raamy Majeed aims to offer an argument against Panpsychism through their own premise. This premise he tells us is as following:

... when we introspect our phenomenal experiences, it seems like there are certain properties represented in these experiences. For instance, when I introspect my visual experience of a red apple, it seems like I represent the apple (or perhaps mistakenly my experience itself) as having the property of *being red, being apple-shaped, being solid* etc.

The aim of this paper is to use this well-conceded point that our phenomenal experiences are representational to cast doubt on contemporary panpsychism. In particular, I will argue that in so far as we grant that our phenomenal content is identical to or supervenient on our representational content, we have reason to forgo the contemporary panpsychist claim that the physical depends on the phenomenal (p. 106).

Majeed wants to claim that since most contemporary panpsychists acknowledge that some of our experiences are representational, he can use that as an argument against panpsychism.

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<sup>94</sup> The reason why I say it would amount to simply being perception itself is because the epistemic access to one’s qualia is had by being causally affected. In essence then, there will be a constant stream of gaining knowledge of one’s qualia every time one has qualia. If our knowledge of properties in things is gained in this causal fashion, then the qualia will always causally affect the person having it. Therefore, it is redundant appealing to the notion of introspection when the causal powers of qualia are enough to explain how we acquire knowledge of them.

The crux of the argument lies in the fact that the representationalism<sup>95</sup> Majeed considers claims that we do not introspect the intrinsic properties of qualia themselves. Rather, we introspect the properties we represent in the experiences we have. He then goes on to explain the representational properties to be higher-order properties as opposed to the properties in the objects themselves that are being represented by us. Now, Majeed says that "... a first-order property is a property that can only be instantiated by individuals, whereas a higher-order property is a property that can (also) be instantiated by properties; be they first-order properties or, in some instances, other higher-order properties themselves." (p. 109). An example to a first-order property which Majeed gives us is for instance the property 'being red'. Because, this property can't be had by just any individual by itself, an apple can have it, while a snowflake cannot. A higher-order property on the other hand can be the property of 'being a color', "... because some first-order properties, like the property of *being red*, can possess it." (p. 109).

The argument comes forth by the contradiction through another premise which Majeed has assumed. The premise that the phenomenal properties 'ground' the physical properties or rather, that microphenomenal properties ground microphysical properties.<sup>96</sup> With these premises, we see that if the experiential properties are the ones that are representational, and they're higher-order properties, then panpsychism seems to be false. Because higher-order properties cannot ground the first-order primary properties, since first-order properties are more fundamental properties i.e. higher order properties could be reducible to the first-order properties.

But, let us stop here, and reconsider the premises that Majeed puts forth. The premise that microphenomenal properties necessarily 'ground' physical properties doesn't seem to be a strong appealing premise that one is forced to accept blindly. One could be a neutral monist and avoid this premise entirely. Or, one could claim fundamental phenomenal properties alongside the fundamental physical properties to be co-existent with equivalent necessity in a substance.<sup>97</sup>

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<sup>95</sup> Keep in mind that the representationalism here is simply the view that what we experience is represented in us, and that there may exist 'modes' of representation. A view like this takes away the reality of the object as it is in itself to the representation that one has of the object. The representation may be distorted or unclear in several aspects, given our sense-perception is arbitrary and differ between individuals.

<sup>96</sup> Grounding in this context is understood by Majeed "... as being neutral between causal and non-causal forms of metaphysical dependence. So if it turns out that the phenomenal properties that occupy the causal roles we identify as physical, this is to be regarded as a case of the phenomenal grounding the physical." (p. 107).

<sup>97</sup> What I mean by this is that we needn't assume that the fundamental intrinsic phenomenal properties 'ground' physical properties. Rather, fundamental intrinsic physical properties may 'ground' (other non-fundamentally

We can also reconsider what Majeed actually says about our qualia being representational and our knowledge of this representation. He tells us that introspection of the phenomenal character of seeing a red apple for instance “is an awareness *that* my experience is of an apple, which is red, apple-shaped, solid, etc.” (p. 109-110). He continues on:

Now, *that* I represent these properties appears to be a feature of my experience. This, however, needs qualification. That I represent properties like *being red*, *being apple-shaped*, and *being solid* in particular must be a feature of a specific experiential state-cum-property (or a specific set of such properties) that I possess. Otherwise, we would expect all my experiences to represent these properties, which I assure you, they don't. Therefore, that I represent so-and-so properties are, arguably, properties instantiated by specific experiential properties (p. 110).

What Majeed tells us is that the represented properties in our experience are instantiated by specific first order experiential properties. The represented higher order experiential properties are what we introspectively have access to which panpsychists would claim *are* the properties that ‘ground’ the physical stuff.

However, if the specific experiential properties are what instantiate the representational higher order property of qualia, then, couldn't the qualia supervene on those ‘specific experiential properties’? Since Majeed invokes the idea of there still being first-order experiential properties, why uphold the view that these experiential properties instantiate some higher order properties? When we may simply reduce the higher order properties to the raw *feels* themselves from which the higher order properties are instantiated. One could ask why there is a need to posit higher order properties for these experiential properties of ‘raw feel’ which according to Majeed we wouldn't know the identities of. Couldn't one simply stipulate that the experiential properties just are the qualia we ‘represent’? Why invoke the notion of higher order phenomenal properties when one already posits the existence of these intrinsic experiential properties.

Furthermore, the representationalist view presupposes a certain notion of what introspection entails and how we acquire knowledge of the objects we introspect. Which in this case seems to distance the subject away from the experience it itself has and gains knowledge of. I've already looked into some views on introspection and the most appealing ones have been the ones that do not promote a parallel view to how we understand perception. Given that

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intrinsic or extrinsic) physical properties, while fundamental intrinsic phenomenal properties do the same for only other phenomenal properties.

perception and introspection are inequivalent, introspection shouldn't be understood under the same terms as perception is. We may represent objects in our perception to how they are in reality as opposed to how they are represented in our minds.<sup>98</sup> But the phenomenal properties that occur when we gain whatever 'representation' of an object through perception are what we are able to introspect first-hand.

There seems to be a misconception to think that whatever the objects of the qualia are, are the properties we must introspectively come to know. It is not the case that when I perceive a red apple, it is knowledge of *the red apple* that I gain through introspection. The knowledge that I gain by introspecting is what it is like to experience a red apple. The phenomenal experience of how it was to be in that particular state of being when perceiving *that* red apple. The experience itself that I can introspect is not instantiated by any prior experience in me, but is caused by the perception itself of whatever physical object we perceive. And the phenomenal properties I acquire knowledge of are simply properties that only exist in my brain. I am not gaining knowledge of the phenomenal properties in other objects (if there be such properties in inanimate objects i.e. microphysical objects as panpsychism claims). Rather, I gain knowledge of the identity of a particular macrophenomenal property which is intrinsically had by the brain in us. These identities vary by the different experiences we acquire through perception. At a moment in time  $t_1$  it may be the experience of seeing a red apple, at  $t_2$  it may be the experience of seeing a yellow tulip flower. But all these 'phenomenal identities' occur within the same physical object i.e. our brain, and are all macrophenomenal properties which are had intrinsically.

The representationalist may simply argue that what we gain knowledge of by having qualia are *exactly* the properties that the object has *out there*. It is the *redness* out there which the object itself has, that I introspectively know. Rather, there is no introspection at all, but simply representation of the things out there. For instance, Michael Tye says:

Prima facie, awareness of phenomenal character is not a quasi-scanning process. Our attention goes *outside* in the visual case, for example, not to the experience *inside* our heads. We attend to one thing—the external surfaces and qualities—and yet *thereby* we are aware of something else—the 'feel' of our experience. Awareness of that 'feel' is not direct awareness *of* a quality of the experience. It is awareness that is based upon direct awareness of external qualities without any inference or reasoning being involved. Introspective awareness of the phenomenal character of an

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<sup>98</sup> By representation in perception, I simply mean the basic idea that any object that is perceived will differ amongst individual perceiver in relation to its own reality.



experience, I maintain, is awareness—*that*—awareness that an experience with a certain phenomenal character is present (2002, p. 144-145).

Tye is arguing for a type of representationalism that assumes a transparency. This transparency view explains why the properties we introspect are the properties out there externally that we perceive. So it is not the properties inside us or the phenomenal properties we introspect, it is simply the external properties represented to us that we gain knowledge of.

But, if that is the case, then representationalism as a view cannot accept a *strong* Identification Thesis for apparent reasons. Because, with transparency, representationalism cannot claim that we strongly identify our representation with the properties that are being represented. Since that would entail us knowing the properties that constitute for instance the sensation of pain. And as Lewis told us “Making discoveries in neurophysiology is not so easy!” (1995, p. 142). If they do not accept a strong Identification Thesis then they need to accept Lewis’s materialist version of it.<sup>99</sup> This way, representationalism may avoid the problem of *strong* Identification Thesis, if what we come to know are only the physical properties being represented in our qualia.

However, there is no logical necessity for the representationalist to accept materialism just because it accepts the materialist version of qualia. That is simply a non sequitur. Still, if we do accept the materialist version of qualia, then we needn’t invoke the ‘phenomenality’ of higher-order properties of experience. Because, the first order experiential properties could simply be ‘Ramsified’, and we wouldn’t know the identities of which experiential properties instantiate which representational property. It would therefore render the whole idea of invoking the notion of first-order and higher-order phenomenal properties mute. But, this way we seem to end up with an epistemic humility. However, that is, only as far as one accepts

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<sup>99</sup> To clarify, the reason why Representationalism cannot accept *strong* Identification Thesis in any way is because it claims that we represent exactly those properties that are externally there which we experience. But, if the properties of – let’s say – a car is the object of my experience, then, its color and shape are what’s represented to me. But if color is essentially a property that actually reflects light in a certain spectrum of wavelengths between 400-800 nanometers, then what I should represent are those photons that are reflected by the surface of the object. Yet, it would seem ridiculous to claim we would represent colors like this, even though that’s what ‘color’ *essentially* is. And if there is this non-identical relation between the representation and the external properties that are objects of the representation, then it undermines representationalism. We do not gain knowledge of properties through introspection if *strong* Identification Thesis is true, because it is not the case we represent the actual non-reductive properties of the objects we perceive. Keep in mind that I am presupposing the reality of scientific objects of course, and that color as a property in this particular example is applied exactly because it’s a controversial property. See footnote 1 in the Introduction of this thesis for a discussion on why I leave the discussion on the property of color outside.

David Lewis's argument against the Identification Thesis. It all hinges on his denial of the Identification Thesis.

Yet, we may altogether argue against representationalism's claim regarding what we really introspect and gain knowledge of. For instance, Sebastian Watzl (2011) argues for how we may apply our 'Attention' to focus on the properties we are experiencing. However, we are also come to know the changes in our own phenomenology by being aware of our own experience when attending to those properties we experience out there. He tells us how:

Not only in its perceptual form, [but] attention makes a difference to our overall phenomenology. Consider a slight pain in your foot. You have one kind of phenomenology when you focus your attention on that pain, and a different phenomenology when your attention is focused on the saxophone [when listening to jazz music] (p. 146).

If attention is an aspect of our phenomenal awareness of which we gain knowledge introspectively, then focusing our attention on certain qualities or properties in our experience would yield un-identical properties between the external properties and qualia of it. This would undermine representationalism if this is true.

The representationalist may argue that attentively focusing on the external properties simply gives us knowledge of extrinsic phenomenal properties nonetheless. Since, we gain knowledge of causal phenomenal properties, which, we become aware of through changes in our phenomenology when we introspect. We do not thereby know the intrinsic phenomenal properties that would be the qualia itself, since the qualia in this case is simply the representation of those external properties. However, if our awareness of the changes in phenomenology yields knowledge of intrinsic phenomenal properties that we come to know through focusing our attention on properties of our experience, then, representationalism is unable to deny our knowledge of intrinsic properties.

I hope to have pointed to the problem that representationalism alone cannot argue against panpsychism unless it presupposes a type of materialism, which again may imply epistemic humility. Still, Majeed does give us another argument against panpsychism by appealing to epistemic humility itself in another paper called: *Ramseyan humility: the response from revelation and panpsychism* (2017). Let's see what this other argument is.

## II

In his second paper, Raamy Majeed aims to argue how the ‘argument from revelation’ fails against Ramseyan Humility or something like that type of epistemic humility. To do this, he attempts to argue against the ‘Identification Thesis’ which according to Majeed “is the view that (ii) by being acquainted with our qualia, we can thereby know their identities.” (2017, p. 76). Majeed applies the ‘doctrine of revelation’ to account for what Lewis thinks what the ‘Identification Thesis’ entails. The doctrine tells us that if we have an experience with a quale we come to know or are in a position to know the essence of that quale. Yet, the doctrine of revelation seems to perhaps conflate what knowing the qualia through introspection entails with knowing the ‘essence’ of qualia. Whatever knowing the essence of something means, we simply need to know the identities of what the qualia properties are, not necessarily their essences. And, if knowing the essences entails knowing the *essential properties* of qualia, then these properties aren’t necessarily intrinsic. But as I’ve considered earlier,<sup>100</sup> essential properties aren’t the same as intrinsic properties, and there is no necessary bi-conditional connection between the two. Or a necessary conditional connection even.

But, Raamy Majeed also considers panpsychism itself as a threat to epistemic humility in conjunction with the Identification Thesis. He considers several types of panpsychisms, but one which may pose a threat may be for instance micropsychism. Where “the phenomenal properties we can introspect aren’t fundamental, but supervene on a set of fundamental properties at a more micro-level ... these fundamental properties are still phenomenal in some sense, despite being distinct in nature from our own phenomenology.” (p. 84). Given our qualia properties supervene on the fundamental microphenomenal properties according to micropsychism. We would therefore have epistemic access to the intrinsic microphenomenal properties that constitute our brain and our consciousness altogether by knowing our macro-phenomenal properties.

But, Majeed explicates: “... it won’t really undermine Ramseyan humility for the humility thesis concerns not knowing the specific identities of the fundamental properties that actually occupy the nomological roles.” (p. 84). So, we would still not know the particular identities of the phenomenal properties that together constitute the qualia that occur in our brain which we experience. Still, one reply to this is to claim that we do know that the phenomenal properties

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<sup>100</sup> See chapter I, section 3 for the discussion regarding possible conflated notions between intrinsic properties, and inherent and internal properties. Essential properties may as well be the properties that are inherently in some object which are essential to its being, without necessarily being intrinsic at all.

that constitute our qualia are clearly the ones residing inside the microphysical properties that constitute *our* brain. We may not perhaps be able to distinguish between exactly which specific microphenomenal properties that our particular qualia supervene on. But, we know it's the ones that reside in our brain. Then again, this only localizes our epistemic humility problem by saying that we do not know which particular microphenomenal property *in our brain* plays which causal role for those particular qualia. Yet, we could simply look back to what Langton told us about Leibniz. His view about us knowing the intrinsic properties opaquely<sup>101</sup> can be applied here if we already presuppose that qualia supervene on microphenomenal properties. So, to some extent, we may *opaquely* know the intrinsic microphenomenal properties of our brain in a Leibnizian manner.

This, however, doesn't seem to undermine epistemic humility directly, it seems to prevail nonetheless; if, all we can know regarding the intrinsic properties are opaquely their identities through our qualia supervening on them. The other type of panpsychism considered by Majeed is one that claims even quarks and other microphysical properties have qualia like we do. This view, according to him, would claim that quarks "can have the kinds of phenomenal experiences had by you or I. That is, what-it-is-like to taste the tannins in fine wines, hear Miles's Davis's trumpet, or feel the intense pain of a dentist's drill, strikes one as being too phenomenally rich to be felt by a quark." (p. 89).

However, I do not think Majeed is justified in claiming that a quark has the *capacity* to have qualia of "... what-it-is-like to taste the tannins in fine wines". For instance, no quark has functioning perceptual organs, and hence no capacity to perceive through sensibility. How is it justified to say that panpsychism claims quarks are capable of having qualia of redness or hearing the 1<sup>st</sup> Movement of Beethoven's 5<sup>th</sup> Symphony? When, clearly, quarks have no capacities for having such properties of qualia.

I think it is misconceived to believe that, if macrophenomenal properties supervene on or are reduced to microphenomenal properties, then that entails the macrophenomenal property had by the macrophysical object is wholly identically had by all the microphysical properties that together constitute the macrophenomenal property. If I *hear* birds chirping outside my room, then the qualia of that experience isn't had identically by all the microphysical

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<sup>101</sup> *Opaquely* knowing in this context is simply having knowledge that is not directly related to us. So, as Langton mentioned in her book, Leibniz supposed a reducibility of extrinsic properties to the intrinsic properties. In our case we have qualia supervening on microphenomenal properties. By there being a supervenience relation between these two properties, we can know to some extent the microphenomenal properties. Since, if changes occur in the extrinsic properties, it implies certain changes in the intrinsic properties according to supervenience.

constituents of my macrophysical object that has the macrophenomenal property of ‘what it’s like’ to hear birds chirping outside.

A potential remedy for the panpsychist can be that quarks having partly properties of the qualia that the macrophenomenal property itself is. In a sense, the microphenomenal properties are like jigsaw puzzle pieces that together constitute the whole picture that is the macrophenomenal property. This is obviously a crude way of explaining this relation, but it suffices to say that we can understand quarks for instance to therefore only have small ‘bits’ of the actual qualia or ‘what it’s likeness’ that together constitute the macrophenomenal property. Such that, when my qualia of hearing birds chirping is reduced to microphenomenal properties, it is actually spread into ‘bits’ in each and every microphysical object that is part of constituting the macrophysical object.<sup>102</sup>

A third option is to simply apply the second view of qualia that I discussed in section 3.2 in Chapter IV. If qualia are token particular properties, then objects such as quarks cannot have qualia of seeing red or tasting fine wine etc. Because, they can only have qualia that are token specific to each individual substance. Where, each property of qualia is determined by whatever distinguishes each quark from each other. However, this is not the most appealing answer to give, but, it is a possible option that can avoid the problem Majeed points out.

Still, the main argument that Majeed makes against the panphenomenalist ‘remedy’ against epistemic humility is to claim that it simply amounts to idealism. The very same idealism that Langton’s Kantian Humility tries to avoid in promoting the epistemic humility interpretation. But, how does one conclude from panphenomenalism: that every single physical *thing* is ‘grounded’ on a phenomenal property, to the view that the *real* fundamental nature of reality is what’s in our *mind* i.e. our *ideas*? There seems to be a conflation between the two distinct terms panphenomenalism and idealism here. Not only that, but the conclusion appears to be a non sequitur. The all too broad term ‘ideas’ contains more in its semantical value than what the term qualia can ever do. Regardless of historical application, and different interpretations regarding Leibniz’s monadology to promote idealism or panpsychism that Majeed points out to. It is clear that ideas i.e. *mental activity* in the subject isn’t equivalent to simply having phenomenal experiences of things.

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<sup>102</sup> For instance, imagine that you have qualia of some external quality or property. That quale is a macrophenomenal property. The macrophenomenal property is ‘100’. Now ‘100’ is reducible to the microphysical objects that all have microphenomenal property ‘1’. Exactly 100 of the microphysical objects have the microphenomenal property ‘1’ that together constitutes the macrophenomenal property i.e. the qualia of ‘100’. I hope this manages to paint a clearer picture of what I am trying to convey here.

'Raw' experience or qualia are primary and simple in nature. The ideas and the mind-dependent reality in idealism are ideal, and the ideas themselves are complex and higher order. Yet, panphenomenalism does not claim that the physical reality itself is ideal in the sense that the phenomenal properties determine the objective reality of how we come to *know* these objects. Given that we do not need to claim that the intrinsic phenomenal properties ground the physical objects, we can easily avoid the conflation with idealism. It is enough that the microphenomenal properties are fundamentally intrinsic as the fundamental material properties are. As long as they exist in a substance or an object intrinsically, no other necessary condition needs to be invoked, such as the concept of 'grounding'. Therefore it suffices with the phenomenal properties being intrinsic to all physical objects as well. They can be understood to reside in the objects dualistically or in a monistic way as Russellian monism tells us.

So, one may be a wholly realist in all possible ways, and also accept panphenomenalism. They are wholly compatible, and accepting scientific properties to be real is coherent with panpsychism and all its variants. It just proposes an intrinsic dual nature to every substance. Not what idealism would claim, where only the phenomenal properties are essentially real. And, one could have an idealism claiming that if every physical object is 'grounded' on phenomenal properties, then reductively everything is phenomenal. What is therefore real in ultimate reality is the phenomenal, such as our mind. But, as I've argued, claiming the phenomenal properties necessarily *ground* the physical substances is not a premise any panpsychist necessarily needs to hold.

# Conclusion

## Summary of the Inquiry

To summarize what I've done in this thesis, let us consider what each chapter has done briefly and what conclusions were inferred from them. The first chapter raised the question which has been the main focal point of this thesis: Do we have epistemic access to the intrinsic properties in objects? This question can at first sight perhaps even seem a bit ambiguous. What does it really ask us? Do I have any epistemic access i.e. a *relation* to intrinsic properties? Or, do I have epistemic access *to the identities* of the intrinsic properties? My focus has been on the latter interpretation of our question here. And, that question already presupposes that the answer to the former question is yes.

So, the first chapter introduced us to our main question. Then, I considered what these 'intrinsic properties' would even be to begin with, if we were to have knowledge of them. After having looked at the concepts on intrinsicness from Langton and Lewis, I considered a view where the reality of such properties is non-existent. Structuralism could be a trivializer to the question, but, some problems were raised against this view and it was put to the side given the plethora of papers discussing for and against this view. I also clarified certain concepts that were not to be conflated with the term 'intrinsic'. And, in the last section of the chapter I briefly considered the three main positions one could have regarding our main question. The answer that said we could know the intrinsic properties through ordinary means was dismissed based on the reason that it presupposed our epistemic access to the intrinsic properties. So, the metaphysical views supporting us having knowledge of intrinsic properties was based on us having access to these properties prior to the metaphysical conceptualization of what an intrinsic property would be. The other two main candidates I considered are our well known claims from epistemic humility and panpsychism.

The second chapter took on the task of presenting Langton's version of epistemic humility which she calls 'Kantian Humility'. This non-transcendental interpretation of Kant concludes that what he really meant to say was that we are in principle ignorant of the 'things in themselves'. Where, the things in themselves are substances bearing only intrinsic properties. Three premises known as the 'Distinction', 'Receptivity' and 'Irreducibility' lead us to 'Humility'. Having presented what each premise claimed and how Langton's Kant came to

hold them, I looked at some implications and possible problems that may occur from her interpretation.

The third chapter presented the other epistemic humility theses that bases on different premises than that of Kantian Humility. The Ramseyan Humility from David Lewis used ‘Ramsification’ and certain modal premises to conclude with our principled ignorance of the identities of intrinsic properties. I looked at the given historical context in which the ‘Ramsey sentence’ was applied for application regarding scientific theories and the objects they describe. Then, I explained in detail the terminology and the several arguments Lewis made for epistemic humility. One argument was made through combinatorialism, and another through use of idlers, aliens and with the premise of quidditism.<sup>103</sup> The last section looked at some further implications of Lewis’ epistemic humility regarding intrinsic properties in general, phenomenal properties such as qualia and an ineffable ignorance.

The fourth chapter inquired into the term introspection and how we should understand it. I explained how introspection was a non-perceptive way of having knowledge of intrinsic properties and how it could undermine the epistemic humility theses. I considered several views for introspection such as the acquaintance view or the direct experience view. I proposed a view that suggested introspection was active acquaintance of a sort, where the subject through its own will actively engages with qualia to gain knowledge. In the second section I looked at the term qualia and considered how this property would be intrinsic to begin with and considered ways of conceptualizing this property. I also considered how the argument for panpsychism may unfold from this concept of qualia as an intrinsic phenomenal property in us. The last section briefly presented the different panpsychistic views and explained what panpsychism was.

The fifth chapter considered the reply from the panpsychist against epistemic humility. The first section looked at some materialist replies against epistemic humility. And, I also saw what premises I would grant epistemic humility. The second section considered three main replies a panpsychist could make against epistemic humility. The third section looked at how an endorser of epistemic humility may retaliate against the panpsychist reply and discussed the potential answers and the multi-layered problems that would occur again. The fourth section discussed Raamy Majeed’s two articles that argued against panpsychism through two different arguments and premises. I considered some problems with Majeeds attempts and also saw some possible answers Majeed could make against these problems pointed out. But,

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<sup>103</sup> See section 2 and 3 in Chapter III for the explanation of these various terms mentioned here.



the question is, where should we stand having considered the two ways of (not) knowing the identities of intrinsic properties?

## Towards a Conclusion

I offer three brief sketches for ‘compromises’ between epistemic humility and panpsychism. Given the space I have, I cannot justify the reason for accepting these three options in enough depth. The three conclusions are as following:

1. The panpsychist sympathizer: We know the identities of the properties of our qualia i.e. macrophenomenal *intrinsic* properties. We know (through scientific theories) that the brain is constituted by microphysical properties. If the brain as a whole is to have a phenomenal property, the macrophenomenal property itself needs to be explained by pre-existing phenomenal properties in the microphysical things that constitute the brain. From there, we infer all microphysical things have microphenomenal properties as well. However, we do not know the identities of any other intrinsic phenomenal properties besides our own qualia. We are therefore ignorant of all other intrinsic properties outside *our own* subject.
2. The Epistemic Humility sympathizer: We can know the intrinsic macrophenomenal property of qualia in our brain. However, we are ignorant of the identities of any other properties beyond us, whether they are phenomenal, material or monistic and so on.<sup>104</sup>
3. The ‘Humble’ Reality sympathizer: We do not know the identities of any intrinsic properties, because they belong to a different reality entirely. A reality which is non-material and non-phenomenal. We may infer that this ‘third’ type of property resides intrinsically in a substance, and without it, neither phenomenal nor material properties could exist. But, we offer nothing on *what* this relation consists in. We needn’t invoke anything beyond the mere possibility that there is a third *kind* of property which lies at the *fundament* to ‘ultimate reality’.

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<sup>104</sup> Thanks to my mentor Sebastian Watzl for pointing out the distinction between the second compromise view from the first and the third view as another stand-alone conclusion.

I need not say more about what the first compromise entails. It is clear that it is a type of panpsychism where we are ignorant of the identities of all intrinsic properties except phenomenal intrinsic properties that we ourselves have in us. Those properties would be qualia which we gain knowledge of through introspection. The reason why this is a type of ‘compromise’ is simply because we remain ignorant of the identities to the intrinsic properties of everything external to ourselves. Yet we can have intelligible ways of knowing *that* there are material and phenomenal intrinsic properties in the world.

The second view takes a more humble approach, yet it still accepts the brute fact that we can know the identities of our own qualia which are intrinsic properties. But, unlike the first compromise view, it offers nothing but silence regarding what *type* of fundamental intrinsic properties there may be beyond the scope of our own qualia. It is therefore much closer to an epistemic humility, yet compromising with panpsychism’s claim of knowing our own qualia. There may be material intrinsic properties, or there may be phenomenal intrinsic properties. Or, there may even be some other type of intrinsic properties. We simply do not know. This is perhaps a broader claim than what epistemic humility itself proposes, given that the epistemic humility thesis really only concerns and presupposes a materialist standpoint.

The third view proposes a whole new property altogether and offers us complete ignorance regarding ultimate reality. There is a metaphysical gain in the types of properties in the world by proposing a third property, but, by doing so we have an epistemological loss regarding the world. This epistemological loss comes at the price of the explanatory efficacy of ignorance. By invoking a third ‘kind’ of property, we simply claim it to be whatever *binds* the phenomenal and material properties together in a substance. We needn’t know how it does it, nor the identities of the properties that do it. It is enough to claim *that* it does it. It is a property that a substance has intrinsically, where the material and phenomenal properties are thereby extrinsically had by the substance bearing the third type of property intrinsically. There is a necessary relation between the substance having the third kind of property and it thereby being *able* to bear phenomenal or material properties.

However, this third property is not to be misconstrued as a conjunction of the two properties i.e. the phenomenal and the material. It is not a type of neutral monism.<sup>105</sup> The point is to have a distinct third type of property that we may in principle be ignorant of,

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<sup>105</sup> Neutral monism is a view that promotes the idea that ultimate reality is one, there is only one substance that is both phenomenal and physical. It is distinct from panpsychism because panpsychism can claim that ultimate reality has two distinct types of properties, one which is phenomenal and the other being material. While the view I am considering proposes three types of properties instead.

something that may connect the phenomenal and material properties in the substance. We can simply infer their existence and a concept of a third type of property, but we are ignorant of what goes beyond this regarding these properties. We can claim these properties are necessary, because we can show to them through its explanatory power regarding the connection of phenomenal and material intrinsic properties. But we are none the wiser about their identities or being in an epistemic relation where we have access to their identities.

The material and phenomenal properties would therefore also end up being extrinsic properties in this way. Because, the third type of property is what the substance has intrinsically, without, the phenomenal and material properties cannot be had. Hence, the third type of property becomes the ultimate ‘ground’<sup>106</sup> to the other two types of properties. They therefore also become causal properties only, where the third types of properties are actually the properties that are the “role occupiers” as Lewis would have said.

But of course, the biggest question is why we need to invoke such a third kind of property? And why isn’t this redundant if we are ignorant of the identities of these properties to begin with? To answer the first question, the reason to invoke a possible third *type* of property is to take seriously phenomenal qualia and also the claim that we may be ignorant of ultimate reality. One can say it’s a different approach to a type of compromise between the two views. But, then again, why would this be a *better* approach than simply accepting there are intrinsic phenomenal properties we know while being ignorant of all other intrinsic properties? As I explained, the view’s force lies in its ability to simply leave the explanation of the connection between the material and phenomenal properties to a principled ignorance. If we claim that we know physical properties, even if we do not know the intrinsic properties, we have the problem of explaining how phenomenal properties occur. But, we also have the problem of different levels of phenomenal properties occurring, and also no phenomenal properties that *seem* to be occurring in objects like rocks and chairs.

With the third type of property, we avoid explaining any of this, while also explaining that the property we are ignorant of lies behind the *reason* for these differences in phenomenal levels. It explains why rocks seem to have no phenomenal properties occurring in them, while mammals and higher order animals seem to do. We can make an analog example with dark matter and energy here. Just as we infer their existence as properties that need to exist in order to explain certain physical discrepancies in physics, we have the third type of property for the

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<sup>106</sup> I’m aware of the contentiousness of the semantical value this term may have, and I simply have in mind the definition Raamy Majeed has given us. In this particular case it would be a non-causal metaphysical dependence of sorts. See chapter V, section 4.1.

relation between phenomenal and material properties. We do not know the identities of the dark matter or dark energy properties. The same way, we do not know the identities of the third type of intrinsic properties. But, we can infer their existence for the purpose of explaining our apparent ‘problem’ in the philosophy of mind and metaphysics in general.

Why this approach wouldn’t end up in redundancy may be somewhat more apparent now through the analogy made with dark matter and dark energy. Something like it may very well be what the concept of a third intrinsic property that is behind ultimate reality – which eludes us – is. In either case, why assume that ignorance is not a solution? The main problem here may be that we’re invoking the existence of something beyond what we know, and claiming ignorance of it. A parallel case can be me claiming that a God exists, but at the same time saying that I do not know what God is i.e. have knowledge of its identity. Why claim its existence to begin with? Well, if we consider the case with God, it may not be meaningless to make an existence claim while concluding an ignorance regarding the identity of its existence. The mere fact that something like God exists may explain several metaphysical questions and problems, while, we can still claim silence on behalf of *what* it is. What matters is *that* it is. It is enough to claim that there are some property or other in our case that may do the explanatory work, yet without us knowing what they are more than that they are *something*.

This view may perhaps be very displeasing to both materialists and panpsychists. But, for someone who endorses epistemic humility in general and its spirit could be open to this possible view. Since, this view leaves us with an epistemic humility regarding ultimate reality nonetheless. And, that is the main point with epistemic humility to begin with. But this way, we are also not denying there being phenomenal properties, only that we do not know the intrinsic properties behind those phenomenal properties.

I am not claiming this proposed view to be definite in anyway or well fleshed out at this point. Rather, the aim is to show it as a mere possibility of conceiving and compromising between the two views I have focused on in this thesis. Whether this actually solves anything, or creates more problems for the mind-body problem – our knowledge of ultimate reality and the metaphysics of intrinsic properties in general – I cannot know at this point. There is much more to be explored and considered regarding all three ‘compromises’ that I have offered here. However, an exhaustive inquiry into these three possible conclusive views would have to be done elsewhere. Whether that inquiry may be fruitful or not I do not know, however, depending on what one’s aim is, there may be something to be gained perhaps.

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