How to color McTaggart

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Consciousness @ the Beach II
25 February 2007
Plan

- We can preserve:
  - Inversion without illusion
  - Standard russellianism
  - The common sense view of colors
  - Color realism

- If we accept:
  - A slightly heterodox semantical view
  - A fairly heterodox metaphysical view

- Color--tense analogies will be helpful
Inversion without illusion

- Some intuitions:
  - My experience of the stop sign is phenomenal red
  - Invert’s experience of the stop sign is phenomenal green
  - Both of us correctly perceptually represent
What’s correct representation?

- Suppose it is true representation
- This constrains our theory of what phenomenal redness/greenness might be
Standard russellianism

- Phenomenal greenness is perceptual representation of green
- Phenomenal redness is perceptual representation of red

So:
- If both Invert and I correctly represent
- And correct representation is true representation
- Then the stop sign is both red and green. !?!?!?!?
Beyond standard russellianism

- Phenomenal redness is . . .
  - . . . some property not bearing on representation (qualia theory: Block)
  - . . . representation of some property other than redness (extended russellianism: Shoemaker, Thau)
  - . . . selection of epistemic rather than alethic possibilities (fregeanism: Thompson, Chalmers)

- But each such view clashes with a strong “diaphanousness” phenomenology
Maybe correctness isn’t truth

- Rather, it’s truth from one’s perspective.
- *(This is the slightly heterodox semantical view.)*
Tense and perspective

- Suppose Bill judges in 2006, ‘2006 is now’.
- We should say:
  - Bill’s judgement is correct
  - Bill’s judgement is not true
- Hence correctness isn’t truth.
- From Bill’s perspective, 2006 is now.
- Bill’s judgement is true from his perspective.
- Hence correct representation is truth from the perspective of the representing.
Back to inversion

- How things are with me:
  - The stop sign is red from my perspective
  - I represent it correctly, hence as red
  - My phenomenal character is: being red-representing

- How things are with Invert:
  - The stop sign is green from his perspective
  - He represents it correctly, hence as green
  - His phenomenal character is: being green-representing

- Intuitions preserved!
Common sense on color

- Revelation (Johnston)
- If something is red, it is not green (etc.)
Revelation

- “The intrinsic nature of redness is fully revealed by an experience representing something as red”.
  - Hence redness is *fundamental*: to make the world, God has to put redness in it. It doesn’t come in virtue of some deeper nature, because there isn’t one.
  - Hence redness is *monadic*: *God commands redness into the world with a monadic predicate.*

- Here’s where McTaggart comes in . . .
Tense Realism

- Nowness (pastness, futurity) is fundamental: it doesn’t reduce to a relation between an event and an utterance.
- Nowness (pastness, futurity) is monadic: it isn’t a relation between an event and an utterance.
Tense Exclusion

- If nowness is monadic, if something is now, it is not past or future
- If pastness is monadic, if something is past, it is not now or future
- If futurity is monadic, if something is future, it is not past or now
  - These are not so obvious if tenses are polyadic: 2006 is now (wrt 2006) and past (wrt 2007)
Transparency

- Electron e has negative (positive) charge. That’s fundamental, and true (false), and differing perspectives have no say in the matter.
- For all fundamental propositions p, for all perspectives X, p iff from X’s perspective, p.
  - (A fundamental proposition is one God could have commanded to be true.)
  - Perspective operators are “transparent”, like ‘true’ or ‘actually’.
- Slogan: “Merely perspectival differences disappear at the fundamental level.”
McTaggart against Tense Realism

- From the perspective of 2006, 2006 is now
  - Hence 2006 is now (Transparency, fundamentality)
  - Hence 2006 is not past (Tense Exclusion, monadicity)
- From the perspective of 2007, 2006 is past
  - Hence 2006 is past
  - Hence 2006 is not now
- Eeek!
Color Exclusion

- If redness is monadic, if something is red, it is not green (or . . .)
- If greenness is monadic, if something is green, it is not red (or . . .)
- Etc.
  - These are not so obvious if colors are polyadic: the stop sign is red (wrt me) and green (wrt Invert)
McTaggart against common sense color

- From the perspective of me, the stop sign is red
  - Hence the stop sign is red (Transparency, fundamentality)
  - Hence the stop sign is not green (Color Exclusion, monadicity)
- From the perspective of Invert, the stop sign is green
  - Hence the stop sign is green
  - Hence the stop sign is not red
- Argh!
Where to go?

- The treatment of inversion is admirable.
- Revelation seems a priori.
- Color Exclusion seems a priori.
- So we’ll have to put pressure on Transparency.
Transparency (propositional restriction)

- For all fundamental *nonperspectival* propositions p, for all perspectives X, p iff from X's perspective, p.
- Let propositions attributing tense and color be perspectival.
- Problem solved.
Color realism

- Is anything red?
- Simpliciter, that is -- not just from your or my perspective.
- Surely the stop sign is.
- So we need some perspective $X$ such that the ‘from $X$’s perspective’ operator is transparent even for perspectival fundamental propositions: a fully transparent perspective.
Analogously, is anything now?

- Once again, simpliciter.
- Surely this talk is.
- Another reason for a fully transparent perspective.
The fully transparent perspective:

- My present perspective.
- Hence the stop sign is red (simpliciter) and this talk is now (simpliciter).
- Letting anyone else (or any other time) drive the train would be too deferential.
How do you like me now?

- Privileging the present seems easy. Here it is! The past is gone, the future has not yet arrived. (That doesn’t mean we need to be presentists: just that the present is somehow privileged.)

- Privileging me is a bit harder. (A trick due to Caspar Hare.) When I pinch myself, my experience manifestly is terrible in a special way, but when you pinch yourself, big deal.

- (When you endorse the previous sentence in your own case, it will seem obvious to you.)

- (This is the fairly heterodox metaphysical view.)
Ontology of color (speculative)

- Dualism about monadic colors (since fundamental)
- Contingent upward laws (surface prop, subject prop) --> color
- From X’s perspective, o is red iff law: (prop of o, prop of X) --> red
- Problem: how are these laws sensitive to presentness?
Semi-conclusion

- We have preserved:
  - Inversion without illusion
  - Standard russellianism
  - The common sense view of colors
  - Color realism

- If we have accepted:
  - The truth--correctness distinction
  - Fundamental facts which privilege a perspective

- Or if we don’t . . .
5. Way out

- there’s still an option open:

- *Fragmentalism (Fine)*:
  - No privileged perspective
  - Correctness = truth

- The bad news: we end up with true contradictions

- The good news: they have no effect on us, because each perspective is consistent, and rationality precludes nonhypothetical deliberation from another perspective.