

The Phenomenology of Intuition

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Penultimate version.

1. The Target

Is torturing the innocent for fun OK?

Just now something happened: it seemed to you (I shall assume) that torturing the innocent for fun is wrong. This went on for a period of time, then it stopped. What kind of thing happened?

What happened was that you were in a mental state, in which it seemed to you that things are a certain way. At other times, it seems to you and others that things are other ways. For example, to many it seems that if a ball is red it's coloured; that a rational person cannot believe both that there are exactly two people in the room and that there are exactly four; that the sentence: "The boy the man the girl saw chased fled" is ungrammatical; that the shortest route between two points must be a straight line; that people prefer less pain to more; and that if events A and B, and B and C, are pairwise simultaneous, then so too are A and C.

States such as these are widely accepted in analytic philosophy as examples of *intuitions*, and I shall treat them this way. But this is already to court controversy. First, some philosophers think that no mental kind is appropriately called intuition (Ayer 1956, p.33; Cappelen 2012; Fumerton 1990, p.6; Smith 2000, pp.23–4). One motivation for this view is that the *word* 'intuition' and its cognates are used very liberally, and some uses do not seem to refer to mental states at all (Cappelen 2012; Bengson 2010, pp. 10-11; Bengson 2014). This is true, but there still might be a mental kind to which we refer when we speak carefully. Another is the alleged mystery of what intuitions are, and of how they can provide knowledge.¹ However, several detailed accounts purporting to answer these questions have recently appeared (Bengson 2010; Bengson 2015; Chudnoff 2011a; Chudnoff 2011b; Koksvik 2011), so it is no longer tenable to claim there is a *mystery* here: the accounts must be evaluated on their merits. Finally, some hold that a mental state is not an intuition unless it meets certain strict criteria, which some of the above examples fail to meet. However, the role these examples play here is modest: it is to help readers lock on to *at least roughly* the right class of mental states. They can do this even if one or two examples ought, in the end, to be removed from it.

We can already say something about the nature of the states at issue. Perhaps most obviously, they 'say' or *represent* things. We can think of their representational contents, *what* they 'say', as how things would have to be for the states to be accurate (their *accuracy conditions*). Intuitions have representational contents which can be either true or false (a ball being red does entail that it's coloured, but simultaneity is not transitive). For simplicity we usually say that intuitions themselves are true or false.

Second, intuitions are *occurrent* mental states. The examples above are intended to refer to the times when it *occurrently* seems to someone that such-and-such is the case. We sometimes say that a

¹ See e.g. (see e.g. Boghossian 2000, p.231): "'Intuition' seems like a name for the mystery we are addressing, rather than a solution to it", and further references to similar sentiments in (Bengson 2015, n.1).

person has a certain intuition even if she is at that time clearly not in that mental state, perhaps because she's asleep. But this simply reflects the noted loose nature of intuition-talk.

Finally, intuitions are *conscious* mental states. It is an unargued starting point of this article that when you have the intuition that torturing the innocent is wrong, this *feels* a certain way, and that the way this feels has something in common with the way it feels to intuit that if something is red it is coloured.² The way that it feels, the *phenomenology* of intuition (Pol), is what this article is about, and we shall return to it in detail below.³

Pol is interesting in its own right. It is a feature of our rich subjective lives, and knowing about it is valuable. Moreover, our accounts of phenomenal consciousness should presumably be informed by our best understanding of the kinds of phenomenal characters that are possible, and of which mental states can be associated with them.

In addition to its intrinsic interest, Pol is also worth examining because of its potential metaphysical and epistemological implications. Human beings come to know things, and can be justified in believing things, in many different ways; for example through testimony, memory, perception, and reasoning. One core question in the philosophy of intuition is:

Is intuition too a source of justification and knowledge?

The other core question in the philosophy of intuition is:

What are intuitions?

The epistemic question has received the lion's share of attention in the philosophy of intuition, but the nature question is also interesting in its own right. In addition, how we answer latter question will very likely affect how we answer the former.

Pol might be relevant to both core questions. This yields a classification of views about Pol. One might hold a) that the phenomenology is relevant neither to its nature nor to its capacity to justify belief and be a source of knowledge; b) that it is relevant only to the former; c) that it is relevant only to the latter; or d) that it is relevant to both. In the first case, Pol is not very significant. In the second and third, Pol is more significant. In the last case, Pol is very significant. We return to this below.

2. Some History

The view that intuition is somehow associated with a characteristic phenomenology has a number adherents (Bealer 1998, p.271; Bealer 2000, pp.3–4; Pollock 1974, §4.3; Pust 2000; Sosa 2007b, p.52; Sosa 2007a, pp.47–8; Plantinga 1993, p.106; Huemer 2005, pp.105–105, and p.c.). However, very little effort has been made to describe the character of this experience. Why is that?

I think it is fair to say that there is a general and widespread aversion in analytic philosophy to placing much weight on, or even offering detailed descriptions of, the phenomenal character of experiences (as opposed to, say, their metaphysical status, or representational contents). This is surprising, since

² These claims are given detailed defence in (Koksvik 2011, Chapter 5).

³ I use the phrase 'the phenomenology of intuition' interchangeably with 'the phenomenal character of intuition', to designate the specific way that it feels to have an intuition.

there has also been widespread agreement that conscious experience is one of the most central and puzzling mental phenomena. If that is so, what sense does it make to ignore its character?

Perhaps the aversion is due to a worry about appearing imprecise or vague—it is after all very hard to describe the character of experience. Or perhaps it is due to the problem of *missing methods* (Koksvik 2015): we lack authoritative methods for determining what the character of an experience actually is. Some may also worry about guilt ‘by association’ with the continental tradition, a tradition which has been more concerned with characterising conscious experience in detail, but which is often dimly viewed in analytic circles.

Whatever the explanation for this general tendency, for the study of PoI, in particular, a turning point of sorts may have come with the publication of some papers by James Pryor, some fifteen years ago. In ‘The Skeptic and the Dogmatist’, Pryor (2000) suggested that perceptual experience justifies belief because of “the peculiar ‘phenomenal force’” of such experiences (n. 37). And a few years later he elaborated:

My view is that our perceptual experiences have the epistemic powers the dogmatist says they have because of what the *phenomenology* of perception is like. I think there’s a distinctive phenomenology: the feeling of *seeming to ascertain* that a given proposition is true. This is present when the way a mental episode represents its content makes it feel as though, *by enjoying that episode, you can thereby just tell* that that content obtains (2004, pp.356–357).

If the phenomenology of perceptual experience is what explains why perception justifies beliefs, mightn’t the phenomenal character of intuitional experience furnish an argument that intuition, too, justifies belief? This idea was independently developed by Chudnoff, Bengson, and myself, around 2010 (Chudnoff 2011b; Chudnoff 2011a; Bengson 2010; Bengson 2015; Koksvik 2011). Some details vary but the core idea is the same: intuition justifies belief *for the very same reason* that perception does; they are both experiences with an epistemically significant phenomenal character. To support an argument of this sort it is necessary to describe the character of perceptual and intuitional experience in detail, so Bengson, Chudnoff, and I went further in this than before. Insofar as this article focuses on these three accounts, then, it is because they contain more substantial material on which to focus.

3. What’s at Issue

When we ask about PoI, we are asking about conscious experiences. The word ‘conscious’ are used in a variety of ways (Block 1995), but in the sense of interest here, a person is conscious just in case there is *something it is like* to be her (Nagel 1974).⁴ Think about your own experience. At any given time there is something it is like to be you. Being you *feels* a certain way, overall, ‘holistically’. Whenever this is so, you are phenomenally conscious. The (often highly complex) fact of *what* it feels like to be you overall is the *phenomenal character* of your *global* experience.

⁴ For an in-depth examination of ‘what it is like’ talk, see (Farrell 2014). Note that, despite the phrase ‘something it is like to be *her*’, there is no suggestion here that the experiencing subject herself shows up in a person’s experience, and so no conflict with Hume’s bundle theory of the self (Hume 1739, §1.4.7).

Local conscious experiences also have phenomenal characters: you probably know both what it is like to taste honey, hear a buzzing sound, and be stung by a bee, for example. At any given time, you enjoy a number of different local experiences, of many different kinds. The character of your global experience somehow *reflects* the characters of all of them; and what it is like to enjoy each of them *contributes* to what it is like to be you overall.⁵ Because we know a lot about the characters of our local experiences, there must be some systematicity to the contribution; otherwise this knowledge would be mysterious.⁶

Intuition is a local experience; it is one of many contributors to what it is like overall for the person who has it. Since we take ourselves to know (or be capable of discovering) something about the character of this experience, there must be some systematicity to the contribution that it makes. Realising this helps us to narrow down the kind of experience that is of interest to us.

A local experience's contribution to overall experience can be determined in different ways. It might, for example, depend on the content of the experience. When I visually perceive a red ball, my perceptual experience makes a different contribution than it would have made had the ball been green. Perception therefore has *content-specific phenomenology*. In addition, many find it plausible that *whatever* I visually perceive, visual perception makes a certain stable contribution to the character of my overall experience, sometimes described as its 'visualness' (Grice 1962/2002). If so, visual perception also has *attitude-specific phenomenology*.⁷ Mental states thus may have, and perception plausibly does have, both content-specific and attitude-specific phenomenology.⁸

Intuition may or may not have content-specific phenomenology.⁹ However, since our interest is in a phenomenal character that might matter either to the nature of intuition, or to its epistemic properties, we can set this question aside. For Pol to matter in either of these ways it must be *shared* between all instances of intuition, regardless of content. Thus, for there to be a Phenomenology of Intuition in the sense at issue here, intuition must have—and need only have—attitude-specific phenomenology.¹⁰

⁵ The earliest use of 'contribution' with this meaning of which I am aware is Peacocke (1998).

⁶ On the relationship between local and global experiences, see (Koksvik 2014).

⁷ Those who doubt the existence of attitude-specific phenomenology might reflect on the phenomenal similarity between different instances of 'being joyous that ...', 'being fearful that ...', 'hoping that ...', etc..

⁸ To my knowledge, although I was certainly not the first to point to this distinction (see e.g. Horgan & Tienson 2002), I coined these terms. (They occur in presentations and circulated ed drafts in 2009, and in writing in 2011, §4.1). Since they have seen some uptake (Smithies 2012b; Smithies 2012a; Kriegel 2015, §3.1) it seems best to keep using them, despite their various flaws. For one, 'attitude-specific phenomenology' might suggest that phenomenology suffices to distinguish one attitude from another (and it is sometimes used that way). However, I intend this to be a substantive question, and in fact put a lot of weight on the claim that intuition and perception share aspects of their attitude-specific phenomenology (Koksvik 2011, Chapters 5 and 6). The terms might also suggest that the ultimate *origin* of the phenomenology is in the content or the attitude. The issues here subtle, and again the terms are intended to leave this open (see Koksvik 2011, pp. 104-105).

⁹ The question plausibly hinges on whether thought does (Koksvik 2011, §4.2).

¹⁰ One might wonder how Pol could be relevant to an intuition's ability to justify belief in *p* if intuitions lack content-specific phenomenology. The answer is that Pol plays a role in explaining how an intuition can justify belief in whatever it is that it represents. To complete the explanation of how the intuition manages to justify belief in a certain *particular* content we would need an account of how mental states get to have the particular contents they have. Whatever the correct account turns out to be, the present account can adopt it.

4. The Nature of the Phenomenology of Intuition

In this section I consider three possible dimensions of variation in the nature of PoI: whether it is reducible or irreducible; whether it is structured or unstructured, and whether it is gradable or non-gradable. This is by no means a full catalogue of interesting dimensions of variation, but it does capture some of the most important ones.¹¹

The *reducibility* of PoI can be captured by asking whether it can be wholly accounted for by the phenomenal characters of other mental states.¹² To see what's at issue, consider the debate concerning cognitive phenomenology. Some hold that thinking that *p* makes a different contribution to overall experience than does thinking that *q* (Siewert 1998; Pitt 2004; Horgan & Tienson 2002; Peacocke 1998; Kriegel 2003; Smithies 2013). Others concede that what it is like to be you overall when you think that *p* is almost always different than what it is like when you think that *q*, but deny that the difference in thought is what explains this.¹³

Corresponding viewpoints are available for PoI. On the one hand, the phenomenal character of intuition might be distinct from any combination of the characters of other mental states. George Bealer has long defended a view of this kind, more recently Bengson (2010; 2015), Pust (2000), and I (Koksvik 2011) have. On the other hand, PoI might be wholly accounted for by another mental state, by a combination of other mental states, or by a mental state or a combination of mental states in conjunction with other machinery, such as dispositions.

A view that's initially difficult to place on this dimension is that of Elijah Chudnoff (2011b; 2011a; 2013). He denies, on the one hand, that intuitional experience is identical to, or analysable as, the experience of any collection of other mental states. But he also holds that intuitions are *constituted* by other states: thoughts, imaginings, intentions, beliefs, etc. (Chudnoff 2011b, p.645). How do these things hang together?

To understand the view, the unity of consciousness is a useful model. Proponents of the view that consciousness is phenomenally unified hold that there is something it is like to taste coffee, something else it is like to smell a rose, but *also* something it is like to taste coffee and smell a rose *together*. This latter something is different from what it (perhaps counter-possibly) would have been like if a subject had enjoyed the experiences in a disunified manner (Bayne & Chalmers 2003; Bayne 2010). Analogously, even though intuition is constituted by other mental states, its character is still irreducible on Chudnoff's view, since it cannot be wholly accounted for by the character of other mental states. Something is lost if one merely lists the constituting states without mentioning that they (in this instance) amount to an intuition, a state with its own distinctive phenomenal character.

This feature of the view is important, because it allows Chudnoff to answer what he calls 'the Absent Intuition Challenge' to intuition as a conscious experience (2011, §4). Some people claim not to

¹¹ Views of PoI might also differ in whether modal strength (necessity or possibility) is seen to be an aspect of the experience's character. As space is restricted, I cannot discuss this further here, but see (Koksvik 2011, §§1.4.3 and 1.5.1).

¹² This is not to be confused with reductionism *about intuition*, a view proposed by Lewis (1983, p. x), Plantinga (1993) and van Inwagen (1997), and endorsed by Williamson (2007); see also Cummins (1998, p. 119).

¹³ For example, remembered, occurrent and imagined perceptual experiences, bodily sensations, moods, and emotions (Lormand 1996; Braddon-Mitchell & Jackson 2007; Prinz 2007; Koksvik 2015)

recognise intuitional experience in their own inner life. Given that we trust their sincerity and have no reason to think that they are less skilled introspectors than we are, how can a defender of intuitional experience explain this? One *could* take this as evidence that the critics lack a type of experience which the defenders enjoy, but this is generally regarded as a poor solution. Chudnoff can instead plausibly say that they overlook intuitional experience because they are looking for the wrong kind of thing. They are looking for an experience distinct from their thoughts, imaginings, etc., but on his view, intuition is not such an experience. It does not occupy an additional ‘space’ in conscious experience; it is instead constituted by these others.¹⁴

A different challenge arises for Chudnoff, however. It seems that:

- i. all intuitional experiences share a phenomenal character, and
- ii. the shared phenomenal character sets intuitional experiences apart from all other mental states.

Chudnoff cannot easily explain these points. Why should different intuitions have something phenomenological in common if they are constituted by very different collections of mental states?¹⁵ It is open to Chudnoff to deny that they do, but it then becomes more difficult to hold that intuition justifies belief in virtue of having an epistemically significant phenomenal character.¹⁶

A second dimension of variation is whether Pol is structured or unstructured. It is plausible that there must be some unstructured experiences; infinite decomposition ‘all the way down’ does not seem viable.¹⁷ Moreover, there are plausible examples of unstructured attitude-specific phenomenology. Being almost but not quite able to articulate a thought or a concept—the so-called ‘tip-of-the-tongue phenomenon’—has a phenomenal character which lacks discernible parts or aspects. The same can be said for ‘a-ha!-experiences’ of sudden insight or understanding. Similarly, then, Pol might be unstructured. Bealer, Pust, Bengson (and perhaps Sosa) are plausibly construed as proponents of this type of view of Pol.

On the other hand, Pol might be structured. On Chudnoff’s account, Pol exhibits structure in two different ways. Intuitional experiences are constituted by different collections of other conscious experiences, so it seems that the phenomenal character of the intuitional experiences themselves will be structured according to their makeup. Chudnoff also argues that intuition, along with some other types of experiences, have *presentational phenomenology*. An experience is said to have presentational phenomenology with respect to content p ¹⁸ just in case it both represents that p , and it makes it “seem as if you are aware of a truth-maker for p ” (Chudnoff 2012, p. 55). Since these are

¹⁴ I develop a related but distinct solution along similar lines in (Koksvik 2011, §5.3), one not subject to the difficulties to be raised in a moment. See also the discussion in (Bengson 2010, p. 56).

¹⁵ One might suggest that all intuitions must be partly constituted by mental states of certain types, and that this will explain the commonality in phenomenal character between instances. But then either the characteristic phenomenal character of intuitional experience will be exhausted by the phenomenal character of the state all intuitions have in common, or it will not. In the former case, there is renewed pressure toward reductionism; in the latter, the challenge rearises.

¹⁶ Chudnoff in fact endorses i and ii, and has indicated that he thinks ‘the principle of unity’ which mental states must meet in order to constitute an intuition accounts for their truth (p.c.).

¹⁷ See Varzi 2015, §3.4 for discussion of the corresponding notion of ‘gunk’ in mereology.

¹⁸ A content which may be a proper part of the content of the experience.

distinct phenomenal characters, intuitional experiences are phenomenally structured in this way as well.

I have myself also proposed an account on which PoI is structured (Koksvik 2011, chap.5). I argue that intuition has attitude-specific phenomenology with three aspects: *pushiness*, *objectivity*, and *valence*.

Valence reflects whether, when a subject enjoys an intuitional experience, the content of the experience seems true or false. For example, it might seem true to you that torturing the innocent is impermissible. On the other hand, you might have an intuition with the content: *torturing the innocent is permissible*, but with negative valence, so that the content *seems false*. These mental states are related but distinct, and they make different contributions to the character of the subject's overall experience.

That the states are distinct can be seen by the beliefs they justify. If it seems true to you that torturing the innocent is impermissible, and if having an intuition can provide you with justification for believing what it represents (see §5), you might thereby become justified in believing that torturing the innocent is impermissible. However, the second intuition cannot justify this belief, unless you are independently justified in believing that torturing the innocent is impermissible if it is not permissible (a view one might reject on a number of different grounds).

Phenomenology of objectivity is on my view that aspect of PoI which reflects the fact that intuitional experience purports to be about objective, mind-independent, facts. When it seems to you that if something is red it is coloured, this does not seem to be an aspect of your own idiosyncratic view of the world; it seems that mind-independent reality really is that way. Some experiences are similar to intuition, but lack this aspect. For example, when I say that cold, clear autumn days are better than warm, overcast ones, I am not expressing an intuition, for when I have the relevant experience it does not seem to me that this is so objectively speaking (it presents itself, roughly, an output of 'taste'). But *someone else* might have a mental state with that content that genuinely amounts to an intuition, because it has phenomenology of objectivity.

Finally, on my view, phenomenology of pushiness is that aspect of PoI which reflects that intuitional experience is not neutral with respect to its contents. When it seems to you that if something is red it is coloured, the phenomenology of objectivity ensures that the state is about an aspect of mind-independent reality, and the content is up for consideration as true, not as false (valence). However, the content is not presented neutrally, merely as a proposition to consider. You are *pushed* to believe it. This is an aspect of the phenomenal character of the intuition. You can still suspend belief with respect to an intuited proposition, but doing so implies a felt effort or resistance in a way suspending belief with respect to a proposition which one merely entertains does not.

A third dimension of variation in views of PoI is that the phenomenal character of intuitional experiences might, or might not, vary continuously in some respect: what we might call its 'gradability' (Bengson 2010, p. 27). Aside from reflection on the phenomenal character of intuitional experience itself, a strong reason for building such an aspect into one's theory is the evident truth that some intuitions are weak but others are strong. This is a fact for which all theories of intuitions must account, though they may do so in different ways.

One possibility is to place variability in the *content* of the intuition; for example as variance in its determinacy. An account along these lines might perhaps allow one to account for the difference in strengths of intuitions without holding that it is reflected in the phenomenology.

Bengson holds a view like this. He says that intuitions vary in how clearly or vividly their contents are presented: it might be more or less “clearly or vividly [as opposed to hazily or fuzzily] presented that ... [Gettier’s] Smith does not know”, for example (2015, 721).¹⁹ The view seems to be that this variation is reflected in the phenomenal character of intuitional experiences as well. However, it is doubtful that this can account for all the variability there is in PoI, since it might *clearly but weakly* seem to someone that torturing one innocent person to save twenty others is permissible (while it clearly and strongly seems to that person that torturing an innocent person to save a thousand is). Put differently, there may be no doubt about what the content of the state is—no ‘haziness’, in Bengson’s terms—but the intuition may still be weak.

Chudnoff, so far as I can tell, has no mechanism with which to account for the fact that intuitions come in different strengths, or at any rate, no way to account for the fact that this is an aspect of *what it is like* to enjoy an intuitional experience.

My own preference is to say that the pushiness of intuitional experience is itself gradable. In my view, the character of an intuitional experience as a whole varies as a consequence of the pushiness varying in strength. This both explains why intuitions come in different strengths, and also why the degree to which a person is justified in believing what an intuition represents varies correspondingly.²⁰

5. The Phenomenology, Nature and Epistemology of Intuition

Exploring the phenomenology of intuition is interesting in itself, but the project takes on added significance if PoI is relevant to the nature of intuition, to its epistemology, or to both. How can we tell?

We can begin by asking two diagnostic questions. For the nature, we first fix on an instance of intuition, then ask whether *this* mental state would still be an intuition if it didn’t have the (attitude-specific) phenomenology it does have. If the answer is ‘no’, we have an indication that the phenomenology is part of the nature of intuition. For the epistemology, we fix on an instance which we think provides justification or knowledge, and ask whether it would still do so if it didn’t have the (attitude-specific) phenomenology which it does have. If the answer is ‘no’ we have an indication that the phenomenology is part of why intuition provides justification, or is a source of knowledge.

It is important to note that, if it *is* possible to change the phenomenal character without affecting either the state’s status as an intuition, or its ability to justify or provide knowledge, PoI is *not* thereby shown to be irrelevant to the nature or epistemology of intuition. Several of the views PoI

¹⁹ Like Chudnoff, Bengson (2015; 2010) argues that intuitions are like perceptual experiences in being ‘presentational’ states. His account of presentationality, however, differs from Chudnoff’s, notably in not containing any element of seeming awareness of the truth-maker of the presented proposition.

²⁰ It also lends credence to the unargued starting point of this article, namely that a mental state’s having certain phenomenal character is required for it to count as an intuition, while acknowledging that variance in the character still occurs (Koksvik 2011, pp.187–188).

which we have canvassed entail the possibility of variability in phenomenal character without change in either status. An account such as Chudnoff's, for example, on which one element of Pol corresponds to awareness of a truth-maker, would allow a counterpart experience to count as an intuition, and to justify and provide knowledge, while having a different character, if that experience was partly constituted by awareness of a *different* truth-maker. And I hold that the strength of an intuition is reflected in its phenomenal character. Counterpart experiences can thus differ in character without failing to be intuitions, and without failing to provide justification or knowledge, by varying in strength. So the crucial question is really whether, when fixing on a mental state, there is some counterpart state which differs from the exemplar in *nothing but* phenomenal character (as well as such changes that, on the view in question, are necessitated by a change in phenomenal character²¹), such that it fails to count as an intuition, or fails to justify.

Thus far we have proceeded as if the centrality of Pol to the nature and epistemology questions can be approached separately. In practice, this is not really the case. In the background is a widely accepted realism about the natural world, a crucial component of which is the claim that there are real divisions in nature, which we sometimes discover instead of imposing. These divisions are often called *natural kinds*, and the endeavour to find them is, following Plato, usually glossed as attempting to 'cut nature at its joints' (see Bird & Tobin 2015 for an introduction). Applying this framework we can say that the mind, like the rest of nature, has natural divisions—*there are mental kinds*—and our conception of the mind should strive to mirror those divisions. So an important way to frame the nature question about intuition is to ask whether intuition is a mental kind.

How can we tell? Accepting that something is a natural kind is widely taken to be warranted just in case we get increased explanatory power by doing so. For it to be reasonable to believe that intuition is a natural kind *there must be some work for it to do*. The central candidates for types of work that intuition might do are epistemic and psychological. This in turn means that, among the best reasons philosophical reflection can provide for thinking that Pol is important to the *nature* of intuition are reasons for thinking that it is important to its *epistemology*.²² From the standpoint of philosophy we must largely pursue these two together. Consequently, while all the positions described at the end of §1 are in principle open, a) and d) are most likely to actually be occupied.

On both Chudnoff's account and my own, Pol is important both to the nature and to the epistemology of intuition. On Chudnoff's view, if no part of the phenomenal character of a mental state is an awareness of the truthmaker of the proposition that state represents, it *ipso facto* fails to be an intuition. It also fails to play the epistemic role Chudnoff thinks that intuitions play. The change in phenomenal character does entail that the state is differently constituted, so Chudnoff could in principle say that it is the difference in constitution alone that matters here.²³ However, I think the

²¹ This opens up for the complication that it may be those concomitant changes that really explain the change in status. On the hyperintensionality of explanation, see (Schnieder 2011). See also the discussion of Chudnoff's view, just below.

²² Bengson (2015, pp.727–8) argues that his theory is well placed to explain certain psychological features of intuition. I agree, but showing that a theory gives one possible explanation for psychological phenomena falls short of showing that it provides the best explanation for them. For that, we usually need empirical work. This is the reason for the "philosophical reflection" restriction here. (Bengson also argues that his view is *uniquely* well placed to explain these features. I dispute this, but I have no room to press the point here.)

²³ The character of intuition supervenes, on this view, on the characters of the constituting states: there can be no change in the former without a change in the latter.

view is best understood as giving explanatory primacy to the phenomenal character of the constituted state, and not to the natures of the constituting states. The view isn't that intuitions *just happen to have* a certain phenomenology; the phenomenal character (partly) explains both the mental states' status as intuitions, and the epistemic roles they can play.

The same is true on my own account. A mental state is an intuition, and being in it provides prima facie justification, just in case it is a state with representational content, without content-specific phenomenology, but with attitude-specific phenomenology of objectivity, pushiness, and valence. Similar mental states without the phenomenology of objectivity are not intuitions (they are instances of wishful thinking), nor are states without the phenomenology of pushiness (they are conscious beliefs), nor are states with content-specific phenomenology (they are perceptual experiences).

The same can be said of Bengson's account if I understand it correctly, but here the exegetical questions are trickier. Bengson argues that intuitions are 'translucent intellectual presentations', that is, states such that in having them, it is presented to the experiencing subject that *p*, and, moreover, there is no distinct content *q* such that it seems to the experiencing subject that it is in virtue of *q*'s being presented that *p* is presented (2015, p.749). Translucency seems to be a phenomenal notion: it is how it *seems* to the subject that's important. This suffices to make Bengson's a view on which Pol is relevant to the nature of intuition.²⁴ Bengson also defends the view that so long as a subject lacks any reason to question her presentations, it being intellectually presented to her that *p*—that is, her having the intuition that *p*—suffices to give her some immediate justification to believe that *p* (pp. 741, 752). So Pol is also relevant to the epistemology of intuition, on this view.²⁵

Let me end by flagging a distinction we have overlooked so far. On the one hand, Chudnoff's and my own account give explanations of why intuition justifies belief which make quite direct reference to the phenomenal character of intuitional experience. On the other hand, accounts such as Bengson's (and Huemer's and Bealer's, see n. 25) take a different tack, letting phenomenal character partly determine whether a state counts as an intuition or not,²⁶ a status which in turn determines its epistemic status. There is a clear sense in which Pol is relevant to the epistemology of intuition on both views (so both are reasonably regarded as type d accounts). But there is also a clear difference in *how* relevant the phenomenal character of intuition is to intuition's epistemic status.

Views on which the relevance of the phenomenology of intuition to its epistemology is indirect in this way are compatible, at least in principle, with the multiple realisability of intuition. Perhaps in another species a state might qualify as a 'translucent intellectual presentation' without the subject having an experience with a similar phenomenal character as we have when having an intuition. If so, and if the state met the other criteria on the account, it could still play the epistemic role intuition

²⁴ Presentationality also appears to be at least partly a phenomenal notion on this account, but here the exegesis is even less clear to me.

²⁵ A fuller account than what I can provide here would also consider the exegetical questions of how best to regard the importance of the phenomenology of intuition in the less developed accounts mentioned earlier. This would be interesting but tricky work, given the sparsity of the data (see §2 above). Michael Huemer has in personal communication confirmed what is perhaps still left unclear by his texts, namely that he regards phenomenal character of mental states essential to whether they count as appearances or seemings or not, which in turn determines whether they confer justification. I think George Bealer's view is also like this; see (Koksvik 2011, n.21).

²⁶ Perhaps more accurately for Bengson: whether it counts as a *presentation*.

plays. Not so on Chudnoff's and my own account: a state's failing to have the phenomenal character intuition has would rule it out from playing the epistemic role which intuition does play.

One of the things that made Pryor's articles especially interesting is that they raised the possibility that the epistemic power of perceptual experience can be explained by its phenomenal character. It is *because* they have this character that perceptual experiences can provide their subjects with immediate justification, on Pryor's view. Those who lament the reticence of analytic philosophers to 'get their hands dirty' with phenomenology, and who suspect that attempts to understand the mind ignore phenomenal character at their peril, might find accounts of the epistemology of intuition which employ this idea especially attractive, despite the undeniable challenges they bring along with them.²⁷

²⁷ I am grateful for helpful discussions with Tim Bayne and Elijah Chudnoff, as well as for much patience and constructive feedback from the editor, Michelle Montague.

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