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Broad's Accounts of Temporal Experience

Two extremely detailed accounts of temporal experience can be found in the work of C. D. Broad. These accounts have been subject to considerable criticism. I argue that, when we look more carefully at Broad's work, we find that much of this criticism fails to find its target. I show that the objection that ultimately proves troubling for Broad stems from his commitment to two principles: i) the Thin-PSA, and ii) the 'Overlap' claim. I use this result to demonstrate that we can learn two extremely important lessons from Broad's work on temporal experience.

The first lesson is that there is a structural problem facing any account that commits to these two principles. This is significant given that a number of recent accounts of temporal experience are so committed. The second lesson is that the problem facing these accounts stems *only* from commitment to the Thin-PSA and 'Overlap', rather than to commitment to a particular conception of how experiences are to be individuated. This, I argue, gives us reason to reject Tye's recent claim that the problems facing accounts of temporal experience can be dissolved simply by making stipulations about how experiences are to be individuated.

Broad's Accounts of Temporal Experience

Oliver Rashbrook

1 Introduction: Two Lessons Learned from Broad

When providing an account of temporal experience—the experience of temporally extended events and processes—there are two crucial pieces of phenomenological data that demand explanation. The first of these is ‘Time-Windows’—the datum that, at a time, a subject’s perceptual experience needs to be characterised in terms of some temporally extended, but temporally limited, interval. The second of these is the ‘Continuity of Consciousness’—the datum that, within any unbroken period of experience, experienced events and processes are always experienced as following on from what was experienced immediately before.

An extremely detailed account of temporal experience can be found in C. D. Broad’s work—an account that had an early incarnation in *Scientific Thought*, and was further refined in *An Examination of McTaggart's Philosophy*. One thing held in common by both versions of his account is a commitment to a sense-datum theory of perception. Upon realising this, one tempting thought that may strike a theorist who is not so committed could be to suppose that any difficulties facing Broad will be solved by rejection of his sense-datum model.

Even though a great deal of criticism has been levelled at various aspects of Broad’s accounts, nearly all of this criticism fails to stick. In what follows, I shall argue that the objection that really troubles Broad does not stem from his advocating a sense-datum model of perception. Rather, the objection stems from a structural

feature of his account—a structural feature shared by a number of *Intentionalist* models of temporal experience.¹

The structural feature is constituted by two claims, each of which corresponds to the two crucial pieces of phenomenological data. To the ‘Time-Windows’ claim there corresponds a claim we can call the ‘Thin-PSA’, and to the ‘Continuity of Consciousness’ claim there corresponds the ‘Overlap’ claim. I shall explain what these claims are in more detail in §3 and §6, and show why they constitute a structural defect in some accounts of temporal experience in section §13.

As well as drawing attention to a structural problem facing any account committed to the Thin-PSA, there is a second lesson we can learn from examining Broad’s account. This lesson concerns an account of temporal experience recently proposed by Michael Tye: the ‘One Experience’ view. Tye has suggested that positing that subjects only have one experience per period of unbroken consciousness provides a way of ‘dissolving’ the problem of temporal experience [Tye, 2003, 102]. I shall argue that attending to the genuine difficulty facing Broad’s account reveals that Tye’s attempted dissolution fails to correctly identify the source of the problem of temporal experience.

In fact, I shall argue that not only does Tye fail to correctly identify the source of the problem of temporal experience, but that his account of temporal experience differs from Broad’s early account in only one substantive regard: whereas Broad is a sense-datum theorist, Tye is an Intentionalist. Given that the problem facing Broad’s account reaches across the divide between Intentionalist and Sense-datum theorist, I shall argue that Tye’s account of temporal experience fails for just the same reason as Broad’s. In this sense, Tye’s account fails to mark any philosophical progress in dealing with the problem of temporal experience.

2 *Early Broad and Sense-datum Theory*

Broad is a sense-datum theorist. His formulation of the ‘sense-datum’ component of his account involves a threefold distinction between awareness, *sensa*, and sensible fields. Broad introduces the notion of awareness of a *sensum* with the following:

When I look at a penny from the side I am certainly aware of *something*; and it is certainly plausible to hold that this something is elliptical. . . *Sensa*. . . cannot in general be identified with the physical objects of which they are the appearances. [Broad, 1923, 240]

So, for Broad, the direct objects of vision are coloured patches that he calls ‘*sensa*’. He suggests that we should think of these *sensa* as having spatial locations within a ‘sensible field’ constituted by those same *sensa*:

The fundamental meaning of ‘place’ for visual *sensa* is their place in the visual field of the observer who senses them. . . a *sensum* . . . is part of a field. . . [and] the same man has different fields at different times. [Broad, 1923, 303]

The claim Broad is making here is that when I am having a normal visual experience of a scene before my eyes, I am aware of a collection of *sensa*, each with a different location in the spatial visual field that they compose. However, as well as claiming that *sensa* are spatially extended, Broad also wants to claim that they are *temporally* extended:

On the assumption that sensible fields are literally momentary, it follows that *sensa* are also literally momentary. But this assumption must now be dropped, and we must come closer to the actual facts of sensible experience. [Broad, 1923, 348]

Broad’s thought here is that, given that sensible fields are constituted by their *sensa*, if we think that sensible fields are momentary, so their constituents (*sensa*) must also be momentary. This suggestion, however, must be rejected, given that it seems to us that we can perceive temporally extended events and processes.

While Broad thinks that this feature of experience shows us that we ought not to think of the direct objects of experience as momentary, he *doesn’t* think—at least initially—that it shows us that we should take this same attitude to awareness. Rather, Broad’s methodology is the following:

I shall begin by assuming literally momentary acts of sensing and shall then correct this abstraction. [Broad, 1923, 348]

At this point, Broad is committing to a principle often identified in the literature on temporal experience called the ‘Principle of Simultaneous Awareness’ (the PSA).² The PSA is the claim that ‘there are instants at which we experience intervals’.³

The PSA: There are instants at which we experience intervals.

In fact, things are slightly more complicated than this, for it is possible to distinguish between two different interpretations of the PSA.

3 *The Principle of Simultaneous Awareness*

The first way of reading the PSA is that the sentence ‘there are instants at which we experience intervals’ requires an instantaneous truth-maker. On this reading, when we consider the instant in question, all that is relevant to determining what is the case at that instant is the instant itself, and nothing more. This reading of the PSA has been referred to by Ian Phillips as ‘Strong PSA’.[Phillips, 2010, 5]

The second way of reading the sentence is not so committed—on this reading, there is no commitment to what might make the

claim true. On this reading, an interval of time could be relevant to determining the truth of the claim—what is the case at a time can be determined by what is the case over an interval of time. Phillips calls this reading of the PSA ‘Weak PSA’.

Phillips suggests the following way of getting a grip on the difference between the two different versions of the PSA. The Strong-PSA is compatible with what he calls ‘Russell Worlds’ [Phillips, 2010, 5]. The idea behind Russell worlds is that things could be as they are in the present even if all of the past events that we take to have happened had, in fact, *not* happened. As Russell puts it:

There is no logical impossibility in the hypothesis that the world sprang into being five minutes ago, exactly as it then was, ... There is no logically necessary connection between events at different times.[Russell, 1992, 132]

Phillips’ suggestion is that we can consider an even more extreme view than one according to which the world sprang into being ‘five minutes ago’: we can consider a view on which there is no logical impossibility in the hypothesis that the world sprang into being *this instant*. The Strong-PSA is compatible with this state of affairs, but the Weak-PSA need not be.

However, for the purposes of discussing Broad, the distinction between Strong- and Weak-PSA is not quite what we need. This is due to Broad’s commitment to an act-object conception of experience, according to which the objects of experience (*sensa*) are genuinely temporally extended. We can get clear on the relevant distinction that is required by considering two objections one might make to the Strong-PSA.

The first objection we can call the ‘temporally extended object’ response: it is the claim that in order for experience at an instant to have the phenomenal character it does, it is a requirement that the object[s] of experience be temporally extended. According to the advocate of the ‘temporally extended object’ proposal, perceptual experience is to be conceived of as a relation to objects with genuine

temporal extension. It is thus a requirement upon the subject having a perceptual experience as of something temporally extended that there exists some temporally extended object of that experience.

The advocate of this proposal rejects the component of the Strong-PSA that claims that there is no logical impossibility in the hypothesis that the world sprang into being this instant, for on their view, the object of experience needs to possess genuine temporal extension. Broad, as a theorist who holds that the objects of experience (*sensa*) possess genuine temporal extension, would seek to make this kind of response to the Strong-PSA.

However, Broad would not seek to make the second kind of objection to the Strong-PSA—an objection that we can call the ‘temporal slice’ response. On this proposal, experience at an instant only possesses the phenomenal character it does in virtue of being an instantaneous portion—an instantaneous ‘temporal slice’—of a temporally extended experience.⁴ This is not the kind of objection Broad would seek to make to the Strong-PSA. For Broad, the claim that ‘there are instants at which we experience intervals’ is made true, at this stage in the development of his account, by ‘literally momentary acts of sensing’.

So, Broad is committed to the Strong-PSA only insofar as he claims that the phenomenal character of an instantaneous portion of experience is not determined by its being a portion of some temporally extended experience. However, its phenomenal character is determined by the temporal extension of the object of experience. For the purposes of this paper, then, we need to adapt Phillips’ distinction between the Weak- and Strong-PSA.

For us, the relevant distinction between varieties of PSA is to be drawn only in terms of commitment to the idea that the phenomenal character of an instantaneous portion of experience is not determined by its being a portion of some temporally extended experience. To mark the relevant distinction between claims needed for the purposes of discussing Broad, we can call commitment to this idea commitment to the *Thin*-PSA. Commitment to a view that

leaves it open whether or not the phenomenal character of an instantaneous portion of experience is determined by its being a portion of some temporally extended experience we can call the *Fat-PSA*.

The Thin-PSA: The phenomenal character of an instantaneous portion of experience is not determined by its being a portion of some temporally extended experience.

The Fat-PSA: The phenomenal character of an instantaneous portion of experience may be determined by its being a portion of some temporally extended experience.

On my proposal, Broad is best interpreted as adhering to the Thin-PSA, and it is this commitment, combined with commitment to a claim that I shall call the ‘overlap’ claim, that ultimately leads to difficulties for his account. However, one might seek to disagree with this interpretation of Broad, given that he also says that he will ‘correct the abstraction’ of commitment to momentary acts of sensing. What will become of Broad’s apparent commitment to the Thin-PSA once he ‘corrects the abstraction’ of literally momentary acts? Will he drop the Thin-PSA altogether? Will he switch his allegiance to the Fat-PSA?

In fact, I shall suggest that he will retain the Thin-PSA and merely claim that there can’t be literally instantaneous *acts of awareness*. This interpretation has the consequence that Broad remains untroubled by Dainton’s ‘ballooning contents’ objection. I discuss both of these claims further in §7.

4 *The PSA and ‘Time-Windows’*

Broad commits to the Thin-PSA in order to provide an account of what I shall call the ‘Time-Windows’ claim. The ‘Time-Windows’ claim is the observation that, if we want to characterise a subject’s

perceptual experience at a time, we need to appeal to a period of time that is greater than an instant, but also temporally limited.

Time-Windows: To characterise a subject’s perceptual experience at a time, we need to appeal to a temporally limited interval of time.

The reason that we need to appeal to a period of time greater than an instant in order to characterise a subject’s perceptual experience at a time is that experience always delivers us awareness of intervals. Even when we are aware of an item without temporal extension—say, the instant at which a race starts—we are only aware of it in virtue of being aware of the interval surrounding it—the events immediately before and after the start of the race.

The reason that we need to appeal to a temporally limited period of time is that the events relevant to characterising a subject’s perceptual experience at a time typically change over the course of a day. In order to reflect this important feature of experience, we have to introduce the idea that there are temporal limits to the interval in terms of which a subject’s experience at a time is to be characterised. An account of temporal experience needs to reflect the fact that what the subject perceptually experienced at 10am is not normally relevant to a characterisation of his perceptual experience at 6pm.

At this point, we can introduce the following piece of terminology: ‘experienced togetherness’. The thought behind ‘experienced togetherness’ is that we can distinguish between those portions of time that are relevant to characterising the subject’s experience at a given time, and those that are not, by saying that only the relevant portions are experienced *together* at a time. In order to provide an account of the ‘Time-Windows’ claim, we need to provide some account of this notion of ‘togetherness’. The appeal of the Thin-PSA is that it provides a strategy for cashing out what ‘togetherness’ is—in terms of *simultaneous awareness*. For a collection of items to be experienced ‘together’ is, on this proposal, for them to be experienced *simultaneously*.⁵

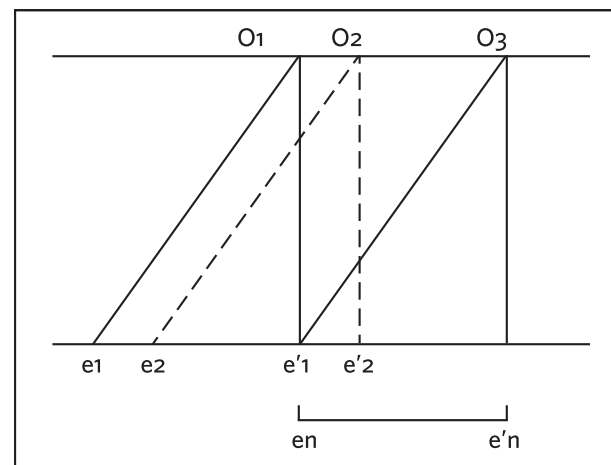
So, Broad commits to the Thin-PSA because it provides him with an account of ‘experienced togetherness’ (to be experienced ‘together’ is to be experienced simultaneously, though not necessarily as simultaneous), which in turn provides an account of ‘Time-Windows’. Commitment to the Thin-PSA constitutes one of the two claims that are responsible for the structural problem that I shall argue has to be avoided when providing a successful account of temporal experience. The second problem-generating claim is that Time-Windows *overlap* with one another. However, before discussing this claim, I want to briefly turn to an important aspect of Broad’s attitude towards Time-Windows. The aspect in question is that Broad thinks that all of the items that feature in Time-Windows are experienced ‘as present’.

5 The Specious Present

Broad’s initial account, then, involves commitment to the notion that there are literally momentary acts of sensing that encompass events and processes. Broad makes use of the diagram below in explaining the details of the account:

Let us represent the history of O’s acts by a directed line OO. Let us represent the history of his sensible fields by a parallel line ee. Let O1, on the upper line, represent a momentary act of sensing done by O at a moment t’1. I take it to be a fact that this act grasps an event of finite duration which stretches back from the moment t’1 to a moment t1, which is earlier by an amount π . This duration π is the length of O’s Specious Present. I call this event e1e’1, and I represent the act of sensing which grasps it as a whole by the right-angled triangle e1o1e’1, with e1e’1 as base and O1 as vertex. [Broad, 1923, 348]

Broad’s suggestion is that at an instant, I am aware of an interval—where this is cashed out in terms of momentary acts of awareness grasping events. As discussed in the previous section, this provides Broad with his account of the ‘Time-Windows’ claim.



However, we should note that in the above passage, Broad makes the further claim that the items that fall within ‘Time-Windows’ are experienced ‘as present’. This is what Broad means when he claims that ‘This duration π is the length of O’s Specious Present’. Let us introduce a piece of terminology at this point: for something to be experienced ‘as present’ is for it to be ‘temporally present’ in experience.

Temporal Presence: An item is temporally present in experience if and only if it is experienced ‘as present’.

Broad’s claim that there is a ‘Specious Present’ is the claim that temporally extended events and processes can feature in an instantaneous portion of experience *as present*.⁶ When Broad talks about ‘the Specious Present’, he is talking about the Time-Windows claim, but he is adding an extra component to the picture—he is adding the

claim that everything that features in a given Time-Window is experienced *as present*. We can use the definition of ‘Temporal Presence’ to formulate a second version of the Time-Windows claim that captures this thought: the ‘Temporal Time-Windows’ claim:

‘*Temporal Time-Windows*’: To characterise a subject’s experience at a time, we need to appeal to a temporally limited interval of time. All of the items featuring in the relevant interval of time are experienced ‘as present’.

Saying that Broad is committed to the idea that there is a ‘Specious Present’ is equivalent to saying that he is committed to the existence of Temporal Time-Windows.⁷

One thing that ought to strike us about Broad’s commitment to the Temporal Time-Windows claim is that it appears somewhat controversial. Broad is claiming that an interval can be experienced *as present*—but surely, we might think, an interval cannot be experienced as present, for an interval will always be divisible into earlier and later temporal parts—parts which will accordingly turn out to be either past or future.⁸ Le Poidevin has expressed his line of thought in the following:

Suppose the present to last for a non-zero interval. It would then have to be divisible into earlier and later parts. But if it is so divisible, then its parts cannot all be present. If some earlier part is present, then some later part is future. Or, if some later part is present, then some earlier part is past. Therefore, it must be durationless.[Le Poidevin, 2007, 79]

In the early version of his account, Broad doesn’t attempt to engage with this worry. His late account, however, contains an attempt to respond that I examine in §9.

6 *The Continuity of Consciousness*

It is now time to turn to the second problem-generating claim mentioned in §4—that Time-Windows overlap. As well as attempting to account for Time-Windows, Broad notes that we can also experience things with duration *longer* than that of the temporal extent required to characterise experience at a time, and provides the following account of this phenomenon (the account again refers to the diagram in §5):

Let us now suppose that, at a slightly later date (separated by less than the length of the Specious Present), O performs another act of sensing. We will represent this by the dotted triangle $e_2O_2e'_2$, which is similar to $e_1O_1e'_1$. This grasps an event of duration π , stretching back from the moment when the act happens. The event is represented by $e_2e'_2$. Now it is evident that there is a part $e_2e'_1$, which is common to the two events $e_1e'_1$ and $e_2e'_2$. This part is sensed by both the acts O1 and O2. On the other hand, there is a part e_1e_2 of the first event which is not sensed by the second act, and a part $e_1e'_2$ of the second event which is not sensed by the first act. [Broad, 1923, 349]

In providing this account, Broad is attempting to explain the phenomenon of the *continuity of consciousness*. The aspect of consciousness being picked out by talk of its continuity is that, for any unbroken period of consciousness, the objects of experience are always experienced as following on from what was experienced immediately before them. If, for example, I experience an A minor scale, then every note in that scale subsequent to the first note—A-B-C-D-E-F-G#-A—will be experienced as following on from the note that occurred immediately before it.

The Continuity of Consciousness: During an unbroken period of consciousness, the objects of experience are

always experienced as following on from what was experienced immediately before them.

In order to account for this continuity, Broad suggests that the same *sensa* can be sensed in different acts of awareness. On his proposal, the intervals that feature in momentary acts of awareness overlap with one another.⁹

Overlap: The intervals that feature in the same subject's Time-Windows overlap with one another.¹⁰

When I experience note B, I experience it together with note A. When, shortly after, I experience note C, I experience it together with note B, and so on. Broad's model, according to which Time-Windows overlap with one another, is intended to provide an account of this phenomenon—the continuity of consciousness.¹¹

7 *Objections to Broad's Early Account Part One: Ballooning Content*

I now want to discuss three objections to Broad's early account that have recently been discussed by Dainton. I shall show that Broad can provide convincing responses to two of them, and conclude that these objections are not the appropriate place to find fault with his view. I shall defer discussion of the third objection—the problem of repeated contents—until §12.

Having set up his position in terms of instantaneous acts of awareness, Broad claims:

We are now able to remove the supposition of literally momentary acts... If we imagine a continuous series of momentary acts between O1 and O2 we can regard them as momentary sections of an act or process of finite duration, and can say that the finite event $e2e'1$ is present throughout the whole of this process of sensing. [Broad, 1923, 349–50]

So, on Broad's account, even though we can think of a subject's acts of sensing as being temporally extended, we can still talk about how things are with the subject at an instant. Note, however, that even without commitment to instantaneous acts, Broad is still providing a model on which the PSA is a claim made true by instantaneous items—instantaneous *sections* of acts. For Broad, a temporally extended act of experience is 'built' out of a series of momentary sections. There is thus a clear sense that, for Broad, these instantaneous sections of acts are explanatorily prior to the existence of temporally extended acts. He thus retains commitment to the Thin-PSA ('The phenomenal character of an instantaneous portion of experience is not determined by its being a portion of some temporally extended experience').

Broad notes that one consequence of his account on which 'Time-Windows' overlap with one another is that there will sometimes be events that I am aware of throughout the entirety of the temporally extended act of sensing. As regards the diagram in §5, Broad notes that over the course of the temporally extended act O1O2, the event $e2e'1$ will remain present in experience. Other temporally extended events will only be present for part of the temporally extended act— $e1e2$ and $e'1e'2$. On Broad's account, the longer an act of sensing (up to the duration of a Time-Window), the shorter the duration of an event that I will be aware of as a whole.

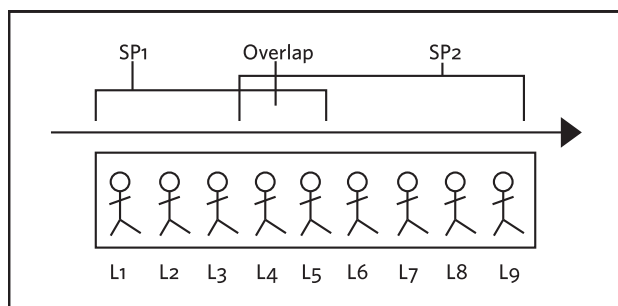
Dainton's first objection to Broad (the 'ballooning content' objection) concerns this aspect of his account:

When I perceive a continuous process, the extent of the process that I am directly aware of does not seem to change. It does not seem that over very short intervals I am aware of longer stretches of the process than I am over a longer period. If Broad's theory is correct, we surely ought to be able to notice this 'ballooning' of content over short intervals. [Dainton, 2006, 140]

It seems to me that Dainton's objection here is slightly misleading, and that he may be talking past Broad somewhat. Broad, I suggest,

would want to agree with Dainton that there is a sense in which ‘over very short intervals I am aware of longer stretches of the process than I am over a longer period’. Say I am aware of a man walking (see the diagram below).

Someone sympathetic to the notion of accounting for continuity in terms of Time-Windows overlapping will want to claim that I am aware of the man walking from location L1 to location L9 in virtue of my being aware of his walking from location L1 to L5, and from L4 to L9, as ‘phenomenal wholes’. They will also want to say that there is a sense in which my perceiving the man walk from L1 to L9 will be something that takes time—the whole of the man’s walking cannot be encompassed by a single momentary portion of awareness.



However, an interesting thing to note at this point is that the overlap theorist looks to be committed to the claim that the man’s walking from L4 to L5 will feature in experience throughout the whole time that I am aware of the man walking from L1 to L9. One way of putting this is to say that, the longer I am aware of the man walking for, the shorter the stretch of process I will be aware of *as a whole* over that period.

Broad is merely observing that if Time-Windows overlap, then parts of what features in those Time-Windows will remain present in experience for the duration of a stretch of temporally extended experience. Given that Dainton is an overlap theorist himself (al-

beit an overlap theorist who rejects the Thin-PSA [Dainton, 2006, 162–82]), it is hard to see what he could find undesirable about this picture. Just like Broad, Dainton holds that there are temporal limits to what can be experienced ‘together’—it is for this very reason he claims that the relation of diachronic ‘co-consciousness’ is non-transitive.

So, even on Dainton’s model, appeal to the man’s walking from L4 to L5 will be required to characterise the subject’s experience both throughout the period L1-L5, and the period L4-L9. On Dainton’s model, it is thus the case that the *only* portion of the movement that is experienced as a whole, and that is relevant to characterising the subject’s phenomenal state *throughout* the period it takes for the man to walk from L1-L9, will be the portion L4-L5. This is exactly the same as the result in the case of Broad’s account.

Dainton’s objection to Broad at this point looks to be founded on the notion that when Broad suggests that the “assumption [that there are momentary acts] must now be dropped...” [Broad, 1923, 348], he is committed to the denial of the Thin-PSA as well. If Broad is so committed, then Dainton’s objection looks to be correct—that is, it looks as though that the longer that an act of awareness goes on for, the shorter the content represented by that act will be. However, as noted above, the following extract from Broad provides evidence that he does not deny the Thin-PSA:

If we imagine a continuous series of momentary acts between O1 and O2 we can regard them as momentary sections of an act or process of finite duration. [Broad, 1923, 350]

At any instant of an act of awareness with temporal extension, Broad claims, I will be aware of something with the duration of a Time-Window in virtue of the nature of an instantaneous section of my ongoing act of awareness. Over the course of a temporally extended act of awareness, my experience presents events and processes of Time-Window duration at every instant, but the particular stretch of happening that continues to feature in experience in its entirety

throughout the course of that act will decrease the longer the act goes on.

8 *Objections to Broad's Early Account Part Two: Mabbott's Objection*

The second objection Dainton raises to Broad's early account is taken from Mabbott, and runs as follows:

If my dentist hurts me, he has always stopped hurting me before I begin to feel the hurt. And this has nothing to do with the time taken by nerve transmission; it is a direct corollary of the Specious Present theory. [Mabbott, 1951, 159]

Dainton mentioning this criticism in connection with Broad's early account (the account in *Scientific Thought*) is a slight curiosity, as Mabbott himself aims this criticism at Broad's late account (the account in *An Examination of McTaggart's Philosophy*).¹² What Broad actually says in *McTaggart* is the following:

There is one important consequence of this theory which I want to make quite explicit because many people would regard it as highly paradoxical. It is this. The period during which any phase, short enough to be prehended as a temporal whole, is so prehended *never* coincides with the period occupied by this phase. The periods do not even overlap. Their relation is that of *adjunction*. [Broad, 1927, 287]

Mabbott clearly agrees with Broad that many people would regard this part of the theory as highly paradoxical. However, the way Mabbott phrases the objection is importantly different to the way Broad phrases the purported worry. Broad is pointing out that, in order for a *whole* event ('a temporal whole') to be experienced,

the whole event must have occurred—and then observing that some people may find this paradoxical.

Mabbott, on the other hand, doesn't appear to make the distinction between experience of an event *as a whole*, and an experience of an event. Mabbott thus takes Broad to be committed to the view that in order for a subject to experience anything temporally extended at all, the whole temporally extended event must have occurred.

Broad *doesn't* commit to this, either in his early or his late account, and so Mabbott's objection doesn't present a problem for him. Broad would respond to this objection by saying 'of course I can feel the hurt before the dentist stops hurting me—I just can't feel the *whole* hurt until it has stopped hurting me'.

The two objections discussed so far do not pose any real problem for Broad. The final objection that I shall discuss, however, does initially look to be problematic—the 'repeated contents' objection. Recall the earlier quote from Broad:

If we imagine a continuous series of momentary acts between O1 and O2 we can regard them as momentary sections of an act or process of finite duration. [Broad, 1923, 350]

If we think of temporally extended acts of awareness as being constituted by a series of momentary sections with overlapping contents, then it appears that different momentary sections of the temporally extended act will represent the same thing. For example, the click that is heard in one Time-Window will also be heard in a later Time-Window. Dainton responds to this consequence of Broad's theory as follows:

This is a disastrous result, since by hypothesis there is only a single click that is experienced by the subject... Broad's account has the consequence that we cannot hear a single sound just once! [Dainton, 2006, 141]

I shall discuss the ‘repeated contents’ objection in §12 in conjunction with Broad’s late account, proposed in *An Examination of McTaggart’s Philosophy*, to which we now turn.

9 *Broad’s Late Account*

In Broad’s late account, he attempts to develop a response to objections to his commitment to the idea that there is a ‘Specious Present’. Recall the objection discussed in §5 that the present cannot be temporally extended, for if it was, it would contain parts that are past or future. Broad’s response proceeds as follows:

I propose to begin by substituting for the phrase ‘Specious Presentness’ the word ‘presentedness’. This is meant to denote a psychological characteristic, which is capable of various degrees from zero up to a maximum . . . I shall assume that what a person prehends at any moment is of finite duration, and therefore that only a single instantaneous cross-section of this total object can be present at that moment. [Broad, 1927, 282–3]

Part of Broad’s thought here is that it isn’t satisfactory to respond to worries about the present being instantaneous just by claiming that ‘the present, as it features in experience, is not an instant’. If there is a different sense of ‘present’ at work in ‘the doctrine of the Specious Present’, then some positive account of it is required—and this is what Broad attempts to provide with the notion of ‘presentedness’.

However, the worry now is that it isn’t clear what ‘presentedness’ is supposed to be. Dainton has attempted to develop this line of thought into an objection to Broad’s account. Before discussing this objection, I shall discuss a little more precisely how it is that ‘presentedness’ figures in Broad’s account. Broad makes the following claims:

Consider any process of finite duration which a person *P* prehends at any moment, e.g., a whistling noise. Imagine this to be divided up into shorter and shorter adjoined successive phases, so that in the end it is regarded as a compact series of successive event-particles. Let us make the following assumptions: (i) That a certain one of these instantaneous cross-sections is present, in the strict sense. (ii) That this has the maximum degree of presentedness. (iii) That the degree of presentedness possessed by cross-sections which are earlier than this one tails off to zero at the cross-section which forms the boundary between what *P* is just ceasing to sense and just beginning to retrospect. [Broad, 1927, 283]

The first claim Broad makes looks like it isn’t a phenomenological claim—rather, he is claiming that one of the cross-sections of what is perceived at a moment will, in fact, be present. Broad’s second claim is that the cross section that is as a matter of fact present will possess the maximum degree of presentedness. The third claim is that whatever it is that I sense at a moment will possess some degree of presentedness—and the earlier the cross section, the lesser the degree of presentedness.

10 *Early versus Late Broad*

I want to propose that Broad’s early and late views differ only in terms of the late account attempting to provide a more detailed treatment of the ‘Specious Present’ by introducing ‘presentedness’. My approach to the distinction between the views is thus slightly different to that of Dainton, who claims:

There are two main differences [between early and late Broad]. Broad no longer believes momentary acts are mere fictions; he now takes the view that an extended

stream of consciousness consists of a compact series of momentary acts. Then there is the property of present- edness which all contents are alleged to possess to a greater or lesser degree. [Dainton, 2006, 145]

The claim Dainton attributes to Broad's late account—'an extended stream of consciousness consists of a compact series of momentary acts'—doesn't look all that different from the claim made as part of his early account that "If we imagine a continuous series of momentary acts between O1 and O2 we can regard them as momentary sections of an act or process of finite duration." [Broad, 1923, 349–50] I thus propose that we ought not to agree with Dainton that the distinction between Broad's early and late accounts has anything to do with his commitment to momentary acts.

I am, however, in agreement with Dainton that 'presentedness' marks an important distinction between Broad's early and late accounts. If 'presentedness' marks this important difference, then one question we can ask concerns whether or not his late account is a genuine improvement—we can examine this issue by considering whether 'presentedness' is a persuasive account of the Specious Present.

11 Problems with Presentedness

Dainton has provided the following suggestion about Broad's talk of 'presentedness':

Since Broad doesn't elaborate on what presentedness is ... One option is simply to equate presentedness with ... 'force and vivacity'. [Dainton, 2006, 149–50]

Of course, this suggestion will not be accepted by Broad, as nowhere does he equate 'presentedness' with 'force and vivacity', nor give any hint that this is what he has in mind.¹³ Dainton acknowledges this, and discusses an alternative proposal:

We seem obliged to conclude that presentedness is a *sui generis* phenomenal property. . . But this proposal also seems flawed. . . when we hear a sound while seeing a colour . . . we are not aware of any additional phenomenal characteristic . . . So the problem is that there just does not seem to be any such property. In response, it could be argued that there must be such a property, or else we would not be aware of contents fading into the past. [Dainton, 2006, 149–50]

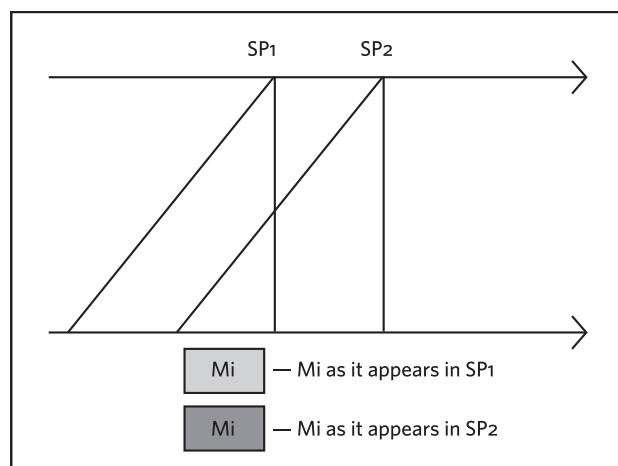
Now, I am not sure that Broad would want to claim that the property of 'presentedness' is needed to explain how it is that we get to be aware of contents *fading into the past*—especially given his commitment to a view on which the events and processes featuring in Time-Windows are experienced *as present*. Rather, Broad's response to Dainton would be to claim that the property of 'present- edness' is needed to explain how it is that we get to be aware of the earlier parts of temporally extended events and processes *as present*, without their also being experienced as simultaneous. 'Presented- ness' thus contributes to the phenomenal character of experience as it is only in virtue of 'presentedness' that temporally extended events and processes are experienced as temporally present in experience.

Perhaps there are other problems facing the notion of 'present- edness'. Dainton has suggested the following: on Broad's late account, the tone *Mi* will have different characteristics when it occurs in different Specious Presents: specifically, it will possess different amounts of the 'psychological characteristic' of presentedness. However, Dainton observes:

In supposing that when we apprehend *Mi* as possessing different degrees of presentedness we are apprehend- ing one and the same tone-content, we are supposing that this content possesses different and incompatible intrinsic properties at the same time. This is impossi- ble. [Dainton, 2006, 147]

We can think of Dainton's objection in the following way: what I am aware of, on Broad's late account, can't *both* be genuinely temporally extended, *and* possess different degrees of presentedness. Consider the diagram below. In the first Specious Present (SP1), *Mi* possesses a greater average degree of presentedness (represented by the light shade of grey) than it does in the later Specious Present (SP2)—the lesser average degree of presentedness is represented by the dark shade of grey.

If what I am aware of in both Specious Presents is the same temporally extended *Mi*, then it looks as though Broad's account requires that the same temporally extended portion of event or process possesses different average degrees of presentedness at the same time. This, Dainton thinks, cannot be right.



One possible response for Broad is to drop the claim that the objects of experience are genuinely temporally extended, abandoning his sense-datum theory in favour of an intentionalist account. This is what Dainton suggests that Broad should do. On this alternative view, at any moment, I am in a state that *represents* temporally extended events and processes. Each instant of an event or process

is represented as possessing a different degree of 'presentedness'. Dainton claims:

This does not mean his theory is false, it just means it is not the kind of theory one might initially take it to be. [Dainton, 2006, 147]

In fact, when we look more closely at Dainton's objection, we will note that it is the *objection* that is not what one might initially take it to be. That is, we can note that Dainton's objection only holds given certain assumptions about the metaphysics of time: namely, that an A-theorist account on which we are to think of time as being 'two-dimensional' is to be rejected. In his book, *Time and Space*, Dainton discusses the two-dimensionalist model:

Our problem is that, while one and the same object can have incompatible intrinsic properties by having them at different times, it seems incoherent to suppose that *a single time* (or events at that time) can have incompatible intrinsic properties at that very time. Posing the problem in this way suggests a solution: why not say that a single time can possess incompatible properties in just the same way as an enduring object; that is, by possessing them at *different* times? For this to be the case there must exist an additional dimension of time, *meta-time*, which is such that ordinary moments of time endure along this extra dimension. [Dainton, 2001, 21]

This approach is precisely what Broad has in mind when developing his account. In *The Philosophy of C.D. Broad* he suggests that:

[The account] becomes considerably clearer when stated in terms of 2-dimensional time. [Broad, 1959, 772–3]

Broad thus looks to resolve issues about the same item, at a time, possessing different degrees of presentedness by appealing to the

two-dimensional theory of time.¹⁴ Now, we might have reason to reject this account of the metaphysics of time as unsatisfactory (though I shall not go into these issues here), but in committing to this, Broad provides at least a satisfactory first response to Dainton's objection.¹⁵

This 'two-dimensional' part of Broad's account of temporal experience isn't explicitly stated in *An Examination of McTaggart's Philosophy*, which may explain Dainton's 'intentionalist' reading. However, bearing the '*The Philosophy of C.D. Broad*' remarks in mind, it looks as though Broad is certainly best interpreted as a sense-datum theorist—it is the kind of account it initially appears to be!

Insofar as Broad is able to respond successfully to the objections discussed in this section, his attempt to account for Temporal Time-Windows ought not to be judged a failure. Objections to Broad's account thus do not look as if they ought to be aimed at his commitment to the notion of 'presentedness'.

12 *The Problem of Repeated Contents*

We can now return to the problem of repeated contents mentioned in conjunction with Broad's early account—the problem being that his commitment to overlapping Time-Windows appears to generate the result that the same thing will be experienced as occurring multiple times.

Dainton suggests that Broad's introduction of 'presentedness' enables him to respond to the problem of repeated contents:

This problem is ... solved, for according to the current theory, although a particular content such as *Mi* is apprehended by a succession of distinct acts, each act apprehends *Mi* as possessing a different, and gradually diminishing, degree of presentedness... no content appears in two different acts under the same temporal mode of presentation. [Dainton, 2006, 146]

Why, we might wonder, does each momentary section of an extended act apprehending *Mi* as possessing a different degree of presentedness solve the problem of repeated contents? After all, we are still apprehending the note *Mi* repeatedly. Dainton appears to take it that the problem concerns our repeatedly apprehending, not the same mind-independent object, but the same 'phenomenal object'. [Dainton, 2006, 146]

It is true that a number of formulations of the problem of repeated contents phrase the problem in terms of awareness of 'presentations', 'phenomenal items', or 'experiences' (see, for instance, [Foster, 1982, 176][Sprigge, 1993, 203–4]. It looks, however, that this owes more to their being formulated by philosophers who adhere to views on which we are directly aware of experiential, as opposed to physical, items.

Mabbott, for example, doesn't seem to commit to the problem of repeated contents being a problem about the same *phenomenal* items being experienced numerous times:

Every brief sound I hear I shall hear not once but repeatedly. Nothing in my direct experience confirms this repetition. If it occurred it would obviously make listening to music or to continuous sentences a matter of the greatest complexity and difficulty. [Mabbott, 1951, 161]

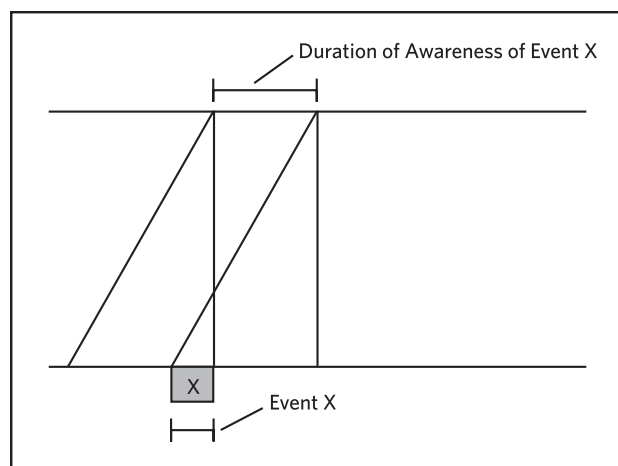
It isn't clear how Dainton's suggested response for Broad solves *this* formulation of the problem—and it looks plausible that this formulation of the 'repeated contents' will be faced by any view that proposes that adheres to the Thin-PSA and claims that Specious Presents overlap. On Mabbott's formulation, the problem is the following: On a particular occasion it can seem to me that I experience a clicking sound once; however, Broad's accounts both suggest that I experience that clicking sound more than once - how can this be reconciled with the initial seeming?

In response to this worry, I presume that Broad will draw attention to the fact that he has 'abandoned the fiction' of there really

existing a series of individual momentary acts that represent intervals. Rather than there being a series of experiences of the same thing, then, he will rather want to say that we *remain* in experiential contact with the event.¹⁶ While we remain in contact with the item, its temporal position relative to the subject will appear to change—in Broad’s terminology it will appear to possess less and less ‘presentedness’. Unfortunately for Broad, this response to the objection merely defers the problem—as is shown by a related objection: the *lingering contents* objection.

13 *The Lingering Contents Objection and the ‘Principle of Presentational Concurrency’*

On both of Broad’s accounts, it look as though he is committed to the idea that we can perceive certain events for periods of time longer than the periods of time those events occupy. In the case of an event of short duration, X, I am aware of that event for a period of time considerably longer than the event itself, as the diagram below shows.



The diagram is intended to make it clear that the problematic result stems from two aspects of Broad’s account: the Thin-PSA, commitment to which is represented by the two large triangles in the diagram; and ‘overlap’ represented by the spatial overlap of the same triangles. The ‘lingering contents’ objection can thus be seen to stem not from commitment to a particular theory of perception (in Broad’s case, Sense-datum Theory), but from commitment to claims that can be appealed to by any theorist working on temporal experience, regardless of their theory of perception.

The clash between the result generated by Broad’s account and the phenomenology of experience of events and processes concerns a particular aspect of the phenomenology picked out by a claim called ‘The Principle of Presentational Concurrency’ (The PPC). The PPC was first formulated by Izchak Miller in *Husserl, Perception, and Temporal Awareness* as follows:¹⁷

The duration of a content being presented is concurrent with the duration of the act of presenting it. That is, the time interval occupied by a content which is before the mind is the very same time interval which is occupied by the act of presenting that very content before the mind. [Miller, 1984, 107]¹⁸

The PPC comprises two components: firstly, that it seems that the order in which the objects of experience occur is the same as the order in which those objects are experienced; secondly, that it seems that the duration occupied by the objects of experience is concurrent with the duration occupied by the relevant portion of experience itself.

The claim about the apparent relationship between represented order and order of representations, we can note, remains true about ways of experiencing other than perception. The claim about duration occupied by experience and object of experience, however, appears to be a distinctive feature of perceptual experience.

To illustrate this, we can consider the case of episodic memory. I am engaging in episodic memory when I recall what it was like

to experience a certain event—I can recall, for instance, what it was like to arrive by plane in France for the first time. This episode of recollection is something that is temporally extended, and in which only the ‘represented order’ component of the PPC appears to apply. In the case of episodic recollection, it seems that the order in which the recollected objects feature in experience is the same as the order in which those objects are recollected.

However, it doesn’t seem as if the duration occupied by the objects of recollection is *concurrent* with the duration of the episode of recollection—for those objects are given ‘as past’. It is this kind of observation that drives the claim that the PPC is distinctive of perceptual experience.

The relevant clash between the phenomenology and Broad’s account is thus that, whereas the PPC states that the duration of content and duration of act are concurrent, Broad’s account gives the result that, for certain short stretches of event or process, the duration of content is outstripped by the duration of act. On Broad’s account, the content ‘X’ in the diagram above continues to be an object of awareness for a period of time greater than that of its own duration. Unfortunately for Broad, if the PPC is correct, we *don’t* remain aware of any of the direct objects of perception for a period of time greater than their own duration.

14 Responding to the ‘Lingering Contents’ Objection

It might initially look as though the introduction of ‘presentedness’ as a property that admits of *degree* could be used to provide a response to the ‘lingering contents’ problem. This is what Dainton has in mind when he talks of Broad giving an account on which events are experienced as ‘fading into the past’:

It is natural to describe *Mi* in successive Specious Presents as one and the same tone sinking into the past,

for it will *seem* to us as though we are apprehending numerically the same to from a succession of slightly different temporal perspectives—or at least this is what Broad’s theory posits to be the case. [Dainton, 2006, 147]

As mentioned earlier, it isn’t clear that Broad would want to say that we experience things as ‘sinking into the past’—‘presentedness’ is introduced to explain how it is that we get to experience things *as present*. However, remarks such as the following from Broad. . .

The. . . sound as a whole continues to be presented, but with steadily diminishing degree of presentedness. [At one point]. . . the. . . sound is just on the point of ceasing to be *presented* and being at most *remembered*. [Later]. . . nothing is any longer presented of the sound. . . except the ghost of the [last part of the sound] in the act of vanishing. [Broad, 1959, 773]

. . . make the kind of interpretation suggested by Dainton tempting. Despite this, I think that we can provide an alternative diagnosis of what is going on in Broad’s above quotation by introducing a distinction between two ways that items can be present in experience. I have already suggested that items can be ‘temporally’ present in experience, but there are two other varieties of ‘presence’ that I hope to show are important in the debate about temporal experience: ‘phenomenal’, and ‘sensorial’ presence.

The first of these additional varieties of presence that I shall discuss is *phenomenal* presence. This variety of presence encompasses the others. ‘Temporal’ and ‘Sensorial’ presence can both be thought of as ways of being phenomenally present. ‘Phenomenal Presence’ is defined as follows:

‘*Phenomenal Presence*’: Something is phenomenally present in a portion of experience just in case a characterisation of the phenomenal character of the relevant

portion of experience requires mention of that something.

I have already discussed ‘temporal presence’ in §5, where it was captured as follows:

Temporal Presence: An item is temporally present in experience if and only if it is experienced ‘as present’.

One way of being phenomenally present in experience is to be *temporally* present. However, there is another way that items can be phenomenally present: they can be *Sensorially* present. We can give an example of what is meant by ‘Sensorial Presence’ as follows:

‘*Sensorial Presence*’: When I look at an opaque, three-dimensional object, it can seem to me that I am experiencing a three-dimensional object, but normally the facing side/s of the object will be present in experience in a way that the rest of the object is not—the facing side/s of the object is/are *sensorially present*.

Before proceeding, I should note that this discussion of ‘sensorial presence’ takes as its starting-point Foster’s observation that:

Duration and change *seem* to be presented to us with the same phenomenal immediacy as homogeneity and variation of colour through space... When I listen to a tune, the duration and succession of notes seem to be as much an auditory datum... as their pitch and loudness.[Foster, 1982, 255]

The distinction between ‘phenomenal’ and ‘sensorial’ presence in what follows is an attempt to get clearer on the sense in which not only homogeneity and variation of colour through space, but also duration and succession, are what Foster calls ‘*phenomenally immediate*’.

15 *Phenomenal and Sensorial Presence*

The first example I shall discuss is one in which the subject visually experiences an armchair that is facing him. This example helps us to bring out the distinction between sensorial presence, and phenomenal presence. What is it like for me to have a visual experience of an armchair that is facing me? The first thing that we should note is that the armchair is experienced as a three-dimensional item.

However, the way in which the front, top, bottom, etc. of the armchair are present in my experience plainly differs. If the armchair is sitting on the floor, I am standing in front of it, and there aren’t any conveniently located mirrors, then the front, top, and possibly sides of the armchair will be present in my experience in a way quite different from the rest of the armchair.

While it is the armchair that is phenomenally present, only the facing parts of the armchair are *sensorially* present. One objection that may arise to the sensorial/phenomenal presence distinction at this point is the thought that the non-facing parts of the armchair *can’t* be present in visual experience—after all, I can’t *see* the non-facing parts of the armchair. How, the objection goes, can anything that I can’t actually see contribute to the phenomenology of visual experience?

My response to this objection is just to note that the sensorial/phenomenal presence distinction offers a way to account for the intuition driving the objection. It is certainly true that I can’t see the non-facing parts of the armchair in the above situation, but this doesn’t preclude the non-facing parts of the armchair from featuring in my visual experience. Here are a couple of reasons for thinking that the non-facing parts of the armchair *do* feature in visual experience:

My first reason for thinking this is phenomenological. I take it that in visual experience it seems to us that we are often confronted with a world of familiar three-dimensional objects. My second reason for thinking this is that some of my behaviour—how I navigate

an unfamiliar assault course, for example—is responsive to what my visual experience presents me with.

When I reach for a rope or rung that I have just looked at for the first time, I reach as if the rope or rung has parts that are not sensorially present, even though there is a sense in which I cannot see those parts of the rope or rung. That I reach in the way that I do is plausibly to be explained by appeal to the nature of the visual experience I have. Given that I reach for the object as if the object has parts that are not sensorially present, it is plausible that my visual experience of the object is a visual experience as of an object with parts that are not sensorially present.

One way to respond to these two arguments in support of the claim that more than the facing sides of opaque objects can be present in that subject's visual experience is to claim that we can account for the phenomenology and the relevant actions by appealing to some cognitive contribution to visual experience.

The question that we should pose for such a view concerns whether or not the relevant cognitive contributions about the non-facing sides of objects can affect the phenomenology of visual experience. If they *can* affect the phenomenology, then this is a position I have no quarrel with in drawing the phenomenal/sensorial distinction, as in drawing the distinction I remain neutral about what it is that is responsible for something's being phenomenally present.

If the position is that the relevant cognitive contributions *don't* affect the phenomenology then I suggest that we can appeal to the sensorial/phenomenal distinction as offering a diagnosis of the thought driving this position, namely that there is a clear difference between the way that the facing and non-facing sides of the armchair feature in visual experience. So, the cognitive contribution, whatever it is, does affect the phenomenology, in which case I have no quarrel with the view, or it does not, in which case I offer the phenomenal/sensorial distinction as a diagnosis of the intuition behind the view.

I thus propose that we persist with my approach of taking the

non-facing sides of the armchair to be present in visual experience, albeit in a different way to the front of the armchair. The front of the armchair, unlike the non-facing sides, is 'sensorially present' in visual experience.

One way that some theorists have attempted to cash out this distinction is by appealing to the notion of a *horizon*:

When I perceive an object, say an armchair, the object is never given in its totality but always incompletely, in a certain restricted profile. . . It is never the entire armchair, including its front, backside, underside, and inside, which is given intuitively. . . Despite this, the object of my perception is exactly the appearing object and not. . . the perceptually given surface. . . According to Husserl, the reason why we perceive the armchair itself, although it is actually only a single profile which is intuitively present, is because of the contribution of what he terms *horizontal intentionality*. [Gallagher and Zahavi, 2008, 96]

A 'horizon' is an aspect of experience that manifests in the phenomenology the profiles of the object of experience that are *not* being 'given intuitively' (or, in the terminology introduced in the previous section, 'sensorially present'). This will prove important in the next section, given that Zahavi's interpretation of Husserl puts the notion of a 'horizon' to a great amount of work in his account of temporal experience.

I now want to propose that it isn't just the spatially extended surfaces of objects that are sensorially present in experience: *temporally* extended items can be sensorially present as well. Just as we were able to use the notion of 'temporal presence' to formulate a 'temporal' version of the 'Time-Windows' claim (see §5), we are also able to formulate a 'sensorial' version of the 'Time-Windows' claim that expresses the idea that temporally extended items can be *sensorially* present in experience.¹⁹

'The Sensorial Time-Windows claim': To characterise what is present in experience at a time we need to appeal to a temporally limited interval of time. All of the items featuring in the relevant interval of time are *sensorially present*.

Hopefully, the Sensorial Time-Windows claim seems like an obvious claim for anyone who chooses to introspect and reflect upon the phenomenology of temporal experience. Even if it does appear obvious, it is nevertheless worth making, as some theorists (Le Poidevin and Husserl, as interpreted by Zahavi) have denied it—and it is this that explains what is unsatisfactory about their accounts. On their views, temporally extended happenings are *never* sensorially present in experience.

16 *Denying the Sensorial Time-Windows Claim: Le Poidevin and Zahavi*

On my reading of both Le Poidevin and Zahavi's Husserl, both are committed to the view that what is sensorially present to the subject in perceptual experience at a time lacks temporal extension.²⁰ When we perceive some temporally extended happening, both claim, we are not *sensorially* presented with something temporally extended, but rather with a series of momentary 'snapshots' that don't have discernable earlier and later temporal parts.

This series of snapshots is supplemented by some additional features (a 'horizon' on Zahavi's picture, and the sensation of 'pure succession' on Le Poidevin's), but despite this supplementation, their accounts of what is sensorially present in perceptual experience are very sparse. By supplementing their accounts with these features, Zahavi and Le Poidevin are able to claim that what is *phenomenally* present to the subject at a time is always temporally extended. Despite this, on Zahavi and Le Poidevin's proposals, only a 'snapshot' is ever *sensorially* present.

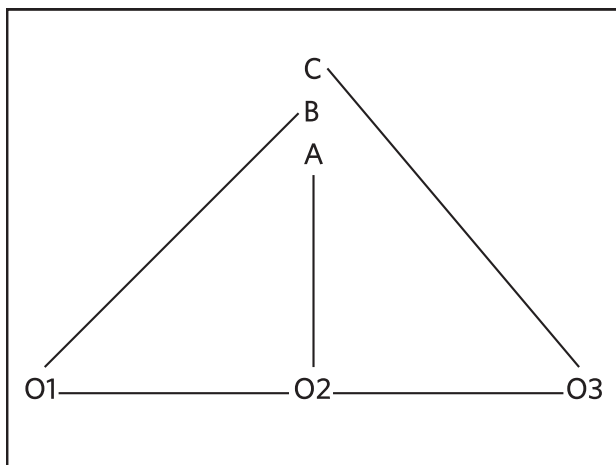
Their views can be illustrated by considering the example of the experience of a moving object. Le Poidevin supplements his sensorial snapshot of the object's movement by appealing to our retaining in short-term memory a grasp of the previous positions occupied by the object, *plus* the sensation of 'pure motion':

What we have here are two neural mechanisms in play. One system registers what we might call 'pure' motion, i.e. gives rise to the impression of motion without any associated sense of change of relative position. It is this system that is responsible for the sense of perceiving motion as happening *now*. Another system, the one that employs short-term memory, takes a series of snapshots of an object's relative position and compares them. That system gives rise to the sense of change of relative position, but it cannot unproblematically be said to give rise to the sense of change of relative position happening *now*. [Le Poidevin, 2007, 89]

Zahavi provides his supplementation in other way: by appealing to the notion of a *horizon*. His thought is that, just as a horizon plays a part in accounting for the non-sensorially presented parts of the armchair in the example supplied earlier, so it also accounts for the non-sensorially presented *temporal* parts of the temporally extended objects of experience. On Zahavi's interpretation of Husserl, at an instant, I am simultaneously in contact with the world in three different ways: a snapshot is *sensorially present* in experience, I represent previously perceived states of affairs as past (retention), and I represent not-yet-perceived states of affairs as future (protention). Husserl sometimes calls our sensorial perception of the 'now-phase' the *primal impression*. Zahavi has suggested that we think of this tripartite experiential structure as follows:

The protentions and retentions are dependent parts of an occurrent experience. They do not provide us with new intentional objects but with a consciousness of the

temporal horizon of the present object. . . Every actual phase of consciousness contains the structure Primal Impression (A), retention (B), and protention (C). The correlates of this. . . structure are the now phase (O2), the past phase (O1), and the future phase (O3) of the object. The now-phase of the object has a horizon, but it is *not* made up of the retentions and protentions, but of the past and future phases of the object. [Zahavi, 2003, 83–4]



Retentions and protentions are thus what represent the past and future phases of the object. However, as already noted, these past and future phases are not sensorially present in perception. Rather, as Zahavi notes, they provide the *horizon* of the object. The notion of ‘horizon’ here makes explicit Zahavi’s attempt to draw a parallel between the account of how the underside of the armchair can feature in perception, and the account of how previously perceived phases of the object can feature in perception, without being sensorially perceived. Just as in the case of the armchair, where the parts of the armchair that aren’t sensorially present nevertheless make an

appearance in the phenomenology, so in the case of temporal experience, parts of a temporally extended event that aren’t sensorially present at an instant nevertheless make an appearance in the phenomenology due to their being represented in retention and protention.

So, while Zahavi and Le Poidevin have different ways of cashing out the non-sensorial contributions to temporal experience, they are both agreed that all that is ever sensorially present to the subject is a ‘snapshot’. While what is sensorially present to the subject changes from instant to instant, it is never the case that one sensorial ‘snapshot’ is experienced together with another sensorial ‘snapshot’ that occurs before or after it: for Zahavi and Le Poidevin, ‘experienced togetherness’ is entirely a matter of being simultaneously experienced (where this is importantly distinct from being experienced as *simultaneous*)

Is it possible to show that Le Poidevin and Zahavi are incorrect to characterise the phenomenology of temporal experience as they do? I believe that it is, and that we can illustrate the implausibility of their positions by comparing what they say about sensorial presence in the temporal case to a position one might take about the spatial case. Le Poidevin and Zahavi both hold that the movement of an object between distinct locations cannot be sensorially present in perception—all that gets to be sensorially present is a series of ‘snapshots’. This is what they have to say about the *temporal* case of sensorial presence.

The analogous position as regards sensorial presence in the *spatial* case is to claim that the sensorial presence of some spatially extended item in perceptual experience in fact consists of an awareness of a multitude of items that are not spatially extended—or at least don’t have discernable spatial extension. This position about the spatial case looks implausible—implausible because we cannot discern such items in experience.²¹

To give an example: the facing part of the page or screen before your eyes is currently sensorially present in your perceptual expe-

rience. The position analogous to that of Le Poidevin and Zahavi in the spatial case is that what is in fact sensorially present in perceptual experience in this case are a multitude of regions without discernable spatial extension.

Notice, however, that it isn't possible to attend to these regions—we are only capable of focussing our attention upon parts of the page that have discernable spatial extension. Given that we are incapable of *attending* to such items in perceptual experience, there is no phenomenological motivation for positing that we are, in fact, experiencing such items whenever something with spatial extent is sensorially present in perceptual experience.

To return to the temporal case, the analogous thing that we ought to say about Le Poidevin and Zahavi's views is that there appears to be no phenomenological motivation for positing 'snapshots'. Just as we can't attend to the spatial equivalent of snapshots (regions of space without discernable spatial extent), we can't attend to the temporal snapshots Le Poidevin and Zahavi posit. When we introspect upon the phenomenology of temporal experience, what we find are temporally extended events and processes.

Plausibly, the closest things we find to the snapshots that Le Poidevin and Zahavi posit are the *boundaries* marking the beginnings and endings of events and processes. However, it is not possible for us to attend to such beginnings and endings in isolation from the events and processes whose beginnings and endings they mark. For example, it isn't possible for me to attend to the boundary that marks the ball beginning to move in isolation from attending to the ball's movement—which is something that takes time.

Given that we find that we are unable to attend to snapshots, it ought to strike us as odd that Le Poidevin and Zahavi both adopt views positing that the *only things* that are sensorially present are snapshots. The claim that only snapshots, rather than temporally extended events and processes, are sensorially present in experience ought to strike us as phenomenologically *revisionary*.

Clearly there is something motivating Le Poidevin and Zahavi to

adopt this revisionary view about the phenomenology. One source of motivation for their views may be the attempt to avoid the 'lingering contents' objection—an attempt that may be implicitly driving Broad's earlier-mentioned claim that 'the... sound is just on the point of ceasing to be *presented* and being at most *remembered*.' It is to a discussion of this source of motivation that we now turn.

17 Two Varieties of 'Lingering'

We have seen that Broad's account has the consequence that the subject remains in experiential contact with items of short duration for periods of time greater than those occupied by the items themselves. The items thus 'linger' in experience. We can use the notion of sensorial presence to distinguish between two kinds of way that items might 'linger' in experience. The first variety of lingering we can call 'sensorial lingering', the second, we can call 'non-sensorial lingering'.

Sensorial Lingering: Items can be sensorially present in experience for a period greater than that of their own duration.

Non-Sensorial Lingering: Items can be phenomenally present in experience for a period greater than that of their own duration.

The first claim—the 'Sensorial Lingering' claim—is false, and ought *not* to be committed to by any account of temporal experience. The second, however, is true, and ought to be capable of being accommodated by any account of temporal experience.

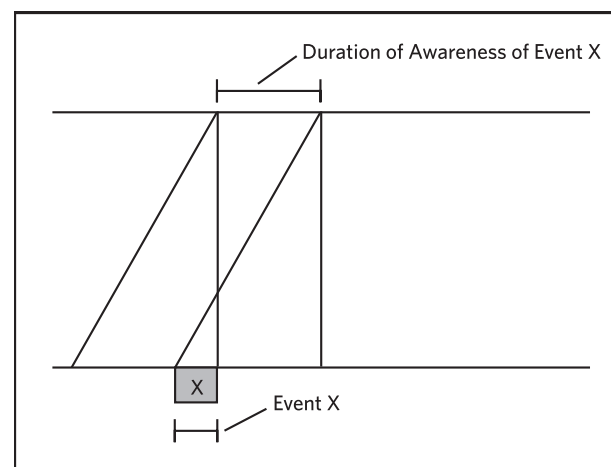
Consider a scenario in which a subject perceptually experiences the sound of a brief click. When the click first features in experience, it will be sensorially present for a period equal to that of its own duration. However, once this period has elapsed, the click ceases to be sensorially present: it may continue to be *phenomenally* present—perhaps the subject retains awareness of the click in

a non-sensorial fashion—but it no longer features sensorially as it did initially. In this way, the click lingers non-sensorially.

How can Broad’s account explain this difference between ways in which the click features in experience (first sensorially, then non-sensorially)? As Broad’s account stands, we can interpret him in two ways, both of which face serious problems—problems that stem from his commitment to i) the Thin-PSA, and ii) Overlap.

On the first interpretation, we take Broad to be committed to the Sensorial Time-Windows claim. Adopting this position, however, means that he is unable to account for the difference between the ways that the click features in experience, for on this proposal, the click remains sensorially present for a period greater than that of its own duration. Commitment to the Sensorial Time-Windows claim thus makes the ‘lingering’ that features in Broad’s account *sensorial* lingering—the lingering that ought to be avoided.

On the second interpretation, Broad rejects the Sensorial Time-Windows claim. This enables him to claim that the lingering that features in his account is ‘non-sensorial’. However, this is also problematic, given the argument in §16 that the Sensorial Time-Windows claim accurately captures the phenomenology of temporal experience. Broad thus faces problems either if he accepts, or if he rejects, the Sensorial Time-Windows claim. Commitment to the Sensorial Time-Windows claim commits Broad to the undesirable ‘Sensorial Lingering’ claim, but rejection of the Sensorial Time-Windows claim renders his account incapable of accounting for the phenomenological datum that temporally extended happenings can be sensorially present in experience.



As the diagram from §13, repeated above, demonstrates, this dilemma can be posed for any account that commits to both the Thin-PSA and to Overlap. As noted earlier, commitment to the Thin-PSA claim is represented by the two large triangles, and the ‘overlap’ claim is represented by the overlap of the base of those same triangles. Given that these two claims can be committed to regardless of one’s theory of perception, the problem faced by Broad ought to be considered a general problem facing any account that seeks to explain ‘Time-Windows’ and ‘continuity’ in terms of the Thin-PSA and ‘overlap’.

18 Early Broad and the ‘One Experience’ View

Having discussed the first lesson to be learned from Broad, I now want to turn to the second—the lesson that bears on Tye’s ‘One-Experience’ proposal. Tye’s diagnosis of the problems facing accounts of temporal experience is that they all stem from commitment to the assumption that subjects have multiple experiences over a period of unbroken consciousness. This diagnosis, however, looks mistaken. Having examined the objections that have been raised to

Broad's early account, we have found that only one—the 'lingering contents' objection—appears to stick, and it isn't the case that this objection stems from Broad's adherence to a particular conception of how experiences are to be individuated.

Broad simply doesn't talk about the issue of individuating experiences, and appears to remain entirely neutral regarding it. Rather, the problem for Broad stems from his commitment to the Thin-PSA and 'overlap' claims. Here is Tye's attempt to 'dissolve' the problem of temporal experience in more detail:

The problem of the unity of experiences through time is to specify the phenomenal unity relation that connects token experiences at different times and binds them together into a single larger experience... The problem, posed in this way, is... [not] real... for there is no relation of unity *between token experiences* that is given to us in introspection. [Tye, 2003, 95–6]

Tye's response to his own diagnosis is to attempt to provide an account of temporal experience according to which subjects have only *one* experience per period of unbroken consciousness. Despite making this claim, Tye is sensitive to the necessity of accounting for both Time-Windows, and the Continuity of Consciousness. Accordingly, Tye's temporally extended experiences begin to look a lot like Broad's temporally extended acts of awareness:

In taking this view [the one-experience view], I am not denying that, in the example of my hearing the musical scale, do-re-mi, there is an experience of do-re in the first Specious Present and an experience of re-mi in the second. My point is that these are not different experiences: there is only one experience—an experience of do-re-mi—that has been described in different (partial) ways, an experience with different stages to it. [Tye, 2003, 99–100]

Just as Broad claims in his early account that temporally extended acts of awareness are composed of a series of instantaneous sections that are not themselves acts of awareness, and that encompass intervals, Tye claims that temporally extended experiences are composed of a series of 'stages' that are not themselves experiences, and that represent intervals. Also like Broad, Tye maintains that temporally extended experience is to be analysed in terms of a series of instantaneous structures whose contents overlap [Tye, 2003, 92–4].

Tye is thus committed to the same two claims, the Thin-PSA and 'Overlap', that resulted in Broad's account being faced by the 'lingering contents' objection. Accordingly, Tye is also faced with the same dilemma regarding the Sensorial Time-Windows claim. Either he commits to the Sensorial Time-Windows claim, in which case he is committed to sensorial lingering, or he rejects the Sensorial Time-Windows claim, in which case he fails to account for the sensorial presence of temporally extended happenings in experience.

So, by looking at Broad's account, we have learned two things about Tye's proposal: firstly, that Tye is mistaken in his identification of the assumption that subjects have multiple experiences over an interval as the source of what is problematic about temporal experience. Secondly, that any progress in the debate about temporal experience thought to stem from Tye's claim that he has diagnosed and dispelled the source of the problems is illusory: the problem facing Tye is exactly the same in structure as the problem that faces Broad's account.

19 Conclusion

By examining Broad's account of temporal experience, we have gained two important insights into the current state of the debate about temporal experience: firstly, that there is a structural problem facing accounts committed to the Thin-PSA and 'Overlap' claims; secondly, that Tye's account, as well as being vulnerable to this structural problem, fails to correctly diagnose the problem of tem-

poral experience.

The problem facing Broad doesn't stem from any claims about how experiences are to be individuated: rather, it stems from the two claims (Thin-PSA and 'Overlap') which look as though they provide good accounts of the relevant aspects of the phenomenology (Time-Windows and Continuity respectively). If this is right, then Broad's account may also tell us where progress in the debate about temporal experience should be looked for—not by making stipulations about experience-individuation, but by attempting to provide a view that avoids commitment to both the Thin-PSA and 'Overlap'.²²

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Notes

¹A sense-datum model of perceptual experience holds that the phenomenal character of a subject's experience is determined by her awareness of objects that are not identical with the mind-independent objects that we naively take ourselves to be experiencing. The intentionalist, by contrast, doesn't attempt to model perceptual experience in terms of an awareness-object structure: rather, they hold that phenomenal character is determined by the content of the subject's experiential state—where experiential states can obtain even in the absence of their purported object.

²The PSA was first *explicitly* formulated by Miller—see [Miller \[1984\]](#)—as an attempt to capture an important doctrine from historical (and contemporaneous) discussion of temporal experience.

³On views on which there are no such things as instants, the talk of instants here can be translated into talk of 'moments', where 'moments' picks out the smallest portion of time admitted by the view in question, without changing the dialectic in what follows.

⁴For an argument that we can only get the phenomenology of experience right by making *both* of these responses to Thin-PSA accounts, see [Soteriou \[2010\]](#)

⁵The Thin-PSA has been committed to by a number of theorists, and it appears that all of them commit to it for this reason: See, for instance, [Husserl \[1991\]](#); [James \[2007\]](#); [Kelly \[2005\]](#); [Le Poidevin \[2007\]](#); [Tye \[2003\]](#). Note that the important point being made in all of these accounts is not that the objects of experience are experienced *as* simultaneous. Rather, the subject simultaneously experiences the items as temporally distributed over an interval.

⁶That Broad is conceiving of the 'specious present' as an interval in which items are temporally present is made explicit when we note that 'presentedness' is introduced in order to account for the following phenomenon: "It is asserted that what is prehended at any moment must have 'presentness', in some sense which *does not* entail instantaneousness and exclude duration, as presentness in the proper sense does."

⁷Commitment to the idea that there is a 'Specious Present' so conceived of can also be found in: [James \[2007\]](#)[Tye \[2003\]](#)

⁸Commitment to the idea that the present, as it features in experience, cannot be temporally extended, can be found in: [Husserl \[1991\]](#); [Le Poidevin \[2007\]](#)

⁹Compare this to a view like Foster's and Dainton's, where both the intervals featuring in the acts, and the acts *themselves* overlap.

¹⁰Explicit commitment to the 'overlap' claim can be found in a number of accounts: see [Dainton \[2006\]](#); [Foster \[1982\]](#); [Husserl \[1991\]](#); [Tye \[2003\]](#).

¹¹Note that the overlap claim alone isn't necessarily problematic—as I shall demonstrate, it is the combination of the 'overlap' and 'Thin-PSA' claims that generates difficulties. Dainton and Foster are examples of theorists who claim to

commit only to ‘overlap’ but not to the ‘Thin-PSA’. Their lack of commitment to the Thin-PSA has, however, been called into question—see the exchange between Dainton and Gallagher in *Psyche* (Gallagher [2003]; Dainton [2003]). If, as Gallagher suggests, Dainton and Foster are so committed, then they will also face the structural problem I discuss in §17.

¹²To be fair to Dainton, he goes on to say that this criticism is not particularly troubling for Broad.

¹³This hasn’t stopped other philosophers from suggesting that ‘presentedness’ could be thought of as ‘force and vivacity’—e.g. [Mabbott, 1951, 162] and [Le Poidevin, 2007, 91]

¹⁴One potential source of confusion here is that, also in *Time and Space*, Dainton introduces the idea of adopting a ‘two-dimensionalist’ account of temporal experience, and claims that Broad (and Husserl) adopt(s) such a view. However, Dainton uses the terminology of a ‘two dimensional model of temporal experience’ to refer to a model on which a momentary awareness has a ‘complex content that *seems* temporally extended’ [Dainton, 2001, 100]. In other words, on this usage, ‘two dimensionalism’ picks out time *as it features in experience*, but not time *as it is in itself*.

In *Time and Space*, Dainton is thus still interpreting Broad’s late account as an intentionalist theory (on which phenomenal character is determined by content), and not as a sense-data theory (on which it is determined by awareness of an object). However, this is *not* the position adopted by Broad in his late view. As discussed earlier, Broad, in both early and late guises, has a sense-data theory of perceptual experience: for him, a momentary awareness is awareness of an object with genuine temporal extension. The puzzle about incompatible properties identified by Dainton can thus only be solved by Broad’s adopting a two-dimensional view of time *itself*, and not just time *as it features in experience*: the very view that Broad, in *The Philosophy of C.D. Broad*, states that he has in mind.

¹⁵My point here is not that we should take Broad’s response here to be either totally convincing or totally unconvincing. Rather, my point is that, given that the status of Dainton’s objection to Broad has been shown to depend upon the status of Broad’s account of the metaphysics of time, the objection can hardly be considered as being decisive. Of course, if it was possible to decisively show that Broad’s account of the metaphysics of time *is* untenable, then we certainly should agree with Dainton that Broad would be better off adopting an intentionalist, rather than a sense-datum, model of experience. It is worth noting, however, that even if this were the case, Broad’s revised account would be an model that commits to Thin-PSA, and so would still suffer from the structural problem I identify later in the paper.

¹⁶Note that this kind of response can be found in Tye’s account of temporal experience [Tye, 2003, 94]. The fact that a response identical to that of Tye is available to Broad says much about the similarities between their accounts—similarities that

I discuss in more detail in §18.

¹⁷Just like the PSA, the PPC is first *explicitly* formulated by Miller, but it was implicit in the literature on temporal experience much earlier than 1984 (when Miller was writing).

¹⁸If one was inclined to shy away from the PPC as a result of its characterisation of the phenomenology in terms of a distinction between ‘act’ and ‘content’, note that we can formulate the PPC more neutrally as follows:

The PPC: It seems as if the duration of experience *in* which an item X is presented is concurrent with the duration that X is represented as occupying.

While it is appropriate to stick with Miller’s characterisation in terms of ‘acts’ for the purposes of the discussion of Broad, the neutral formulation of the PPC demonstrates that it picks out an important aspect of the phenomenology that can be identified regardless of one’s theoretical commitment to a particular theory of perception.

¹⁹I should briefly note that there is an issue closely related to distinguishing between sensorial and phenomenal presence in the philosophy of perception—the issue of whether or not we only see objects *in virtue of* seeing their surfaces. In my discussion of sensorial versus phenomenal presence I am not taking a stand on this issue—I am merely noting that there are two different ways in which the objects of visual experience can feature in visual experience. For discussion of the ‘in virtue of’ issue see: Martin [2008]; Jackson [1977]; Clarke [1965].

²⁰The views in question can be found in Le Poidevin [2007] and Zahavi [2003].

²¹It might be objected that this analogy does not hold, because there is no analogue for the role of memory in Zahavi and Le Poidevin’s accounts in the spatial case. However, as Zahavi’s theory makes clear, there *is* a way to draw an analogy by noting that, in the spatial case, objects have aspects that are merely phenomenally, but not sensorially, present (the underside of the armchair, for example). Note that, in the spatial case, it isn’t enough to say that we are sensorially aware of a multitude of items without spatial extension *plus* we are aware of the hidden aspects of those items—after all, it is clear in the spatial case that the story has gone wrong in positing the multitude of items without spatial extension in the first place. What we want an account of in the spatial case is our *sensorial* awareness of spatially extended items. Analogously, in the temporal case, we want an account of our sensorial awareness of *temporally* extended items.

²²Particular thanks to Matt Soteriou and also to two anonymous reviewers for all their help and input into this paper. Thanks also to Adrienne Cooper, Alex Kelly, Peter Poellner and Louise Richardson.

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