

Perspectives on the Past: A Study of the Spatial Perspectival Characteristics of Recollective Memories

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Abstract: The following paper considers one important feature of our experiential or 'recollective' memories, namely their spatial perspectival characteristics. I begin by considering the 'Past-Dependency-Claim', which states that every recollective memory (or 'R-memory') has its spatial perspectival characteristics in virtue of the subject's present awareness of the spatial perspectival characteristics of a relevant past perceptual experience. Although the Past-Dependency-Claim might for various reasons seem particularly attractive, I show that it is false. I then proceed to develop and defend the 'Present-Dependency-Claim', namely the claim that the spatial perspectival characteristics of an R-memory depend on the spatial perspectival characteristics of perceptual experiences that the subject has at the time at which the R-memory occurs. Lastly, I discuss the phenomenon of so-called 'observer-memories', which presents a special challenge for any attempt to account for the spatial perspectival characteristics of R-memories. I argue that we have no good reason to deny that the relevant experiences should count as memories, and I show that we can account for the spatial perspectival characteristics of observer-memories with the help of the 'Present-Dependency-Claim'. More generally, the paper shows that certain events that occur in a subject's mental life (namely, a subject's R-memories) are necessarily dependent on other events that occur in the relevant subject's mental life (namely, on certain perceptual experiences). This more general conclusion in turn should be relevant for any attempt to develop an appropriate account of a subject's mental life as a whole.

The phenomenon of memory perspective, which stands at the centre of the present paper, might best be introduced with the help of a little self-experiment. Thus, try to remember the last dinner party you went to. What is your memory like? Chances are that you remember at least some aspects of the event in a vivid way, that is, that your memory has experiential characteristics. Memories that have such experiential characteristics I here call 'recollective memories' (or 'R-memories'). If you have a recollective memory of the last dinner party you went to, it is likely that you recollectively remember the relevant objects or events from the perspective from which you originally witnessed them, that is, from what has been called a 'field-perspective'. However, sometimes people recollectively remember past events from a different perspective, a so-called 'observer-perspective'.¹ Thus,

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¹ Cf. Nigro and Neisser (1983) and Robinson and Swanson (1993) for relevant empirical research.

perhaps you do not remember the dinner party in a way in which you yourself might have experienced the original situation, but rather in a way in which, at the time, it might have been perceived by some observer. In this case, you remember the dinner party from an observer-perspective.

The distinction between field- and observer-memories seems interesting, if not puzzling. One might try to dispel the sense of puzzlement by holding that so-called ‘observer-memories’ are not really memories at all. Be that as it may, it seems clear that field-memories and so-called ‘observer-memories’ differ with respect to their perspectival characteristics. This in turn should make us more attentive to the (usually neglected) fact that field-memories, which no-one doubts should count as memories, do have spatial perspectival characteristics.

The present paper aims to give the spatial perspectival characteristics of R-memories careful consideration. After some clarificatory comments in section 1, section 2 of the paper considers the ‘Past-Dependency-Claim’. The Past-Dependency-Claim departs from the assumption that whenever a subject R-remembers a past object (or event), the subject is aware of a relevant past perceptual experience of the object (or event) which she presently R-remembers. An R-memory, so a defender of the Past-Dependency-Claim holds, has its spatial perspectival characteristics in virtue of the subject’s present awareness of the past perceptual experience’s spatial perspectival characteristics. Indeed, the Past-Dependency-Claim might seem to offer a simple and straightforward account of an R-memory’s spatial perspectival characteristics and might therefore seem particularly attractive. Furthermore, if the Past-Dependency-Claim were true, we would also have reason to conclude that so-called ‘observer-memories’ should not count as memories.² However, so I argue in section 3 of the present paper, the Past-Dependency-Claim is false because there are, as I show, cases (of *field*-memories) in which a subject R-remembers an object *without* being aware of a past perceptual experience of the relevant object.

Instead, so I proceed to show in section 4, we have good reason to accept the ‘Present-Dependency-Claim’, namely the claim that under normal conditions, the spatial perspectival characteristics of any R-memory depend on the spatial perspectival characteristics of perceptual experiences that the subject has at the time at which the R-memory occurs. Sections 5 and 6 finally consider the phenomenon of so-called ‘observer-memories’. I argue that we do not have any good reason to deny that the relevant experiences should count as memories (section 5), and I show that we can account for the surprising spatial perspectival characteristics of observer-memories with the help of the Present-Dependency-Claim (section 6).

More generally, the present paper does, if successful, show that certain events that occur in a subject’s mental life (namely, R-memories) necessarily depend on certain *other* events that occur in the subject’s mental life (namely, perceptual

² For a reconstruction of the argument that might lead to this conclusion, cf. section 5 below.

experiences which occur at the time at which the R-memory occurs). This, in turn, is an insight with far-reaching consequences. For it directly contradicts an assumption which seems to permeate and underlie most of our everyday thinking about our own mental lives, and which arguably also permeates and underlies some contemporary work in the philosophy of mind. For (so runs the standard assumption) although the events which occur in a subject's mental life might as a matter of fact stand in certain causal and justificatory relations to each other, the events which occur in a subject's mental life could each occur as they do without the occurrence of any of the other events. In particular, so it is usually assumed, each experience that a subject has is completely independent of any *other* experiences that the subject might also happen to have. On the basis of our considerations of the phenomenon of the spatial perspectival characteristics of R-memories, we will be able to reject these claims. Accordingly, the following considerations are not just relevant for our understanding of a specific aspect of experiential phenomenology, namely an R-memory's spatial perspectival characteristics. Rather, the following considerations will also, more generally, show that certain events that occur in a subject's mental life are related to, and indeed necessarily dependent on, other events that occur in the relevant subject's mental life. This observation should be relevant, and indeed rather important, for any attempt to account for a subject's mental life.

1. Recollective Memories

Before we begin, however, we should first consider in more detail which occurrences are to count as R-memories here. R-memories, so we said, are memories that have experiential characteristics. For example, when you remember the last dinner party you went to, you might have an experience as if seeing again the person who sat opposite at the dinner. Or you might have an experience as if hearing once more some particular sounds or noises—the sudden bang emanating from the kitchen at some point, or a new tune played towards the end of the party. Indeed, in an attempt to describe those occurrences, we might say that ‘you see the person again in front of your mind's eye’, that you can ‘hear the tune in your head’, and so on for the other senses. Thus, when talking about R-memories here, I mean to refer to those cases of remembering which characteristically ‘correspond to our use of the distinct senses’.³

³ Martin, 2002, p. 403. In the passage from which the present quote is taken, Martin, 2002, p. 403 explains what he means by ‘sensory imagining’ as follows: ‘By sensory imagining I have in mind those distinctive episodes of imagining or imaging which correspond to our use of the distinct senses: so we talk of visualising corresponding to seeing, or listening in one's head parallel to audition, and so on.’ The phenomenon of R-memory, so it seems, can be introduced in perfectly analogous ways. (An account of the *nature* of R-memory, however, is bound to differ in important respects from an account of the nature of sensory imagining.)

In order to clarify which cases of remembering should count as R-memories here, we might also relate the phenomenon of R-memory to other classifications of the various phenomena of remembering.⁴ Indeed, in an attempt to understand better the various phenomena of remembering, philosophers and psychologists have, during the 20th century, developed various typologies of memory. Malcolm (1963) and Shoemaker (1967), for example, distinguish between ‘personal’ and ‘factual’ memories. Personal memories, according to their typology, are memories ‘of events experienced or witnessed by the rememberer’,⁵ while factual memories are memories of any kind of fact. Among psychologists Endel Tulving’s distinction between ‘semantic’ and ‘episodic’ memory has been particularly influential. Episodic memory, so Tulving explains, ‘is concerned with unique, concrete, personal experiences dated in the rememberer’s past; semantic memory refers to a person’s abstract, timeless knowledge of the world that he shares with others’.⁶

On the basis of these typologies, many R-memories should be classified as episodic memories (in Tulving’s terminology) or as personal memories (in Malcolm and Shoemaker’s terminology). For example, when you remember the last dinner party you went to, and you have a visual R-memory of the host welcoming you on the doorstep, you R-remember an event that you witnessed before. Thus, your R-memory of the host welcoming you should, following Malcolm and Shoemaker’s typology, count as a personal memory. Your R-memory is also ‘concerned with [a] unique, concrete, personal experience [...]’ in your past and should therefore, according to Tulving, count as an episodic memory.

Other R-memories, however, might not fit so easily into one of those categories. For example, try to remember the way you used to take to primary school when you were a young child. In an attempt to do so, I remember the big chestnut tree in front of the football pitch on the road leading up to the primary school I attended. My memory of the big chestnut tree in front of the football pitch has experiential (namely visual) characteristics and should therefore count as an R-memory. However, it remains unclear whether Malcolm and Shoemaker would classify the memory as a personal memory or whether Tulving would classify it as an episodic memory. Indeed, the R-memory of the chestnut tree is not a memory of an ‘*event* [...] experienced or witnessed by the rememberer’, and it is not ‘concerned with [a] unique, concrete, personal experience’ in the rememberer’s past either. Rather, it is a memory of an object—the relevant tree—that the rememberer has seen countless times on her daily walks to primary school in the past. Presumably, therefore, the memory of the big chestnut tree should not count as a personal memory (given Malcolm’s and Shoemaker’s typology) nor should it count as an episodic memory (given Tulving’s classification). However, the memory of the chestnut tree does have experiential characteristics and therefore

⁴ Thanks to an anonymous referee for suggesting that the following typological considerations might help in the present context.

⁵ Shoemaker, 1976, p. 266.

⁶ Tulving, 1983, p. v.

should count as an R-memory. We can conclude that the category of R-memory cuts across other widely used typologies of memory such as those developed, for example, by Malcolm, Shoemaker or Tulving. Coming to see this should, in turn, help us to understand better which occurrences are here called R-memories: R-memories are those memories which have experiential characteristics. They are those cases of remembering which characteristically ‘correspond to our use of the distinct senses’.⁷

2. Remembering Past Perceptual Experiences

On this basis, we can now turn to address the phenomenon of an R-memory’s spatial perspectival characteristics. How, then, could we account for the spatial perspectival characteristics of a subject’s R-memories? In order to answer this question, it might be useful to think about the spatial perspectival characteristics of *perceptual* experiences first. A perceptual experience’s spatial perspective is determined by the spatial location of the perceiving subject and the spatial location of the perceived objects at the time at which the perceptual experience occurs. Firstly, a perceptual experience of a set of objects presents the relevant objects as related to the *perceiving subject*, who takes up a particular spatial location. For example, a perceptual experience might present a green chair to the left of the subject, and a red chair to the right of the subject. Secondly, a perceptual experience of a set of objects presents those objects as spatially related to *each other*. For example, a subject’s perceptual experience might present a green chair to the left of a red chair. Were the subject to stand on the other side of the room, she would perceive the green chair as to the right of the red chair, rather than to its left. Thus, the way in which the objects are presented as related to each other in turn importantly depends on the subject’s spatial location. We can conclude that a perceptual experience’s spatial perspective is determined by the spatial location of the perceiving subject and the spatial location of the perceived objects at the time at which the perceptual experience occurs.

Against this background we might then try to understand better the spatial perspectival characteristics of R-memories. We might begin by considering the following case:

(Anna and the Eiffel Tower) Anna R-remembers climbing the Eiffel tower. She R-remembers the look of the steely steps below her feet, she R-remembers the chequered shirt and the movements of her father climbing the steps in front, and she R-remembers her brother’s breathing and talking behind.

⁷ Martin, 2002, p. 403. For further helpful comments on different possible typologies of memory, cf. Martin, 2001, pp. 258ff.

Clearly, Anna's R-memory has spatial perspectival characteristics. The R-memory presents the people and objects which Anna perceived in the original situation as related to each other—for example, it presents the person in the chequered shirt as moving on top of the stairs—, and it also presents the spatial relation in which Anna stood to the relevant objects and people in the original situation—for example, it presents her father in front. And indeed, so someone might argue, we can account for the spatial perspectival features of Anna's R-memories if we accept (as Mike Martin has recently suggested) that a subject who R-remembers a past event remembers, in an experiential way, *perceiving* the relevant event in the past.⁸ Thus, following the present suggestion we should say that when Anna R-remembers her father in front, for example, Anna actually R-remembers *perceiving* her father in front. She is not just aware of her father climbing the stairs, but she is aware of *seeing* her father during the original situation. Indeed, so runs the present suggestion, Anna's R-memory has spatial perspectival characteristics because the past perceptual experience of which the R-remembering subject is aware did have spatial perspectival characteristics. More generally, whenever a subject has an R-memory, the subject R-remembers *perceiving* a relevant object (or event), and a subject's R-memory has its spatial perspectival characteristics in virtue of the past perceptual experience's spatial perspectival characteristics of which the subject is presently aware. Thus, with respect to R-memories' spatial perspectival characteristics, it might then be suggested that

(Past-Dependency-Claim) every R-memory has its spatial perspectival characteristics in virtue of the subject's present awareness of the spatial perspectival characteristics of a *past* perceptual experience.

Indeed, the Past-Dependency-Claim offers a comparatively simple and straightforward account of the perspectival characteristics of R-memories. According to the Past-Dependency-Claim, an R-memory simply 'inherits' its spatial perspectival characteristics from relevant earlier perceptual experiences of the object (or event) that the subject presently R-remembers. Thus, under the assumption that we can account for the spatial perspectival characteristics of perceptual experiences, it should be comparatively easy to account for the spatial perspectival characteristics of R-memories if the Past-Dependency-Claim was true, which in turn renders the Past-Dependency-Claim rather attractive.

However, although the Past-Dependency-Claim might seem rather attractive, we should assess it more carefully. In particular, we should clarify what exactly is meant by the claim that someone R-remembers *perceiving* something, or what it

⁸ As Martin (2001) puts it, an R-memory is a 'form of representing [an earlier] experiential encounter with the world' (p. 274). When R-remembering a past event, 'one recalls the original episode of apprehension. That episode has as its object events which one perceived, or of which one was an agent' (p. 278). In brief, memory is 'the retention of an earlier apprehension' (p. 270).

means to say that a subject is aware of an earlier experiential encounter with the world.⁹ In reply, it might be suggested that in order for a subject to be said to R-remember perceiving an object, or to be aware of a previous experiential encounter with the world, it is sufficient that the subject *believe* that there was a past perceiver who had a perceptual experience of the relevant object (or event) in the original situation.¹⁰ However, we are presently trying to assess the view that a subject who R-remembers an object is aware of a past perceptual experience of the relevant object, and that the present R-memory has spatial perspectival characteristics because the relevant past perceptual experience had spatial perspectival characteristics. Thus, in trying to explain what it means to say that someone R-remembers perceiving something, we have to accommodate the idea that a subject who R-remembers perceiving something is in some way presented with the relevant past perceptual experience itself. The present belief-based account does not make room for this requirement.

Instead, we might clarify what it means to say of a subject that she R-remembers *perceiving* a past object with the help of the following two claims:

(Spatial-Involvement-Condition) A subject who R-remembers *perceiving* a past object necessarily R-remembers the past object in a spatially *involved* way.

(Determinate-Location-Condition) A subject who R-remembers *perceiving* a past object necessarily R-remembers the past object situated at a determinate location.

In assessing the Spatial-Involvement-Condition, we should begin by asking what it might possibly mean to say that a subject R-remembers a certain past object in a spatially involved way. Characteristically and importantly, objects in perception are experientially presented to the subject as ‘to the left’, ‘to the right’, ‘five feet below’, ‘right in front’, etc., that is, objects are experientially presented in perception in what might be called a ‘spatially involved way’. If we want to describe a case in which a subject experiences something in a spatially involved way, we will have to use ‘monadic spatial notions’¹¹ rather than dyadic spatial notions—that is, we will have to say things like ‘she perceives the chair to the left’ rather than ‘she perceives the chair to the left of herself’.

It seems that subjects do not only perceive things in a spatially involved way, but that subjects can also R-remember things in a spatially involved way.

⁹ Thus, using Martin’s (2001) terminology, we have to clarify what it means to say that an R-remembering subject recollects the past *apprehension* of a certain object or event.

¹⁰ To rephrase the suggestion in Velleman’s (1996) 50 words, one might hold that it is necessary that the subject believe that there was a perceiver who provided ‘the mental environs of the image and the sensorium at its spatial and causal point of origin’.

¹¹ Campbell, 1994, p. 119.

For example, we earlier said that Anna R-remembers her father as having been ‘right in front’. Thus, we might plausibly say that Anna R-remembers the past situation in a spatially involved way.¹²

Furthermore, so the Spatial-Involvement-Condition has it, in order for a subject to R-remember perceiving a past event, it is *necessary* that the subject R-remember the relevant event in a spatially involved way. An argument in support of this claim might run as follows:

- (i) It is possible for a subject to R-remember past objects in a spatially involved way.
- (ii) A subject who R-remembers perceiving a past object is aware of a past perceptual experience of the relevant object.
- (iii) In perception objects are necessarily experientially presented to the subject as ‘to the left’, ‘to the right’, etc., that is, in perception objects are necessarily experienced in a spatially involved way.
- (iv) As objects are necessarily experienced in a spatially involved way in perception, and as it is possible for a subject to R-remember past objects in a spatially involved way, it also seems plausible to demand that in order for a subject to be said to R-remember perceiving an object, it is necessary that the subject’s R-memory present the past object in a spatially involved way, just as the Spatial-Involvement-Condition says.

Thus, on the basis of the present argument, it might be reasonable to accept the Spatial-Involvement-Condition.

The Determinate-Location-Condition, in turn, says that a subject who R-remembers *perceiving* a past object necessarily R-remembers the past object situated at a determinate location. Indeed, when we perceive objects in everyday situations, we necessarily perceive those everyday objects as located at determinate places in our environment. It also seems possible to R-remember objects at determinate locations. In analogy to the argument in support of the Spatial-Involvement-Claim, it is therefore also plausible to demand that in order for someone to be said to R-remember *perceiving* an object, it is necessary that the R-memory present the R-remembered object at a determinate location, just as the Determinate-Location-Condition says. Both the Determinate-Location-Condition and the

¹² Williams (1973, p. 43) might have something analogous in mind with respect to imagination when he speaks of ‘participation imagery’. For some suggestive remarks that seem relevant in the present context (although I would not agree with everything that is said), cf. Kinsbourne, 1995, p. 218: ‘Any act of episodic (autobiographical) remembering must include a representation of the self in the context of the remembered event [...]. If the individual is engrossed in what is happening, there will be no spare attention available to represent the self as part of the scene. But the background of body sensation may nonetheless anchor the event to the individual’s autobiography. Background awareness of one’s body (its feeling, its potential for action) puts the stamp of personal experience on the scene.’

Spatial-Involvement-Condition, therefore, seem plausible. The two conditions should, in turn, help us to understand better what it could possibly mean to say that a subject R-remembers perceiving something, or that an R-remembering subject is presently aware of a past perceptual experience. This, in turn, should then provide us with a good basis on which to assess the Past-Dependency-Claim, which, to repeat, states that

(Past-Dependency-Claim) every R-memory has its spatial perspectival characteristics in virtue of the subject's present awareness of the spatial perspectival characteristics of a *past* perceptual experience.

3. Why the Past-Dependency-Claim is False

Someone who holds (with Mike Martin) that every R-memory is a 'form of representing [an earlier] experiential encounter with the world'¹³ might think that the Past-Dependency-Claim points towards a particularly congenial account of the perspectival characteristics of R-memories. Furthermore, the Past-Dependency-Claim does, as indicated earlier, promise a comparatively simple account of the spatial perspectival characteristics of a subject's R-memories. The Past-Dependency-Claim might therefore seem rather attractive. Arguably, however, subjects sometimes R-remember past objects (or events) *without* R-remembering past perceptual experiences of the relevant object (or event). For example,

(Mary and the Picture by Mondrian) on a recent visit to a museum, Mary has spent quite a while looking at a picture by Mondrian. The picture consists of a grid of black vertical and horizontal lines covering the white canvas, a yellow square in the top left corner of the picture, and a red square towards the bottom right corner. Mary presently R-remembers the picture and the spatial organization of its colours and shapes. She does not R-remember the picture in a spatially involved way, that is, her R-memory does not, for example, present the picture 'an arm's length in front, slightly to the left', nor does she R-remember the picture at a determinate location. Rather, the R-memory presents the picture at no particular location at all.

Given the Determinate-Location-Condition and the Spatial-Involvement-Condition, it seems that Mary should not be said to R-remember *perceiving* the picture. Rather, her R-memory seems best described by saying that she R-remembers nothing but the picture. I will call R-memories of this kind 'unmediated

¹³ Martin, 2001, p. 274.

R-memories', because in those cases the subject R-remembers a past object (or event) without R-remembering perceiving the object (or event).¹⁴

Nevertheless, Mary's unmediated R-memory of the picture does have some spatial perspectival characteristics. She R-remembers the different elements of the picture as spatially related to each other—for example, she may R-remember the yellow square as located to the left and higher up compared to the red square. Had the picture been hanging upside down in the museum, Mary would still R-remember the very same picture. However, she would then R-remember the yellow square as to the right and below the red square. Mary's R-memory in the hypothetical 'upside-down-scenario' differs in important ways from the R-memory that she actually has. It seems plausible to describe this difference by saying that the two R-memories present the picture from two different spatial perspectives. However, although Mary's R-memory does have perspectival characteristics, those perspectival characteristics cannot be explained with the help of the claim that Mary R-remembers *perceiving* the picture. This implies that the Past-Dependency-Claim must be false. The Past-Dependency-Claim does not apply to unmediated R-memories. It therefore cannot help us to account for the spatial perspectival characteristics of all R-memories.

In defence of the Past-Dependency-Claim, someone might reply that contrary to first appearances, the Past-Dependency-Claim does also apply to unmediated R-memories. Even Mary, so it might be said, actually R-remembers *perceiving* the picture. She is just unaware of this fact because she focuses all her attention on the R-remembered picture. However, it seems unclear what it could possibly mean to say that a subject does R-remember perceiving an object although she is not aware of the fact that she R-remembers perceiving the object. We said earlier that a subject who R-remembers perceiving an object R-remembers the object in a spatially involved way and at a determinate location. Thus, in an attempt to develop the present suggestion, we might say that a subject who R-remembers perceiving an object without, however, being aware of the fact that she R-remembers the relevant past perception does R-remember the object in a spatially involved way and at a determinate location, but is not aware of the fact that she R-remembers the object in a spatially involved way and at a determinate location. What could this possibly mean?

Firstly, someone might suggest that the subject R-remembers the object, and that she also R-remembers the object in a spatially involved way and at a determinate location, but that the latter characteristics are *unconscious* features of the experience. However, we are here trying to offer an explanation of the perspectival characteristics of the relevant R-memory. We said that the subject's R-memory does have perspectival characteristics, and it seems also plausible to

¹⁴ Analogously, it sometimes also seems possible simply to imagine something without imagining perceiving the relevant thing. Williams (1973), Noordhof (2002), and Currie and Ravenscroft (2002, p. 27f.) seem to be of the same opinion. For opposing views, cf. Peacocke (1985), Currie (1995, p. 36f.) and Martin (2002, esp. pp. 407ff.).

hold that the subject is aware of the perspectival characteristics of her experience. The claim that the consciously experienced perspectival characteristics of the R-memory are guaranteed by an unconscious feature of the experience seems, to say the least, rather far-fetched.

Alternatively, someone might suggest that subjects who have apparently unmediated R-memories actually R-remember the relevant object in a spatially involved way and at a determinate location, but that they do not *attend* to the fact that they R-remember the object in a spatially involved way and at a determinate location, and therefore report that they R-remember nothing but the object. This suggestion certainly has more explanatory force, but there is reason to doubt that it describes the everyday phenomenology accurately. Mary claims ‘I remember nothing but the picture.’ A defender of the present account asks back: ‘But aren’t you also conscious of remembering the picture in some spatially involved way, for example, at an arm’s length in front, slightly to the left, although you don’t *attend* to that feature of the experience? And aren’t you conscious of remembering the picture at some determinate location, although you don’t attend to that feature of your experience?’

Reconsidering her R-memory, our subject might come to agree with the questioner on both counts, or at least one of them. However, the subject might just as well continue to hold that when R-remembering the picture, she does *not* R-remember the picture in a spatially involved way at all, no matter how much she tries to attend to some such feature of her experience. Self-observation suggests that replies of the latter kind sometimes do describe accurately what is going on when we R-remember something. Similarly, our subject might insist that she does not R-remember the picture at any determinate location at all, and that no amount of attention to the experience will change that.¹⁵ Indeed, it seems characteristic of R-memories like Mary’s that they do not present the relevant object as located at a determinate place (but rather present the relevant object at a vague distance), and that they do not present the relevant object in a spatially-involved way. Thus, it seems plausible to accept that there are R-memories that do not fulfil either or both of the Spatial-Involvement- and Determinate-Location-Conditions. Given that both

¹⁵ Martin (2002, p. 411) suggests that there might be cases in which the subject actively ‘discard[s ...] a point of view’ when *imagining* something. In an analogous vein, it might be suggested that at first Mary herself R-remembers perceiving the picture and is also aware of that fact. But as she is particularly interested in the R-remembered picture, so it might be said, she then actively discards all other aspects of her R-memory in order to concentrate on the R-remembered picture itself. However, while the claim that the subject ‘discards’ certain elements of her experience might sound plausible with respect to imagination, it seems rather implausible once it is applied to a case of R-memory. Arguably, the imagining subject ‘sketches’ the imagined scene herself (the formulation is Campbell’s, 2002b, p. 128), and if we say of someone that she ‘sketches’ a scene, it might then also make sense to say of the same subject that she ‘discards’ certain elements of the scene she has sketched. However, the claim that an R-remembering subject ‘sketches’ the R-remembered scene does not seem true to the phenomenology, and accordingly, it also seems much less plausible to claim that the subject actively ‘discards’ certain elements of her R-memory while R-remembering.

conditions need to be met in order for an R-memory to count as a case in which the subject R-remembers perceiving something, there is, accordingly, good reason to conclude that not every R-memory is an R-memory of a past perception.¹⁶

Thus, we find that there are cases in which a subject R-remembers an object (or event) without R-remembering *perceiving* the relevant object (or event). In those latter cases, the relevant R-memory could not possibly have its spatial perspectival characteristics in virtue of the subject's present awareness of the spatial perspectival characteristics of a past perceptual experience, because the subject is not aware of any such past perceptual experience at all. Thus, the Past-Dependency-Claim turns out to be false. It could not possibly be true that, as the Past-Dependency-Claim has it, every R-memory has its spatial perspectival characteristics in virtue of the subject's present awareness of the spatial perspectival characteristics of a past perceptual experience.

4. The Present-Dependency-Claim

However, it seems that the spatial perspectival characteristics of unmediated R-memories, as well as the spatial perspectival characteristics of all other R-memories, do depend on *some* perceptual experiences of the subject. Indeed, so the Present-Dependency-Claim has it,

(Present-Dependency-Claim) assume that a subject who has an R-memory also has some present *perceptual* (i.e. visual, auditory, tactile, olfactory, gustatory, or proprioceptive) experiences. Then the subject's R-memory can only have its spatial perspectival characteristics if, on the basis of the relevant present perceptual experiences, the subject is also perceptually aware of an instance of the kind of spatial relation in which the objects presented by the R-memory would be standing to each other if she was to perceive them now.

Mary's case as described earlier might offer some first support for the Present-Dependency-Claim. It seems that in order for us to say of Mary that she R-remembers the painting with the yellow square to the left of the red square, Mary needs to grasp how both squares would be spatially related to each other if she was

¹⁶ An anonymous referee suggests that someone might try to defend the Past-Dependency-Claim against the present objection by suggesting that while a subject (such as Mary) who has an apparently unmediated R-memory is not aware of one particular past perceptual experience, the subject in such a situation is aware of a *set* or a *class* of past perceptions. However, under the assumption that it is possible at all for a subject to be aware of a set or a class of relevant past perceptions, it would seem plausible to demand that in order for a subject to be said to be aware of a set or class of past perceptual experiences, the Spatial-Involvement-Condition has to be met. But then, there are cases (such as Mary's case) in which this condition is not met, which implies that the present suggestion does not save the Past-Dependency-Claim.

to perceive them now. If Mary did not grasp how the R-remembered objects would be spatially related to each other at present if she was to perceive them now, we would not, it seems, be prepared to say that her R-memory has the relevant perspectival characteristics either. But then, it also seems that in order to grasp how the R-remembered objects would be spatially related to each other at present if she was to perceive them now, Mary has to rely on her present perceptual experiences. She might, for example, recognize that if she was to perceive the painting now, the yellow square might be located ‘here’ and the red square might be located ‘there’, that is, at certain places in her environment. This observation in turn might lead us to suggest, more generally, that the spatial perspectival characteristics of unmediated R-memories somehow depend on the subject’s present perceptual experiences, just as the Present-Dependency-Claim has it.

Yet, such anecdotal evidence is not sufficient to show that the Present-Dependency-Claim is true. Instead, we should consider the following argument in support of the Present-Dependency-Claim:

(Argument in Support of the Present-Dependency-Claim)

- (S1) In order for a normal subject to be said to have an R-memory which presents objects as having stood in certain spatial relations to each other at all, the subject needs to grasp that there are phenomenal similarities between the way in which past objects are presented as spatially related to each other by the R-memory and the way in which the same objects might be presented as spatially related to each other if the subject perceived the relevant objects at present.¹⁷
- (S2) But then, in order for the subject to grasp that there is a phenomenal similarity between the way in which past objects are presented as spatially related to each other by the R-memory and the way in which the same objects might be presented as spatially related to each other if she perceived the relevant objects at present,
 - (a) the subject needs to grasp how the objects *would* be spatially related to each other at present if she was to perceive them now, and
 - (b) the subject needs to grasp this (i.e. how the objects presented by her R-memory would be spatially related to each other at present if she was to perceive them now) in such a way that she can be aware of the relevant *phenomenal* similarities between her R-memory and a potential present perceptual experience.
- (S3) In order for a subject to fulfil condition (b), that is, in order for a subject to grasp how the objects presented by her R-memory would

¹⁷ Note that the subject does not need to possess any spatial concepts—such as ‘to the left of’—in order to grasp how the objects would be spatially related to each other if she were to perceive them now. It is sufficient that she grasp that objects would be spatially related to each other ‘thus’ (where the demonstrative refers to an instance of the relevant spatial relation which the subject perceives at present).

be spatially related to each other at present if she was to perceive them now in such a way that she can be aware of the relevant phenomenal similarities between her R-memory and a potential present perceptual experience, the subject needs to have a present perceptual experience of an instance of the relevant kind of spatial relation.

- (S4) Thus, in order for a normal subject to have an R-memory which presents objects as having stood in certain spatial relations to each other at all, it is necessary that the subject be perceptually aware of an instance of the kind of spatial relation in which the remembered objects would be standing to each other at present if she was to perceive them now, which is just what the Present-Dependency-Claim demands.

In an attempt to assess the present argument, we might begin with considering its first premise. R-memories, so we might observe in an attempt to elucidate and support (S1), are, as we said earlier, those cases of remembering which characteristically ‘correspond to our use of the distinct senses’,¹⁸ and indeed, R-memories are in some way *derivative* experiences. They are like ‘faint’ perceptual experiences, and in an everyday context, we express this fact by saying that R-remembering something is like ‘*re-experiencing*’ the object we remember. For example, we sometimes describe visual R-memories by saying that visually R-remembering an object is like seeing the relevant object again. This, it seems, is not just a figure of speech. Rather, in order for a subject to be said to have an R-memory at all, it needs to be apparent to the subject that there are salient *phenomenal similarities* between her present recollective experience and a potential perceptual experience of the objects which she R-remembers at present. In particular, it seems that in order for a subject to be said to have an R-memory at all, it needs to be obvious to her that there are salient phenomenal similarities with respect to the *spatial perspectival* characteristics of her present recollective experience and a potential perceptual experience of the objects which she R-remembers. This, in turn, is just what (S1) states.

An opponent, however, might object to (S1) as follows:¹⁹ In order for a subject to be said to have an R-memory, the subject herself does not need to *grasp that* there are phenomenal similarities between the way in which past objects are presented as spatially related to each other by the R-memory and the way in which the same objects might be presented as spatially related to each other if the subject perceived the relevant objects at present, as (S1) claims. Rather, we should only demand that in order for a subject to be said to have an R-memory, it is necessary that there *are* phenomenal similarities between the way in which past objects are presented as spatially related to each other by the R-memory and the

¹⁸ Martin, 2002, p. 403.

¹⁹ Thanks to an anonymous referee for suggesting that the following objection should be considered.

way in which the same objects might be presented as spatially related to each other if the subject perceived the relevant objects at present. Accordingly, so the opponent concludes, (S1) demands too much and should therefore be given up.

However, (S1) might be defended against the present objection as follows: R-memories, so we said earlier, are like ‘faint’ perceptual experiences, and R-remembering something is like ‘re-experiencing’ the R-remembered object. In making these claims, we try to characterize R-memories in the way in which they might be appropriately described by an R-remembering subject herself. In order to make this more explicit, we should, more precisely, say that *for the R-remembering subject*, R-memories are like ‘faint’ perceptual experiences; and that R-remembering an object (or event) is, *for the R-remembering subject*, like ‘re-experiencing’ the relevant object (or event). Once we accept this description of the first-personal phenomenology of R-memory (which, it seems, we should do), we also find that in order for a subject to be said to have an R-memory at all, it needs to be apparent *to the subject herself* that there are salient phenomenal similarities between her recollective experience and a potential perceptual experience of the objects which she R-remembers at present. Thus, as long as the subject does not *grasp* that her present experience resembles a perceptual experience of the relevant kind in salient respects (such as, among other things, with respect to its spatial perspectival characteristics), the subject should not be said to have an R-memory either. The opponent’s objection to premise (S1) of the Argument in Support of the Present-Dependency-Claim is therefore unsuccessful. Quite on the contrary, we find that we have good reason to hold that in order for a subject to be said to have an R-memory at all, it needs to be obvious to her that there are salient phenomenal similarities with respect to the spatial perspectival characteristics of her present recollective experience and a potential perceptual experience of the objects which she R-remembers, just as (S1) says.

It seems unlikely that premise (S2) of the Argument in Support of the Present-Dependency-Claim will create great controversy. Indeed, it seems plausible to accept that, just as (S2) says, in order for an R-remembering subject to grasp that there is a phenomenal similarity between the way in which the R-remembered objects might be presented as spatially related to each other if she perceived the relevant objects at present, (a) the subject needs to grasp how the objects *would* be spatially related to each other at present if she was to perceive them now, and (b) the subject needs to grasp this in such a way that she can be aware of the relevant *phenomenal* similarities between her R-memory and a potential present perceptual experience.

However, an opponent might question premise (S3) of the Argument in Support of the Present-Dependency-Claim. Indeed, so the opponent might say, in order for a subject to grasp how the objects presented by her R-memory would be spatially related to each other at present if she was to perceive them now, the subject does not have to have a present *perceptual experience* of an instance of the relevant kind of spatial relation, as (S3) claims. Rather, so the opponent might suggest, in order for a subject to grasp that there is a similarity between the way in

which past objects are presented as spatially related to each other by an R-memory and the way in which the same objects might be presented as spatially related to each other if the subject perceived the relevant objects at present, it is sufficient that the R-remembering subject possess the relevant *spatial concept* and have an appropriate belief about how the objects presented by the R-memory would be spatially related to each other if she was to perceive them at present. For example, so the opponent might say, in order for Mary to grasp, in the relevant way, how the yellow and the red square would be spatially related to each other at present if she was to perceive them now, it is sufficient that Mary has the belief (BF) ‘if I was to perceive the picture now, the yellow patch would be to the left of the red patch’.

Indeed, the opponent is certainly right to hold that belief (BF) will give Mary some understanding of the way in which the two coloured patches would be spatially related to each other if she was to perceive them now. Thus, if Mary has belief (BF), she meets condition (a) as formulated in premise (S2). However, the opponent is wrong to think that if Mary has formed belief (BF), condition (b) is thereby also met. The *phenomenal similarity* between the way in which Mary’s R-memory presents the relevant objects as spatially related to each other and the way in which a present perceptual experience would present the relevant objects as spatially related to each other if Mary was to perceive them now lies in the fact that the R-memory does, and the potential present perceptual experience would, present the relevant spatial relations in a way in which only an *experience* can present spatial relations to a subject. The R-memory does, and the potential perceptual experience would, present the spatial relation in a characteristically experiential way. Thus, on the basis of her possession of the concept ‘to the left of’ and her ability to form belief (BF), Mary cannot fully grasp how a present perceptual experience would present a particular spatial relation between some objects in this characteristically experiential way. Rather, Mary can only fully grasp how a present perceptual experience would, in its characteristically experiential way, present a particular spatial relation obtaining between some objects if she actually *perceives* an instance of the relevant spatial relation. On the basis of this perceptual experience, Mary might then form the belief (BF★) ‘If I was to perceive the picture now, the yellow patch would be spatially related to the red patch thus’, where the demonstrative ‘thus’ which occurs in the belief refers to an instance of the spatial relation ‘to the left of’ which Mary presently perceives as obtaining between, for example, her two hands. But in order for Mary to form a belief of this kind at all, she needs to perceive an instance of the relevant spatial relation first of all. This in turn vindicates premise (S3) of our earlier argument in support of the Present-Dependency-Claim.

Thus we have good reason to accept all three premises of the Argument in Support of the Present-Dependency-Claim, which in turn gives us good reason to accept the Present-Dependency-Claim, its conclusion. We therefore have good reason to hold that, in order for a subject to have an R-memory which presents objects as having stood in certain spatial relations to each other at all, it is necessary

that the subject be perceptually aware of an instance of the kind of spatial relation in which the remembered objects would be standing to each other at present if she was to perceive them now.

In order to understand the demand which the Present-Dependency-Claim makes, we should next consider the fact that subjects can be perceptually aware of spatial relations in different ways—visually, acoustically, tactually, proprioceptively, and maybe, somewhat less plausibly, even in olfactory and gustatory ways. We have so far focused on visual R-memories, and with respect to such visual R-memories, someone might offer the following ‘mono-modal interpretation’ of the Present-Dependency-Claim:

(Mono-Modal Interpretation, (MMI)) In order for a visual R-memory to have its spatial perspectival characteristics, it is not sufficient that the subject be in some way perceptually aware of the relevant spatial relation at present. Rather, in order for a visual R-memory to have its spatial perspectival characteristics, the subject needs to be *visually* perceptually aware of the relevant spatial relation at present, that is, the subject needs to see the relevant spatial relation in her present environment.

If we accept (MMI), we have to conclude that people with their eyes closed cannot have visual R-memories. However, everyday (self-)observation shows that it is quite possible for subjects to have visual R-memories with their eyes shut. This in turn implies that we have to reject (MMI). If we want to continue holding on to the Present-Dependency-Claim, we will instead have to accept a ‘cross-modal interpretation’ of the Present-Dependency-Claim, which might be formulated as follows:

(Cross-Modal Interpretation) In order for a visual R-memory to have its spatial perspectival characteristics, it is necessary that the subject be perceptually aware of the relevant spatial relations at present. However, in order for a visual R-memory to have its spatial perspectival characteristics, it is not necessary that the subject have visual experiences of the relevant spatial relations. Rather, a visual R-memory can also have its spatial perspectival characteristics on the basis of the remembering subject’s tactile, acoustic or proprioceptive perceptual experiences of the relevant spatial relation.²⁰

We might illustrate this cross-modal interpretation of the Present-Dependency-Claim by considering once more the case of Mary who, so we might assume, has her eyes shut while R-remembering the picture. Simultaneously, Mary also proprioceptively perceives one of her hands to the left of her other hand, both hands positioned slightly in front of her body. The proprioceptive experience

²⁰ Less plausibly, olfactory or gustatory perceptual experiences could also play a role.

makes Mary perceptually aware of the relation in which she R-remembers the yellow and the red square as having stood to each other. According to the cross-modal interpretation, Mary's present *proprioceptive* awareness of the relevant spatial relation is sufficient to satisfy the demand formulated by the Present-Dependency-Claim, namely the demand that in order for Mary's R-memory to present the relevant past objects as having been spatially related to each other in a certain way, it is necessary that Mary be perceptually aware of the relevant spatial relation at present.

This seems plausible, and it also seems compatible with the exemplary case that led us to develop the Present-Dependency-Claim first of all. In order for us to say of Mary that she R-remembers the yellow square to the left of the red square, so we said, Mary needs to recognize that if she was to perceive the painting now, then the yellow square might be located 'here' and the red square might be located 'there'. Intuitively, it seems perfectly possible for Mary to recognize this on the basis of *proprioceptive* experiences of her two hands, even though her R-memory of the picture is a *visual* experience. Thus, our original intuitions not only support the Present-Dependency-Claim in general, but they also support the Present-Dependency-Claim in its cross-modal interpretation. We find that we have good reason to accept that in order for a subject's R-memory to have its spatial perspectival characteristics, it is necessary that the subject be perceptually aware of the relevant spatial relations at present, but it is *not* necessary that the R-memory and the relevant perceptual experience present the relevant spatial relation in the same modality.²¹

Having established this much, we should consider the Present-Dependency-Claim's first sentence. According to that sentence, the demand made by the Present-Dependency-Claim only applies to those cases in which the R-remembering subject has present perceptual experiences. However, why should we restrict our considerations to cases in which subjects have present perceptual experiences? Indeed, could there not be cases in which a subject has an R-memory with spatial perspectival characteristics, but presently does not have any perceptual experiences at all?

To begin with, we should note that cases in which a subject has an R-memory but does not have any perceptual experiences whatsoever while the R-memory occurs are, if they are possible at all, certainly extremely rare and usually do not occur in our everyday lives. Even if I close my eyes, block my ears and hold my nose, I still touch some surface on which I am sitting, lying or standing, and I certainly always have proprioceptive experiences of my own body while R-remembering past events. This is presumably so for all people in at least the vast majority of cases in which they R-remember anything at all.

However, let us consider the case of a subject who is placed in a sense-deprivation tank in which she is deprived of all possible perceptual experiences. Our subject

²¹ For suggestive remarks along similar lines, cf. also Pylyshyn, 2006, p. 386f.

does not have any visual, tactile, acoustic, gustatory, olfactory or proprioceptive experiences whatsoever. Nevertheless, so someone might say,

(Sense-Deprivation Argument)

- (SD1) a subject in a sense-deprivation tank can still have R-memories. In particular, with respect to their spatial perspectival characteristics, those R-memories do not differ in any way from the spatial perspectival characteristics of R-memories that occur in everyday situations.
- (SD2) But then, a subject in a sense-deprivation tank does not have any perceptual experiences at all, and could therefore hardly be perceptually aware of any spatial relations.
- (SD3) Accordingly, at least in the case of a subject in a sense-deprivation tank, a subject's R-memory can have spatial perspectival characteristics although the subject *is not* perceptually aware of an instance of the kind of spatial relation in which the objects presented by the R-memory would be standing to each other if she was to perceive them now.
- (SD4) Thus we do not have any reason to restrict our account of the spatial perspectival characteristics of R-memories to those cases in which the R-remembering subject also has present perceptual experiences, as the first sentence of the Present-Dependency-Claim suggests.

In assessing the present argument, the defender of the Present-Dependency-Claim will question the opponent's premise (SD1). Granted, at first sight it might seem plausible to assume that a subject in a sense-deprivation tank could have unmediated R-memories with perfectly normal spatial perspectival characteristics. That first impression presumably comes about in the following way: When trying to conceive of the situation which the subject in the sense-deprivation tank finds herself in, I try to 'put myself into the shoes' of such a subject. In an attempt to do so, I consider my present mental life and then subtract from that all the perceptual experiences I have. The subject in the sense-deprivation tank, so the implicit reasoning seems to go, is in just that situation: Her mental life is just like my own present mental life, only that there are no *perceptual* experiences in her mental life. But then, surely, I am presently able to have R-memories—I might have one right now—, and these R-memories are a part of my mental life and remain part of my mental life even once I have subtracted all perceptual experiences from it. Accordingly, so I conclude, a subject in a sense-deprivation tank will be able to have normal R-memories.

However, perhaps life in a sense-deprivation tank is not as simple as that. There is every chance that the mental life of a subject in a sense-deprivation tank will be very different from the mental life of normal subjects like us. Not only will the subject in a sense-deprivation tank lack all perceptual experiences. Rather, it seems possible, and indeed likely, that soon after a subject has been put in a sense-deprivation tank, those of the subject's experiences which, according to our earlier

somewhat simplistic arithmetic, should be carried over unscathed from the subject's earlier normal life into her new life in the sense-deprivation tank, will also change drastically. In particular, it seems quite likely that once a subject has been put in a sense-deprivation tank, her ability to have R-memories with normal spatial perspectival characteristics will deteriorate and the relevant experiences, if they still occur, will change radically, particularly with respect to their spatial perspectival characteristics. But then, if this is really so, premise (SD1) of the opponent's argument against the Present-Dependency-Claim is false.

Both (SD1) and its negation are empirical hypotheses. In order to decide which of the two claims is true, we would have to observe the mental life of people who do not have any present perceptual experiences. Thus, as our philosophical consideration of the issues at hand has shown, we have here reached a point at which we cannot move any further without new empirical information about those cases.

However, we can certainly conclude that at least as long as the empirical research has not been conducted, the opponent does not have any good reason to assume that (SD1) is true. On the other hand, given that (SD1) might either turn out to be true or turn out to be false, an account of the spatial perspectival characteristics of R-memories needs to leave room for both possible outcomes. The first sentence of the Present-Dependency-Claim is meant to do just that. For according to it, the rest of the Present-Dependency-Claim only applies to cases in which the subject also has perceptual experiences at the time at which the R-memory occurs. In those cases, so we have shown, the spatial perspectival characteristics of a subject's R-memories do, as the Present-Dependency-Claim says, depend on the spatial perspectival characteristics of the R-remembering subject's present perceptual experiences. Thus, we find that we have good reason to accept the Present-Dependency-Claim. This, in turn, seems an important conclusion.

The Present-Dependency-Claim states *that* the spatial perspectival characteristics of a subject's R-memory depend on the spatial perspectival characteristics of present perceptual experiences of the subject. However, it still leaves room for various different answers to the question *in which ways* the spatial perspectival characteristics of an R-memory depend on the spatial perspectival characteristics of the subject's present perceptual experiences.²² Indeed, one might conceive of that dependency in at least two different ways. One might, on the one hand, hold that the spatial perspectival characteristics of a subject's R-memory are *causally* dependent on the spatial perspectival characteristics of the subject's present perceptual experiences. Alternatively and somewhat more radically, one might hold that a subject's present perceptual experience of a certain spatial relation is itself a *constitutive part* of the subject's relevant R-memory. Indeed, so a defender of the latter idea might say,

²² Many thanks to an anonymous referee who pointed out that this issue should be mentioned here.

(Constitution-Claim) an R-memory is composed of memorial and perceptual experiential elements, and the spatial perspectival characteristics of an R-memory are contributed to the R-memory by *perceptual* experiential elements that present the relevant spatial relations. Perceptual experiential elements that present the relevant spatial relations are therefore a constitutive part of any R-memory.²³

Although this suggestion might seem surprising at first sight, I think the Constitution-Claim is well worth further consideration. Indeed, it seems likely that the Constitution-Claim will, once it has been developed in the appropriate detail, provide us with a particularly attractive interpretation of the Present-Dependency-Claim. However, in order to develop the Constitution-Claim adequately, we would have to address some rather fundamental questions about the metaphysics of experience in general and the metaphysics of R-memories in particular. Among other things, we would have to ask what exactly it means to say that an R-memory is constituted of various experiential elements, how those elements might be related to, and connected with, each other, and why perceptual elements do, as the Constitution-Claim has it, have to be part of the R-memory in order for the R-memory to have its spatial perspectival characteristics. There is no room to address those questions here, and we therefore have to leave an assessment of the Constitution-Condition for another occasion.²⁴

For the time being, we can conclude that the spatial perspectival characteristics of a subject's R-memory do, under normal circumstances, depend on the spatial perspectival characteristics of present perceptual experiences of the R-remembering subject. Thus, we find that we have good reason to endorse the Present-Dependency-Claim, which, to repeat, runs as follows:

(Present-Dependency-Claim) Assume that a subject who has an R-memory also has some present *perceptual* (i.e. visual, auditory, tactile, olfactory, gustatory, or proprioceptive) experiences. Then the subject's R-memory can only have its spatial perspectival characteristics if, on the basis of the relevant present perceptual experiences, the subject is also perceptually aware of an instance of the kind of spatial relation in which the objects presented by the R-memory would be standing to each other if she was to perceive them now.

This in turn seems an important conclusion. It indicates that we can give up on the Past-Dependency-Claim. It also indicates that we should give up on the tempting assumption that R-memories are completely independent of any other mental occurrences. Quite on the contrary, so we have seen, at least in normal, everyday cases, an R-memory is necessarily dependent on some of the

²³ For related comments, cf. Pylyshyn, 2002, p.168f.

²⁴ I consider some relevant aspects of the metaphysics of R-memories elsewhere (cf. Debus, manuscript).

R-remembering subject's present perceptual experiences. Without those perceptual experiences, R-memories as we know them would not be possible at all.

5. Should 'Observer-Memories' Count as Memories?

People usually R-remember past objects and events from what has been called a 'field-perspective'. However, as indicated earlier, subjects sometimes report that they R-remember past events from an observer-perspective. When remembering a past event from an *observer*-perspective, the subject's memory presents the relevant past event from a perspective which was *not* the subject's perspective during the original past event. This seems rather puzzling—so much so that one might try to get rid of the puzzlement by holding that such experiences simply should not count as cases of memory at all. However, if one endorses the claim that so-called 'observer-memories' should not count as memories, one will then presumably have to hold that the relevant experiences are imaginary experiences. But then, while it seems plausible to accept that R-memories might provide the subject with knowledge about the past in an immediate way, imaginary experiences could not plausibly be said to provide the subject with knowledge about the past, at least not in the immediate way in which R-memories do. Thus, if one holds that so-called 'observer-memories' should not count as memories, one will then also have to hold that the relevant experiences cannot provide the subject with knowledge about the past, at least not in any immediate way. If, on the other hand, we endorse the view that so-called 'observer-memories' should count as memories, then we can also accept that the relevant experiences sometimes can and do provide the subject with knowledge about the past in an immediate way.²⁵ Thus, the present considerations have important epistemological implications.

We might begin by considering why someone might hold that so-called 'observer-memories' should *not* count as R-memories. A first argument in support of that claim might depart from the Past-Dependency-Claim. Indeed, if one were to endorse the Past-Dependency-Claim, one would, as indicated in the introduction, have good reason to hold that so-called 'observer-memories' should not count as R-memories. For a subject who experiences a so-called 'observer-memory' (usually) has not *perceived* the relevant object (or event) from the perspective from which she remembers it now.²⁶ Accordingly, (at least in most cases) it is impossible for a

²⁵ In order to substantiate the present epistemological claims, more would have to be said about how R-memories might provide the subject with knowledge about the past in an immediate way. There is no room to do so here, but I develop some of the relevant ideas in sections III and IV of Debus (forthcoming). Cf. also Wiggins, 1992.

²⁶ Nigro and Neisser (1983) report that they sometimes do have perceptual experiences from an 'observer perspective'. However, even if we were to accept that the relevant experiences should count as *perceptual* (rather than imaginary) experiences, it seems plausible that in the case of *most* observer-memories, the R-remembering subject has not perceived the relevant object (or event) from the perspective from which she remembers it now.

subject's so-called 'observer-memory' to have its spatial perspectival characteristics in virtue of the subject's present awareness of the spatial perspectival characteristics of a perceptual experience that she had of the relevant object (or event) in the past. But then, according to the Past-Dependency-Claim, every R-memory has its spatial perspectival characteristics in virtue of the subject's awareness of the spatial perspectival characteristics of a relevant past perceptual experience. Hence, if the Past-Dependency-Claim was true, so-called 'observer-memories' should not count as R-memories. However, we have seen that the Past-Dependency-Claim is not true, and accordingly, the present objection to the claim that so-called 'observer-memories' should count as R-memories can be ignored. Still, even someone who has given up on the Past-Dependency-Claim might continue to insist that so-called 'observer-memories' should not count as R-memories.

Indeed, a second attempt to support the claim that so-called 'observer-memories' should not count as memories might depart from Freud's observation that 'since original impressions are necessarily [from a field-perspective], every [observer-] memory must be the product of some reconstruction'.²⁷ On the basis of this observation, one might then argue as follows:

(Argument from Reconstruction)

- (i) Observer-memories present past objects and events from a perspective from which they were not originally perceived by the R-remembering subject.
- (ii) This implies that the spatial relations in which the R-remembered objects stood to each other in the original past situation are presently 'reconstructed' in some way.
- (iii) But then, if the relevant past spatial relations are presently reconstructed, they cannot be said to be presently remembered.
- (iv) Thus, observer-memories should not count as memories at all. Rather, they are present reconstructions of past situations or events.

The premises of the present objection all seem true, but premises (i), (ii) and (iii) do not justify the opponent in drawing conclusion (iv). According to premise (iii), certain *elements* of an observer-memory, namely its spatial perspectival characteristics, are due to some present reconstruction. However, this in itself does not yet imply that an experience that has such reconstructive elements should not count as a memory at all. In order to reach this conclusion, the opponent has to make a further assumption. She needs to assume that

(No-Reconstructive-Elements-Claim) as soon as an experience has *any* reconstructive elements, the experience as a whole cannot possibly count as a memory at all.

²⁷ Quoted by Nigro and Neisser, 1983, p. 468.

This might seem plausible if one endorses some ‘replay-account’ of recollective memory, which holds that when a subject R-remembers something, the original past perceptual experience is accurately ‘replayed’. A replay is an exact copy of an original occurrence. Thus, if an experience has present reconstructive elements, it seems impossible to hold that the relevant experience is a *replay* of a past experience. Someone who accepts the replay-account of R-memory therefore seems to have good reason to accept the No-Reconstructive-Elements-Claim. However, a replay-account of memory is itself rather implausible. The fact that the No-Reconstructive-Elements-Claim seems plausible against the background of a replay-account therefore does not speak in favour of the No-Reconstructive-Elements-Claim.²⁸

Another train of thought which might support the No-Reconstructive-Elements-Claim runs as follows:

- (i) R-memories are a source of knowledge about the past.
- (ii) But then, in order for a present experience to be a source of knowledge, it needs to present the relevant past object (or event) accurately.
- (iii) An experience that depends on present reconstructive elements is more prone to *misrepresent* the relevant past object (or event) than is an experience that does not depend on any such reconstructive elements.
- (iv) An experience that *misrepresents* the relevant past object (or event) is a source of *false* beliefs.
- (v) In order for someone to be said to know something, the proposition said to be known needs to be true, and accordingly, an experience which *misrepresents* a past object (or event) cannot be a source of *knowledge* about the relevant situation.
- (vi) However, given (i), an experience that is not a source of knowledge about the past cannot be an R-memory.
- (vii) Thus, an experience which depends on present reconstructive elements is more prone to not being a source of knowledge and thus to not being an R-memory than is an experience which does not depend on any such present reconstructive elements.
- (viii) Perhaps we should try to accommodate this observation by holding that an experience that does depend on present reconstructive elements simply should not count as an R-memory at all, as the No-Reconstructive-Elements-Claim says.

In order to assess the present train of thought, we have to ask whether the No-Reconstructive-Elements-Claim really does become sufficiently plausible on the basis of claim (vii). According to (vii), an experience which depends on present

²⁸ For some useful remarks in support of the claim that the ‘replay-account’ of memory is rather implausible, cf. also Wittgenstein, 1980b, §131; Wittgenstein, 1980a, Vol. I §220 and §1131; and Wittgenstein, 1982, §442.

reconstructive elements is more prone to not being a source of knowledge and thus to not being an R-memory than is an experience which does not depend on any such present reconstructive elements. This might be true as far as it goes. However, there does not seem any reason to doubt that in cases in which the spatial elements of a past situation are experientially ‘reconstructed’ as part of a present observer-memory, the relevant reconstructions will most often be accurate. This assumption in turn renders the earlier train of thought in support of the No-Reconstructive-Elements-Claim unconvincing. If the experiences which we have so far called ‘observer-memories’ are only minimally and irrelevantly more prone to not being a source of knowledge and thus to not being an R-memory than other R-memories whose perspectival characteristics do not depend on any reconstructive elements, then the truth of (vii) does not give us any reason to endorse the No-Reconstructive-Elements-Claim, as the earlier train of thought suggested.

As long as no better argument in support of the No-Reconstructive-Elements-Claim is offered, we can therefore conclude that the No-Reconstructive-Elements-Claim should be given up. The fact that certain *elements* of an experience depend on some present reconstruction does not imply that the whole experience could not possibly count as a memory at all.²⁹ Given that the Argument from Reconstruction necessarily depends on the truth of the No-Reconstructive-Elements-Claim, we can also conclude that the Argument from Reconstruction does not succeed in showing that observer-memories should not count as memories at all.

However, a third argument in support of the claim that observer-memories should not count as memories might run as follows:

(Argument from Causal Dependence)

- (i) In order for someone to be said to R-remember a past event at all, it is necessary that the present recollective experience causally depend on a perceptual experience which occurred during the original situation.
- (ii) This condition, however, is not fulfilled in the case of so-called ‘observer-memories’.
- (iii) Accordingly, so-called ‘observer-memories’ should not count as R-memories at all.

Indeed, when perceiving an event, a subject cannot perceive herself from an observer-perspective, and thus a present experience that presents a past event from an observer-perspective could not possibly be completely causally determined by a

²⁹ Indeed, it seems likely that most or even all experiences of which we would, in an everyday context, say that they are cases of recollective memory do depend on some reconstructive element. For further comments on the role of reconstructive elements in R-memory, see Campbell, 2002a, p. 189.

past perceptual experience of the event.³⁰ However, even in the case of so-called ‘observer-memories’, it seems possible that the present experience does depend causally on the relevant past experience. Consider the following case:

(Bertha and the Slippery Flight of Stairs) Bertha fell down a slippery flight of stairs during a drinks party a few months ago. She now remembers the occasion from an observer-perspective. Among other things, she R-remembers the dark red pattern of the wall towards which she had been falling and she R-remembers the brown steps below her feet.

It seems plausible to assume that those and most of the other aspects of Bertha’s R-memory do causally depend on her past perception of the situation. Thus, even in cases of observer-memories, at least most of the subject’s present experience might be causally determined by her earlier perceptual experience of the original event. This in turn indicates that even observer-memories can fulfil the necessary condition formulated in premise (i) of the opponent’s Argument from Causal Dependence, which implies that premise (ii) of the opponent’s Argument from Causal Dependence is false.

We can conclude that various attempts to show that so-called ‘observer-memories’ should not count as memories fail. We do not have any good reason to deny that so-called ‘observer-memories’ might count as memories, and we might therefore follow our everyday intuitions and hold that so-called ‘observer-memories’ *should* count as cases of memory. This in turn implies that just as other R-memories, so-called ‘observer-memories’ might sometimes be a source of knowledge about the past.

6. Observer-Memories and Their Perspectival Characteristics

However, if we accept that so-called ‘observer-memories’ can and should count as cases of memory, we are then also back with our original problem: We have to account for their spatial perspectival characteristics.

To begin, let us reconsider the case of Bertha. Let us assume that:

(Bertha’s Observer-Memory) Bertha has an observer-memory of herself sitting at the bottom of the stairs after her fall. In the original situation Bertha

³⁰ As indicated earlier, Nigro and Neisser (1983) report that they sometimes do have perceptual experiences from an ‘observer perspective’. If such experiences are indeed possible (and if they should count as *perceptual* rather than *imaginary* experiences), then observer memories sometimes might be fully causally determined by a perceptual experience during the original situation. However, it is plausible to assume that in most cases in which people have observer-memories of past situations, they originally perceived the relevant situation from a normal ‘field perspective’.

had been looking at a wall opposite and a man in front of the wall, bending down towards her. Bertha's observer-memory of the relevant situation presents a wall to the left of the man, the man to the left of a flight of stairs, and herself sitting at the bottom of the stairs to the right of the wall and to the right of the man.

Clearly, the way in which Bertha's original perceptual experience presented the relevant situation differs in important respects from the way in which the same situation is now presented by Bertha's observer-memory. Most strikingly, Bertha's observer-memory presents the man *to the right* of the wall, while her original perceptual experience presented the man *in front* of the wall, and so on. Indeed, the way in which Bertha's observer-memory presents the relevant objects as having been spatially related to each other differs in a *systematic* way from the way in which they were originally presented as being related to each other. Each of the different relations in which Bertha's observer-memory presents the different objects as having been standing to each other results from a simple rotation of 90 degrees in the relation in which the original perception had presented the relevant objects. More generally, when a subject R-remembers a past situation or event from an observer-perspective, the way in which the observer-memory presents the relevant objects as having been spatially related to each other differs in a systematic way from the way in which they were originally presented as being related to each other. Thus, it seems plausible to assume that during the causal process that links the original perception and the observer-memory, the relevant spatial information is systematically manipulated. The assumption that the original information is systematically manipulated makes room for the possibility of the relevant spatial perspectival differences between the original perceptual experience and the subject's present observer-memory, while we can at the same time also hold that the two experiences are causally linked.

But then, assuming that some such manipulation does occur, why does it? In an attempt to answer this question, Nigro and Neisser (1983) show that if an R-remembering subject was highly emotionally self-aware in the original situation which she now R-remembers (if, for example, the subject was running from a threat, or was giving a public performance), it is likely that the subject will R-remember the relevant situation from an observer-perspective. Similarly, Libby and Eibach (2002) have recently found that subjects who recall situations in which they acted in ways of which they now disapprove, are more likely to have observer-memories than field-memories of the relevant situations.³¹ One might try to explain these correlations by saying that the subject's remembering the relevant situation from an observer-perspective is *caused* by the relevant factors. Libby and

³¹ Israel and Martin (manuscript) also find that observer-memories are more frequent when the subject is inclined and motivated not to identify with her own former self, that is, when the subject is inclined and motivated not to identify with the kind of person she was and the behaviour she displayed in the R-remembered past situation.

Eibach offer evidence in support of this claim,³² although it remains a little unclear what exactly the claim is supposed to mean.³³

Be this as it may, in the present context we should primarily ask how we could possibly account for the observer-memory's perspectival characteristics *as experienced by the subject*. And indeed, we might come back to the Present-Dependency-Claim here. We might usefully apply the Present-Dependency-Claim to the case of observer-memories as follows:

(Present-Dependency-Claim, for Observer-Memories) Assume that a subject who has an observer-memory also has some present *perceptual* (i.e. visual, auditory, tactile, olfactory, gustatory, or proprioceptive) experiences. Then the subject's observer-memory can only have its spatial perspectival characteristics if, on the basis of her present perceptual experiences, the subject is perceptually aware of an instance of the kind of spatial relation in which the objects presented by the observer-memory would be standing to each other if she was to perceive them now.

Bertha's case as described earlier might offer some preliminary support for this claim. While Bertha R-remembers the man to the right of the wall, she also has certain perceptual experiences. In order for us to say of Bertha that she R-remembers the man to the right of the wall, it seems necessary that she grasp how the man and the wall would be spatially related to each other if she was to perceive them now. Indeed, if Bertha did not grasp how the R-remembered objects would be spatially related to each other at present if she was to perceive them now, then, it seems, we would not be prepared to say that her R-memory has the relevant perspectival characteristics either. However, in order to grasp how the R-remembered objects would be spatially related to each other if she were to perceive them now, Bertha does have to rely on her present perceptual experiences. Accordingly, in order for us to say that Bertha has an observer-memory of the man to the right of the wall, it is necessary that she be perceptually aware of how the wall and the man would be spatially related to each other if she was to perceive

³² Cf. Libby and Eibach (2002), Studies 2 and 3. Libby and Eibach (2002, p. 173) claim that 'inconsistencies between the present self-concept and recalled behavior *produce*' observer-memories (emphasis mine). Cf. also Nigro and Neisser (1983, p. 477), who claim that 'events involving a relatively high degree of emotional self-awareness are likely to *produce* observer memories' (emphasis mine).

³³ Indeed, not only should this claim be clarified, but further empirical studies of the problem should also provide us with an answer to the question how exactly the spatial perspectival information which has been encoded during the original perception is manipulated such that the relevant event is later remembered from an observer-perspective. Broadly, we might distinguish two possibilities here. It might turn out that the relevant manipulation takes place on a purely sub-personal level. Alternatively, one might find that the manipulation at least partly, or at least sometimes, takes place on a personal level. In the latter case, it might sometimes be 'up to the subject' whether she R-remembers one particular event from an observer- or a field-perspective.

them now. Thus the spatial characteristics of Bertha's observer-memory depend on her present perceptual experiences, just as the Present-Dependency-Claim for Observer-Memories would make us expect.

More generally, our earlier Argument in Support of the Present-Dependency-Claim also supports the present specific formulation of the Present-Dependency-Claim for the case of observer-memories. Indeed, premise (S1) of that earlier argument seems to apply to observer-memories just as it applies to any other R-memory. It seems true that

- (S1) in order for a normal subject to be said to have an R-memory (and, more specifically, in order for a normal subject to be said to have an observer-memory) which presents objects as having stood in certain spatial relations to each other at all, the subject needs to grasp that there are phenomenal similarities between the way in which past objects are presented as spatially related to each other by the R-memory and the way in which the same objects might be presented as spatially related to each other if the subject perceived the relevant objects at present.

But then, given that, as we showed earlier, we also have reason to accept all the other premises of the Argument in Support of the Present-Dependency-Claim, we can conclude that we have good reason to accept the Present-Dependency-Claim for observer-memories as well as for all other R-memories. Thus we find that the Present-Dependency-Claim helps us to account not only for the spatial perspectival characteristics of R-memories which have a field-perspective, but we now find that the Present-Dependency-Claim also helps us to account for the spatial perspectival characteristics of observer-memories. We can conclude that, in order for a normal subject to have an observer-memory which presents objects as having stood in certain spatial relations to each other at all, it is necessary that the subject be perceptually aware of an instance of the kind of spatial relation in which the remembered objects would be standing to each other at present if she was to perceive them now, which is just what the Present-Dependency-Claim demands. Indeed, although there is no time to do so here, the Present-Dependency-Claim for *observer-memories* should also be developed further with the help of the Constitution-Claim as formulated in section 4 above.

There is, however, one final important difference between a subject's present observer-memory and the original perceptual experience on which the relevant observer-memory causally depends which we have to consider here. Observer-memories present objects from perspectives from which they were not perceived in the original past situation, and often, as in the case of Bertha's observer-memory, observer-memories include a presentation of the subject herself from an observer's point of view. Thus, compared to the original perceptual experience, the observer-memory might contain some completely new information. Clearly, these elements of the observer-memory cannot be explained fully with reference to some systematic geometrical manipulation of the information that was encoded during

the original perceptual experience. Instead, we might try to explain this further difference between the original perceptual experience and a later observer-memory in at least two different ways. Firstly, we might find that the new information is ‘filled in’ by some sub-personal mechanism. Alternatively, one might hold that (at least sometimes) the subject herself actively imagines those aspects that are new in the observer-memory as compared to the original perceptual experience.³⁴

For the time being, we can, on the basis of our present considerations, conclude that there is no reason to deny that occurrences of so-called ‘observer-memories’ should count as cases of memory. More positively, it seems that we are able to account for the most puzzling aspect of observer-memories, namely their spatial perspectival characteristics, in close parallel to the way in which we might account for the spatial perspectival characteristics of field memories. As we have seen, the spatial perspectival characteristics of observer-memories do—just as the spatial perspectival characteristics of all other R-memories—depend on spatial perspectival characteristics of perceptual experiences that the subject has at the time at which the observer-memory occurs.

7. Conclusion

Remembering, so Bartlett once famously wrote,

is not a completely independent function entirely distinct from perceiving, imagining, or even from constructive thinking, but it has intimate relations with them all.³⁵

Our present considerations have shown, so I hope, why and how aspects of this claim are true with respect to the spatial perspectival characteristics of R-memories. The spatial perspectival characteristics of R-memories, so we have seen, depend on the spatial perspectival characteristics of perceptual experiences which the subject has while the relevant R-memory occurs. Furthermore, so we have found, we have no reason to deny that so-called ‘observer-memories’ should also count as memories, and an observer-memory’s surprising perspectival characteristics can be accounted for once we understand that they depend on perceptual (and possibly also imaginary) experiences which the subject has at the time at which the observer-memory occurs.

³⁴ Once more we should not prejudge the issue on the basis of armchair speculations but should rather await empirical results in order to determine which of those two claims is true. However, it seems possible and also quite likely that at least sometimes a subject imagines, for example, what someone might have looked like from the side in a certain situation. Should this ‘imagination-hypothesis’ be supported by the relevant empirical research, we might then also be able to conclude that observer-memories sometimes contain imaginary elements.

³⁵ Bartlett, 1932, p. 13.

Thus the spatial perspectival characteristics of any R-memory necessarily depend on some of the subject's perceptual experiences. As we said at the outset, this conclusion has wide-reaching implications. It directly contradicts an assumption which seems to permeate and underlie most of our everyday thinking about our own mental lives, and which arguably also permeates and underlies some contemporary work in the philosophy of mind, namely the assumption that the events which occur in a subject's mental life are ultimately independent of each other and that, in particular, each experience which a subject has is independent of any other experiences which the subject might have.

On the basis of our considerations of the phenomenon of the spatial perspectival characteristics of R-memories, we have good reason to reject this claim. Instead, we have found that at least some experiences (namely, R-memories) do depend on the occurrence of other experiences (namely, perceptual experiences) in the subject's mental life. This conclusion, in turn, should prompt us to consider a set of new and important questions. Firstly and most urgently for our present concerns, we should develop the Constitution-Claim further. In order to develop the Constitution-Claim adequately we will, as indicated in section 4, have to address some very fundamental questions about the metaphysics of experience in general, and the metaphysics of R-memories in particular. Among other things, we will have to ask what exactly it could mean to say that an R-memory is constituted of various experiential elements, how those elements might be related to, and connected with, each other, and why perceptual elements do, as the Constitution-Claim has it, have to be part of the R-memory in order for the R-memory to have its spatial perspectival characteristics.³⁶

Secondly, we should assess the implications of our present considerations for cases of sensory imagination. Indeed, *mutatis mutandis* it should be possible to use our earlier Argument in Support of the Present-Dependency-Claim to show that the Present-Dependency-Claim applies to cases of sensory imagination also.³⁷ This in turn should further our understanding of sensory imagination. It should also help us to understand the role that the Present-Dependency-Claim can and should play in

³⁶ In a paper ('Perception and Causation') presented in Oxford in January 2006 Tom Baldwin offered some new and stimulating comments about cases in which perceptual experiences are 'mixed' with hallucinatory or imaginary elements. Consideration of those and similar cases should be highly relevant for any attempt to develop the Constitution-Claim further. (A version of this paper is forthcoming as Baldwin, 2007.)

³⁷ Thus, having applied the 'Argument in Support of the Present-Dependency-Claim' to the case of sensory imagination, we might accordingly come to endorse the following 'Present-Dependency-Claim, for Sensory Imagination': Assume that a subject who experientially imagines something also has some present *perceptual* (i.e. visual, auditory, tactile, olfactory, gustatory, or proprioceptive) experiences. Then the subject's imaginary experience can only have its spatial perspectival characteristics if, on the basis of the relevant present perceptual experiences, the subject is also perceptually aware of an instance of the kind of spatial relation in which the objects presented by the sensory imagination would be standing to each other if she was to perceive them now'. (I am grateful to an anonymous referee who rightly suggested that the considerations of the present paper will, if successful, also apply to cases of sensory imagination.)

an account of R-memory. If the Present-Dependency-Claim can be shown to apply to cases of sensory imagination as well as to cases of R-memory, we can then also conclude that the Present-Dependency-Claim could not possibly be used to distinguish R-memories from other experiential occurrences such as imaginary experiences. Rather, it seems plausible that the Present-Dependency-Claim holds for cases of sensory imagination just as it holds for cases of R-memory, and indeed, it seems likely that it will hold for any mental occurrence which, while not a perceptual experience, should nevertheless still count as an *experiential* occurrence of some kind. Thus, further consideration of the ideas developed in the present paper is likely to show that the Present-Dependency-Claim provides us with one condition that needs to be met by any mental occurrence in order for the relevant occurrence to count as an *experiential* occurrence (as long as it is not a perceptual experience).³⁸

Thirdly and most generally, our present considerations should give us reason to consider which *other* dependencies (apart from the ones described here) might obtain between the different occurrences that are part of a subject's mental life. In the present paper, we have tried to further our understanding of the spatial perspectival characteristics of R-memories, and of the relation of dependency that obtains between R-memories and perceptual experiences with respect to an R-memory's spatial perspectival characteristics. These considerations will contribute, so it is hoped, to the wider project of developing an account of the relations that obtain between the various occurrences in a subject's mental life. This, in turn, should help us achieve a better understanding of a human being's mental life as a whole.

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³⁸ The anonymous referee whose helpful suggestions have been mentioned at various points throughout this paper remarks that this last insight in turn implies that the Present-Dependency-Claim could not possibly 'help settle the controversy about the status of observer-perspective recollection'. I agree. However, if the Past-Dependency-Claim was true, observer-memories could not possibly count as R-memories. The Present-Dependency-Claim provides a plausible alternative to the Past-Dependency-Claim, and thereby also makes room for the possibility that observer-memories might count as R-memories. Thus, although the Present-Dependency-Claim does not by itself help to *settle* whether observer-memories should count as R-memories, it provides us with an account of the spatial perspectival characteristics of so-called 'observer-memories' that is *compatible* with the claim that those mental occurrences should count as R-memories, and thus enables us to defend and develop the latter (intuitively rather plausible) claim further.

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