SUBJECTIVITY EMERGENCE IN PANPSYCHISM

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Abstract. A combination problem in Russelian panpsychism arises when we try to understand how macroexperience comes from microexperience. I will argue that panpsychists could avoid the combination problem if they endorse an intelligible form of emergence. They should endorse Shoemaker’s account of emergence or realization which states that there are “micro-latent” powers beside “micro-manifest” ones and accommodate this account to panpsychism. One possibility is that a macrosuject is part of a microsubject whole on Shoemaker’s “subset” account of realization. I will investigate if and how a possible solution to these panpsychist troubles could be distilled from Shoemaker’s emergence account.

Key words: panpsychism, emergence, latent powers, combination problem, subject-summing, subjectivity.

1. PANPSYCHISM

Russellian monism (RM) has recently been defined by Chalmers (2015, 262) as the view that: “structural properties in physics do not constitute consciousness, but quiddities (perhaps along with structure) constitute consciousness. The view is Russellian because of the appeal to quiddities and their connection to mentality. It is a sort of monism because the world on this view consists in quiddities connected by laws of nature.” The most plausible type seems to be Russellian identity theory in which dispositional properties are identical to categorical properties (“powerful qualities” view of properties).

Panpsychism is the view that everything in reality has a modicum of consciousness or sentience. Panpsychists ascribe subjectivity and experientiality to fundamental material entities in order to explain macro-consciousness - it does not miraculously emerge from the physical substrate but is already present fundamentally. In my discussion I will take panpsychism to be a version of Russellian monism, meaning that the quiddities or categorical properties in question are phenomenal. Although RM can be an appealing...
mind/body theory it suffers from a severe problem of combination. This problem arises when we try to understand how macro-consciousness \( (o\text{-consciousness}) \), that we pre-theoretically know) comes from fundamental micro-consciousness. The problem is especially difficult when it relates to the combination of micro-into macrosubjects; it is called “the subject-summing problem”. The easier way out of the subject combination problem would be to just deny the existence of any microsubjects since the only type of subjectivity we phenomenologically know is the one of human beings. If we posit microsubjects and we deny the possibility of subjects coming together to form a larger subject (combinationism) then we have an almost unsolvable problem on our hands, the hard problem of the subject combination.

When it comes to solving the combination problem in RM, Chalmers argues that the most promising position is constitutive panpsychism \( (\text{or constitutive Russellian monism}) \). According to constitutive panpsychism, macroexperience\(^1\) is wholly or partially grounded in or constituted by microexperience (Chalmers 2016, 25). Chalmers argues against Russellian panpsychism in which emergence is considered as brute, where o-experience is strongly emergent on microexperience. Goff stresses that such brute emergence is incoherent and we should exchange brute emergence for intelligible causation. He comes to the position of intelligible emergentism and combines it with Russellian panpsychism (Goff 2015, 394). Goff argues that if there is a solution to the combination problem\(^2\), and there is \textit{a priori} entailment from the micro-phenomenal to the o-phenomenal facts then intelligible emergent Russellian panpsychism is a good account for o-consciousness.

The problem with emergent forms of Russellian panpsychism is that they breach micro-physical causal closure (Goff 2015, 396), though there is no such problem with macro-physical causal closure. For the emergent RM macro-physical is nothing over and above macro-phenomenal, so there is no problem with macro-physical causal closure. But since o-experience is over and above everything micro, and micro-closure is accepted, then there is a problem with causal efficacy of macroexperience (o-experience). An emergent account of RM that would accommodate micro-physical closure would have an obvious advantage.

Section 1 has opened up the problem of emergence in constitutive Russellian panpsychism. Section 2 will show how severe this problem is when it comes to the emergence of macrosubjects from microsubjects, the subject-summing problem of constitutive panpsychism. In Section 3, I introduce Shoemaker’s account of emergence. Section 4 demonstrates how Shoemaker’s account of emergence could be improved and this reworking is analyzed. After that, I apply the improved account of emergent properties to panpsychism in order to get a more intelligible form of emergent panpsychism. In Section 6, I discuss how the reworked Shoemaker’s account could help a panpsychist get round the unintelligibility of subject-summing by endorsing intelligible emergence of subjectivity.

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\(^1\) Phillip Goff’s uses \textit{O-consciousness} and \textit{o-subjects}, terms that I would like to keep and use in the paper. He says it “leaves open the (rather obscure) possibility that the kind of consciousness we pre-theoretically believe in exists at the micro-level” (Goff 2015, 380). This may well be the obscurity I am looking for here. Shoemaker’s emergence applied to panpsychism would state exactly this, that macroexperience or o-experience is somehow already present on the macro-level. And since we will be tackling subject combinations, which resist constitution and are notoriously difficult to combine, I think it would be advantageous to look at things this way. But let's not get ahead of ourselves.

\(^2\) He also proposes phenomenal bonding. Combination problem indicates that there couldn’t be \textit{a priori} entailment from the micro-phenomenal to the o-phenomenal.
2. EMERGENT DILEMMA

In a recent paper, Sam Coleman (2013) argued that there is an “internal tension” in panpsychism. Constitutive panpsychism was driven by an aversion to emergentism, but in the end, it seems that panpsychism has to yield to some kind of emergence in order to account for the production of high-level subjects. Coleman argues that if panpsychism resorts to emergence, classical physicalism seems like a more plausible solution. Accepting emergence could be taken as a betrayal of original intentions of panpsychism.

The combination of subjects seems to be an insurmountable problem for constitutive panpsychism. More than that, it seems to be an unsolvable in principle. Goff (2009) argues that a set of subjects does not a priori entail the existence of another subject, we cannot see how this happens, though there is the possibility that it might occur in some still unknown way. Coleman, while acknowledging Goff’s argument, goes on to argue that it is metaphysically impossible to combine subjects to yield new subjects and this rules out constitutive panpsychism. If this were to occur, some kind of brute emergence would be involved and panpsychists do not want this, because panpsychism is a position that originally tried to avoid emergence. This is why Coleman denies the plausibility of constitutive panpsychism and argues that panpsychists should become neutral monists. I think that Coleman’s stronger version of the no-summing argument is very persuasive, but I do not share his conclusions, nor the solution to the problem. I do believe that such an argument works against constitutive panpsychism, though not against some different form of emergent panpsychism, such as the one defended in the paper.

If fusion (Humphreys 1997, Seager 2010) is endorsed, in order to get macrosubjects from microsubjects, then we would have strong, radical emergence. Seager (2010) and Mørch (2014) endorse some version of such emergence in their accounts. In the case of fusion, lower level subjects produce another subject while they themselves disappear. They are annihilated in the process. Mørch (2014) defends an account in which subjects partially survive, they are changed by the whole of which they are parts, but still exist, since there seems to be no fusion in the brain. In such an account there is no novel macrosubject in the strong sense (a new point of view), apart from those microsubjects that make it, though they are changed somewhat. In fusion, there can only be radical emergence, so it is of no help to the constitutive panpsychist. In Mørch’s account there is no strong emergence, because there is the survival of microsubjects, but also there is no macrosubject in any strong sense, and such a position is deflationary.

The emergent panpsychism that I am considering in this paper is one in which the microsubject is the macrosubject (or, at least, some aspect survives and is identical) so there is no combination whatsoever (and no annihilation). To avoid the pitfalls of constitutive RM while staying true to the indivisible nature of subjects, I propose panpsychists should defend emergentist RM. The RM view I will discuss uses Shoemaker’s emergence to

3 Nagel’s (1979, 181-182) famous argument for panpsychism includes a Non-emergence premise: “P4. Non-emergence: All high-level properties of a composite intelligibly derive from properties of its constituents plus their arrangement.”

4 Like the phenomenal bonding solution.

5 Coleman takes what he thinks is a golden middle way between orthodox physicalism and full-fledged panpsychism and defends panqualitism, position in which ultimates are (absolutely) intrinsic qualities, but they have no experience, they are not subjects.

6 Seager’s (2010) infusion seems to entail such radical emergence.
obviate the need to deny the micro-physical closure and is a more plausible and desirable form of emergentist panpsychism.

3. SHOEMAKER ON EMERGENCE

Shoemaker’s has devised an interesting and ingenious theory. He starts by connecting with Broad’s understanding of emergence in *Mind and Its Place in Nature* (1925). Broad takes the example of the properties of silver-chloride relative to those of its chemical elements, silver and chlorine. Shoemaker’s propositions seem to be already present as in Broad’s work:

These “properties” cannot be deduced from any selection of the other properties of silver or of chlorine. Thus we may say that we do not know all the properties of chlorine and of silver until they have been put in the presence of each other; and that no amount of knowledge about the properties which they manifest in other circumstances will tell us what property if any, they will manifest in these circumstances. Put this way, the position is that we do not know all the properties of any element and that there is always the possibility of their manifesting unpredictable properties when put into new situations (Broad 1925, 66).

Broad speaks of two descriptions. The first description is about the novel, emergent properties which cannot be deduced from combinations of properties. There are “latent” properties in substances of which we become aware once the substances are combined in certain ways. The other description gives us the properties that are manifest when there is no combination. Shoemaker calls these special ways of combination “emergent engendering” ways. There are latent causal powers in addition to always manifesting ones, that become once there is an emergent engendering way of combination of their substances.

Shoemaker says that when micro-entities are combined in an emergence engendering way, they have two sorts of microstructural properties. The first are specified entirely in terms of the *micro-manifest* powers of the constituent micro-entities together with how these micro-entities are related. They are called by Shoemaker Type-1 properties. The emergent properties are Type-2 microstructural properties and “are specified in terms of all of the powers, micro-latent and micro-manifest, of the constituent micro-entities” (Sheomaker 2002, 56). So emergent properties have both micro-manifest and micro-latent powers.

Shoemaker claims that Type-2 properties supervene on the Type-1 properties. If emergentism is true, properties of macro-entities will not be predictable on the bases of micro-facts, but realized in emergent microstructural properties; the micro-facts do fix the macro-facts but in the emergent view the micro-facts include the instantiation of micro-latent powers. There is no need for macro-properties to be realized in these emergent ones, they are those properties. What is the relation between type-1 and type-2 properties?

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7 See Broad (1925, 65-69).
On Shoemaker’s account, dependence relation holding between emergent properties and physical properties is nomological supervenience (Shrader 2010, 286). Shrader has criticized that Shoemaker’s account fails to meet the conditions of Minimal Ontological Emergence which states that emergent properties are dependent on but not reducible to the physical properties, and that they make a novel causal difference. He also tried to resolve some of the problems of Shoemaker’s account in the same paper.

There is a problem with Shoemaker emergence and it is that emergent properties are structural, something that is commonly argued against. For example, O’Connor (1994, 94) says that structural properties cannot be involved in downward causation and so are not causally efficacious. But there is a problem with this reasoning, and Shrader shows it. This supposes that there are only micro-manifest powers, and Shoemaker’s account avoids this by adding micro-latent powers. Shrader gives an example of such powers. A micro-manifest power could be the power of bestowing a mass, it is manifest all the time. The complete micro-physical theory would mention these powers but not the latent micro-powers, such as the “power of bestowing the property of being in pain” (Shrader 2010, 291). This is because they are manifest only in higher level entities.

Shrader then marks a huge problem for Shoemaker’s emergence: every type-2 property seems to be nomologically equivalent to a type-1 property (Shrader 2010, 294). And if a causal theory of properties is endorsed, and Shoemaker does endorse it, then nomological equivalence implies identity. So these are not emergent properties at all. Shrader states that even if the causal theory of properties is abandoned and you hold that the powers contributed by properties vary across worlds, it still fails to be a genuine ontological emergence. Shrader changes Shoemaker’s account in order to avoid these. Type-2 property can be viewed as a conjunctive property, whose conjuncts are type-1 property and a type-3 property “the property of having such and such constituents possessing such and such micro-latent causal powers and related in an emergence engendering way” (Shrader 2010, 295). Type-3 are the real emergent properties; just the properties of having micro-latent powers. There is no problem now that type-3 and type-1 properties are nomologically coextensive and identical.

Furthermore, Shrader points that both Shoemaker’s and the new emergence imply the denial of physical causal closure. Shrader solves this by arguing that the synchronic dependence of type-3 on type-1 properties should be regarded as causal rather than mere nomological supervenience (Shrader 2010, 297). It should be a case of causal dependence. Then there would be no breaching of the causal closure, since type-1, type-3 and some type-1* properties would be in the same causal chain. There is a denial of causal exclusion, but with “an explanation”. Shrader does not say it is micro-physical causal closure, though it seems that is the case since these are all microstructural properties. All this seems to build a coherent picture of emergence.9

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9 It seems that even Shoemaker himself does not hold that all there is to a property is its causal role. As Pereboom states Shoemaker holds the view that properties “also feature intrinsic aptnesses for the causal roles that individuate them” (Pereboom 2015, 312).

9 Hedda Hassel Mørch and Luke Roelofs have commented that the problem with this could be that there is no evidence of micro-latent powers manifesting at the higher levels, they were not discovered by physics and are excluded by micro-physical closure. Just because physics cannot discover micro-latent powers that does not mean they do not exist or cannot exist already at lower levels; they can be detected, but only at higher levels, when they become manifested.
5. EMERGENCE IN PANPSYCHISM

Now let us apply this reworked account of emergence to panpsychism. On the assumed Russellian identity theory, micro-powers are identical to microsubjects. This is important because it is the intrinsic character that is playing the explanatory role and is causally relevant; it is that causal capacity. If we take Shoemaker’s account as it is, unchanged, then we could arrive at some kind of identity panpsychism. By analogy, we equate microsubjects with type-1 properties and macrosubjects with type-2 properties, which are emergent. Type 2 properties are identical to type-1 properties. But type-2 properties are combinations of micro-latent and micro-manifest power, and it seems reasonable that it is the micro-latent powers that are really emergent and we want macrosubjects to be like that. Regarding macrosubjects (o-subjects) as Shoemaker’s type-2 properties seems to generate a new combination problem.

It would be better to say that what we are looking for our macrosubjects is just what Shoemaker calls properties specified entirely in terms of micro-latent powers. In order to avoid type-2 and type-1 properties being identical and so this could be an account of emergence, Shrader separates this as the L property and this type-3 property is emergent.

On Shrader’s account, type-3 properties are not nomologically equivalent to type-1 properties. We could maintain that type-3 properties nomologically supervene on type-1 properties. But this dependence relation is problematic. Shrader thinks it is preferable to view such dependence as causal dependence. So there is intelligible causation between them. In RM this would mean that there is causal dependence between o-subjects and macrosubjects.

When we apply Shoemaker’s reworked account to RM, o-experience is emergent so it should be equated with the L properties (type-3) (having of micro-latent powers) and microexperience is to be equated with having micro-manifest powers. And endorsing the causal dependence relation between these properties obviates the need to deny micro-causal closure. There seems to be no problem in the Shoemaker/Shrader emergence with micro-physical closure because o-experience would not be something over and above microexperience, since it comes from, it is from the fundamental micro-level.

6. SUBJECT EMERGENCE

Goff’s term o-subject has left one possibility open, the possibility that a pre-theoretical subject is identical to a microsubject, but it seems implausible to identify me or you, as a subject of experience, with some “micro-level entity”. If microsubjects are the same as particles, how could one particle cause the behavior of my pre-theoretical mind? It is

These are metaphysical problems and Shoemaker’s account can help us solve or avoid them. I am not sure if properties are latent in such a way and if there is empirical evidence for this, but when it comes to the problems of panpsychist subject-summing this account seems to me to be a very useful way of thinking about subjects. When it comes to the micro-causal closure, the problem is are there such micro-latent powers as Shoemaker thinks? Physics knows only about micro-manifest powers, but these latent powers still have causal efficacy, only that they become manifest when the parts are combined in special ways. So their effects are detectable on a higher level, but does this mean they cannot be fundamental (working on the micro-physical level)? This would be a form of strong emergentism, but the macroscopic whole is the loci of emergence. Perhaps we could use the answer Mørch gives in her dissertation (see pages 206-210), citing Cartwright (1994, 281), that even if there is strong emergence with latent micro-powers, this does not entail that the laws of physics are violated. Cartwright argues that reality is a patchwork of laws; metaphysical nomological pluralism.
possible that a microsubject acquires more and more powers. The solution is akin to Leibniz’s “dominant monad” view.

This position seems to be the one Chalmers takes into consideration as a possible reaction to the combination problem. One option is to hold that macrosubjects are identical to certain microsubjects (Chalmers 2015, 270). The problem is how a human subject is identical to a single fundamental particle in the brain and how it has complex phenomenal properties (all this on a Russellian monist view). To give one possible answer: it does not need complex properties, it just needs one for subjectivity. Subjectivity is simple. It could just need a property of being a point of view.

Since we tend to think of subjects as non-spatial this does not seem so far off. Does “size” really matter when it comes to subjects? What would saying that o-subjects are macro- instead of micro- really amount to, in case there is no constitution and subject cannot combine? What would be the difference? A macro-physical object is composed of many micro-physical objects, but macrossubjects do not have to be composed of many microsubjects. If we take a subject of experience to be indivisible, there is no difference between a microsubject and a macrosject. If they are to combine into macrossubjects does that mean that microsubjects are spatially related in some way? But the problem of mental-physical isomorphism still stands for Russellian monism version of panpsychism.

One problem with Shoemaker emergence is that latent dispositions are situated on the micro-level and this does not make downward causation coherent. That is why O’Connor (1994) thinks emergent dispositions should be situated in the macro-whole itself and so they have a downward influence on the behavior of involved parts. Shoemaker envisions in his account that when micro-latent dispositions become manifested, they are not located on the macro level, but they do have large-scale effects, and so no epiphenomenalism should entail.

Another problem that needs to be answered is how to make sense of dormancy of subjects of experience. Powers are latent and manifest, not objects, that have those powers. How might we solve it? This predicament, perhaps, could be avoided if it is taken into consideration that this is a Russellian identity theory framework and I already suggested it is the most plausible form of Russellian monism. If a phenomenal property can be identical to a dispositional property, then it seems less implausible to think of any property of subjectivity as having the characteristics of a power. It should be noted that all the aforementioned pertains to the properties of subjects, whether they are experiential or dispositional since it is unclear how an entity could be “latent”.

How to make sense of the distinction between latent and manifested in subjects? The only theory that I know of that relates potentiality to subjects of experience, through capacities for experience, is Dainton’s C-system theory. Dainton calls it The Potentially Conscious Self thesis (Dainton 2008). One way to make sense of the emergence of subjects is this rise from potentiality to manifestness/actuality. Dainton’s dismisses the thesis that subjects are always conscious entities (Essentially Conscious Self thesis), and argues that they are entities that are capable of being conscious. The subject or self is potentially conscious because it has a capacity to be conscious. This could be a problem because this way a subject is defined

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10 The others being giving up constitutive panpsychism for emergent panpsychism, quantum entanglement, deflating the subject.
11 This is where deflation of subjects would be helpful.
12 Like a haecceity, for example. Turausky argues for this in subjects (haecceity is a “non-qualitative, non-duplicable properties that uniquely individuate objects (and, in this case, subjects)”). See Turausky (2014, 249)
dispositionally which goes against the standard notion of subjects. So, both Shoemaker’s subject emergence account and Dainton’s potentially conscious self thesis are in need of an explanation of how subjects of experience are to be defined dispositionally. These capacities can be dormant and at certain times contribute to a single stream of consciousness. It would be beneficiary to combine such view of the subject with the present account. Of course, there are deep differences between this account (one being Lockean other Leibnizian), but this is just to illustrate one possible way of making the claim intelligible.

What about the property of subjectivity, if it is a property of some sort? Could subjectivity be latent and manifested? The strongest reason for the non-divisibility of subjects (fission/fusion of subjects) is the subjectivity itself. It is not conceivable for subjectivity to be divided, cut or fused. I think the term “experiential combination” is used because it is conceivable to fuse and fission experiences and streams of consciousness. We could imagine split-brain (split-stream) cases where experiences are shuffled around (transferred), but this is unimaginable with subjectivity; I cannot share someone’s point of view. It is conceivable to divide a river, a stream of experiences, but could subjectivity be divided? Taking Coleman’s argument to the limit means there is no subject combination whatsoever, not even in the case of emergence (fusion cases), a subject cannot even be emergently caused (produced) from other subjects.

Two possibilities for Coleman: that subjectivity is a structural property of microsubjects combining, or that there is strong emergence as a causal production of a macrosubject from microsubjects. On the other hand, there are other possible ways for understanding emergence. I think the best option is to go with Shoemaker’s emergence. And Coleman, also, entertained the thought that one point of view could survive to become a macrosubject. A macrosubject is just one of the microsubjects (dominant monad). This is not combination anymore, but emergentism, only of a different kind, the way Shoemaker understood emergence.

The same goes for the deflationary views on subjects that are sometimes invoked to defend an experiential combination. Even in deflated (thin) subjects account, this seems implausible. Thin subjects are still strong unities, be it synchronic or diachronic. It is especially visible in thin subject positions that stress the subjectivity or the mineness (first-person givenness), like Zahavi (2014) and Strawson (2009). Some want to argue for the reduction of subjects to experiences because in such a case, combination and causal production would seem more likely to occur. It seems that argument is so strong that neither constitution nor emergence (causation) will work. In the end, there is no combination whatsoever. Because of the indivisibility of subjects, the only alternatives are radical emergence and that one of the microsubjects becomes the macrosubject, one possibility being that a micro one is dormant and becomes active on higher levels (the “dormant monad” view). This other is a novel solution from Shoemaker’s emergence, but both are dominant monad views.

We get an account of non-radical emergence, there is no coming of new subjects out of nothing, and it vouches there is no breaching of the microphysical closure because all the causal influence drains at the bottom. This harkens us back to the problem with causation, so panpsychist should bite the bullet and claim, as the Shoemaker account

13 See Coleman (2013, 32).
14 I have argued against deflation of subjects of experience elsewhere. See Nešić (2017).
entails already, that the relation is *identity*. This would lead us straight into a Leibnizian solution. If we do not want to postulate unknown latent micro-powers/subjects, the same conclusion could be secured if the subset realization account is endorsed, so that the macrosubject is just one of the microsubjects as a part of the micro-realization whole.\textsuperscript{15} And this is still very much in the spirit of Leibniz’s ideas that the material body is made out of many monads. The realization account has the potential to solve the epiphenomenalist threat; it is the whole of many monads (microsubjects) that exerts the causal effect, though it is attributed to a part of it, to one monad.

Some remarks from Basile (2010) are informative. Basile argues that the experiential combination leads into a contradiction. There are two requirements that a viable panpsychist theory should satisfy: “[A] The panpsychist should reject the idea that larger experiential wholes are brought into existence by way of simple addition of lesser experiential realities; [B] The panpsychist should fully acknowledge that experiences are private. This means that the notion of mental composition should not be construed as involving the idea that experiences can be literally ‘shared’ – ‘owned’ as it were by two different subjects.” (Basile 2010, 111). What known panpsychist theory could answer them? Basile answers that the right candidate is Leibniz’s theory of causally independent monads, and the mind is an *indivisible substance*. In the end, Basile asks if a recurrence to a Leibnizian metaphysics would be a price too high to pay for a panpsychist? Though he does not answer this question, given what was discussed in this paper and given the account defended here, I would say that it is a route which shows promise for a panpsychist to take.

7. **CONCLUDING REMARKS**

I think those who take Coleman’s anti-summing argument seriously and want to stay on the ground of panpsychism, are forced to bite the bullet and endorse the conclusion that subjects are fundamental entities by taking up one of the positions discussed in this paper. Then, instead of the combination problem, the issue of epiphenomenality should be addressed. Benefits would be a strong notion of emergent o-subjects and no breaching of the micro-physical closure, though we would have this in an inelegant way. So, in order for this to be a viable alternative for panpsychists as a way to avoid the combination problem and not to slip into neutral monism, the problem of epiphenomenalism should be met. Another problem for this solution that needs working out is making sense of the alleged latency of subjects of experience.

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\textsuperscript{15} The causal efficacy comes from the whole, but it is attributed to the part. It would also be useful to combine this account with the Russellian realization theory, to make it intelligible
EMERGENCIJA SUBJEKTIVNOSTI U PANPSIHIZMU


Ključne reči: panpsihizam, emergencija, latentne moći, problem kombinacije, sumiranje subjekata, subjektivnost.