

The Phenomenology of High-Level Perception

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Perceptual experiences provide us with a variety of salient phenomenology, such as color and shape. But do we also entertain the perceptual phenomenology of faces or trees? In recent years, some philosophers have given a positive answer, suggesting the existence of the ‘high-level’ phenomenology (Siegel, 2006; Bayne, 2009). But some opponents have rejected the idea of these kinds of phenomenology and suggested that only the basic or ‘low-level’ phenomenology like color is manifested in perceptual experiences (Tye 2000; Prinz, 2006).

In this presentation, I will discuss this issue from a philosophical and quasi-empirical viewpoint. First, I consider some arguments for and against high-level phenomenology which I think are question-begging or inconclusive. Second, I argue for high-level phenomenology via a theoretical prediction based on the neurocognitive architecture of human perceptual systems. Finally, a reflective and methodological consideration will be discussed: how do implicit views about consciousness enable us to support (or otherwise) the existence of the high-level phenomenology? I would like to articulate this methodological space, drawing an implication for the conception of phenomenology in general.

References

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