ABSTRACT. In his 1911 paper, "On the Relations of Universals and Particulars," Bertrand Russell supposes the question whether universals are spatial or non-spatial turns on the question of the existence of particulars. If particulars could be shown to exist, then since, according to Russell, they obviously are spatial, the non-spatiality of universals would be established. On the other hand, the denial of the existence of particulars would entail the spatiality of universals.

In this paper, I argue that Russell's claim is plausible only if particulars are construed either as quality instances or as ordinary objects. If, however, particulars are either substrata or collections of qualities, nothing follows in regard to the spatiality or the non-spatiality of universals. Since the alternative interpretations of particularity are, I contend, at least as attractive as Russell's, his failure to consider them makes his position less interesting than it might otherwise have been.

In his 1911 paper, "On the Relations of Universals and Particulars,"[2] Bertrand Russell supposes the question whether universals are spatial or non-spatial turns on the question of the existence of particulars. If particulars could be shown to exist, then since, according to Russell, they obviously are spatial, the non-spatiality of universals would be established. On the other hand, the denial of the existence of particulars would entail the spatiality of universals.

It will be my purpose in the following pages to examine
this supposition. I shall attempt to show that Russell's claim is plausible only if one construes particulars as either quality instances or ordinary objects. There are, however, other, perhaps more attractive, interpretations of particularity, such as substrata or collections of qualities, which, I shall argue, are not incompatible with the spatiality of universals. Since Russell does not even consider these other interpretations, his position is less interesting than one might think from an uncritical reading of his paper.

The significance of this investigation is, I believe, twofold. First, there is strong evidence not only that Russell believed such a relationship between universals and particulars exists, but that his understanding of it is crucial to the strategy of his paper. Since both have often been overlooked, calling attention to them should be of some interest. Second, clarification of what, exactly, Russell understood particulars to be is needed. Although he frequently uses the term "particular," it is not easy to determine which view(s) of particularity he actually held. I hope to be able to illuminate this question.

The supposition of such a relationship between universals and particulars comes out in several places. Mention is first made of it when Russell summarizes the strategy of his paper. He will argue, he informs us, in the following manner: The existence of universals will be established on the basis of the indispensability of a relation of colorlikeness. Then, leaving in abeyance the question of the spatiality or non-spatiality of universals, he will turn his attention to particulars. These will be shown to exist, because otherwise it would be impossible to solve the problem of individuation. Thus, he concludes, "the fact that it is logically possible for precisely similar things to coexist in two different places, but that things in different places at the same time cannot be numerically identical, forces us to admit that it is particulars, i.e., instances of universals, that exist in places, and not universals themselves."[3] In other words, universals are non-spatial because particulars, that is, instances of universals, exist.

Second, Russell alludes to the relationship in drawing the consequences of the two views he is considering, namely, that which affirms, and that which denies, the existence of particulars. He characterizes the theory that denies the existence of particulars as claiming that "if the same shade of colour is found in two different places, . . . what exists in the one place is identical with what exists in the other."[4] On the other hand, the view that admits particulars is supposed to say "that two numerically different instances of the shade of colour exist in two places; in this view, the shade of colour itself is a universal and a predicate of both the instances, but the universal does not exist in space or time."[5] Thus, once again, the existence
UNIVERSALS AND PARTICULARS

of particulars is claimed to entail the non-spatiality of universals, and the denial of the existence of particulars the spatiality of universals.

Third, Russell refers to the relationship when, in the concluding pages of his paper, he summarizes his results. Since, he believes, the existence of particulars has been established, it follows that "such general qualities as whiteness never exist in time, whereas the things that do exist in time are all particulars."[6] We are therefore afforded, he says, "a division of all entities into two classes: (1) particulars, which . . . exist in time, and cannot occupy more than one place at one time in the space to which they belong; (2) universals, which . . . do not exist in time, and have no relation to one place which they may not simultaneously have to another."[7]

The evidence is therefore strong that, in the 1911 paper, Russell believes the existence of particulars entails the non-spatiality of universals. What Russell means by the term "particular" is less clear. But to assess his position, we must know precisely this. In an attempt to discover which account(s) of particularity he had in mind, let us consider four different interpretations. Perhaps there are others, but the following four are commonly given and/or seem to offer the most interesting possibilities. Particulars might be: (a) substrata, (b) collections of qualities, (c) quality instances, or (d) ordinary objects. Let us focus on the role of the first two of these in the analysis of an ordinary object, such as a white piece of paper.

Take, first of all, the view of those who defend substrata. On this view, the object is a collection of qualities (color, shape, texture, etc.) plus a substratum, which "has," or is the bearer of, the qualities, but is not itself characterized by them. Substrata are thought to be required for the solution of several problems: Not only are they the "bearers" of qualities, but they also stand as the terms of relations and provide a basis for individuation. Not infrequently, they account for the identity of an object through a change in its properties. Though some would disagree, most proponents of substrata claim they are inaccessible to experience, but, rather, are established by dialectical considerations alone.[8] Most importantly for our purposes, substrata are identified with particulars. The object would therefore be composed of the qualities and the particular and any other "entity" or "thing" believed necessary to bind them all into a complex whole.

On the other hand, we have those who dispense with substrata and identify the particular with the collection of qualities. Proponents of this view have the responsibility of proposing solutions to the aforementioned problems and informing us, in addition, what binds the qualities together. Whether the "collections of qualities" view is more

267
successful from a dialectical point of view, it at least appears more consistent with empiricism.[9]

To appreciate the range of possibilities for the relations of universals and particulars, we need only develop two further distinctions. First, we have Russell's suggestion that universals might be construed either as spatial or non-spatial entities. It might seem odd that such disparate things as those in space and those not in space might both be considered universals, but for the sake of discussion let us, too, entertain this possibility. On the former interpretation, whenever there are two different white objects, literally one and the same thing—whiteness—is in two places at once. This position, which is consistent with empiricism, dispenses with the notion of an instance, since the universal itself is here and now. Adherents of this view claim that qualities "are" universals, the sense of the verb "to be" being that of identity.[10] According to the latter interpretation, which might be called Platonism, the quality white, which is in space, is an instance of the universal whiteness, which is non-spatial. Given the two different white objects, the instances of whiteness are numerically different, while that of which they are instances is one thing. Qualities are therefore not identified with universals in any sense, since instances and universals are of two radically differing kinds.

Second, we may divide universals into two categories, simple and complex. A universal is simple if it is incapable of being analyzed further; otherwise, it is complex. Thus, "catness"[11] would be a complex universal, while whiteness would be a simple. The distinction is hard to make precise, but it does seem to capture some basic intuitions and appears worthy of preserving for, if no other reasons, the logical possibilities thereby afforded.

We have, then, two alternative accounts of particularity, substrata and collections of qualities, and a double distinction of universals, spatial and non-spatial, and simple and complex. The relations of universals and particulars may therefore be represented by a table showing the double distinction of universals, upon which may be superimposed the alternative views of particularity.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Non-spatial</th>
<th>Spatial</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Simple</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Complex</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
To illustrate, the white color of an object—a cat, for example—might be taken as an instance of the simple, non-spatial universal whiteness ("A"), while the cat itself would be an instance of the complex, non-spatial universal "cat-ness" ("B"). It may be noted in passing that positions 'A' and 'B' are not incompatible with one another, since one may consistently hold that both simple and complex universals exist; the latter would be somehow composed of the former. If, however, instances are rejected, the whiteness here and now may be taken to be identical with the whiteness there and now ("C"). But an incongruity emerges in regard to the fourth possibility ("D"). We cannot maintain that the cat-ness here is literally one and the same as the catness there, simply because the two cats are, in fact, different. It makes no sense to say that a complex here is literally the same as another complex there. The same complex itself is not distributed through space, since a complex in space is an object, and an object cannot be in more than one place at a time. In the remainder of the discussion we may disregard 'D', since the very idea is incongruous.

We are now in a position to compare the various views of the natures and relations of universals and particulars; in so doing, let us pay close attention to the question of the spatiality or non-spatiality of universals. Let us assume, first, that particulars are substrata. Proponents of 'A' will say the object is a substratum (or particular) plus certain simple qualities, each of which is an instance of a simple, non-spatial universal. Proponents of 'B' will claim the object is a substratum (or particular) and various qualities somehow bound together, which in turn constitute an instance of a complex universal, which is itself non-spatial. Finally, defenders of 'C' will maintain the object is a substratum (or particular) plus a collection of simple universals, which are themselves in space.

If, on the other hand, we assume that particulars are collections of qualities, proponents of 'A' will claim the object is a collection of simple qualities, each of which is an instance of a universal. The qualities are in space; the universals are not. Defenders of 'B' will say the object is a collection of simple qualities, which, taken together, constitute an instance of a complex, non-spatial universal. Lastly, an adherent of 'C' will regard the object as a collection of simple qualities, which are identified with universals, so the object is actually a collection of universals in space.

If these exhaust the alternatives, it cannot escape our attention that both views of particularity are compatible with the spatiality and with the non-spatiality of universals. The identification of particulars with substrata is compatible with the spatiality of universals ("C") and their non-spatiality ("A" and "B"). And so is the identification
of particulars with collections of qualities. On this inter-
pretation, universals might equally well be considered 
spatial ('C') or non-spatial ('A' and 'B'). In short, as-
suming these notions of particularity, one may hold any view 
of the nature of particular one wishes quite independently 
of the analysis of universals, and vice-versa. One need 
only make the appropriate modifications concerning the rela-
tions of qualities to what one wishes to call universals and 
particulars.

Further evidence for the compatibility of substrata and 
the spatiality of universals comes from the realization that 
even substrata, if they exist, may not be spatial. The sup-
position of their spatiality leads to perhaps insurmountable 
difficulties. First, it leads to an infinite regress, since 
a spatial substratum would seem to require another spatial 
substratum as the "bearer" of its "constituents," ad in-
finitum.[13] Second, it seems to entail the possibility of 
one's being acquainted with substrata, which, however, as we 
have noted, most proponents of substrata deny. If it should 
turn out that even substrata are non-spatial, there could be 
no reason whatsoever for maintaining their existence en-
tailed the non-spatiality of universals.

Since Russell thinks the existence of particulars en-
tails the non-spatiality of universals, and the denial of 
the existence of particulars the spatiality of universals, 
his "particulars" are apparently neither substrata nor col-
lections of qualities. His position is coherent if we as-
sume, rather, that particulars are either quality instances 
(simple localized qualities, for example, whiteness here and 
now) or ordinary objects. If we posit two categories, uni-
versals and particulars, and construe the latter as either 
quality instances or ordinary objects, it does seem to fol-
low that universals are not in space. If one were to claim 
that particulars are quality instances and also attempt to 
maintain the spatiality of universals ('C'), the result 
would be the identification of universals and particulars 
and, hence, a disavowal of distinct categories. On the oth-
er hand, regarding particulars as ordinary objects implies 
the non-spatiality of universals, because for reasons given 
above, the claim that complex universals exist in space 
('D') is indefensible. What I am suggesting is that the two 
analyses of particularity offered earlier are both compati-
bile with the spatiality of universals (and with their non-
spatiality) but that neither of Russell's is.

Various considerations support this interpretation of 
Russell. He seems to be thinking of quality instances when, 
in a passage quoted earlier, he characterizes the view that 
admits particulars as claiming "that two numerically differ-
ent instances of the shade of colour exist in the two 
places."[14] The thing in space is, he says, an instance of 
whiteness, a particular of which whiteness is the only 
predicate except shape and brightness and whatever else is
necessarily connected with whiteness."[15] Furthermore, we may note Russell's admission in a footnote that this thesis is similar to G.E. Moore's in "Identity" (1901).[16] It may be significant that, in "Identity," Moore's particulars are quality instances.[17]

Other passages militate in favor of the identification of particulars with ordinary objects. In summarizing his argument for particulars he says "it is logically possible for two exactly similar patches of white, of the same size and shape, to exist simultaneously in different places."[18] When he compares his concept of particularity with what the tradition calls a substance, he admits: "What a man sees when he sees a flash of lightning is a substance in our sense."[19] Whatever else they might be, patches of white and flashes of lightning are ordinary objects.

Sometimes Russell seems to vacillate between the two interpretations. Assuming the existence of two different white patches, we may, he says, reject attempts to individuate on the basis of a system of co-ordinates in absolute space. Hence, "it will be impossible to distinguish [i.e., to individuate] the two patches as two, unless each, instead of being the universal whiteness, is an instance of whiteness."[20] Of course, Russell cannot have it both ways, since a white patch is not the same as a quality. Even if one regards the patch as nothing more than a collection of qualities, the quality white will be only one of the qualities of which the patch is composed, so there could be no thought of identifying the two.[21]

Finally, favoring to some degree the supposition that Russell's particulars are either quality instances or ordinary objects is the observation that only on these interpretation does it follow that universals are non-spatial. In other words, the structure of his argument would dictate that he had either quality instances or ordinary objects in mind. The alternative would be simply to admit that, in regard to his ontology, Russell was confused.

Herbert Hochberg has suggested that, in the 1911 paper, Russell may be arguing for substrata.[22] And, indeed, it is not hard to see why someone might think this. As I have indicated, when Russell turns to the question of particulars, he believes himself antecedently to have shown the existence of universals, and he is entertaining the possibility that they might be in space. At the same time, he recognizes the need to provide a basis for individuation. Russell feels a basis would be lacking if universals were spatial for what appear to be the following reasons: (1) In the case of a simple, the "same thing" could be in different places at once. (2) In the case of a complex, since it is logically possible for different entities to have all their properties in common, there would again be a sense in which the "same thing" would be in different places at once. Rus-
sell concludes that neither universals nor "collections of universals" exist in places: particulars do. [23] When we ask what Russell means by a "particular," it is convenient to think in terms of the classic interpretations, substrata and collections of qualities. He might seem to be denying the "collections of qualities" view, since he obviously is rejecting the "collections of universals" view. The "substratum" interpretation is the only one remaining.

As Hochberg points out, Russell is assuming, wrongly, that a collection of (spatial) universals is itself a universal. [24] I agree. If, as I have claimed, it at least makes sense to think a simple quality might be analyzed as something that might be in different places at once, it would be incongruous to analyze a complex in this manner. In denying the legitimacy of 'D' (above), I am saying a collection of (spatial) universals is not itself a universal. However, it does not follow from this that Russell's particulars are substrata. Substrata might seem to accomplish Russell's purposes. Since no one would confuse a substratum with either a simple or a complex universal, the "substratum" view ensures that different objects will differ in at least one constituent, even if the objects share all their qualities. Substrata do provide a basis for individuation. But other interpretations of particularity do the same job. Either quality instances or ordinary objects can serve the purpose, since any one or either of these can be taken as numerically different from any other. Actually, the other interpretations do the job better, since, as I have shown, the existence of substrata is compatible with the supposition of the spatiality of universals, and considerations in regard to space are integral to Russell's argument. If one comes to the text with a predisposition to find material relevant to the question of substrata, one can find it, but the suggestion that Russell himself was arguing for substrata appears unwarranted.

If I am right, Russell does not succeed in showing that, in general, the existence of particulars entails the non-spatiality of universals, and the denial of the existence of particulars the spatiality of universals. This result follows only if one assumes particulars are either quality instances or ordinary objects. Since Russell seems to hold either or both of these views of particularity, then, on grounds of consistency, his position is not liable to criticism. The existence of such "particulars" does entail the non-spatial nature of universals.

But these may not be the most attractive interpretations of particularity. A discussion of the relative advantages and disadvantages of all four analyses is beyond the scope of this paper, but certain limitations of the views Russell apparently favors can be indicated. In any case, Russell's failure even to consider the other interpretations makes his position less interesting than it might otherwise
Let us focus attention, first, on difficulties with identifying quality instances with particulars. An initial, and perhaps relatively weak, objection is the dissimilarity of this and the classical interpretations of particularity. Prior to the twentieth century particulars seem most characteristically to have been construed as spatial instances of complex, non-spatial universals (Plato or, at least, Platonism), substrata (Aristotle, Locke), or collections of qualities (Hume). Quality instances are quite different from these. If quality instances are so unlike what traditional metaphysicians have called particulars, one wonders why the same term is even employed.

Still, Russell or, perhaps, a Russellian might reply that historical precedents are irrelevant. We need not bind ourselves to the usual paradigms. Moreover, as we will see, it is simply untrue that the "quality instance" interpretation has nothing in common with the others.

A second problem with identifying quality instances with particulars stems from the fact that qualities, the things one analyzes as quality instances, can also be analyzed as universals! It might be thought that anything that might possibly be analyzed as a universal is an unsuitable candidate for particularity. Of course, if qualities are more appropriately analyzed as universals, the identification of quality instances with particulars would be clearly inappropriate, but this result cannot simply be assumed.

What permits the analysis of qualities as both particulars and universals is the ambiguity of the very notion of a quality. A quality such as whiteness not only can be, but in fact has been, interpreted as being in only one place at a time, or in different places at the same time, or even as being essentially non-spatial. According to some philosophers, a quality is in only one place at a time. This, indeed, is the "quality instance" view. Whiteness is the quality here and now. This was held not only by Russell (in the 1911 paper), but also, as indicated earlier, by Moore (in "Identity"), and, later, by G.F. Stout.[25] However, qualities have also been thought to be distributed through space. This is the view characterized by Russell as claiming that the same shade of color might be found in two different places at the same time.[26] It was also defended by Moore, later, in his reply to Stout.[27] Finally, one might even think of a quality as being non-spatial. Whiteness is not "really" localized at all. The quality here and now is an instance of the non-spatial universal whiteness. This, too, is Russell's view in the 1911 paper, though it is his interpretation of universality. Quality instances (particulars) are instances of non-spatial universals. As noted above, Russell concludes his paper by claiming that "such general qualities as whiteness never exist in time"[28]
since particulars, that is, instances of universals, exist.

The latter two interpretations of the notion of quality allow its analysis as a universal. The claim that qualities are distributed through space and the view that they are essentially non-spatial are both interpretations of universality.

Neither ordinary objects, the entities with which one begins analysis, nor any of the other candidates for particularity (other than quality instances) has this ambiguity. No one would ever say that substrata or ordinary objects are in different places at the same time. And, as I have argued above (agreeing with Hochberg), since a collection of qualities is not a universal, there is no plausibility to the suggestion that such a collection might be in more than one place at a time.

Hence, the difference between quality instances and the other candidates for particularity is revealed, since qualities, the things that are analyzed as quality instances, might possibly be interpreted as universals. Even without arguing for the interpretation of qualities as universals, the fact that qualities might be so analyzed might lead some to regard their interpretation as particulars suspiciously.

This objection is not, however, decisive. The proponent of quality instances can reply that his "particulars" are not in different places at the same time and thus satisfy what may be the more general requirement for particularity. Even if the notion of a quality is ambiguous, it does not follow that its analysis in terms of a quality instance is inadequate. Calling attention to the ambiguity does not amount to a refutation of the "quality instance" interpretation of particularity.

A third objection to construing particulars as quality instances is its logical compatibility with some of the other interpretations. Suppose we grant the interpretation. It would still be open to the proponents of substrata or collection of qualities to affirm the existence of what they call particulars. The idea that a quality belongs to one and only one place at a time is compatible both with the claim that particulars are substrata and with the claim that they are collections of qualities. We would then have different kinds of "particulars." Thus, allowing quality instances to count as particulars does not promote clarity.

Again, however, this objection does not succeed in ruling out the "quality instance" analysis, since a defender of the notion can merely insist on his interpretation against the others. Alternatively, he might not be uncomfortable with the idea of different kinds of "particulars," as long as quality instances accomplish the dialectical work required of them.
UNIVERSALS AND PARTICULARS

This brings us to our fourth, and perhaps strongest, objection to the interpretation, or at least to Russell's procedure in the 1911 paper. The analysis of particulars in terms of quality instances ought not be embraced without having given due consideration to its dialectical ramifications, especially in comparison with those of the other interpretations. Particulars have most often been called upon to answer questions such as: What accounts for the difference between different objects? How are qualities combined to form complex objects? In what sense does an object remain "the same" through a change in qualities? What are the terms of relations? Alternative views of particularity should be evaluated, at least in part, on the basis of their ability to provide answers to these questions. Here, obviously, such an extensive investigation cannot be undertaken, but the fact that this is so does not diminish its importance.

If so, however, the objection can be made that, in opting for quality instances or ordinary objects, Russell fails to give the alternative interpretations the attention they deserve. He addresses himself to some of the questions, such as the problem of individuation, and he makes a genuine effort to show the consequences of at least one view of particularity. But he does not discuss a broad range of issues, and he completely overlooks the interpretation of particulars as substrata or collections of qualities. Perhaps the most serious objection to what Russell does in the paper, then, is not that he commits logical errors, but, rather, that he fails to consider a sufficient number of issues and options.

If absolutely convincing reasons for rejecting the "quality instance" interpretation have not been given, its reputation has perhaps been tarnished, and what would have to be done to establish its desirability has been indicated. It is somewhat easier to discredit the other interpretation of particularity found in Russell's paper, the identification of particulars with ordinary objects.

The claim that particulars are ordinary objects means, in effect, that objects are to remain unanalyzed, but this runs contrary to Russell's whole program for philosophy, the analysis of complexes into their constituents. He specifically argues for analysis in "The Philosophy of Logical Atomism,"[29] and he practices it almost everywhere. The fact that, in his 1911 paper, some of his examples of particulars are ordinary objects should be taken lightly. The problem with the identification of particulars with objects is that it leaves too much undone. Analysis begins with ordinary objects. When we decompose objects into their constituents, too many attractive candidates for particularity emerge other than the object itself.
The strongest claim would be that the existence of particulars, interpreted in any of the four ways indicated above, entailed the non-spatiality of universals. This, however, could not be shown, since, indeed, it is false. To his credit, Russell does not make this claim. His position is nonetheless weakened by the fact that he considers only two of the four interpretations. To discover the relations of universals and particulars, a more extensive examination would be required.

FOOTNOTES

1. An earlier version of this paper was read for the Bertrand Russell Society at the meeting of the Eastern Division of the American Philosophical Association in Philadelphia, December 28, 1981. I am grateful to Dennis Bradford, John D'Onofrio, William J. Edgar, Walter Soffer, a referee, and the Editor of Philosophy Research Archives for suggestions improving this paper. None of these persons is responsible for remaining errors.


3. Ibid., 113. The first emphasis is Russell's, the second mine.

4. Ibid., 110.

5. Ibid., 110-11.

6. Ibid., 122. Although Russell speaks here of time, it is clear from the context that his remarks apply equally well to space.

7. Ibid., 123-4.


10. Cf. Donald Brownstein, Aspects of the Problems of Universals
11. The reader is asked to forgive the barbarism.

12. A referee has claimed that the idea of a complex universal in space is not incongruous, since we ought to distinguish between a complex universal in space and an object. Thus, it would make sense to say that the catness here is literally the same as the catness there. Although I am suspicious of the distinction, I am willing to grant it for the sake of argument. The general point that I am making, that the existence of particulars, construed either as substrata or as collections of qualities, does not entail the non-spatiality of universals, still stands. The proponent of substrata will say that the object is the complex universal in space plus a substratum. One who defends collections of qualities will maintain that the object is a complex universal in space and that the individual qualities, of which the complex universal is composed, are also universals in space. Thus, even if 'D' is coherent, neither interpretation of particularity in terms of it involves a commitment to the view that universals are not in space.


15. Ibid., 111 (my emphasis).

16. Ibid., 105, n. 1.


19. Ibid., 122.

20. Ibid., 113. The first emphasis is mine, the second Russell's.

21. On still other occasions, as when he speaks of universals and particulars as predicates and subjects, Russell is ontologically neutral.


23. Russell, op. cit., 118. Cf. p. 120.


26. Cf. p. 2 of this paper. In the 1911 paper Russell ultimately rejects this view.

27. G.E. Moore and G.F. Stout, "Are the Characteristics of Particular Things Universal or Particular?" Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society, Supplementary Vol. III (1923), 95-122. On page 106 Moore explicitly says: "One and the same quality can be in two different places at the same time." Between 1901 and 1923 Moore apparently changed his mind about qualities.
