**Abstract, "Deflationism about Properties"**

I present a theory about properties, mirroring deflationism about truth, according to which every fact about properties, and about the use of property locutions can be explained, together with auxiliary theories and assumptions, on the basis of the equivalence (PE) between any sentence "$F(t)$" and the corresponding "$t$ has $P(F)$", where "$P(F)$" is a "property nominalisation" of the predicate "$F$", so that if the predicate is "is white", its property nominalisation is "the property of being white", whiteness", etc. I here focus mainly on the explanation of linguistic facts concerning property-talk.

On the basis of (PE) and innocuous assumptions, it can be shown that property locutions increase the expressive power of a first-order language in much the same way "true" does. Together with "quantification over propositions", as in "Everything he believes is true", "true" enables what inferentially amounts to propositional quantification with free-standing variables, as in "$(\forall p)$(If he believes that $p$, then $p$)", whose consequent is free-standing. On the basis of (PE) and innocuous assumptions, it can be shown that property locutions similarly enable what inferentially amounts to quantification into *predicate* position. Thus, Leibniz's law that for every property $P$, if $a=b$, then $a$ has $P$ iff $b$ has $P$ serves the purpose of expressing what is expressed by "$(\forall F)$(If $a=b$, then $F(a)$ iff $F(b)$)". With a suitably non-representational (use-theoretic, conceptual role, or inferentialist) semantics on which (PE) is a meaning-constituting principle of property locutions, we can say that *this is all the law says*, because we can then avoid the view that the content and function of property locutions consist in referring to properties, and the view that "quantifications over properties" must be explained truth-conditionally and objectually. Deflationism together with non-representational semantics arguably makes for a plausible form of nominalism in that it properly accounts for the purpose of property-talk. By contrast, on a truth-theoretic semantics, this expressive strengthening implausibly becomes a bi-product of the primary function of *referring to properties*.

By contrast to "true", however, there is a greater variety of linguistic data to be accounted for by this theory, mainly because we often apply predicates to property nominalisations, as in "Redness is an observable property". But we need not, and probably should not, try to find some general schema with which to analyse such sentences, however. It seems rather that we can explain their intended meaning by (PE) and pragmatic assumptions. So, it is reasonable to interpret the above sentence as intended to communicate, e.g., that if something is green, then it is observable that it is green, on the basis that this satisfies pragmatic constraints on interpretation. Other sentences of the same form might require a different interpretation, however, e.g., "Bravery is a virtue". Perhaps the meaning of this sentence is merely given by (PE) together with a meaning-constituting principle for "virtue", say, "A virtue is a property it is good to have", which given (PE) and innocuous assumptions, entails the target sentence is equivalent to "It is good to be brave". (Of course, none of this is to imply that one always needs to find a paraphrase not containing property locutions to have a proper meaning analysis of sentences containing them.)

There seems to be no reason to require a general schema for such sentences, as long as there is some plausible account of each one's meaning that can be given by (PE) together with theories and assumptions that do not concern properties, the notion of property, or the word "property". (Note that adverbial modifications of the truth-predicate, as in "$x$ is approximately true" or "$x$ is true to degree $d$", constitute a similar problem for truth-deflationism.)