

RETURNING TO OUR SENSES

by

OCTAVIAN ALEXANDRU BUSUIOC

A thesis submitted to the Department of Philosophy
in conformity with the requirements for
the degree of Master of Arts

Queen's University
Kingston, Ontario, Canada
September, 2007

Copyright © Octavian Alexandru Busuioc, 2007

To my parents

ABSTRACT

The following thesis is concerned with the way we think of particular objects. More specifically, it is concerned with *de re* thoughts and beliefs, which are parasitic upon the objects they are about. In ascribing and expressing *de re* thoughts and beliefs, we employ *de re* expressions, such as demonstratives and names. There is a pervasive view in the philosophy of language, known as the direct-reference view, that claims that these expressions contribute to thoughts nothing over and above objects themselves. I argue that not only is this view of *de re* expressions untenable upon reflection on its repercussions for cognitive significance and judgement, but also that the considerations that motivate its genesis rest on a mistaken understanding of the alternative, *viz* a Fregean understanding of thought that employs a notion of sense. In the first chapter, I present logical difficulties that face accounts of *de re* belief and a quasi-Fregean response to them. In the second chapter, I focus on two exhaustive interpretations of the cognitive significance of *de re* expressions on the direct-reference view, and I argue that both interpretations are untenable either because they cannot account for propositional unity, or because they isolate experience from judgement. In the third chapter, I present a holistic interpretation of sense, and argue that it is neither faced by critiques presented by proponents of direct-reference, nor by the difficulties I articulate in the first two chapters.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This thesis owes much to David Bakhurst, who I would like to thank for his guidance, insight, clarity and patience – I am thoroughly convinced that a graduate student could not ask for a better supervisor. I would also like to thank Henry Laycock, for his piercing critiques of earlier incarnations of the position I here take up. Gurpreet Rattan, I have to thank for introducing me to this topic, and rendering many difficult issues and arguments crystal clear. And none of this would have been possible, in its current form, without the patience, energy, insight and gusto for clarity of G. Anthony Bruno, Clifford Roberts, Emerson Doyle, Patrick Moran and John Symons.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Abstract.....	iii
Acknowledgments.....	iv
1. The Logical Structure of De Re Thought.....	1
2. The Cognitive Contributions of De Re Expressions.....	25
3. Returning to Our Senses, Holism and Cognitive Significance.....	46
Works Cited.....	72
Appendix.....	76

CHAPTER 1

THE LOGICAL STRUCTURE OF DE RE THOUGHT

'To quine': To deny resolutely the existence of importance of something real or significant.

- Daniel Dennett

In some languages, and even in extended versions of English, proper names can serve as verbs. With this in mind, Daniel Dennett presents the following definition of the verb 'to quine': to deny resolutely the existence of importance of something real or significant.¹ While the definition is intended to be humorous, it bears a kernel of deep insight: theoretical considerations can lead to the denial of significant facets of experience. This is exemplified in the way analytic philosophers sometimes find themselves caught in a tension between everyday natural goings-on and the logic that is designed to clarify the goings-on, and end up theoretically denying or distorting the former, albeit in a sophisticated manner.

It is significant that this outcome is at odds with the aims of the founders of the analytic tradition. Gottlob Frege's *Begriffsschrift*,² one of the founding projects (perhaps *the* founding project) of analytic philosophy, introduced a new logic that could capture rigorously the notion of a valid inference in mathematics.³ The elegance and explanatory power of Frege's approach impressed itself upon the philosophical community and his

1 Cf. Daniel Dennett, "Quining Qualia," in *Mind and Cognition*, ed. W. Lycan (Oxford: Blackwell, 1990) pp. 519-548.

2 Gottlob Frege, *Begriffsschrift in The Frege Reader*, ed. Michael Beaney (Oxford: Blackwell, 1997), originally published in 1879.

3 One should also mention the other founding project, Bertrand Russell and A. Whitehead's *Principia Mathematica*. Cf. Alfred North Whitehead and Bertrand Russell, *Principia Mathematica*, 3 vols (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1910, 1912, 1913). Second edition, 1925 (Vol. 1), 1927 (Vols 2, 3). Abridged as *Principia Mathematica to *56* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1962).

project did not remain bound to mathematics, but was extended to natural language – or rather, idealizations of natural language. The most appealing aspect of the analytic method is its clarity and rigour – by articulating the logical structure underlying sentences, what is expressed becomes clear and so do the inferences that follow. But, there is a worrisome corollary of this perspective that brings us back to Dennett's definition of 'to quine'. If one cannot articulate the logic behind a particular sentence, it becomes mysterious how the sentence can be meaningful and not a mere mirage of meaning. To the analytic philosopher's chagrin, there are scenarios where individuals express themselves clearly, yet their utterances do not admit of satisfactory logical codification.⁴ It seems that at these times, analytic philosophy is in tension with itself – it aims to make unclear utterances clear, and instead, it makes clear utterances unclear.

§I. One such tension arises when codifying the connections between thoughts and mind-independent objects. This tension echoes persistent early-modern anxieties about the nature of the connection between mind and world. Historically, these anxieties have their home in epistemology, which studies, amongst related topics, how knowledge is grounded in the deliverances of experience, and thus, often focuses on the nature of experience. When considering the nature of experience in terms of the cognitive significance of impingements of the world upon minds, we are led in turn to issues in the philosophy of language. Specifically, we are led to a distinction between beliefs of particular objects, which rely heavily on how we conceive the cognitive content of experience, and general beliefs, which often require only a purely mental characterization. My focus throughout this thesis is on the former, and thus, what is critical, is the cognitive significance of utterances expressing particular beliefs, such as assertions that employ demonstrative expressions and proper names, the meaning of which many view as

4 For example, metaphors.

tioned to the objects they refer to. In other words, my focus is on how we are *en rapport* with mind independent objects in thought, and I will approach this issue by reflecting on particular beliefs, expressed using proper names and demonstratives.

The seminal texts that draw attention to these issues in their linguistic guise are two articles by Gottlob Frege, namely “Uber Sinn und Bedeutung”⁵, and “Der Gedanke”⁶. In the former, Frege argues that there must be more to the meaning of a proper name than the object it designates, *viz* its referent, and he does this by arguing that co-referential expressions,⁷ such as 'Hesperus' and 'Phosphorus', which both refer to the same planet, serve different cognitive roles. To account for this difference, over and above a notion of reference, Frege introduces a notion of sense, which is meant to capture the cognitive significance of expressions. Senses are of logical and ontological import for Frege because we can refer to them when we ascribe thoughts and beliefs, and thus, they are public, objective, and independent. In the latter paper, Frege defends this distinction for demonstrative expressions such as 'this' and 'that', which some believe do not admit a cognitive contribution over and above their referents.

What I shall also be concerned with throughout this thesis is the subsequent recoil from Frege's sense / reference distinction in the context of world-involving utterances that express particular beliefs and thoughts. Doubt has been cast on Frege's distinction most prominently by Saul Kripke in his 1970 lectures on *Naming and Necessity*⁸ and Frege's account of demonstrative expressions has been challenged by David Kaplan⁹ and John Perry.¹⁰ I evaluate both Kripke's and Kaplan's alternative proposals in Chapter 2, by

5 Gottlob Frege, “Uber Sinn und Bedeutung” in *The Frege Reader*, ed. Michael Beaney (Oxford: Blackwell, 1997).

6 Gottlob Frege, “Der Gedanke”, in *The Frege Reader*, ed. Michael Beaney (Oxford: Blackwell, 1997).

7 i.e. expressions that refer to the same object.

8 Cf. Saul Kripke, *Naming and Necessity* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1980).

9 Cf. David Kaplan, “Demonstratives” in *Themes from Kaplan*, eds. J. Almog, J. Perry, and H. Wettstein (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989) pp. 481-564.

10 Cf. John Perry, “Frege on Demonstratives”, in *The Philosophical Review*, LXXXVI, No. 4 (1977).

looking at their cognitive repercussions, and in Chapter 3, I evaluate their motivations for eschewing sense, and argue that they are ungrounded by being rooted in a misunderstanding. Before doing so, in Chapter 1, I discuss W.V.O. Quine's account of paradigmatic world-involving utterances, *viz. de re* utterances. Quine is suspicious of sense in this context, especially as an item of logical significance as in the Fregean inspired logical systems of Rudolph Carnap.¹¹ I start my exposition with Quine because he clearly reveals the tensions that motivate Frege's concern with cognitive significance, and also because David Kaplan's¹² reply to Quine helps us see how formal logical concerns about the possibility of *de re* thought connect with extra-logical considerations of cognitive significance.

Let us return to the intersection between epistemology and the philosophy of language. Central to understanding how it is that we can be *en rapport* with objects in thought is clarifying a distinction between the occasions objects are directly involved in thought, and the occasions thought is only general, about no thing in particular. Consider Isabella, who often thinks of spies. She believes that spies are intriguing and mysterious, whoever they may be, and she also believes that there are spies living in her neighborhood. For example, she believes that her neighbor Harry is a spy.¹³ Whatever the case, we can ascribe the following: Isabella believes that someone is a spy. This attribution leaves open the question as to which of Isabella's beliefs it captures. Does it capture her general belief of spies, but of no spy in particular? Or, does it rather capture her belief of Harry, that he is a spy?

These two different beliefs are underlined by two different logical forms. *Particular beliefs*, that are bound to objects external to Isabella, exemplified by her belief

11 Rudolph Carnap, *Meaning and Necessity* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1947).

12 David Kaplan, "Quantifying In" in *Synthese* 19 (1969), pp. 178-214.

13 I take it for granted here that one needs certain beliefs to entertain thoughts. Cf. Donald Davidson, "Thought and Talk" in *Inquiries into Truth and Interpretation* by Donald Davidson, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2001), pg. 157.

of a particular thing in the world, namely Harry, and *general beliefs*, that are at most in *friction* with a world external to Isabella herself, exemplified by her belief that spies exist. Isabella's general belief is at most in friction because it may or may not be satisfied, contingent upon states of affairs. For example, the world may be such that spies exist and her belief is satisfied by those spies, or the world may be such that spies do not exist and her belief is not satisfied. Most significantly, the content of Isabella's general belief is independent of states of affairs, it may touch upon them, but it need not.

On the other hand, if 'Harry' does not denote, and thus if the world is such that 'Harry' doesn't name an individual, then independently of Isabella's believing that it does, the particular belief ascription is at best false, if not senseless.¹⁴ It is in this symbiotic way that particular beliefs are bound to the world. This symbiotic relationship between particular beliefs and an external world is crucial to understanding the connection between thought and mind-independent objects because such *particular beliefs*, it seems, root us in a mind-independent reality.

In the contemporary literature, the distinction between these two types of thoughts is known as the *de re / de dicto* distinction. Roughly translated, the two terms mean respectively *of a thing* and *of a proposition*. Logical notation makes this distinction explicit, by displaying the underlying logical structure of the two interpretations. Consider Isabella again:

(1) Isabella believes that someone is a spy.

¹⁴ It may strike some as a bit of a bold statement. In the literature, there are some who will consider this consideration too strong, in the sense that they believe one may still entertain a *de re* thought in the absence of an object – the thought is just “gappy”, i.e. lacking in content as regards to what the subject expresses. For an example of this sort of a view, see Robin Jeshion, “Acquaintanceless De Re Belief” in *Meaning and Truth: Investigations in Philosophical Semantics*, eds. Joseph Keim Campbell, Michael O’Rourke and David Shier (New York: Seven Bridges Press, 2002), pp. 53–78. I will remind the reader that keeping this in mind is important, but at the same time such views steal the excitement away from inquiries into *de re* thought, for the deep tie between thought and its objects is dramatically loosened. I will not deal with this issue in this thesis, not because I do not believe it requires a reply, but rather because my reply to it, articulated any further, would take us far astray.

The *de re* interpretation of (1) is displayed when generalizing the statement bearing the existential quantifier outside the belief operator:

(2) $\exists x(\text{Isabella believes that } x \text{ is a spy})$.

Translating (2) back to English reads: there exists something, such that Isabella believes of that something that it is a spy. Thus, we evaluate the statement by considering objects one by one, and ascertaining whether Isabella believes of one of those particular objects that it is a spy. Notice that if no object will do, the attribution as a whole is false, and if there is no object that makes the attribution (2) true, then there is no instantiated *de re* attribution of (1).

The *de dicto* logical structure is exemplified by generalizing and binding the existential quantifier within the thought context:

(3) Isabella believes that $\exists x(x \text{ is a spy})$.

Translating (3) back into English reads: Isabella believes that there exists someone who is a spy. To evaluate the attribution, we need not consider objects at all, we just turn towards Isabella to ascertain whether she believes that there are spies. In (3), unlike in (2), what matters for the truth value of the ascription is not that there is an object that satisfies it, but rather that Isabella holds true that there is such an object. Unlike in the *de re* reading of (1), there is nothing incoherent about a lack of an object that satisfies Isabella's general thought – at most Isabella is just thinking falsely. It seems that there is no difficulty interpreting the character of either of the two ascriptions. However, Quine has argued that (2) lacks cogency.

To make sense of *de re* beliefs, we must satisfactorily describe both the underlying logical difference between general and particular beliefs and also the cognitive binding between *de re* belief and world. In the literature, there are two respective puzzles in meeting these requirements. The first is logical and questions whether (2) is cogent as the logical structure of *de re* thought – I call this the *quantification puzzle* and as it is Quine's

primary point of contention, I focus on it for the rest of this chapter. The second arises when accounting for the cognitively constitutive binded content required for attributions underlined by a *de re* logical structure. This latter puzzle hinges on a distinction between conceptual and non-conceptual propositional content – I call it the *content puzzle*, and I discuss it in Chapter 2. In Chapter 3, by reflecting upon considerations brought forth by a non-descriptive notion of Fregean sense,¹⁵ by Donald Davidson's holistic account of interpretation,¹⁶ and by John McDowell's insights¹⁷ on the connection between mind and world, I shall articulate a holistic interpretation of Fregean sense, and in doing so, I shall show how these puzzles cannot start outside of an atomistic view of cognitive significance. As intimated above, besides making sense of the possibility of *de re* thought, holistic Fregean sense should cast light on epistemological issues and also a few vexing puzzles in the philosophy of language, such as Kripke's puzzle about belief and the puzzle of analysis.

§II. The quantification puzzle is introduced by W.V.O. Quine in a series of papers,¹⁸ culminating in “Quantifiers and Propositional Attitudes”.¹⁹ The articulation of the puzzle hinges upon considerations of direct reference motivated by *extensionality* - a policy that requires the preservation of the truth value of larger statements when substituting constitutive equivalent statements within them. This policy lies deep within the substratum of analytic philosophy, as it is recommended, at least on grounds of elegance, by predicate logic and the standard semantics. Eschewing extensionality also has drastic

15 Cf. Gareth Evans, *The Varieties of Reference* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1982).

16 Cf. Davidson “Thought and Talk”.

17 Cf. John McDowell, *Mind and World* (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 1994).

18 The problem is articulated in roughly four different yet deeply related papers: “Notes on Existence and Necessity” in 1943, ten years later in “Three Grades of Modal Involvement” in 1953, “Reference and Modality” in 1961, and most important for our current inquiry, “Quantifiers and Propositional Attitudes” in 1956.

19 W.V.O. Quine, “Quantifiers and Propositional Attitudes”, in *The Ways of Paradox* by W.V.O. Quine (New York: Random House, 1966).

repercussions for ontology because, besides everyday objects and properties, going over and above extensionality means postulating a whole group of mental *bona fide* entities – and, according to extensionalists, this is a repercussion that we are better off without. Quine thinks²⁰ he has done well accounting for all knowledge that we must account for by only employing extensionality, and as he is fond of minimalist ontologies, he sees no reason to stray away. Most importantly, Quine thinks that eschewing extensionality also means giving up our paradigmatic understanding of names and demonstratives as directly referring to objects.²¹

Quite possibly, what impresses Quine, as a mathematician, is the elegance of extensionality: “The clarity and convenience conferred by extensionality are evident: free interchangeability of coextensive components *salva veritate*.”²² Extensionality is also a principle that applies across the board, lending common explanations of different logical objects, which without doubt, is desirable:

In defining coextensiveness, I lumped predicates, general terms, and open sentences together. They are what can be predicated of objects or sequences of objects, and in that capacity they all three come to the same thing. They are what the schematic predicate letters in quantification theory stand for. Open sentences are the most graphic of the three renderings. Two open sentences are coextensive if they have the same free variables and agree with each other in truth-value for all values of those variables.²³

Notwithstanding logical elegance, a policy of extensionality has drastic repercussions for the *possibility* of *de re* belief. As Quine sees it, belief contexts are not extensional. As he thinks that we cannot abandon extensionality without also losing our understanding of reference, Quine argues that modal and intensional contexts must be

20 See W.V.O. Quine, “Confessions of a Confirmed Extensionalist”, in *Future Pasts*, eds. Juliet Floyd and Sanford Shieh, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001), p. 217.

21 Quine argues for this by way of what has come to be known as the sling-shot argument. I have reconstructed the argument in the Appendix, including its repercussions for singular terms.

22 *Ibid.* p. 215.

23 *Ibid.*

deemed opaque,²⁴ which means that quantification into these contexts is not permitted. And if intensional attributions are opaque, then *de re* ascriptions that employ quantification into an opaque context such as (2) are not permitted. Basically, according to Quine, it seems that we can eschew extensionality and lose a grip on reference which we need to make sense of *de re* thought, or we can keep extensionality and render the logical articulation of *de re* utterances untenable.

§III. Quine's commitment to extensionality is based on the universal application of two related notions: logical equivalence²⁵ and substitutivity. In an extensional logic, these notions are related, because two expressions are intersubstitutable *salvâ veritate* if and only if they are logically equivalent, that is, if and only if they are co-extensional. Accordingly, we cannot both keep extensionality and admit non-inter substitutable and co-extensional expressions.

The expressions that we are interested in are purely-referential²⁶ (or purely-designative expressions²⁷) such as 'Quine', whose semantic contribution is supposedly only a referent.²⁸ This view of naming expressions follows directly from our conception of the domain of quantification over variables in extensional contexts, *viz* objects and nothing else. This understanding is supported by the incoherence of the *de re* reading of "Isabella believes Harry is a spy" in cases where 'Harry' does not denote. The *de re* reading is at worst senseless, because the semantic contribution is entirely absent – if something other than the referent was contributed, supposedly this would not be the case, as whatever that would be, it would remain untouched.

24 W.V.O. Quine, "Reference and Modality", in *From a Logical Point of View* by W.V.O. Quine (New York: Harper and Row, 1961) p. 20.

25 Where two expressions are logically equivalent if and only if they are inter-substitutable *salve veritate* – thus logical equivalence extends beyond sentences to names.

26 Quine, "Three Grades of Modal Involvement", *op. cit.* p. 158.

27 Quine, "Notes on Existence and Necessity", *op. cit.* p. 114.

28 Quine, "Three Grades of Modal Involvement", *op. cit.* p. 158.

Treating names as purely referential provides an elegant criterion of logical equivalence: if two names semantically contribute the same object and thus are co-extensional, then they are logically equivalent. With a criterion of logical equivalence, we can articulate a test for context opacity with which we can ascertain whether a linguistic occurrence is purely referential.

Taking a hint from Russell, we may speak of a context as referentially opaque when, by putting a statement ϕ into that context, we can cause a purely referential occurrence in ϕ to be not purely referential in the whole context.²⁹

Opaque contexts are contexts where an otherwise purely referential occurrence, such as 'Harry', is rendered non (purely) referential; in other words, it becomes an occurrence that contributes something other than a referent. A test for opacity has two steps. First, the free occurrence of a statement ϕ must meet the criterion for pure referentiality. Second, if the context-statement F that ϕ is embedded within is opaque, then $F(\phi)$ should fail to meet the same criterion.

So, to recap, if an expression is purely referential, then it can be substituted by a co-extensional expression in extensional contexts. If that same expression when embedded in a broader context cannot be substituted by a co-referential expression *salvâ veritate*, then that *occurrence* of the expression is not purely referential.³⁰ And if a purely-referential expression occurs non-purely referentially within a context, then that context is referentially opaque.

Quotational contexts are apt to display opacity, and as such, Quine deems them the “referentially opaque context par excellence”³¹ and utilizes them as an effective explanatory tool. To see how this works, consider 'Cicero' and 'Tully' which are co-extensional purely referential expressions in virtue of naming the same individual, and

29 *Ibid.* p. 158.

30 Quine, “Reference and Modality”, *op. cit.* p. 18.

31 Quine, “Three Grades of Modal Involvement”, *op. cit.* p. 159.

consider the following occurrence of 'Cicero':

(4) 'Cicero' has six letters.

Substituting 'Tully' in for 'Cicero' turns the true statement (4) into the false statement (5):

(5) 'Tully' has six letters.

We can conclude, by the criteria outlined above, that quotational contexts are referentially opaque.

Let us return to Isabella's spies. Suppose Isabella got it right – her neighbour Harry is indeed a spy. Unbeknownst to Isabella, 'Harry' is only one name that Harry goes by. There are many others, one of which is 'Frederick', a name he uses to introduce himself at various neighborhood cocktail parties. As all skillful spies, Harry changes his visual appearance drastically by employing a mustache, a hat, dark glasses, and a heavy accent when he presents himself as 'Frederick'. Isabella, as a lover of gossip and conspiracies, is an avid attendee of cocktail parties, where she confides in Frederick. Isabella is so selective in her confidants, that he is the only one she does not suspect to be a spy – after all, no spy dresses to fit the stereotype. Harry, that is Frederick, does his job well. Just as 'Cicero' and 'Tully' are logically equivalent in virtue of being co-extensional, so are 'Harry' and 'Frederick'. Let us consider the following ascription:

(6) Isabella believes that Harry is a spy.

By the logical equivalence of 'Harry' and 'Frederick', their inter-substitution in (6) should not yield a change in truth value.

(7) Isabella believes that Frederick is a spy.

However, while (6) is true, (7) is false, which entails that the substitution of logically equivalent expressions fails within belief contexts. Just as quotational contexts, *mutatis mutandis*, belief contexts are opaque.³²

32 Quine, "Reference and Modality", *op. cit.* p. 20.

§IV. This does not explain, though it may entail, why Quine thinks (2) is incoherent. We need a further demonstration of how it is that substitutivity and existential generalization are tied so as to block quantification into opaque contexts.

The notion of existential generalization follows directly from the notion of a purely referential expression.³³ If a name occurs purely referentially, then we are committed to something that may or may not bear the property ascribed. In Isabella's case, if it can be said truthfully that she thinks of Harry that he is a spy, then it is a necessary inference that she thinks of something in particular that it is a spy, which means that from (6), (2) should follow by logical necessity.³⁴

With Quine, we may ask: just what is this thing that Isabella believes is a spy? Harry, that is to say Frederick? If so, then this is inconsistent with the falsity of (7). This leaves us perplexed, because if no object satisfies the thought, then we cannot re-instantiate the generalized statement. Something is amiss, because we have started with an instantiated statement and if our logic is valid, we should be able to return to it. If we cannot do so, then it is unclear what (2) expresses, if anything at all. When quantifying into an opaque context, such as (2), our domain of quantification becomes unclear, to the extent that we just no longer know what we are quantifying over.

For Quine, in *de re* cases, we should solely quantify over entities in the world,³⁵ and if we allow unbridled quantification, such as one that allows intensional entities, then we fail to maintain extensionality and we do damage to purely referential expressions. On the other hand, the price of keeping extensionality is insulating belief contexts from external quantification and rendering (2) nonsensical.

³³ *Ibid.* p. 22.

³⁴ This example is akin in all ways with Quine's own, *Ibid.* p. 24.

³⁵ I believe this argument is re-lived in Saul Kripke's "A Puzzle About Belief" in *Meaning and Use*, ed. A. Margalit (Dordrecht: Reidel, 1979), 239-283. Kripke's point there is that our very practices of *de re* belief attributions breaks down before Frege's puzzle of identity can even be articulated.

To recapitulate, if we insist upon (2)'s coherence, we deny extensionality and we lose grip on singular terms and with them the prospect of *de re* expressions. If we assent to (2)'s incoherence, then we require an alternative articulation of the logical structure underpinning the *de re* reading of (1). Quine does present such an alternative articulation, albeit an admittedly contentious one. This may make it untenable, as I think it is, but with our current resources, our quandary does recommend it.

§V. As a solution³⁶ to the quantification puzzle, Quine re-interprets in two steps the underlying logical structure of the *de re* reading of (1). In the first step, he utilizes intensional contexts with the obvious caveat that they entail a denial of extensionality. Quine goes so far as to call intensional contexts “creatures of darkness...[to be]...exorcised”.³⁷ For him, this first step is merely exegetical, the content of which, but not its structure, should be discarded when taking the second step.

Quine proposes that *de re* thought is a triadic relation between a thinker, an object, and an attribute.³⁸ We can formalize this by introducing intensional attribute names signified by a $z()$ notation. An example of an attribute is *spyness* as found in (1), whose formal name is $z(z \text{ is a spy})$. Utilizing this notation, we can re-articulate the underlying *de re* logical structure of (6) without resorting to the apparently incoherent articulation (2):

(8) Isabella believes $z(z \text{ is a spy})$ of Harry.

In English, (8) reads, Isabella believes *spyness* of Harry. The name 'Harry' can be quantified into because it occurs purely extensionally outside of the opaque intensional context. This allows us to perform an existential generalization on (8) without losing

36 Quine, “Quantifiers and Propositional Attitudes”, *op. cit.* p. 106.

37 *Ibid.* p. 104.

38 *Ibid.* p. 104, As earlier, I assume that all considerations regarding belief extend to thought for the sake of simplicity.

cogency:

(9) $\exists x(\text{Isabella believes } z(z \text{ is a spy}) \text{ of } x)$.

However, while in capturing *de re* belief we no longer quantify into opaque contexts, there still remains a contradiction akin to a failure of substitution. Because Isabella believes of Frederick, that is to say of Harry, that he is not a spy, then we can ascribe (10) using an attribute of non-spyness named $z(z \text{ is not a spy})$ ³⁹:

(10) Isabella believes $z(z \text{ is not a spy})$ of Harry.

One may, with good reason, think that (9) and (10) entail the contradiction (11):

(11) Isabella believes $z(z \text{ is a spy} \cdot z \text{ is not a spy})$ of Harry.

Quine recognizes this.⁴⁰ However, he draws attention to how undesirable it is to think that (9) and (10) imply (11): “but this goes to show that it is undesirable to look upon [(9)] and [(10)] as implying [(11)].”⁴¹ He reminds us that $z()$ expressions in (9) and (10) are names of intensions whose orthographic contents are semantically unarticulated, for Quine, any apparent articulation is an orthographic accident, such as 'cat' in 'cattle', and do not allow for conjunction.

However, while this apparently sidesteps the quantification puzzle, it does not seem to capture the nature of the tension. It is not that Isabella is unaware that the two attributes are contraries, but rather, she is not aware that she is applying contrary attributes to the *same individual*, which means that this solution does not stay true to the original tension we set out to relieve. Regardless of how serious I think this problem is, Quine thinks that there are other issues with this intensional articulation:

Let it not be supposed the the theory which we have been examining is just a matter of allowing unbridled quantification into belief contexts after all, with a legalistic change of notation. On the contrary, the crucial choice recurs at each point: quantify

39 *Ibid.* pg. 106.

40 *Ibid.*

41 *Ibid.* – The brackets denote a use of the examples in this text rather than Quine's own. I have done this for the sake of coherence, especially for the reader who does not have a copy of Quine's paper handy.

if you will but pay the price of accepting near-contraries like [(9)] and [(10)], at each point at which you choose to quantify. In other words: distinguish as you please between referential and non-referential positions, but keep track so as to treat each kind appropriately. The notation of degree one and higher, is in effect a device for inking in a boundary between referential and non-referential occurrences of terms.⁴²

Quine warns that while quantifying in is an option, it is not without caveats. When quantifying in, one has to keep track of purely referential and non-purely referential occurrences of terms, by using the intension notation as a status marker. Containing a non-purely referential occurrence makes it difficult to see how it is that Isabella's thought is of an object, i.e. that it is a *de re* thought. The attribute that she may believe is satisfied by an external object may not be satisfied by anything at all. Quine's concern is not quite this, yet it is related. Because intensional contexts are employed, we no longer maintain extensionality, which further entails that we no longer have a grip on purely referential expressions. However, he does find this solution attractive which leads him to suggest a structurally identical solution, which does not employ intensional contexts.

In the second step, as an alternative to an intentional articulation, Quine suggests a semantic solution that employs a notion of *thinking a sentence true* of an object.⁴³ Employing this notion, he reformulates (8) in non-intensional terms:

(12) Isabella believes 'Harry is a spy' satisfied by Harry.

The same quantification advantages are maintained as the second occurrence of 'Harry' is purely extensional and can be quantified into. The only problem is what we may call a certain *unnaturalness*. While we understand what it is for someone to believe that an attribute is satisfied by an object, it is harder to understand what it means for someone to believe that a sentence is true of an object. Quine wittily dispatches of such a worry, but I do think it is of more concern than he seems to recognize:

We may treat a mouse's fear of a cat as his fearing true a certain English sentence.

42 *Ibid.* p. 106.

43 *Ibid.* p. 109.

This is unnatural without being therefore wrong. It is a little like describing a prehistoric ocean current as clockwise.⁴⁴

While appearing as a sort of unnaturalness of ascription, the problem is supported by deeper concerns, which I suspect make it unnatural to begin with. This semantic solution is likewise plagued by the problem I articulated for the intensional version: it gets the original tension wrong. Even deeper, this semantic solution leaves obscure the connection between the opaque, embedded sentence and the object it is satisfied by. Because quotational contexts are unarticulated closed packages, there is no way to connect objects they are satisfied by to their sentential subject term, because the subject term is logically insulated inside the opaque context and cannot be unearthed. Elucidating the nature of the connection is rather like elucidating how an object relates to something whose features nothing can be said about. The most that can come out of the exercise is guesswork, while what it is to guess correctly is mysterious at best.

§VI. We are faced by a rather threatening dilemma. Quine himself admits that *de re* utterances have crucial roles in ascribing and expressing everyday beliefs.⁴⁵ As he writes, having a *de re* ascription available over and above a *de dicto* ascription makes the difference between an individual wanting a particular person to be president ($\exists x(\text{Witold wishes that } x \text{ is president})$), and just wanting a certain type of government (Witold wishes that $\exists x(x \text{ is president})$), i.e. one in which there *is* a president. We cannot do away with *de re* ascriptions without doing violence to beliefs and thoughts that we already *do* express. How else shall we account for the beliefs of keen friends of governmental candidates? We are faced with a dilemma that asks us to either deny extensionality, or follow Quine's semantic suggestion. While neither of these horns is promising as they stand, one or the

44 *Ibid.*

45 *Ibid.* p. 102.

other may be strengthened, and the early David Kaplan⁴⁶ does just that.

§VII. There are various reasons to be suspicious of Quine's semantic solution. Possibly the most pressing follows from Quine's treatment of quotational contexts as homogeneous packages that lack semantic articulation. We usually think of quotational contexts as conjuncts of linguistic expressions rather than single unarticulated names, which means that Quine's view betrays pre-theoretical intuitions. *Prima facie*, it is not the case as Quine would have it, that 'Harry' in 'Harry is a spy' is on the same footing as 'cat' in 'cattle'. Kaplan uses this intuition to motivate the unattractiveness of the semantic solution and suggests⁴⁷ that a careful return to broadly Fregean considerations provides a natural interpretation of *intermediate* occurrences (such as that of 'Harry' in (6)) as semantically significant occurrences, rather than orthographic accidents.⁴⁸

One of Frege's⁴⁹ observations is that in natural language, terms do not neatly designate as they do in mathematical-linguistic practices. We must avoid the attraction to extend the logic that has proved efficacious in capturing mathematical discourse to natural language without standing alert to the way expressions are employed in particular circumstances. Before passing judgement on the nature of a compound expression, one must clarify what each term within it denotes, without presupposing that the denotation of orthographically identical expressions will always be the same.⁵⁰ If a suitable

46 David Kaplan, "Quantifying In", in *Synthese* 19 (1969), pp. 178-214 – there are many stages to Kaplan's thought on *de re* belief, for a complete mapping of these stages, see Erin Eaker, "David Kaplan on De Re Belief" in *Midwest Studies in Philosophy XXVIII* (2004).

47 Kaplan, "Quantifying In", *op. cit.* p. 113.

48 Kaplan's vocabulary for these occurrences is 'vulgar' and 'accidental', for the sake of continuity, I shall continue using the original terminology set out above.

49 Articulated in Frege, "Über Sinn und Bedeutung", *op. cit.* p. 153.

50 Kaplan here makes use to a certain extent of a notion of natural analysis (Kaplan, "Quantifying In", *op. cit.* p. 117). He exemplifies the notion by considering: "Although F.D.R. ran for office many times, F.D.R. ran on television only once". The salient point is that one can clearly see how the two identical terms designate different individuals. There is a problem with this of course, as Quine's examples clearly take the same elements and embed them instead of looking at two different sentences.

denotation is found for each expression then there is no reason not to treat the larger expression as a composite.⁵¹ It is thus necessary to look first for denotations of expressions within quotational contexts, without assuming that they will be the same denotations as in extensional contexts. With this in mind, the suggestion, following Kaplan's interpretation of Frege,⁵² is that within quotational contexts, expressions denote themselves. Quotational contexts are, to use a Fregean term,⁵³ *oblique*, in the sense that occurrences internal to them only indirectly denote their usual referents – in this case, *via* themselves. This interpretation of Frege avoids some of the mystery behind the view. Frege's own articulation⁵⁴ calls for a shift in reference in oblique contexts from an expression's ordinary *Bedeutung* (referent) to its ordinary sense. This sounds mysterious to many because it entails an inflation of our ontology with novel entities called 'senses'. While Fregeans' ontological sensibilities allow for a third realm of sense, others are reticent in accepting such an ontology – especially those fond of minimalistic ontologies such as Quine.

The brilliance of Kaplan's interpretation stems from the fact that it is acceptable to both groups, as neither the minimalist such as Quine, nor the third-realist such as Frege, should be suspicious of quantifying over expressions – expressions are elements of our language which surely we can speak of,⁵⁵ if we can speak of a language at all. I believe this can be interpreted as capturing Frege's thought in quite a subtle and effective way,⁵⁶ but I should first make clear that I am uncertain whether what follows is exegetical, or just

51 *Ibid.* p. 119.

52 *Ibid.* p. 120.

53 Frege “Über Sinn und Bedeutung”, *op. cit.* p. 160.

54 *Ibid.*

55 The use / mention distinction is after all a distinction between speaking of things in the world and speaking of the elements of our language.

56 While Kaplan does not make this quite explicit, I am guessing he must have something like this in mind – though comments such as the one on Kaplan, “Quantifying In”, *op. cit.* p. 119 regarding the denotation of quotational contexts may entail otherwise. All in all, at the very least what I next suggest is available according to Kaplan's thought.

inspired by Kaplan's proposal.

Consider the nonsense from a previous example, 'felinettle' as well as the non-nonsense 'cattle'. The two expressions differ in that one has purchase in our language while the other does not; i.e. 'felinettle' is nonsense precisely because there is no such expression in the English language. But what does it mean for something to be an expression in a language? Surely not being the sort of thing that is written in a certain font or is a scribble on a page, or is a noise produced by employing one's vocal chords. Rather, an expression is a *meaningful* scribble, it is a *significant* noise, it is something of *cognitive significance* to members of a linguistic community. It is of utmost importance to recognize that when one speaks of expressions conceived as such, cognitive significance is not something over and above expressions themselves. It is not that we have the expression 'cattle' and then we have the cognitive contribution of 'cattle'. Rather, we speak about expressions, which in turn make constitutive cognitive contributions.

In conceiving of cognitive contributions as constitutive of expressions the contributions also serve as a *bona fide* criterion of individuation for expressions that can even explain how orthographically identical expressions can be different in some other way. From this criterion of individuation, we can infer that two expressions are equivalent if and only if they make the same cognitive contribution. When one quantifies over expressions, one quantifies over cognitively significant entities, which can be inter-substituted *salva veritate* with expressions that make the same cognitive contribution.⁵⁷ This elegantly avoids postulating any sort of entities Quine is uncomfortable with, while capturing the overall Fregean spirit.

We thus have a compositional semantics for quotational contexts with expressions

⁵⁷ At the moment, I do not have enough to motivate this point as well as it should be motivated. To motivate it properly, I require certain considerations about interpretation and cognitive contributions which I shall discuss in Chapter 2. I shall thus return to this point and discuss it further in Chapter 3.

as components⁵⁸ that are available for quantification. We also have a criterion of substitution – that of same cognitive contribution. With a domain of quantification (expressions), and a substitution criterion (sameness of cognitive significance), the difficulties raised by Quine are answered while retaining broadly Quinean sensibilities – we may now open up quotational packages and quantify over constituents.

This is not yet a solution to the broader problem, as we are still bereft of a satisfactory answer to the main question of §IV: who is this individual that Isabella believes is a spy? Her *de re* belief is a belief about an individual, not a belief about an expression.

§VIII. Up until now, Kaplan has shown us a domain of quantification into opaque contexts. This is not enough to capture Isabella's *de re* beliefs because there is yet a natural way to articulate who it is that she believes is a spy. This becomes apparent when employing Kaplan's notation to symbolize (6):

(13) $\exists\alpha(\text{Isabella believes “}\alpha \text{ is a spy”})$

In English, (13) says that there is an expressions such that Isabella believes of that expression that it is a spy. This does not capture Isabella's *de re* thought as it is not an expression that Isabella believes is a spy, but rather an individual.⁵⁹ To get around this, Kaplan supplements his account with a logical articulation of the connection between expressions qua elements of a language, and their referents in non-*oblique*, *vulgar*,⁶⁰ contexts. He introduces a three place relational, denotation predicate **R**, relating a

58 It should be noted that Kaplan utilizes a lively suggestion for the nature of the part whole relation between larger expressions and their constituents. Roughly, he presents it as analogous to the operation of addition: $300 + 50 + 1 = 351$, with 300, 50 and 1 analogous to each expression, and 351 analogous to the formed sentence, Cf. Kaplan, “Quantifying In”, *op .cit.* p. 123

59 *Ibid.* p. 123.

60 Cf. Kaplan, “Quantifying In”, *op .cit.* p. 112. Kaplan is quite fond of using Humean terminology in this paper. What he means by “vulgar” is merely non-intensional contexts, which are fully extensional.

speaker, an object and an expression.⁶¹ Employing **R**, the re-articulation of (13) is:

(14) $\exists\alpha(\mathbf{R}(\alpha, \text{Harry, Isabella}) \ \& \ \text{Isabella thinks "}\alpha \text{ is a spy"})$

In English, (14) reads: there exists an expression that denotes Harry for Isabella, and Isabella believes of Harry denoted by that expression that he is a spy. With **R** supplementing the rest of the view, Kaplan effectively solves the quantification puzzle, because we no longer find an inconsistency on Isabella's part. Consider her thought of Frederick's non-spyness:

(15) Isabella believes Frederick is not a spy.

And its interpretation into Kaplan's logical notation:

(16) $\exists\alpha(\mathbf{R}(\alpha, \text{Harry, Isabella}) \ \& \ \text{Isabella believes "}\alpha \text{ is not a spy"})$

In English, (16) reads, there is exists an expression that denotes Harry for Isabella, and Isabella believes of Harry denoted by that expression that he is not a spy. Also, consider the contradiction (17):

(17) $\exists\alpha(\mathbf{R}(\alpha, \text{Harry, Isabella}) \ \& \ \text{Isabella believes "}\alpha \text{ is a spy and } \alpha \text{ is not a spy"})$

In English (17) reads, there exists an expression that denotes Harry for Isabella such that she believes of Harry denoted by that expression that he is and is not a spy. Since (14) is satisfied by 'Harry' and since (16) is satisfied by 'Frederick', they are both true. (17) on the other hand is false, because there is no one expression that denotes Harry and completes the open sentence.⁶² Formally, this addresses Quine's puzzles, but not without bringing to the forefront epistemic concerns.

Kaplan recognizes that his view necessitates *extra-logical* constraints on the application of the denotation operator **R**, in order to limit its application to intuitively *de re* utterances. To elucidate these constraints, Kaplan introduces a distinction between a

61 Kaplan also introduces a sister denotation predicate Δ . He employs Δ to formalize non-speaker involving modal contexts such as necessity and possibility, and **R** to formalize speaker involving intensional contexts, such as thought and belief.

62 *Ibid.* pp. 141-142.

name's descriptive content and its genetic character.⁶³ The former maps onto user independent features of an object, while the latter maps onto features of a particular user's acquisition of beliefs of that object.

§IX. A good explanatory tool of these notions is Kaplan's picture theory.⁶⁴ Think of a picture of W.V.O. Quine that bears striking resemblance to Donald Davidson. The descriptive content of the picture explains its striking resemblance to Davidson – it encompasses the phenomenal descriptive features that are exemplified by both individuals. However, descriptive content need not only capture phenomenal features, as the picture-analogy exemplifies deeper descriptive resources. For example, while looking at a variety of pictures of Bernard Williams, one can note how some pictures better capture Williams's demeanor and temperament. Demeanor and temperament are not something that can be solely captured by giving a strictly phenomenal description, one at the very least has to talk about character. In short, the descriptive content of Quine's picture encompasses a myriad of features that form a *picture-type* that is exemplified by Davidson, Quine, and a myriad of other individuals.

In contrast, its genetic character has to do with the picture itself, i.e. the *picture-token*, and it is what determines the only one individual the picture is of, *viz* Quine. The genetic character of the picture-token depends on the genesis of the picture as it is causally connected to the person it is a picture of, regardless of who else it resembles. This can be seen in the way that pictures of identical twins are pictures of different individuals, in the way pictures of Quine may resemble Davidson more than Quine, and in the way pictures of Quine may not resemble Quine at all; for the latter, one just has to reflect on what happens when shaky photographers decide to forgo a tripod – the resulting blur is a picture of someone, though who it is of is indeterminate based solely

63 *Ibid.* p. 132.

64 *Ibid.*

on the impoverished descriptive content.

Kaplan employs these considerations to limit the application of the denotation operator **R** in the form of three constraints on quantifying in. The first constraint is *denotation*. *Denotation* requires that the descriptive content is satisfied – i.e. that there is an individual that is thus and so. The second is *vivacity*,⁶⁵ which captures the descriptive content of a name. *Prima facie*, this restriction is obscure as it is unclear how it is delimited. However, Kaplan provides enough to construct an auspicious notion of *vivacity*. The vivacity of an object for a speaker is a relation between the descriptive content of a name and how this content resembles the object it is a name *of*. The way to think about the resemblance relation is in terms of a scale ranging from a blurry picture, to an uncannily accurate one. Thus, it is a scale from at best unclear descriptive content to descriptive content that captures the individual to a tee. There is something definitely correct about vivacity, as surely there is a difference in cognitive significance between one's conception of an individual one has glanced only briefly, and one's best friend. Those sceptical need only reflect upon the difference in richness of available inferences, which are surely significant to any description of the relation between thought and its objects. Conversely, if a name is not at all vivid for a thinker, it is hard to see how it can make the right sort of cognitive contribution to have *de re* purchase in a speaker's linguistic interactions – which explains why vivacity is necessary to legitimize quantifying in. The last constraint is *of-ness*,⁶⁶ which requires that a name's origin is causally related to the object it is a name *of*. Otherwise stated, a name must have a genetic character that binds it to an object. This last requirement blocks cases where empty names such as 'Santa Claus' are vivid but are not *of* an individual. Even though many children associate rich descriptive content with 'Santa Claus', as they can list many

65 *Ibid.* p. 134.

66 *Ibid.* p. 132.

details about him right down to his supposed address, work habits, and employees, their beliefs of Santa Claus cannot be of a person as let's say, my beliefs of Hilary Putnam. Their thoughts are rather strictly general, about whomever satisfies the complex description that scaffolds their Santa Claus beliefs.

Kaplan's solution is both formal in regards to the quantification puzzle and also informal in regards to extra-logical considerations about the nature of *de re* thoughts. While these latter considerations may be questionable on grounds of arbitrariness, they do lead to reflection on the nature of the cognitive contributions of names. I shall not here reflect on Kaplan's success or failure, for now, I just want to point out that Kaplan's considerations at the very least lead to a tidy conclusion: a name must make a *certain type* of contribution in order to be bound to an external object. Over and above understanding *de re* logical structure, getting a grip on the nature of *de re* utterances, is at the very least partially getting a grip on this peculiar type of cognitive contribution.

CHAPTER 2

THE COGNITIVE CONTRIBUTIONS OF DE RE EXPRESSIONS

*A truth value cannot be a part of thought,
any more than, say the Sun can...
- Gottlob Frege*

I proposed in Chapter 1 that *de re* thoughts have a peculiar type of cognitive significance, and following Kaplan we may say that this peculiar cognitive significance originates in a relation between thinkers and objects. Kaplan showed us something about this relation by placing restrictions on believing *de re*, restrictions which are insightful because they show something about the conditions for ascribing, what we might call, “*de re* cognitive significance”. However, they reveal little or nothing about the intrinsic characteristics of *de re* cognitive significance. In this chapter, I present and assess views of these intrinsic characteristics, considering those that invoke the idea of propositional content, and those that employ non-conceptual perceptual content. Primarily, I focus on views that deploy an early-Russellian mixed account of cognitive significance. Whether any of the views are successful will hinge on whether they can preserve the unity of propositional thought while doing justice to the justificatory role of *de re* thought. I shall argue that both possible interpretations of this Russellian account are untenable. I will show on the first interpretation that *de re* thoughts lack unity, and on the second interpretation, that *de re* thoughts are insulated from judgement – and they cannot be insulated, if they are to retain their significance. I will end this chapter by suggesting that this failure warrants a re-evaluation of Fregean sense.

§I. When discussing *de re* expressions, the later Kaplan⁶⁷ opts to focus on demonstratives instead of names. The advantage is one of simplification, as demonstratives are *de re* expressions par excellence in virtue of their parasitic nature upon demonstrated objects. Kaplan's methodological shift is influenced by an early-Russellian approach, where Russell makes a distinction between logical proper names and ordinary names.⁶⁸ The former, which include demonstratives but not proper names, contribute nothing but objects, while the latter are analyzed as definite descriptions.⁶⁹ This means that it is by employing demonstratives, and not by employing ordinary names, that one can express *de re* thoughts on Russell's view. This is because ordinary names, analyzed as definite descriptions, to use the distinction introduced in Chapter 1, are at most in friction with the world but are not bound to it.

While the strict Russellian-tract is rightly found untenable by most, it does show that by binding thoughts and objects, demonstrative thoughts exemplify *de re* thought *par excellence*. To explain, demonstratives require a successful demonstration, such as a pointing towards a demonstratum⁷⁰, which intertwines the demonstrative's cognitive significance with an object. However, if the demonstration fails and no object is demonstrated, then *no* thought is expressed.

While unlike Russell, Kaplan will allow ordinary names the status of *de re* expressions, like Russell⁷¹, Kaplan thinks that *only* objects in themselves constitute the

67 Cf. David Kaplan "Demonstratives" in *Themes from Kaplan*, eds. J. Almog, J. Perry, and H. Wettstein, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989), pp. 481-564 and David Kaplan "Dthat" in French, P.A., Uehling, T.E. Jr. And Wettstein, H.K. *Contemporary Perspectives in the Philosophy of Language* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1979). Unless specifically mentioned, 'Kaplan' will from now on refer to the later Kaplan.

68 Cf. Bertrand Russell "Knowledge by Acquaintance and Knowledge by Description", in Bertrand Russell, *Problems of Philosophy*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997).

69 Cf. Bertrand Russell "On Denoting", in Bertrand Russell, *Logic and Knowledge, Essays 1901-1950*, ed. by Robert Charles Marsh (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1956).

70 There are a variety of demonstrations that we employ and pointing with one's finger is the most basic and direct.

71 Cf. Russell, "On Denoting".

cognitive contribution of *de re* expressions. Kaplan makes light of this with a hint of humor: “John himself, right there, trapped in the proposition!”⁷² This is perplexing at first, and can be read as a category mistake – one should make a distinction between objects and thought as two separate categories, on pain of otherwise sounding idealistic and cutting off any possibility of a binding relation. But there is not necessarily something occult here. The reason Kaplan thinks this way is because he eschews Fregean sense, which as we have seen, Kaplan's former self had gladly embraced.⁷³

On a descriptive interpretation of Fregean sense, the sense of subject terms, or the cognitive contribution of subject expressions, is interpreted as equivalent to that of a definite description. Kaplan understands sense in this way, that is to say descriptively, and following Frege's tenet that sense determines reference, he then infers that definite descriptions determine the objects of thought. Kaplan recognizes⁷⁴ this will not do for *de re* thoughts, as it renders them only in friction with the world but not bound to it, and it is for this reason that he eschews *de re* senses. As senses will not do,⁷⁵ Kaplan is left looking for some other cognitive contribution for *de re* expressions. In looking for a different contribution, Kaplan takes flight away from sense, and takes a Russellian route by embracing objects as constituents of thought.

Kaplan's Russellian analysis *could* boil down to either the literal interpretation, i.e. objects are literally constituents of *de re* thoughts, or to an employment of non-conceptual content as constitutive of *de re* thought. To motivate this latter option, we can reflect on how demonstrative thoughts are tied to perceptions, and as such to perceptual content. For successful communication, both speaker and listener must direct their gaze towards

72 Kaplan, “Dthat”, *op. cit.* p. 293.

73 See Chapter 1, §VII.

74 Kaplan, “Demonstratives”, *op. cit.* pp. 516-517.

75 Kaplan does not completely eschew sense when it comes to demonstratives, he just rather equates it with descriptive rules of use that are stable across all utterances. Thus, at best for Kaplan, *sense* plays a role in determining the cognitive significance of *de re* thoughts, but does not play a constitutive role.

the same object by placing themselves in perceptual states with *saliently* similar content. It is this perceptual relation between individuals and objects that gives content to demonstrative thought. The idea is that demonstratives cognitively contribute non-conceptual perceptual content and not conceptualized, descriptive Fregean sense. *De re* thoughts contain objects insofar as objects are constitutive of perceptual content – Isabella perceives an object in the world, *viz.* Harry, and she furthermore thinks of *it* that *it* is a spy. This somewhat empiricist idea is that perceptual content is conceptually unstructured and gains conceptual structure as a result of an activity of conceptualization. For those such as Kaplan, this latter step must be forgone for the subject of *de re* thoughts, because the conceptualization of such content is tantamount to a reorganization of phenomenal properties of unstructured perceptual content into a definite description. On this view, conceptualization turns an otherwise *de re* thought into a *de dicto* thought.⁷⁶ As the content of fully conceptualized thought is wholly descriptive, fully conceptualized thought can at most be in friction with the world, but cannot be bound to it. This means that fully conceptualized thought, on Kaplan's interpretation, cannot be a candidate for *de re* thought.

What follows is that *de re* thoughts have mixed content, both conceptual (expressed by predicate terms) and non-conceptual (the object itself, or conceptually unstructured perceptual content). As mentioned, Kaplan thinks that not only demonstrative expressions make a *de re* contribution, but so do proper names. He thinks this, because we can employ our view of demonstratives, whatever it may be, to do explanatory work for proper names. This employment is displayed in the link between demonstrative expressions and names, in the context of Saul Kripke's⁷⁷ causal theory⁷⁸ of

76 Cf. Kaplan, "Dthat", *op. cit.* p. 298.

77 Cf. Saul Kripke, *Naming and Necessity*.

78 I need to take caution here. While the view is often attributed to Kripke as a theory, Kripke adamantly says at many times that his proposal not being a *theory*.

names that has been developed by Gareth Evans.⁷⁹

§II. Kripke proposes that demonstrative baptisms fix the cognitive contribution of proper names in a linguistic community. This is a significant shift in the philosophy of language, one enabled by possible world semantics – a semantics that makes sense of the notions of possibility and necessity in terms of possible worlds sharing a domain of objects. In his exposition, Kripke's target is descriptivism, which he associates with both Frege and Russell.⁸⁰ More specifically, Kripke is targeting an incarnation of descriptivism, known as the “cluster-descriptive theory” of names. The cluster descriptive theory was a sort of paradigm in the philosophical *milieu* at the time of Kripke's *Naming and Necessity* lectures, and it was the result of the pressures applied to Russellian descriptivism. Cluster-descriptivism interprets the cognitive contribution of names as clusters of definite descriptions. The referent of a name is determined by who, if anyone, satisfies most, not necessarily all, definite descriptions associated with it. For example, the cognitive contribution of 'Aristotle' is supposedly equivalent to the cluster-description: the teacher of Alexander the great, the student of Plato, and the author of *De Anima*. Whoever 'Aristotle' denotes is determined by whom *most*, but not necessarily all, of these descriptions are instantiated by.

Kripke employs possible world semantics to craft examples that show how the cluster-descriptive analysis fails. He concludes that the cognitive contribution of names is bound up with their origin in a linguistic community, and has little to nothing to do with descriptions members of linguistic communities associate with them – in early Kaplanian parlance, the cognitive contribution of a name is bound to its genetic character, not to its

79 Cf. Gareth Evans, “The Causal Theory Of Names” in Gareth Evans, *Collected Papers* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002).

80 As we have seen above, if *sense* is interpreted descriptively, this association is quite correct. Of course, I do not myself think Frege should be interpreted as a descriptivist.

descriptive character. Consider Albert Einstein, and his name 'Einstein'. Many individuals will associate the name 'Einstein' with the definite description “the creator of the atom bomb”, which is a false description of Einstein. He did not create the atom bomb – members of the Manhattan project infamously did. These same individuals will also associate 'Einstein' with the description “a famous 20th century scientist”, which is satisfied by many individuals. When pressed for more, these same individuals provide descriptions of his peculiar fuzzy hair-cut, however, many others fit this description – especially famous 20th century physicists. According to the cluster theory of descriptions, these descriptions form a cluster, and whoever uniquely satisfies most, is the referent of 'Einstein'. As part of the cluster we have a false description of Albert Einstein and two descriptions that are instantiated by many individuals. So what makes it the case, on the cluster picture, that one is thinking of Albert Einstein and not of another individual satisfying the same cluster such as Richard Feynman? We seem bereft of a concrete answer without resorting to a notion of genetic character – something that the cluster descriptivist cannot resort to. But, the cluster descriptivist may still hold onto their view by claiming that there must be some definite description that these individuals have in mind. While it is hard to see what that may be, Kripke does have a stronger reply.

To understand Kripke's reply, let us return to Aristotle. Consider constructing possible worlds whose domains include Aristotle. We assign properties to Aristotle such that there is a world where descriptions true of Aristotle stand in contradiction to descriptions true of Aristotle in the actual world. Then we ask, “would Aristotle still be Aristotle if he was not x?”, where x is a variable that takes definite descriptions true of Aristotle in the actual world, as required by the cluster descriptivist. For all x, the question is answered by looking at the domain of possible worlds, and checking if there is a world such that Aristotle does not bear that property – and lo and behold, as we have constructed our set, there is a world where Aristotle does not meet any of the true definite

descriptions in the actual world, and yet, he is Aristotle. That is not to say that our intuitions never break down on this point, as we may be unable to answer the question of whether Aristotle would still be Aristotle if he was born of different parents. In view of this, Kripke embraces a sort of essentialism,⁸¹ the view that there may be some properties that are necessary to an individual's identity. But what is important is not whether that is true or not, but whether the definite description whose constituents are essential properties is what determines the referent of the name 'Aristotle', thus whether or not these properties play any role in determining the cognitive contribution of 'Aristotle'. A description of the type "the child of X and Y" where 'X' and 'Y' name Aristotle's parents, at best provides an inconclusive reference – first because their identity is wholly inconclusive for historical reasons, but more significantly, because such analysis would be no analysis as there are names within the definite description itself. 'X' and 'Y' cannot be analyzed away without further analysis contributing four names (i.e. Aristotle's grandparents) that will need further analysis, *ad infinitum*. Such an analysis could never be complete, and furthermore, its potentially infinite result cannot serve as an expression's cognitive significance that is a constituent of a temporally finite thought.

On the cluster descriptive view of proper names, once all descriptions are ascertained, to dissent to the sentence asserting the equivalence between the cluster of descriptions and the original name is tantamount to denying a semantically necessary statement, such as denying that bachelors are unmarried adult males. Having shown that none of the descriptions are essential to 'Aristotle' referring to Aristotle, the cluster description's efficacy in capturing the cognitive significance of a name is rendered moot; one may dissent without pains of irrationality. That we can cognitively detach Aristotle from all workable definite descriptions entails that there isn't a necessary relation between his name and any descriptions, indeed, it becomes questionable whether descriptions play

81 Kripke, *Naming and Necessity*, *op. cit.* p. 53.

any role in determining the reference of a name. There is no cognitive dissonance in imagining a world such that Aristotle is not Alexander's teacher, that he is not the student of Plato, and that he never wrote *De Anima*. Thus, it seems clear that there is a dislocation between the cognitive contribution of any definite description or cluster of descriptions and the cognitive contribution of 'Aristotle'.

What also seems clear is that the cognitive contributions of names are tied to what the early Kaplan calls their 'genetic character'. In light of the above argument, Kripke proposes that names are not descriptive, but rather are rigid designators, rigidly designating individuals in all possible worlds. The origin of a rigid designator is in turn connected to a recognized demonstrative act within the linguistic community. This provides a strong link between an analysis of the cognitive contributions of demonstrative expressions and the cognitive contributions of names. The suggestion lends itself to a workable analogy to a baptism, where an infant is usually held up (i.e. demonstrated) towards the community, and is assigned a name. It is in this type of act that a name gains its cognitive contribution, and it gains it according to the demonstrated object. Kripke is by no means committed to the further analysis I have presented above of the cognitive significance of demonstrative expressions, and as an extension the cognitive significance of names. My analysis should be understood as an unpacking of what it may mean, if anything, that *de re* expressions cognitively contribute their referent and nothing else. Insofar as rigid designators contribute only a designated object, they will also have to be analyzed as contributing either objects themselves, or non-conceptual, perceptual content. Minimally, for Kripke, the cognitive contributions of names are not at all descriptive, but rather, with the later Kaplan, they *causally* take on the cognitive contribution of a baptismal demonstrative.

§III. In effect, Kripke suggests that we should look out into the world for the

significance of names, much like any particular demonstration outwardly points to its object. However, it is important not to forget that names are significant to *us*, in the sense that they serve central roles in our rational cognitive activities, in making judgements, forming beliefs, and drawing inferences. I have suggested that there are two ways of interpreting the relation between names and their objects on the perspective that is shared between Kripke and Kaplan. On the first, objects are literally constituents of *de re* thoughts. On the second, non-conceptual perceptual content is constitutive of *de re* thoughts. Both articulations espouse two different types of cognitive content, respectively non-conceptual content (may it be the object itself, or perceptual content), and predicative, conceptual content. For example, Isabella's *de re* thought contains both non-conceptual content expressed by 'Harry', and conceptual content expressed by 'is a spy'.

However, while it seems we can articulate what both interpretations amount to, both face a common strand of difficulties, as it is arduous if not impossible to make cogent the interaction between two vastly different types of content in a unified thought. As I argue in the following, it is difficult to maintain unity in a way that is conducive to cognitive activities we pursue that make *de re* thoughts significant to begin with.

§IV. Let us consider the repercussions of a view that espouses objects themselves with properties or relations, by looking at the most salient proponent of such a view, a philosophical incarnation of Russell⁸². Russell argues that logically proper names contribute only objects to propositions.⁸³ Throughout his work, Russell held a

82 Russell has not held onto this view for his whole philosophical career as can be seen in Bertrand Russell, "On Propositions, what they are and how they mean" in Bertrand Russell, *Logic and Knowledge, Essays 1901-1950*, ed. by Robert Charles Marsh (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1956). Russell here is motivated by a common sensical account of mental content that admits what he calls "images" into an account of propositional content. Precisely what images are supposed to be is a bit elusive to me, and pursuing this in detail would take us far astray.

83 Propositions for Russell are that which constitutes judgement, i.e. they are what can be judged as either true or false, see Russell "On Propositions, what they are and how they mean" *op. cit.* p. 285.

compositional conception of propositional content, described as logical atomism.⁸⁴ For Russell, propositions are complex unities whose content is determined by atomic constituents. The basic parts of propositions are objects, designated by logically proper names; properties, designated by predicates; and relations, designated by relational predicates. How this works, and also the start of what I shall call the *unity difficulty*, is exemplified in Russell's early conception of propositional content.

Russell's systematic recoil from his original idealist roots challenges him to provide a non-idealist,⁸⁵ and thus non-representational,⁸⁶ articulation of the connection between mental propositional content, and an external world. On the tracks of this recoil, Russell opts for what we could call “an extreme objective naturalism”, where thought contains only thinker-independent entities. However, in order to avoid a different sort of idealism, Russell distinguishes between facts and beliefs by separating the role of predicate-terms into efficient and inert positions – in effect, he employs a constitutive rather than a type belief / fact distinction.⁸⁷ For example, Isabella's belief that Harry is a spy, is held together by the efficient relation of belief. Otherwise stated, Isabella, Harry, spyhood and the inert occurrence of being designated by 'is' are objects joined by the efficient relation of belief. In contrast, when it comes to facts, what matters is whether Harry and spyhood are *actually* united by an efficient relation of being.⁸⁸ Presented in this manner, Russell's position meets his realist demand, because what distinguishes an

84 See Bertrand Russell, *The Philosophy of Logical Atomism*, (Chicago: Open Court 1998) and Russell, “On Denoting”, Russell (1910), Russell (1919), “Truth and Falsehood”, 1912, in Bertrand Russell, *Problems of Philosophy*, Oxford University Press: 1997.

85 Cf. Thomas Ricketts, “Truth and Propositional Unity in Early Russell”, in *Future Pasts*, eds. Juliet Floyd and Sanford Shieh, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001) pg. 102.

86 This can be seen throughout Russell's work, up and including the later Russell, in Russell, “On Propositions, what they are and how they mean”, *op cit.* p. 306, where Russell defines idealism precisely at the view that counts only representational mental content as constitutive of thought.

87 Russell, “Truth and Falsehood”, *op. cit.* p. 128.

88 Russell here uses a very apt analogy of bricks and cement, where the cement is the efficacious property and the bricks are the objects that are related.

assertion of one's mental life from a fact is the constitutive relation that holds the proposition together, not something over and above the atomic elements of mind-independent reality.⁸⁹

§V. My first interpretation of direct reference does not quite capture Russell's view, because Russell does not, and need not, assent to predicative content as conceptual in the contemporary sense I employ the term. Rather, for him, predicative content constitutes relations or properties that hold between objects in a proposition. However, in virtue of his view, Russell is unable to account for how propositions are unified wholes, and *mutatis mutandis*, I shall show how the same difficulties extend to my first interpretation of direct reference.

By providing an atomistic account of propositional content, Russell must explain how propositions, conceived as unities, can be constructed out of atomic parts. Consider a basic proposition expressed by "Aristotle is human", functionally symbolized as Human(Aristotle). According to atomism, its constituents are a property, Human, and an object, Aristotle – and thus, we should be able to construct Human(Aristotle) from them alone. However, we fail to do so because ontologically atomistic objects such as Human and Aristotle can only be bound by a further relation – much like billiard balls, due to their heterogeneous atomistic nature, they do not bind on their own. In order to create a

89 It is worthwhile noting that Russell first encounters a unity difficulty in relation to his conception of a correspondence theory of truth. He finds such a conception of truth difficult to maintain, because with his limited logical ontology truth must be a property, and thus Russell ultimately finds his correspondence theory of truth inarticulable on pains of an infinite regress. In analyzing the meaning of "truth" (Richard Gaskin, "Bradley's Regress, The Copula And The Unity Of The Proposition", in *The Philosophical Quarterly* Vol. 45 No. 179 (1995)) Russell must postulate a correspondence property (Ricketts, "Truth and Propositional Unity in Early Russell", *op. cit.* pg. 105), let's say H. The satisfaction of H entails correspondence between a proposition and a fact. For p to be a true propositional belief, it means that p is H. But as p is H is itself a proposition, which in turn is truth apt, and thus, the proposition expressed by 'p is H' must in turn be true, which for the correspondence theorist just means that (p is H) is H. This results in an infinite regress that remains in the realm of belief and never reaches out to the fact that it's supposed to capture.

proposition out of them, we must introduce a further binding relation R that relates Human and Aristotle: R(Human,Aristotle). However, R, as all other propositional parts, is also atomistic and heterogeneous. Thus, when we break down R(Human,Aristotle), we remain with three atomistic constituents R, Human and Aristotle that require yet another relation to unify them into a proposition. We can of course postulate one more relation, but this will lead to another proposition R(R,Human,Aristotle) that when unpacked will require yet another unifying relation, *ad infinitum*. Because *ad infinitum* analysis is no analysis, the atomist remains with a *unity difficulty*⁹⁰.

To avoid the regress, we must show how propositional content hangs together without postulating an extra relation over and above what is expressed by subjects and predicates. The problem with holding that thought contains objects is analogously related to this difficulty. Enacting a separation in *kind* between concepts and objects forces us to conceive not only of objects, but also of properties as saturated and atomistic, and as we have seen, an atomistic conception of propositional content cannot account for propositional unity. It is worthwhile to note that the unity difficulty bears striking resemblance to the difficulties faced by Quine when giving a logical articulation of *de re* thought. The intensional articulation of Quine's proposed solution⁹¹ is mysterious precisely because it is unclear what the connection is between attributes conceived atomically and objects that satisfy them – and this is further obscured by instead thinking a sentence true of an object.

If we treat propositional content as heterogeneous and atomistic, we no longer can account for the unity of a proposition, a point which receives apt expression in F.H. Bradley's critique of Russell⁹²:

90 It is worthwhile to note that this difficulty runs through analytic philosophy up to and including Davidsonian truth-conditional semantics cf. Donald Davidson *Truth and Predication*, (Belknap Press: 2005).

91 See Chapter 1 §V.

92 F.H. Bradley, "On Appearance, Error and Contradiction", in *Mind*, No. 74 (1910), p. 179.

On the one side, I am led to think that [Russell] defends a strict pluralism, for which nothing is admissible beyond simple terms and external relations. On the other side, Mr. Russell seems to assert emphatically, and to use throughout, ideas which such a pluralism surely must repudiate. He throughout stands upon unities which are complex and which cannot be analyzed into terms and relations. These two positions to my mind are irreconcilable, since the second, as I understand it, contradicts the first flatly. If there are such unities, and, still more, if such unities are fundamental, then pluralism surely is in principle abandoned as false.

Bradley argues that Russell cannot hold onto a plurality (thus onto an atomistic heterogeneous conception of propositions) and also maintain propositional unity – unities are homogeneous in virtue of being unities. This means that we may not help ourselves to objects as constituents of thought, because if we do so, we effectively cannot also help ourselves to whole propositions.

I do not believe the difficulty this poses to an account of *de re* thought is insurmountable, that is, if we can get a grip on how *de re* thought can be homogeneous and not idealistic. The first step to doing so is understanding why Frege does not have a unity difficulty, and furthermore, how it is that this connects to his conception of singular terms having a *sense*. I shall return to this in Chapter 3, but for now, let us consider the second interpretation, which employs non-conceptual perceptual content as the cognitive contribution of *de re* expressions.

§VI. We are now considering a view that employs non-conceptual perceptual content as constitutive of the cognitive contribution of *de re* expressions. The cogency of this idea relies upon perceptual content having a non-conceptual structure. Thus, in order to find whether we can make sense of non-conceptual content as what *de re* terms express, I will next assess the most relevant articulations of how it is that non-conceptual content plays some constitutive role in perception.

Non-conceptual content is presented in terms of a reflection upon the nature of

our perceptual system as delivering information gathered by our sense modalities. We can think of our sense modalities as forming a perceptual informational system⁹³ whose role is delivering information about the world to thought. The difference between non-conceptual and conceptual content is a distinction between the way this information is structured. There are a variety of ways of understanding non-conceptual content and thus the precise difference is a matter of contention in the literature. What is shared among non-conceptualists is the idea that conceptual content is produced only when non-conceptual content is actively organized conceptually. In what follows, I shall mostly focus on Gareth Evans' use of non-conceptual content, as his presentation lends itself well to our inquiry into *de re* cognitive contributions.

There are a variety of reasons to assent to a notion of non-conceptual content. For example, we may think that we fundamentally share perceptual experience with non-rational creatures, and because these creatures are thought to lack conceptual capacities, the perceptual content we share cannot be conceptually structured, but rather must be non-conceptual. Even if we think this, we must take care, as some non-conceptualists, such as Evans,⁹⁴ do not credit the deliverances of perception the status of experience without qualification, because experience is the deliverance of content to “a *thinking, concept-applying, and reasoning system*.”⁹⁵ Evans uses the term “reasoning system” to refer to what is responsible for paradigmatic rational activities such as judging, inferring, believing and rational scrutiny. This conception of a reasoning system is at least partially meant to map onto Kant's notion of *spontaneity*. Whether this is wholly appropriate or not I shall not discuss here, but at the very least the notion does fit the way John McDowell⁹⁶ employs the term “spontaneity” and for the sake of brevity and exposition, I shall

93 I have in mind here something similar to Gareth Evans' informational system, Cf. Gareth Evans, *The Varieties of Reference*, Chapter 5, especially pp. 122-129.

94 Evans, *The Varieties of Reference*, *op. cit.* p. 158

95 *Ibid.*

96 Cf. McDowell, *Mind and World*, *op. cit.* p. 4.

appropriate the term and its McDowellian use.

What we share with non-human animals is not experience in the strict sense, but rather deliverances of the perceptual system. What makes these deliverances *bona fide* experiences in rational subjects is their role as input to spontaneity.⁹⁷ This conception of perceptual experience lends itself to an exposition of creature-world interaction as a production line. Information in the form of non-conceptual content is gathered by the senses at the periphery and is labeled either visual, tactile, auditory, olfactory, or gustatory. The non-conceptual content passes through several stations on the production line,⁹⁸ of which rational creatures have an extra conceptualization station that structures the content such that it can figure in spontaneity.

§VII. The operation of this conceptualization station is conceived as limited by one's conceptual development. For example, a musical neophyte such as Isabella may be unable to distinguish chords individually. With training, she progressively hones her conceptual auditory ability by sharpening her judgements. In honing her judgements she may start recognizing C chords but not distinguish between types of C chords, and progressively make her way to recognizing a C major chord with little or no difficulty. It may be vague when it is that she can be said to have gained the C Major chord concept without qualification, but the point is that Isabella's experience has changed when she attained mastery of the relevant concept. For us to understand how it is that Isabella has attained a skill, and not merely that her experience has changed without progress, we must make sense of her being perceptually affected by the same stimulus both in her neophytic state and in her mastery – in other words, we must make sense of her struggling with the same experiential content. It seems that to explain this, with the Evansian non-

97 See Evans, *The Varieties of Reference*, *op. cit.* p. 158 and McDowell, *Mind and World*, *op. cit.* p. 49.

98 For example, one of these stations may be an instinctual station, where if a tactile content is received from the hand that displays extreme heat, will automatically cause the hand to move away.

conceptualist, we must conceive of Isabella's auditory perceptual system as receiving non-conceptual content that has the proper structure for conceptualization as a C Major. Before honing her musical skills, instead of experiencing a C Major, Isabella experiences an indistinct sound from which she cannot draw the rich inferences that are warranted after full blown conceptualization, but supposedly, non-conceptually she is faced by the same content both before and after gaining the conceptual ability.

This point is often supported by an appeal to the richness of experience in contrast to the paucity of our conceptual abilities. For example, Evans appeals to the color spectrum in order to show it is implausible that we possess concepts for each shade we can distinguish against a background of other shades. The idea is that perceptual impingements admit of distinctions in tandem with experience that cannot be re-enacted in spontaneity while retaining the same richness. So while in a certain perceptual state I may distinguish between crimson and candy red, this does not entail that I can also do so in free thought. If I possessed concepts for all red shades, there would be no reason that it should follow that I may be unable to make the same distinctions in free thought. The structure of experience supposedly cannot be conceptual, precisely because we appear to lack concepts to fully delineate it. The most sophisticated articulation of this point directly in relation to *de re* thought can be found in the work of Tyler Burge.⁹⁹ Burge argues that perceptual states that lend content to *de re* thought are too multifaceted to admit of conceptual structuring. Rather, *de re* thought is conceptually incomplete *par excellence*, and is completed by external contextual, non-conceptual elements. Consider a cold winter day,¹⁰⁰ where a variety of natural elements coalesce into a frigid wind. On this day, Isabella decides to visit Frederick in order to relay an important piece of information. Upon arriving, Isabella says to Frederick, “The wind is exceptionally

99 Tyler Burge “Belief *de re*”, *Journal of Philosophy*, 75, 119-138 (1977).

100 Burge employs a piano example, and while the point is roughly the same, I believe an example of a frigid wind better communicates the idea due to its cross modal nature.

menacing today.” The thought she expresses is *de re*, as she has a particular wind in mind. The cognitive significance of 'the wind' for Isabella is individuated by a multitude of perceptual bombardments of her senses. It is individuated by the cold feeling in her fingers, the burning sensations on her cheeks, the pressure it applies to her body, and the whirring sounds whizzing by, to mention a few. It is these deliverances of her sense modalities that add up to the cognitive significance of 'the wind'. To think that Isabella has conceptual grip on every single feature as it impinges upon her at various degrees seems, to Evans and Burge, intuitively preposterous, so to explain how Isabella thinks *de re* of the frigid wind in all its glory, they appeal to non-conceptual perceptual content as input to spontaneity.

§VIII. Let us return to the C-major chord, and reflect on a case where Isabella thinks *de re* of the sound, expressed by “that is pleasant” first before she gains the relevant conceptual ability, and then after. Her two thoughts are *of* the same object, *viz* the same sound, just as Isabella's thought is of Harry himself. In ascribing the thought, we must capture this commonality, while maintaining that the experiences are conceptually different.¹⁰¹ On Kaplan's proposal, the sound itself is constitutive of both thoughts, and since we cannot help ourselves to the literal interpretation of this claim on pains of the unity difficulty, we must otherwise capture the commonality. Due to the radically different conceptualizations, it is at best unclear whether the two conceptualized experiences have anything in common. Conceptually, the pre-training indistinct sound is equivalent to other auditory experiences, while the post-training C-major chord is not.¹⁰²

101 Without doubt, some will think there is something fishy about my treating sounds as particular objects that can be re-experienced. That said, one can easily replace the chords with a particular instrument that one cannot recognize, for example, making a distinction between a violin and a viola – Isabella may at first be unable to distinguish a particular violin from a particular viola, but later on, as she learns more about the two instruments she is able to distinguish between the two without any difficulty.

102 This point is even clearer in Isabella's relationship with Harry. Her conception of Harry and Frederick spelled out descriptively are entirely divergent, as they each could be satisfied by different individuals.

By employing a notion of raw non-conceptual content impinging upon Isabella's spontaneity, we can recapture a common basis for the two thoughts that does not appeal to constitutive objects. It is *of* the non-conceptual auditory content that Isabella believes it is pleasant, regardless of the manner it is conceptualized – the predicate attaches to the non-conceptual content as subject.

On this non-conceptualist view, a *de re* demonstrative thought-ascription ascribes a belief of a particular non-conceptual perceptual content, whose conceptualization is irrelevant because the conceptualized content is not a constituent of the thought ascribed. This captures the recoil from a descriptive Fregean conceptualized conception of the cognitive contribution of *de re* terms, as what is constitutive of *de re* thoughts, while not the object itself, is raw perceptual content whose causal perceptual terminus is the object itself.

§IX. I think, however, that the position is untenable. The position has the unfortunate repercussion that the experiential content that is part of *de re* thoughts, in virtue of containing non-conceptual content, cannot serve a role in *spontaneity*, in the sense that it cannot justify judgements. Evans, showing his Kantian roots,¹⁰³ recognizes that judgement must be conceptual in structure in order to serve the sort of demanding role that spontaneity requires.¹⁰⁴ Evans' point, remember, is that experience is structurally non-conceptual and it is experience only insofar as it is input to spontaneity. So, it is experience only insofar as it can be conceptualized into a judgement, which engages the conceptual repertoire of empirical concepts that enables it to integrate into one's world-

Any commonality between the two is merely accidental and what we need is a necessary commonality.

103 Evans makes a distinction between intuitions, which he understands as non-conceptual, and experience which he considers conceptualized insofar as experience is a judgement that things are thus and so.

104 Evans, *The Varieties of Reference*, *op. cit.* p. 157, as well as Gareth Evans, "Things Without The Mind", in *Philosophical Subjects: Essays Presented to P.F. Strawson*, ed. Zak van Straaten, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1980), p. 88, where Evans points out that we cannot distinguish objects of our experience without a surrounding theory.

view.¹⁰⁵ The reason for this can be summed up into the Kantian slogan that intuitions without concepts are blind.¹⁰⁶ For a Kantian, an intuition is an immediate cognition through an impingement of the world upon an individual, so one can see how Evans' notion of experience maps onto the Kantian notion of an intuition. The point of this slogan is that we cannot make sense of experience's grip on judgement if the content of experience is not organized in a way that allows for rational evaluation. Intuitions conceived as bare presences, *viz.* non-conceptual content, by definition have been postulated to lack conceptual structure, and so, it is difficult to see how non-conceptual content can constrain judgement while lacking a rational structure, because what gives non-conceptual content a *rationaly salient structure* cannot come from the world itself, but rather must come about internally from the subject. If the constraining structure comes from inside, experience cannot constrain judgement. This means that not only is there is a deep explanatory gap in the explanation for how non-conceptual deliverances of the perceptual system can constrain judgement, but also that it is theoretically *impossible* that they can do so. And if we postulate structure that is of rational import in perceptual non-conceptual content, then it becomes unclear just what the distinction between conceptual and non-conceptual content is – I suspect, all in all, that there is none.

What a non-conceptualist view such as Evans' does, is infuse intuitions with non-conceptual content, in effect, blinding them in such a way that it becomes precarious to still call the infusion “content”. McDowell aptly articulates this in terms of the Myth of the Given, when he says that the non-conceptualist provides “exculpations where we wanted justifications”.¹⁰⁷ The non-conceptualist only provides exculpations because she cannot explain how it is that non-conceptual content can be justificatory. Rather, she simply assumes that it is so, an assumption that is shown by the above considerations to

105 McDowell, *Mind and World*, *op. cit.* p. 29.

106 *Ibid.* pp. 53-54.

107 *Ibid.* p. 8.

be incoherent.

In virtue of being bound to objects, *de re* thoughts bear the structure of assertions that things are thus and so, which means that they naturally lend themselves to judgement. Their binding nature suggests that there is no distance between *de re* thought and the world. McDowell says that “thought can be distanced from the world by being false, but there is no distance from the world implicit in the very idea of thought.”¹⁰⁸ In the context of *de re* thought, McDowell's view is especially transparent. While *de re* thought can be distanced from the world by being false, by its very nature it is also bound to it. The only way that *de re* thoughts can be false is if they get a feature of the world wrong, but they cannot be unbound from the world all-together. In entertaining a *de re* thought of Harry, Isabella can directly make a judgement, in the case of our ongoing example, that he, Harry, is a spy. She can be wrong if Harry is not a spy, but she cannot be wrong in the sense that her thought does not connect with an object at all.

If non-conceptual content is constitutive of the cognitive significance of names and demonstratives, then it is perplexing how it is that *de re* belief is justified. In effect, experience that lends itself to *de re* belief, in virtue of its constituents, is insulated from judgement. And if experience *cannot* impose rational constraint on *de re* judgements, then it becomes difficult to explain how the world can at all constrain what we believe. If we have beliefs about the world at all, we must be able to have beliefs about particular constituents in the world,¹⁰⁹ and if experience of those constituents cannot justify our beliefs of them, what else could? This means that the appeal to non-conceptual content as constitutive of the cognitive significance of *de re* thought is inexpiable, on pain of losing grip of the constraints the world places on our epistemic states.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.* p. 26.

¹⁰⁹ I have in mind here what may be called a Strawsonian argument, in the sense that without a notion of particulars about which we can think of, it is hard to see how we can maintain a notion of an external world. Cf. P.F. Strawson, *Individuals* (London: Methuen, 1959)

Both interpretations of Kaplan's claim that objects are constitutive of *de re* thought are either untenable on a literal interpretation, or inexpiable on an expanded interpretation. The flight from sense has landed us in tumultuous waters and this is enough to suggest that the flight itself may have resulted from a misunderstanding. I believe we have found ourselves here not out of necessity, but rather out of a forced descriptive interpretation of sense. In the next chapter, I will argue that Fregean sense need not be interpreted as descriptive, but rather should be interpreted as capturing the cognitive contributions of expressions, much as I have presented the early Kaplan hinting towards.

CHAPTER 3

RETURNING TO OUR SENSES, HOLISM AND COGNITIVE SIGNIFICANCE

Certainly it appears unlikely that we will get closer to the real nature of human experience by leaving behind the particularity of our human point of view...
-Thomas Nagel

I concluded in Chapter 2 that we cannot make cogent interpretations of cognitive contributions of *de re* expressions either as objects in themselves, nor as non-conceptual perceptual content. The flight from Fregean sense has been unsuccessful, and as I shall go on to argue, unnecessary. My goal in the following is to present a way to interpret Fregean sense that avoids the pitfalls that we have seen other views fall prey to, that is minimally substantive, and that does justice to our rich rational and cognitive interactions with the world. In doing so, I will unearth the reasons behind the quantification puzzle, and show that it can be overcome at a cognitive level, though not at an extensional formal level. I will also show how it is that we can think of mental content as conceptual and holistic in regards to belief and thought ascriptions. This latter point is at least in part epistemic, with regard to how it is that we interact with our world in thought and belief, which is precisely the reason that I have originally provided for why it is that *de re* thought and belief are both crucial and interesting.

§I. There are many passages in Frege that suggest descriptive interpretations of sense. The most attractive passage for the descriptivist appears in a footnote, where Frege seemingly identifies two senses of 'Aristotle' with two definite descriptions.

In the case of an actual proper name such as 'Aristotle' opinions as to the sense may differ. It might, for instance, be taken to be the following: the pupil of Plato and the

teacher of Alexander the Great. Anybody who does this will attach another sense to the sentence 'Aristotle was born in Stagira' than will someone who takes the sense of the name: the teacher of Alexander the Great who was born in Stagira.¹¹⁰

This passage invites a descriptive interpretation because, it seems, that by employing the verb 'to be', Frege is proposing an equivalence in sense between 'Aristotle' and the definite description that follows. I do not think this is correct, and I discuss why in the following section. For now, I only aim to diagnose motivations.

I suspect that besides Frege's own comments on sense, the descriptive interpretation is motivated by a distinctive view of what is conceptual.¹¹¹ In "Concept and Object"¹¹², Frege talks of concepts as what is expressed by predicate terms,¹¹³ which suggests that the sphere of the conceptual is equivalent to the sphere of concepts; and the only subject expressions that fit this understanding of conceptuality are definite descriptions. The temptations for this equivalence date back to Kantian roots, because for the Kantian, the sphere of the conceptual is what is organized by the categories, and the categories, while far less numerous, are roughly equivalent in role to Fregean concepts. Since Fregean sense is equated with what is conceptual, and since the conceptual is equated with the descriptive, the temptation is to equate sense with what is descriptive. Kaplan,¹¹⁴ amongst others, motivates this descriptive reading by citing a passage in Feigl's translation of Frege, where it appears that Frege equates sense with descriptive, qualitative and situational features of the designated object:

[...]the sense (connotation, meaning) of the sign in which is contained the manner and context of presentation of the denotation of the sign.¹¹⁵

110 Frege, "Über Sinn und Bedeutung", footnote B.

111 I have briefly discussed this in Chapter 2 §I.

112 Gottlob Frege "Concept and Object" in *The Frege Reader*, ed. Michael Beaney, (Oxford: Blackwell, 1997).

113 *Ibid.* 182.

114 Cf. Kaplan, "Dthat".

115 Gottlob Frege, "Über Sinn und Bedeutung", translated by Feigl, in *Readings in Philosophical Analysis*, eds. H. Feigl and W. Sellars, (New York, 1949).

The language of containment is exhaustive, in that there is nothing constitutive of sense over and above the manner and context of presentation. When we speak of context, we often mean a description of the surrounding environment and likewise when we speak of a manner of presentation, we often mean a description that captures the salient elements of the object presented. We often speak this way of the manner in which individuals present themselves. They may be kind, well-dressed, mild-mannered, short-tempered, blue, witty, sharp amongst many other descriptions. Kaplan must have something like this in mind when he interprets the above passage, because he ultimately regards sense in this way explicitly when he recognizes that by interpreting the cognitive contribution of *de re* terms as sense, he turns an otherwise singular *de re* proposition into a general *de dicto* one:

What I am confident of is that if we force all phenomena that suggest a special *demonstrative* use of language, along with what I regard as a corresponding feature—a special singular form of proposition—into the Fregean mold of linguistic elements with a sense and a denotation, the sense being the element which appears in the proposition (thus leaving us with only general propositions), then important insights will be lost.¹¹⁶

It would not be the case that we remain with only general propositions if he interpreted sense otherwise than descriptively, as it is only in turning a singular subject term into a description that we get a general *de dicto* proposition out of a *de re* one.

Kaplan's stance echoes John Perry,¹¹⁷ whom, unlike Kaplan, argues that Fregean sense cannot have a place in an analysis of demonstratives. He disagrees with Kaplan's interpretation of demonstrative senses as the character of demonstratives,¹¹⁸ because, as he correctly argues, the interpretation entails not only that senses are incomplete, but also that they can only be completed by something that is not sense. This is something that

116 Kaplan, "Dthat", *op. cit.* p. 298.

117 John Perry, "Frege On Demonstratives", in *The Philosophical Review*, LXXXVI, No. 4 (1977).

118 Perry calls the character of demonstratives 'role'.

Frege would not be sympathetic to, as it would mean that more than sense is constitutive of thought, which he explicitly denies.¹¹⁹ There are a variety of reasons for Frege's denial of a heterogeneous understanding of thought, but as we have seen, a central and important reason is the unity difficulty. Besides roles as senses, Perry attempts other interpretations of Fregean sense and finds them unsatisfactory. I shall forgo their content, as what is most telling, is his methodology displayed in his conclusion:

How can we extract from a demonstrative an appropriate completing sense? Such a sense, it seems would have to be intimately related to the sense of a unique description of the value of the demonstrative in the context of utterance. But where does such a description come from? 'Today' seems only to get us to a day.¹²⁰

In this passage, Perry's interpretation of sense is clearly descriptive. As Perry rejects Kaplan's character interpretation of demonstrative sense, he is left thinking that the *only* alternative is to find some other *descriptive* contribution for each use of a demonstrative expression. In virtue of looking for something that can *only* be in friction with the world but not bound to it, Perry finds no descriptive contribution that is bound to the demonstrated object. The only thing that Perry does think will do is the *Bedeutung* itself, thus an object. As I have shown in Chapter 2, Perry's view, in virtue of being identical to Kaplan's in this respect, is untenable either on pains of the unity difficulty or on pains of insulating *de re* thought from judgement.

§II. The descriptive interpretation of Fregean sense has been a matter of much contention. Evans is its most prominent critic, first in a paper¹²¹ aimed directly at Perry's interpretation, and also in *The Varieties of Reference*.¹²² Evans begins his criticism with a

119 See Frege, "Über Sinn und Bedeutung", *op. cit.* p. 158 where Frege remarks that the Sun itself could not be part of thought, as it is not a sense.

120 Perry, "Frege on Demonstratives", *op. cit.* p. 485.

121 Cf. Gareth Evans, "Understanding Demonstratives" in *The Collected Papers of Gareth Evans*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985).

122 See Evans, *The Varieties of Reference*, *op. cit.* pp. 7-38.

key suggestion of Michael Dummett's¹²³ that warns of the misconceptions that lead to descriptive interpretations of sense.

Indeed, even when Frege is purporting to give the sense of a word or symbol, what he actually states is what the reference said: and, for anyone who has not clearly grasped the relation between sense and reference, this fact makes his hold on the notion of sense precarious. The sense of an expression is the mode of presentation of the referent: in saying what the referent is, we have to choose a particular way of saying this ... In a case in which we are concerned to convey, or stipulate, the sense of the expression, we shall choose that means of stating what the referent is which displays the sense: we might here borrow a famous pair of terms from the *Tractatus*, and say that, for Frege, we say that the referent of a word is, and thereby we show what its sense is.¹²⁴

Dummett's remark suggests that descriptive interpretations of sense are misleading because they do not consider the explanatory difficulty in articulating the sense and reference distinction. He himself employs the *Tractarian*¹²⁵ saying and showing distinction in order to *show* the difference between sense and reference, because it is not something that can be strictly articulated. If sense is what is expressed, then one cannot provide a second order explanatory linguistic articulation because any articulation will constitute more expressions that if cognitively significant, will themselves express senses – thus, one ends up explaining sense with more sense, rendering any articulation circular. With this in mind, Dummett suggests that sense is not something that is said, but rather what is *shown* in employing expressions. More accurately, it is what is wholly constitutive of thoughts grasped when expressions are *used*. Thinking in this manner renders null and void both a descriptive account of sense and both Perry and Kaplan's critiques of *de re* sense. In arguing that the cognitive contribution of *de re* expressions differs from any description, they prove Frege's point, as this shows that *de re* expressions

123 Michael Dummett, *Frege: Philosophy of Language*, London, Duckworth: 1973.

124 *Ibid.* p. 227.

125 Cf. Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*, *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*, translated by D.F. Pears and B.F. McGuinness, (New York: The Humanities Press, 1961).

have a unique sense that is different from the sense of any definite description. In other words, Kaplan and Perry, following Kripke, employ Fregean sense under the guise of an appeal to cognitive significance in order to show that there is something different grasped from a proper name than from any definite description, in effect, undercutting their own position.

With this in mind, Evans' key suggestion is that in cases such as Hesperus and Phosphorus, we must be attentive to the way the referent, *viz* the planet itself, is presented in utilizing each expression, without equating their contributions to what is expressed by definite descriptions. To understand what this means, it is important that we understand the nature of modes of presentation and how it is that they can render us rational when by extensional means alone we are irrational. Otherwise stated, we have to understand *how* certain ways of presenting objects in thought are employed over others. So let us proceed.

In support of this interpretation, relating directly to *de re* thought, Evans¹²⁶ and McDowell¹²⁷ have argued that an expression cannot have a sense without having a referent. Their respective arguments are based on Frege's claim that senses are modes of presentation of referents,¹²⁸ such that if there is no referent, then there is nothing to be presented. If there is nothing to be presented, then there cannot be a mode of presentation, and if there cannot be a mode of presentation, then there cannot be a sense. The descriptive interpretation of Frege ultimately holds that there cannot be such a thing as a *de re* sense precisely because there is no binding relation between definite descriptions and objects. On the other hand, if the sense of *de re* expressions is bound to their referents in the way that modes of presentation are bound to objects they are modes of presentation of, then there is no concern that *de re* expressions conceived as having

126 Evans, "Understanding Demonstratives", *op. cit.* p. 297.

127 John McDowell, "On the Sense and Reference of a Proper Name", in *Meaning, Knowledge & Reality* by John McDowell, (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 1998).

128 See Frege, "Über Sinn und Bedeutung", *op. cit.* p. 152.

both sense and reference are only in friction with the world but not bound to it. The binding comes precisely from the parasitic relation between a mode of presentation and the object it is a mode of presentation of – the cognitive contribution, *viz* the sense of singular terms, is bound to a referent, and it is in this way that sense determines reference.

The primary difficulty with Evans' and McDowell's accounts, is the resulting treatment of empty proper names. If I say “Isabella would be delighted to meet Sherlock Holmes.” my utterance at least appears to have a sense as it seems that a thought is expressed. This is not to claim that it is a *de re* sentence, precisely because the proper names within it are fictional, and thus empty. What seems preposterous, is to claim that the two names do not make a cognitive contribution at all, and Frege's view seems ultimately to be this apparently preposterous claim. Frege often regards empty proper names as defective,¹²⁹ much in the same way and for the same reasons that he regards vague concept terms as defective.¹³⁰ Evans notes that this is in tension with other comments, as Frege often insists that senses need not connect to objects in fictional discourse.¹³¹ That said, both Evans and McDowell are happy to take on Frege's less reluctant views, and treat empty names as defective.¹³²

While I broadly agree with Evans and McDowell, I feel uneasy about their regard of empty names as defective. The name 'Odysseus' seems to function very well in the context of Homer's *Odyssey*, the name 'Sherlock Holmes' seems to function well in the prose of Arthur Conan Doyle, and the names of my own fictitious characters 'Isabella', 'Harry' and 'Frederick' also seem to function well in my examples. So what does it mean

129 Frege, “Über Sinn und Bedeutung”, *op. cit.* p. 163.

130 For an in-depth discussion of this, see Evans, “Understanding Demonstratives”, *op. cit.* p. 297.

131 See Frege, “Über Sinn und Bedeutung”, *op. cit.* p. 157 in regards to Odysseus. Some, such as Gareth Evans and John McDowell have argued that this stands in tension with Frege's overall view of sense – i.e. that there can be no sense if there is not a referent. I don't quite think this is correct and I will discuss why later in the chapter. For Evan's and McDowell's thoughts on this, see Evans, *The Varieties of Reference*, and McDowell, “On the Sense and Reference of a Proper Name”.

132 McDowell, “On The Sense and Reference of a Proper Name”, *op. cit.* p. 184 and Evans, *The Varieties of Reference*, *op. cit.* p. 29.

to say that they are defective? It seems that what Evans means when he, with Frege, claims that empty names are defective is that by lacking a referent, empty names cannot make a contribution to the truth value of sentences they are embedded within. The senses of whole sentences are modes of presentation of their truth values, and thus, *mutatis mutandis*, if a sentence is not truth-apt in virtue of containing constituents that do not have referents, then no truth value can be presented, which means that the whole sentence cannot express a sense. If we stick to our solely intellectual roots and regard truth as the aim of discourse, then we can see how sentences that cannot have a truth value are defective, and we can also see how it is that constituent empty names cause the defect. There are a few occasions when Frege considers fictional utterances of empty names only *as if* discourse, that is sensible only in so far one *pretends* that the empty names refer. As I wrote above, Frege is at times clear that he does think sentences that contain empty names have a sense, but do not necessarily have a truth value, or at the very least the truth value is not important, which is clearly in tension with his thesis that senses of sentences are modes of presentation of their referents, *viz* truth values. There is something disingenuous in portraying fictional discourse, such as poetry and prose, as akin to mere play, as it is often the case that it provides us a better grasp of our world and our humanity than scientific discourse. I think that while Frege's views are indeed in tension as Evans and McDowell claim, we should at least find motivation in the richness of fictional discourse to appease this tension in such a way as to not undercut either fictional discourse, or scientific discourse. I want to make clear that I do not purport to have a solution to the problem of empty names. It is an immensely difficult problem with repercussions in many areas of philosophy, from linguistic problems to problems of rationality. That said, I do think that the considerations at the end of this chapter may contribute a novel way to think about the issue. However, I am uncertain whether they will provide any solace to those, myself included, that are in the grip of these difficulties.

§III. For now, let us return to the close tie between sense and truth. Insofar as whole sentences are truth apt, as *de re* sentences must be as they are about particular objects, they express a unified sense, or a unified proposition whose content is that things are thus and so. We have seen above that when treating the cognitive contributions of sentence parts as atomistic, we face the unity difficulty. Frege is aptly aware of this, and he furthermore recognizes that there is a strict distinction in logical ontology between concepts, which are expressed by predicate terms, and objects, which are expressed by subject terms. Frege's conclusion is that concepts are incomplete,¹³³ because concept expressions cannot be genuinely cognitively significant on their own, but only in their completion by objects – to explain my use of 'cognitive significance' up to and beyond this point, with Frege, I understand complete thoughts as the paradigm of cognitive significance, whose constituents are cognitive contributions.¹³⁴ Propositions cannot be split into their constituents in a substantive way as on Russell's view, because upon enacting such a split, one is left with an incomplete constituent that makes a cognitive contribution only when part of a thought, but not on its own. Also, both subject and predicate terms express senses, and thus, unlike Russell, Fregean propositions are homogeneous in regards to the type of their constituents. The two symptoms of the unity difficulty, an atomism and a heterogeneous conception of propositions, are absent in Fregean analysis, and it is precisely for this reason that Frege does not have a unity difficulty.

133 Frege, "On Concept and Object", *op. cit.* p. 193.

134 There is a parallel between Frege and the early Russell on the one hand, and Aristotle and Plato on the other. Oddly enough, it is Russell that ends up taking up the platonic stance, where concepts are complete entities that are elements of acquaintance (this can be seen in Russell, "Knowledge by Acquaintance and Knowledge by Description", where Russell claims we must be acquainted with universals, where 'universals' is used to designate concepts). Frege's position on the other hand turns out to be more Aristotelian, in the sense that concepts are incomplete when disconnected from objects that instantiate them.

That is not to say that Frege's view is uncontentious. Frege was criticized on his treatment of concepts by Benno Kerry, on the score that concepts can and do serve as subject terms, which threatens propositional unity in Frege, because subjects qua objects must be complete, which means, if Kerry is right, that concepts must also be complete when serving as subjects.

Kerry thinks he has shown how Frege's concept and object distinction cannot be absolute, by giving examples of sentences whose subjects are concepts, such as: "The concept "horse" is a concept easily attained." Kerry infers that since the sentence is not non-sense, then it must be the case that the strict concept and object distinction is at best loose, and at worst untenable. Frege replies to Kerry by pointing out that the subject of sentences such as the above are not concepts, but rather objects designated by the whole subject expression,¹³⁵ in this case, "the concept "horse"", which can no more be used predictively than the names 'Hesperus' and 'Vesuvius'.¹³⁶ Frege's point can be articulated in terms of cognitive contributions of expressions. Kerry is mistaken precisely because the cognitive contribution of the subject-term 'the concept horse' is not the same as the cognitive contribution of the predicate term 'is a horse' in 'Seabiscuit is a horse', which entails that there are different senses expressed, that are such that they present different referents.¹³⁷ We can here furthermore employ a tactic I have ascribed to Frege previously, by paying attention to the *use* of each expression in natural language without expecting uniform contributions from typographically identical expressions. Upon reflection, this tactic reveals that the contribution in the latter sentence is incomplete, and is completed into a proposition by the addition of the object denoted by 'Seabiscuit', and thus it cannot

135 Frege, "On Concept and Object", *op. cit.* p. 187.

136 I do realize that there is a hint of irony here when considering how I have begun, but one should notice that even there, that the cognitive contribution of the predicative use of 'quine' is completely different than its use as a subject term which refers to Quine himself.

137 Besides Frege, "On Concept and Object", see also Gottlob Frege, "Comments on Sinn and Bedeutung", in *The Frege Reader*, ed. Michael Beaney (Oxford: Blackwell, 1997) pp. 174-175.

be equivalent to the former contribution of the whole subject term which is complete.

Richard Gaskin¹³⁸ has raised concerns about Frege's *solution*¹³⁹ that consciously re-assert Kerry's critique. He quickly dispatches with the Fregean account of propositional unity in light of its failure to quantify over concepts, or more basically, of its failure to account for concepts figuring as subject terms. To Gaskin, as well as to David Wiggins¹⁴⁰, it seems plausible that we can quantify over concepts. For example, we can say that there is a concept that is satisfied by both Mahler and Mozart, i.e. $\exists \partial(\partial(\text{Mahler}) \ \& \ \partial(\text{Mozart}))$, which is made true by the concept expressed by 'composer'. Gaskin's own solution proposes that the infinite regress that is the unity difficulty is not vicious, but rather is virtuous by serving as an explanation for the infinite expressibility of our language out of a finite set of expressions. On the other hand, Wiggins' solution¹⁴¹ suggests that the copula 'is' should be taken seriously as what attaches to a concept-term rendering it unsaturated – in this manner, we can maintain that concept terms have a referent, but when they are combined with the copula 'is', the resulting expression is unified, unsaturated and incomplete, and requires completion by an object in order to be cognitively significant. As Wiggins articulates it, proper substantial reference drops out of the picture in complex, unified, predicate expressions.¹⁴²

Gaskin's rejection of Frege's account fails on the same counts as Kerry's, as Gaskin assumes that the predicative use and the subject term use of 'horse' is cognitively the same. On the other hand, Wiggins' exemplifies the Fregean spirit by paying close attention to the contribution of expressions one by one. I am still a bit suspicious of

138 Richard Gaskin, "Bradley's Regress, The Copula, and the Unity of the Proposition", in *The Philosophical Quarterly*, Vol. 45. No. 179 (1995), pp. 161-180.

139 I place "solution" in italics because technically, Frege just does not have this problem, so there is no need for a solution.

140 David Wiggins, "The Sense and Reference of Predicates: A Running Repair to Frege's Doctrine and a Plea for the Copula" in *The Philosophical Quarterly*, Vol. 34, No. 136 (1984).

141 *Ibid.* pp. 317-318.

142 *Ibid.* p. 319.

maintaining *bona fide* reference to concept terms, as their existence is wholly parasitic upon objects which instantiate them. Often what sets apart fictional from scientific discourse is precisely that the cognitive contribution of fictional names is built up from purely conceptual descriptive resources, which are themselves parasitic upon objects that instantiate them – which lends intelligibility to concept expressions. That said, the interpretation of concept terms, while very difficult and immensely interesting, would set us far astray from our topic if reflected upon further here.

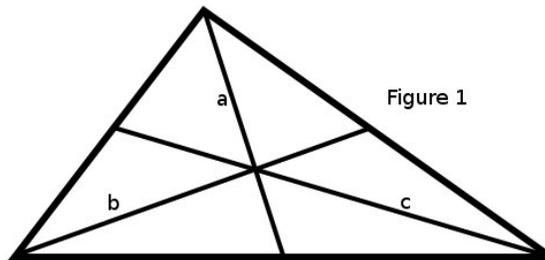
What is most important in relation to *de re* thought, is that by employing sense and an incomplete notion of concepts, we achieve unity to the proposition. However, the way in which Frege arrives, and I think we should arrive at propositional constituents is by starting with the content of a judgement, *viz* a full proposition,¹⁴³ and then unpacking its parts in relation to it. I have reserved the term 'cognitive significance' for whole sentences, which express propositions, and not sentence parts. The reason for my use stems precisely from this point, propositions are not only whole unities, but are also the vehicles of cognitive significance; proposition parts on the other hand make cognitive contributions, and are unable to stand on their own but rather are parasitic upon propositions which contain them, i.e. thoughts which they are constitutive of.

§IV. Frege's sense is often interpreted atomistically, because for Frege, each complete expression has a referent, and expresses a determinate sense. There are many motivations for this conception of sense, but most importantly, Frege is concerned with avoiding vagueness and privation.¹⁴⁴ While this is an accurate interpretation of Frege, as it is well supported by the text, I do not think it most felicitous by Frege's own lights if we interpret determinateness to entail an atomistic conception of cognitive contribution. Let us return

143 *Ibid.* p. 326.

144 See Frege, "Über Sinn und Bedeutung", *op. cit.* p. 155, where Frege specifically associates sense with something public in the telescope example.

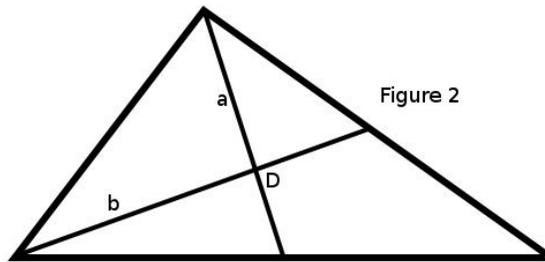
to Frege's sense and reference distinction, and consider Frege's often ignored example displayed in Figure 1.¹⁴⁵



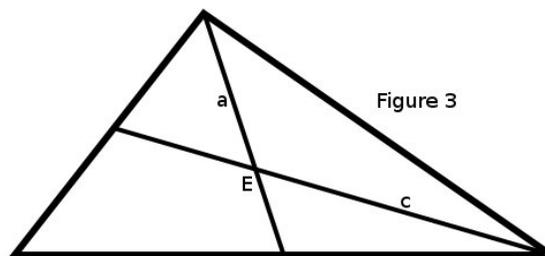
Consider the point at the intersection of lines a, b, and c. Frege proposes¹⁴⁶ that we may present this point, *qua* referent, in two different ways. We may present it as either the intersection of lines a and b or as the intersection of lines a and c. In other words, we may talk about it, *de re*, as where lines a and b intersect or as where lines a and c intersect, where the latter and former *describe* modes of presentation of the referent, which are both candidates for sense. We know that there are different cognitive contributions relative to the two, because depending on which mode of presentation we employ, different inferences will follow – in the simplest case, from the first we can infer that the point lies on line b, and from the second we can infer that the point lies on line c, and we can infer from both modes of presentation that the point lies on line a. We can consider an individual, let us say Harry, who is acquainted with the point under two names respective to the two modes of presentation, let's say 'D' and 'E'. From this, we can infer that Harry is rational in believing that D, whose mode of presentation is displayed in Figure 2, lies on line a and line b, but not on line c.

145 Frege, "Über Sinn und Bedeutung", *op. cit.* p. 152.

146 *Ibid.*



Harry is also rational for believing that E, whose mode of presentation is displayed in Figure 3, lies on line a and c, but not b.



The mistake is to think that something atomistic about the cognitive contributions of 'D' and 'E' accounts for Harry rationally holding conflicting *de re* beliefs – i.e. that E is on c, but D is not on c. If we take what is displayed in the figures seriously, as I think we should, that is not the case. Notice how Figures 2 and 3 conceived as modes of presentation convey *different information*¹⁴⁷ about the point of intersection that seeps into the cognitive contribution of the *de re* expressions 'D' and 'E' respectively. It is the different information that individuates the sense of 'D' and 'E' and thus the cognitive contribution of 'D' and 'E'. We can think of Figure 2 and Figure 3 as different *information spaces* in which the point of intersection itself plays different roles – it is in virtue of these two spaces that the two names contribute different senses, not in virtue of

¹⁴⁷ David Wiggins also argues for this point – i.e. that it is different information that is relevant for the content of a mode of presentation, though he says little about it further than this, and thus I am uncertain whether we are in agreement over more than just this point. See Wiggins, “The Sense and Reference of Predicates”, p. 312-313.

the object they designate, and of course, the designated object *is* in both of these spaces. We must not look atomistically at 'D' and 'E' for their cognitive contributions, but rather should look outside them to the surrounding *information space* that scaffolds the senses that they express. Detached from the respective information spaces, 'D' and 'E' do indeed just contribute their referents, as Quine, Kripke, and Kaplan would have it, but this is a *logical* contribution, not a cognitive one, which cannot explain what goes on in thought or belief. For *de re* expressions to make cognitive contributions, they must be situated in an information space because then, and only then, we can speak of thoughts and beliefs by employing senses and modes of presentation of objects. It is in this way that we can understand how it is that Harry gains a piece of new information when he learns that D = E, the information that he gains is akin to superimposing Figure 3 on Figure 2 – in effect, Harry gains a new information space represented in Figure 1, while also understanding how it can be separated into two other information spaces, i.e. back to Figure 3 and 2.¹⁴⁸

Let us project this way of thinking back onto Isabella's *de re* thoughts of Harry, and his alter ego, Frederick. For each sense, expressed by either 'Harry' or 'Frederick', Isabella has beliefs about appearance, demeanor, personality, spyness etc. Each of Isabella's beliefs can be conceived as roughly analogous to the lines a, b, and c on Figure 1, all intersecting at the same point, Harry or Frederick, analogous to D or E. The reason Isabella is not irrational for holding contradictory *de re* thoughts of Harry, that is of Frederick, i.e. that he both is and is not a spy, is because she holds them relative to two different information spaces which individuate the cognitive contributions of each respective expression; one information space supports her inference of spyness, and the

148 I have started thinking of sense in this manner in tandem with Rush Rhees (see Rush Rhees, *Discussions of Wittgenstein*, (Thoemmes Press, 1996) interpretation of Wittgenstein's picture theory in the Tractatus. Wittgenstein's theory employs a notion of geometric projection of concepts, much as projections from two dimensional planes to three dimensional ones, and the idea is similar in how our concepts, which are different in kind, can get the world right through such a projection. I have Clifford Roberts to thank for drawing my attention to this much richer strand of Wittgensteinian interpretation.

other does not. As we have seen with the geometrical example, what Isabella gains when she learns that Harry = Frederick is akin to superimposing the two modes of presentation conceived as information spaces.

This manner of presenting the sense and reference distinction should be appealing to Frege himself, and also has the advantage of explaining some of Frege's difficulties in articulating the distinction. In employing Figure 1, Frege can be understood as showing the distinction to us, by showing how different information is relevant to the way the referent is presented.¹⁴⁹ We can then understand the rest of Frege's comments in this manner. For example, the Aristotle footnote can be interpreted as pointing out how different information, *viz* either the teacher of Alexander the great, or the pupil of Plato, make a difference in ascertaining the cognitive contribution of 'Aristotle' in the context of any one utterance.

§V. This conception of cognitive significance may be called holistic, in contrast with the atomistic conception. What matters in ascertaining the cognitive contribution of an expression is not something that can be spelled out atomistically, as somehow made out of intrinsic elements constitutive of some expressed content, but rather is something that is displayed when one presents an object in a particular way. One way of presenting objects is just by stating what information one takes to be relevant about them. In Isabella's case, she may talk about Harry's shifty demeanor, or she may talk about Frederick's trustworthiness. It is in these sorts of conversations that we ascertain and get a grip on the cognitive significance of expressions, and in our case *de re* expressions. The view as

149 David Wiggins takes a similar approach when interpreting the sense of a predicate term when he discusses the concept horse: "expounding one body of information in preference of another body of information to amplify our identification of the object". In preferring one mode of presentation over another, one can present a certain concept in different ways. See Wiggins, "The Sense and Reference of Predicates", *op. cit.* pp. 312-313.

I have presented it has much in common with Donald Davidson's¹⁵⁰ holistic account of interpretation and belief ascription. Davidson argues that we cannot interpret utterances on a piecemeal basis, but rather, we must interpret them in relation to other beliefs the individual in question does hold. This is especially clear when it comes to interpreting the contribution of concept terms. Let us consider one of Isabella's utterances: "I believe Harry is a spy." From this, we can infer that she believes that there are certain activities that Harry engages in. For example, we can infer that Harry is collecting sensitive information for another country, that he is always in danger of being found, and that if he is found the repercussions will be dire. But, if we further inquire, and Isabella tells us that she thinks that a spy is a type of tool, we start losing grip on what she is speaking of – of course, we may think at this point that she is making a comment as to how she thinks of spies, i.e. as merely cogs in governmental machines. But, if she next tells us that a spy is used to put nails into walls, and she has a collection of spies in her garage, we may start suspecting that she is speaking of hammers rather than spies. Or, if she continues and talks about the wonderful conversations she has had with spies in the past, we would either completely lose grip of what she intends to express, or start to consider whether Isabella may have lost her mind. This suggests, if not proves, that the cognitive contribution of concept terms such as 'is a spy' depends on various other beliefs and concepts that an individual possesses. In this sense, my suggestion is wholly akin to Davidson's, only that I think it not only the cognitive contribution of concept-terms that are holistically individuated, but rather all expressions, including subject terms and especially *de re* ones as I have argued above.

The reason we do not generally have to peruse the relevant information space is because we rightly assume that, in virtue of our membership in a linguistic community and our membership in a shared world, we share information spaces, in the sense that we

150 Donald Davidson, "A coherence theory of truth and knowledge", in *Subjective, Intersubjective, Objective*, by Donald Davidson, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2001).

consider the same features relevant in relation to our employment of concepts and ways we conceive of objects. This is exemplified in the case of Hesperus and Phosphorus. The ancient Greeks took certain information to be relevant to Hesperus, i.e. that it appears on the evening sky, at such and such place and at such and such time, and other information to be relevant to Phosphorus, i.e. that it appears on the morning sky, at a different such and such place and at different such and such time. To gain any linguistic ability with the two terms, one would have had to latch onto some of the relevant information. And because the Greeks were not aware of the identity between Hesperus and Phosphorus, the two different information spaces, while public, social, and of the same object, were insulated in virtue of their content, which in turn enacted a dislocation of the cognitive contribution of one expression from the other.

As I have mentioned above, Frege usually takes an atomistic path because he is concerned with vagueness and privation. But this is by no means necessary, as the way we have been conceiving of holistic sense does not have these undesirable repercussions. The point is not that the cognitive contribution of expressions is indeterminable, and thus vague, but rather it is individuated by a variety of other factors in one's cognitive architecture. And it is not private, because the variety of factors can be brought to light in conversation through utterances that express the information relevant for individuating the cognitive contribution of a certain term, otherwise stated, one's cognitive architecture is public – one just has to sometimes *make* oneself understood.

§VI. One way to think of information spaces is by way of Wilfrid Sellars' notion of a logical space of reasons.¹⁵¹ The term “logical space of reasons” is supposed to encompass one's conceptual abilities as to capture inference practices amongst other operations of

151 See Wilfrid Sellars, “Empiricism and The Philosophy of Mind” in Wilfrid Sellars, *Science, Perception and Reality*, ed. Ted Honderich, (New York: The Humanities Press, 1963).

spontaneity, and for McDowell it is supposed to capture¹⁵² what he calls 'second nature', which is our conceptual, rational, interaction with the world in thought. Employing this notion, information spaces are locations in a logical space of reasons and they are objective and accessible by all through inculcation. Expressions must make cognitive contributions that directly interact within the logical space of reasons, otherwise experience would be bereft of cognitive content because its contents would not be individuated. This means that demonstratives, like all expressions, must express a holistic sense in order to make a cognitive contribution. The sense expressed, *qua* mode of presentation of a demonstrated object, will depend on what features of experience are significant to the way the object is presented, and this requires, as I argued in Chapter 2,¹⁵³ that experience has a conceptual structure. This conceptual structure allows demonstrative thought to gain cognitive significance by connecting into a location in the logical space of reasons.¹⁵⁴ The relevant information space employed to present the demonstrated object is contingent upon conceptual abilities of the demonstrator, which explains why Isabella in Chapter 2 has a different cognitive experiences when the same sound impinges upon her auditory apparatus. When she gains a new concept, her conceptual abilities allow for an enriched experience, in her case of a G major. In this manner, we can regain a grip of our rational interaction with the world, for we can start seeing how experience can fall into cognitive relations with a logical space of reasons in order to serve as content for judgement, and thus be available for rational scrutiny. We

152 See McDowell, *Mind and World*, *op. cit.* pp. 84-86.

153 See Chapter 2, §IX.

154 This can be seen as another side of McDowell's main argument in *Mind and World*. If experience does not have a conceptual structure, it becomes difficult to see how it is that our demonstrative expressions can have content. In the introduction, McDowell, whilst often read as in deep tension with Davidson, insists on the crucial influence of Davidson upon *Mind and World*. One of the things that he may have in mind is precisely this point about the holistic nature of cognitive contributions. What motivates McDowell to argue for full-blown conceptualism is an explanatory gap in how the content of experience could be cognitively significant if it's content is not such as to interact with the content of one's beliefs as to be significant within one's whole cognitive architecture.

can also see how the deliverances of experience can enrich our world view, without our actively distorting their contents.

§VII. Quine's concern¹⁵⁵ is that inside belief contexts, terms do not behave purely extensionally, which results in the failure of inter-substitutivity of co-referential expressions, which further results in the failure of logical codification of *de re* beliefs. Considering what I have presented, we have seen that in belief and thought ascriptions, there are extra-logical considerations that are relevant for the success or failure of substitution. I have presented these relevant considerations in terms of information spaces, whose elements externally individuate the cognitive contribution of expressions. This contribution cannot be codified, but rather will display itself when discussing the relevant elements for its individuation. As the account is holistic and not atomistic, we can see how Quine's search is bound to be fruitless, as at best he will find definite descriptions as contributions, which will turn an otherwise bound *de re* thought, into a *de dicto* thought. Should my view at all be appealing to the Quinean? In at least one way it should. When *presenting* the content of an information space, one must employ only extensional property ascriptions, *viz* assertions of relevant features of an object. Of course, this should not be of too much solace, because what matters is *how* something is expressed, something which cannot be spelled out extensionally. But, that said, there is also the suggestion I have made above, that we can conceive of logical contributions of *de re* terms as strictly their referents, and thus there is no reason for substitution or quantification to fail if and only if all that we are interested in is preserving the *totality* of warranted inferences, and not the inferences that the individual we are ascribing the beliefs to will actually make. If we are interested in the latter, then extra logical concerns will be of utmost importance. Logically, we could employ a solution such as the early

155 See Chapter 1, §III.

Kaplan's to prevent exportation, but one of the central requirements, i.e. that of sameness of relevant information, will be an extra logical reflection, just as Kaplan's other extra-logical requirements.¹⁵⁶

We can interpret Frege's articulation to be of this sort. Inside that-clauses, intersubstitution requires sameness in sense which requires sameness of relevant information. Due to my holistic interpretation of sense, the way in which we ascertain this sameness, is not logically, but cognitively – i.e. sense can only be shown to the neophyte, not said. In a way, Quine was correct in his commentary on the intensional solution he provides. We can quantify in, but we must be careful and keep track of the *use* of each expression, in this case, we must keep track of an expression's location in the logical space of reasons.

§VIII. *De re* terms make cognitive contributions to *de re* thoughts that are individuated in terms of their location in information spaces within the logical space of reasons – in other words, they have over and above a referent, a holistically individuated sense. The sense determines the referent because its content is tied back to its referent in virtue of the relevant information being of the referent. What determines this will not be solely something intrinsic to the information, but rather will have everything to do with the genesis of the expression in a linguistic community and its use by competent speakers.

Evans articulates this point quite aptly in *The Varieties of Reference*:

An informational state may be of an object even though its content fails to fit the object at all well – because of malfunction in the system, either at source, or in transmission, or in memory. And an informational state may be of *nothing*: this will be the case if there was no object which served as input to the informational system when the information was produced. Information can fail to be information from anything, of course, even if there is an object which the content of the information

¹⁵⁶ Kaplan was close to a notion of an information space when discussing vivacity, sans the holism, because one way to think of vivacity is in terms of richness of an information space.

states that embody it *fits* closely.¹⁵⁷

Evans' suggestion should strongly echo Kaplan's picture theory discussed in Chapter 1.¹⁵⁸ He points out that we can have what I call information spaces relevant to uses of empty names – such as Santa Claus – but these information spaces do not individuate the cognitive significance of a *de re* expression, precisely because in virtue of their origin they are not attached to an object, i.e. it is not information *of* anything. Thus, empty names, while similar to proper names in that their cognitive significances are individuated by information spaces, are dissimilar in that those information spaces are not organized around objects, but rather are at best organized around definite descriptions that may or may not be instantiated.

We thus must and should retain a Kaplanian notion of genetic character, as what makes expressions *de re*. The idea is that an information space may be centered around an individual, determining how that individual is conceived, or it may be centered around a definite description, determining how whoever, if anyone, that satisfies the definite description is conceived. What makes an expression *de re* is what is presented by its sense, which is determined by way of a causal chain back to a demonstrative baptism, just as Kripke suggested. What allows this to work is precisely that the cognitive contributions of demonstrative expressions in baptism are structured such that they directly interact with our conceptual capacities by having places within information spaces that holistically determine the cognitive contributions of demonstratives and that of demonstratively introduced names. By employing baptismal names, the content of information spaces can be communicated to others by way of expressing beliefs and thoughts in lieu of the availability of their objects in egocentric space. *De re* thoughts and beliefs are bound to the world insofar as cognitive contributions of *de re* expressions

157 Evans, *The Varieties of Reference*, *op. cit.* p. 128.

158 See Chapter 1, §IX.

are bound to objects through holistically individuated senses – thus capturing the feature of *de re* expressions that we have set out to capture, and in doing so explaining how it is that we can be directly in touch with the world in thought.

§IX. I have mentioned that these considerations may provide a novel way to think of empty names. I have already hinted at it in the previous section, but to make it explicit, in fictional contexts, what individuates the cognitive contributions of empty names is likewise an information space that is centered around a definite description, in the sense that the genesis of empty names is not from a demonstrative expression, but rather, it is from a definite description. This has the advantage of explaining why empty names at times *feel* like proper names that can figure as *de re* expressions, as their cognitive contribution has the same form and structure as that of proper names, because it is also holistically individuated by an information space. But, that said, as I also mentioned, this explanation will be of little solace to those that want to account for truths in fiction, such as: “Odysseus survived the sirens.” It seems that as things stand, we can at most come up to an error theory, where even though sentences that contain empty names are cognitively significant, they are at best false.

On the brighter side, what I have presented has repercussions for two other troubling issues in the philosophy of language, one being Kripke's puzzle about belief¹⁵⁹, and the other being the Problem of Analysis. Kripke's puzzle is a puzzle about the nature of belief ascriptions. What it shows is that Frege puzzles get a grip outside of intensional contexts leading us to hold contradictory beliefs. His conclusion is that belief ascriptions break down before we even start to articulate Frege puzzles. His example is of an individual holding beliefs of Paderewski, under the same name, that he is both a good musician, and that he is a terrible musician. When he articulates the puzzle, in order to

159 See Kripke, “A Puzzle About Belief”.

make sense of the problem, Kripke engages in rationalizing the difference. It turns out that the individual in question holds one belief under one relevant information space, that of piano players, and the other under a different information space, that of politicians whom our protagonist believes always make terrible musicians. Kripke's puzzle gets a grip precisely because it seems that we ascribe to ourselves contradictory beliefs of our protagonist, that he both believes of Paderewski that he is and he is not a good musician. But the problem only gets a grip if we accept that both appearances of 'Paderewski' make the same cognitive contribution. As I have argued, we must be sensitive to the use of an expression, and this means we should be sensitive on a case by case basis to the contents of the information spaces that individuate each respective cognitive contribution. What we need to do in such cases, in order to avoid this conundrum, is to keep track of the relevant information that individuates each cognitive contribution of 'Paderewski', and in doing so, we retain our rationality. Kit Fine¹⁶⁰ has recently argued that we can even *show* this in our logic by formally specifying whether there is a cognitive tie between the two appearances of an expression. In doing so, the force of Kripke's argument is diminished by resisting the attraction to treat cognitive contributions atomistically.

The Problem of Analysis is somewhat similar, in the sense that it claims that it is difficult to see how analytic statements such as “Bachelors are unmarried adult males” can be informative. My suggestion for how these statements are informative is akin to my explanation of Frege puzzles. As the cognitive contributions of the former and latter concepts are individuated holistically, respective to different information spaces, the statement is informative in the same way that superimposing Figure 3 on Figure 2 is – while we may not gain any new information content, we do gain an understanding of how information we already have inter-connects.

160 See Kit Fine, “The Role of Variables” in *The Journal of Philosophy*, Volume C, No. 12 (2003).

§XI. We should not fall into the traps that I discussed at length in Chapters 1 and 2. To avoid falling, we must keep in mind that we are in touch with the world in thought by way of the totality of our cognitive abilities. The quantification puzzle is a puzzle only if we decide to eschew extra-logical considerations when accounting for when we can, and when we cannot quantify into belief ascriptions. The problem is that the quantification puzzle arises because we expect the contributions of our *de re* expressions to be strictly atomistically characterizable, but this conception quickly falls apart once we consider what is relevant to their contribution to thoughts and beliefs. And this brings me to the second overarching puzzle, the content puzzle. I have said at the outset that the two puzzles are deeply related, and they are so in virtue of sharing an attraction towards an atomistic characterization of the way the world impinges upon human subjects in thought. This characterization has forced us to either conceive of the cognitive contribution of *de re* expressions as objects in themselves, which fails on the pains of the unity difficulty, or it has forced us to conceive of the contribution as non-conceptual, which is an inexpiable option as it cuts off experience from judgement. But we need not, and must not be swayed by the atomistic conception. I have presented a Fregean *inspired* account of how we may think of cognitive contributions as holistic and imbued by our conceptual capacities as to serve the right role in judgement, while maintaining the full fledged features of *de re* expressions. In such an account, not only can we see how *de re* expressions play a crucial role in our interactions with the world, but we can also see how *de re* beliefs deeply root us in a mind independent reality.

§X. Often, I have employed terms such as 'conceptual', 'non-conceptual', 'content', 'cognitive value' and 'cognitive significance'. It should be clear that I find the distinction between conceptual and non-conceptual content an untenable one when it comes to characterizing thought and experience. That is not to say that the distinction does not

have its proper place in cognitive psychology. With McDowell,¹⁶¹ I believe thinking otherwise from a philosophical armchair is bound to be a mistake. The distinction just does not have a place in philosophical concerns about the nature of our experience as minded creatures, nor does it have a place in an account of language as a vehicle for the expression of thought. One may think that doing away with the distinction entails that we should still be comfortable with a notion of content. I think this too is at best misleading, as in virtue of its use, the notion invites an atomistic conception of cognitive contributions – it too should be avoided for the sake of clarity, and this likewise goes for cognitive value, which also invites an atomistic conception. What does not invite these pitfalls is a notion of cognitive significance of sentences for speakers within a linguistic community, and parasitically and only parasitically a notion of a cognitive contribution of sentence parts. These notions do not commit us to any odd entities such as intensions and senses interpreted as ontologically significant, and they capture the richness of our activities employed in spontaneity, in making judgements, inferring, and all the creative endeavors of our free active thought. That is not to say that I think thoughts are indeterminate. That could not be further from what I proposed. What I hope to have shown is that one must be sensitive to much more than just utterances themselves to interpret and understand what another thinks, and this extends to *de re* utterances. One's beliefs and thoughts of the world, expressed by *de re* utterances, are imbued with the contents of one's world view, which enables one to adjust and fine-tune them in relation to how one passes judgement on experience, which itself has a structure that can bear upon one's beliefs. Thus, in virtue of interacting directly with the world in thought, one adjusts their beliefs not only in virtue of how one thinks that things are, but by how things actually are.

161 McDowell, *Mind and World*, *op cit.* p. 55.

WORKS CITED

- Bradley, F.H., "On Appearance, Error and Contradiction", in *Mind*, No. 74 (1910).
- Burge, Tyler, "Belief de re", *Journal of Philosophy*, 75, 119-138 (1977).
- Carnap, Rudolph, *Meaning and Necessity* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1947).
- Davidson, Donald "A coherence theory of truth and knowledge" in *Subjective, Intersubjective, Objective*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2001).
- "Thought and Talk" in Donald Davidson *Inquiries into Truth and Interpretation* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2001).
- "Truth and Predication, (Belknap Press, 2005).
- Dennett, Daniel, "Quining Qualia" in *Mind and Cognition*, ed. W. Lycan (Oxford: Blackwell, 1990), pp. 519-548.
- Dummett, Michael, *Frege: Philosophy of Language* (London: Duckworth, 1973).
- Eaker, Erin, "David Kaplan on De Re Belief" in *Midwest Studies in Philosophy XXVIII* (2004).
- Evans, Gareth, *The Varieties of Reference*, ed. John McDowell (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1982).
- "The Causal Theory Of Names" in Gareth Evans, *Collected Papers* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002).
- "Things Without The Mind" in *Philosophical Subjects: Essays Presented to P.F. Strawson*, ed. Zak van Straaten (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1980).
- "Understanding Demonstratives" in Gareth Evans, *Collected Papers* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002).
- Fine, Kit, "The Role of Variables" in *The Journal of Philosophy*, Volume C, No. 12 (2003).
- Frege, Gottlob, *Begriffsschrift* in *The Frege Reader*, ed. Michael Beaney (Oxford: Blackwell, 1997).
- "Uber Sinn und Bedeutung" in *The Frege Reader*, ed. Michael Beaney (Oxford: Blackwell, 1997).
- "On Concept and Object" in *The Frege Reader*, ed. Michael Beaney (Oxford: Blackwell, 1997).

- “Über Sinn und Bedeutung”, translated by Feigl, in *Readings in Philosophical Analysis*, eds. H. Feigl and W. Sellars (New York, 1949).
- “Der Gedanke”, in *The Frege Reader*, ed. Michael Beaney, (Oxford: Blackwell, 1997).
- “Comments on Sinn und Bedeutung” in *The Frege Reader*, ed. Michael Beaney, (Oxford: Blackwell, 1997).
- Gaskin, Richard, “Bradley’s Regress, The Copula, and the Unity of the Proposition”, in *The Philosophical Quarterly*, Vol. 45. No. 179 (1995), pp. 161-180.
- Jeshion, Robin, “Acquaintanceless De Re Belief” in *Meaning and Truth: Investigations in Philosophical Semantics*, eds. Joseph Keim Campbell, Michael O’Rourke and David Shier (New York: Seven Bridges Press, 2002), pp. 53–78.
- Kaplan, David, “Quantifying In” in *Synthese* 19 (1969), pp. 178-214.
- “Dthat” in *Contemporary Perspectives in the Philosophy of Language*, eds. P.A. French, T.E. Uehling Jr. and H.K. Wettstein, (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1979).
- “Demonstratives” in *Themes from Kaplan*, eds. J. Almog, J. Perry, and H. Wettstein (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989), pp. 481-564.
- Kerry, Benno, “On Intuition and its Psychological Elaboration” in *Vierteljahrsschrift für wissenschaftliche Philosophie* (1885-1891).
- Kripke, Saul, *Naming and Necessity* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1980).
- “A Puzzle About Belief” in ed. A. Margalit, *Meaning and Use* (Dordrecht: Reidel, 1979), pp. 239-283.
- McDowell, John, *Mind and World* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1994).
- “De Re Senses” in *Meaning, Knowledge & Reality* by John McDowell (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1998).
- “On the Sense and Reference of a Proper Name”, in *Meaning, Knowledge & Reality* by John McDowell, Harvard University Press (1998).
- Nagel, Thomas, “What is it like to be a bat?”, *Philosophical Review* 83: 435-450 (1974).
- Quine, W.V.O., “Notes on Existence and Necessity” in *The Journal of Philosophy*, Volume XL, no. 5 (1943).
- “Three Grades of Modal Involvement”, in *The Ways of Paradox* by

- W.V.O. Quine (New York: Random House, 1966).
- “Quantifiers and Propositional Attitudes” in *The Ways of Paradox* by W.V.O. Quine (New York: Random House, 1966).
- “Reference and Modality”, in *From a Logical Point of View* by W.V.O. Quine (New York: Harper and Row 1961).
- “Confessions of a Confirmed Extensionalist”, in *Future Pasts*, eds. Juliet Floyd and Sanford Shieh, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001).
- Perry, John “Frege on Demonstratives”, in *The Philosophical Review*, LXXXVI, No. 4 (1977).
- Rhees, Rush *Discussions of Wittgenstein*, (Thoemmes, 1996).
- Ricketts, Thomas “Notes on Truth and Propositional Unity in Early Russell” in *Future Pasts*, eds. Juliet Floyd and Sandford Shiek (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001).
- Russell, Bertrand “Knowledge by Acquaintance and Knowledge by Description” in Bertrand Russell, *Problems of Philosophy*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997).
- “On Denoting” in Bertrand Russell, *Logic and Knowledge*, (London: Allen and Unwin, 1956).
- “Truth and Falsehood” in Bertrand Russell, *Problems of Philosophy*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press: 1997).
- *The Philosophy of Logical Atomism*, (Chicago: Open Court, 1998).
- “On Propositions, what they are and how they mean” in Bertrand Russell, *Logic and Knowledge, Essays 1901-1950*, ed. Robert Charles Marsh, (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1956).
- Sellars, Wilfrid, “Empiricism and The Philosophy of Mind” in W. F. Sellars, *Science, Perception and Reality*, ed. Ted Honderich, (New York: Humanities Press, 1963).
- Strawson, P.F., *Individuals*, (London: Methuen, 1959).
- Whitehead, Alfred North, and Russell, Bertrand *Principia Mathematica*, 3 vols, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1910, 1912, 1913). Second edition, 1925 (Vol. 1), 1927 (Vols 2, 3). Abridged as *Principia Mathematica to *56*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1962).
- Wiggins, David, “The Sense and Reference of Predicates: A Running Repair to Frege's Doctrine and a Plea for the Copula” in *The Philosophical Quarterly*, Vol. 34, No. 136, (1984).

Wittgenstein, Ludwig, *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*, translated by D.F. Pears and B.F. McGuinness, (New York: The Humanities Press, 1961).

APPENDIX

The Sling-shot

Consider a statement that behaves purely extensionally, let's say $F()$. If we take two other statements devoid of variables, let's say p and q , both bearing the same truth value, then the values of $F(p)$ and $F(q)$ co-vary – i.e. $F(p)$ if and only if $F(q)$. We can introduce a conjunction crafted such that if p is true, then the conjunction is true of one and only one object, *viz* the empty class Λ .¹⁶²

$$(i) (x = \Lambda) . p$$

In virtue of the conjunction, if p is false, then (i) is not true of any object. We introduce a class named $\hat{y}((x = \Lambda) . p)$, whose members are determined by (i). If p is true, then \hat{y} contains one element Λ and refers to the unitary class $\iota\Lambda$ and if p is false, then the class is empty and \hat{y} refers to the empty class Λ , which entail (ii):

$$(ii) \hat{y}((x = \Lambda) . p) = \iota\Lambda$$

Since (ii) if and only if p , we can substitute (ii) for p in $F(p)$:

$$(iii) F[\hat{y}((x = \Lambda) . p) = \iota\Lambda]$$

Since p and q have been stipulated to be logically equivalent, we can substitute q for p into (ii):

$$(iv) \hat{y}((x = \Lambda) . q) = \iota\Lambda$$

When q is true, the class is the unitary class, rendering (iv) true, and when q is false, the class is the empty class, rendering (iv) false – as these are also (ii)'s truth conditions, (ii) and (iv) are logically equivalent. By transitivity, we get:

$$(v) \hat{y}((x = \Lambda) . p) = \hat{y}((x = \Lambda) . q)$$

As $F()$ is purely extensional, we can use the equivalence in (v) to make a substitution in (iii):

162 Quine “Three Grades of Modal Involvement”, *op. cit.* 161.

(vi) $F[\hat{y}((x = \Lambda) \cdot q) = \iota\Lambda]$

From the logical equivalence of $\hat{y}((x = \Lambda) \cdot q) = \iota\Lambda$ with q we can substitute in (vi) and conclude $F(q)$. By Quine's lights, this argument shows how a policy of extensionality is central to maintaining the logic of singular terms:

“Meanwhile, the above argument does serve to show that the policy of extensionality has more behind it than its obvious simplicity and convenience, and that any real departure from the policy (at least where logical equivalents remain interchangeable) must involve revisions to the logic of singular terms.”¹⁶³

The argument is supposed to show that without extensionality, the logic of our singular terms will require radical revision, to the point that one may question whether it would be pragmatically sensible to force oneself into such a position. The point is roughly the following: as the class in (ii) has one and only one member, it acts as a singular term. The membership conditions of a class should not be affected by any outside factors, i.e. the context the expression is embedded into, at least not without a change in the internal membership conditions of the class itself. If $F()$ was not a purely extensional context, then the move from (v) to (vi) would be a fallacious one, because one could not predict the membership conditions of the class when embedded. But this is precisely the problem, for the embedding of the class name within a larger statement causes a change in membership when a policy of extensionality is not kept – i.e. depending on the embedding context the class itself will change members, and as the identity criterion of classes rests on what can be called a *same membership* condition, we no longer have the same class, but a different one that is somehow still referred to by the same class name. This makes it obscure just what the class name expresses due to the erratic change in membership.

163 *Ibid.* 162.