



# Indexical *Sinn*: Fregeanism versus Millianism

## *Sinn Indexical: Fregeanismo versus Millianismo*

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### **Abstract**

This paper discusses two notational variance views with respect to indexical singular reference and content: the view that certain forms of Millianism are at bottom notational variants of a Fregean theory of reference, the Fregean Notational Variance Claim; and the view that certain forms of Fregeanism are at bottom notational variants of a direct reference theory, the Millian Notational Variance Claim. While the former claim rests on the supposition that a direct reference theory could be easily turned into a particular version of a neo-Fregean one by showing that it is bound to acknowledge certain sense-like entities, the latter claim is based upon the supposition that a neo-Fregean theory could be easily turned into a particular version of a Millian one by showing that De Re senses are theoretically superfluous and hence eliminable. The question how many accounts of singular reference and content are we confronted with here — two different (and mutually antagonistic) theories? Or just two versions of what is in essence the same theory? — is surely of importance to anyone interested in the topic. And this question should be answered by means of a careful assessment of the soundness of each of the above claims. Before trying to adjudicate between the two accounts, one would naturally want to know whether or not there are indeed two substantially disparate accounts.

Grosso modo, if the Fregean Claim were sound then we would have a single general conception of singular reference to deal with, viz. Fregeanism; likewise, if the Millian Claim were sound we would be facing a single general conception of singular reference, viz. Millianism. My view is that both the Fregean Notational Variance Claim and its Millian counterpart are wrong, though naturally on different grounds. I have argued elsewhere that the Fregean Notational Variance Claim — considered in its application to the semantics of propositional-attitude reports involving proper names — is unsound. I intend to supplement in this paper such a result by trying to show that the Millian Claim — taken in its application to the semantics of indexical expressions — should also be rated as incorrect. I focus on a certain set of arguments for the Millian Claim, arguments which I take as adequately representing the general outlook of the Millian theorist with respect to neo-Fregeanism about indexicals and which involve issues about the cognitive significance of sentences containing indexical terms.

**Keywords:** Sense. Indexicals. Direct reference. Propositional attitudes. Cognitive value.

### **Resumo**

*Neste ensaio discutem-se dois pontos de vista sobre a variação notacional com respeito à referência e ao conteúdo singular indexical: o ponto de vista de que certas formas de Millianismo são no fundo variantes notacionais de uma teoria fregeana da referência, sendo esta a concepção fregeana da variação notacional; e o ponto de vista de que certas formas de Fregeanismo são no fundo variantes notacionais de uma teoria da referência directa, sendo esta a concepção milliana da variação notacional. Enquanto a primeira concepção assenta na suposição de que uma teoria da referência directa poderia ser facilmente convertida numa versão particular de uma teoria neo-fregeana, mostrando que ela está obrigada a reconhecer certas entidades próximas de sentidos fregeanos, a segunda concepção está baseada na suposição de que uma teoria neo-fregeana poderia ser facilmente convertida numa versão particular de uma teoria milliana, mostrando que sentidos De Re são teoricamente supérfluos e logo elimináveis. A questão de saber com quantas teorias da referência e do conteúdo singular estamos aqui confrontados — duas teorias diferentes (e mutuamente antagónicas)? Ou apenas duas versões daquilo que é em essência a mesma teoria? — é uma questão seguramente importante para quem se interesse pelo tópico. Essa questão deve ser respondida através de um exame cuidadoso da plausibilidade de cada uma das concepções*

acima mencionadas. Antes de tentarmos escolher entre as teorias em questão, quereríamos naturalmente saber se há ou não de facto duas teorias substancialmente díspares. Grosso modo, se a concepção fregeana da variação notacional fosse correcta, então teríamos de lidar com apenas uma teoria geral da referência singular, viz. o fregeanismo; analogamente, se a concepção milliana da variação notacional fosse correcta, estaríamos confrontados com uma única teoria geral da referência singular, viz. o millianismo. Pensamos que, quer a concepção fregeana da variação notacional, quer a sua contraparte milliana, são incorrectas, embora por razões diferentes (naturalmente). Argumentamos noutro lado que a concepção fregeana da variação notacional — considerada na sua aplicação à semântica de relatos de atitudes proposicionais que contêm nomes próprios — é incorrecta. Tencionamos neste ensaio suplementar esse resultado com uma tentativa de mostrar que a concepção milliana da variação notacional — tomada na sua aplicação à semântica de expressões indexicais — deve ser também vista como incorrecta. Concentramos a nossa atenção num conjunto de argumentos a favor da concepção milliana, argumentos esses que tomamos como adequadamente representativos do ponto de vista geral do teórico milliano sobre o neo-fregeanismo acerca de indexicais e que envolvem questões relativas ao significado cognitivo de frases que contêm termos indexicais.

**Palavras-chave:** Sentido. Indexicais. Referência directa. Atitudes proposicionais. Valor cognitivo.

Our starting point and motivation is nicely illustrated by considering the following claim made by John Hawthorne and David Manley in their recent book *The Reference Book*:

At any rate, surely anyone who claims that “Now is now” expresses the same proposition as “Now is Tuesday” must acknowledge at least the need for the explanation of the vast difference in cognitive payoff between the two ways of accessing that proposition (HAWTHORNE; MANLEY, 2012, p. 68).

On the neo-Fregean side, the charge has often been made against Millian theories of singular reference and singular content that they necessarily end up with the admission of theoretical entities which

are apparently indistinguishable from Fregean senses<sup>1</sup>. Such a countenance of sense-like entities is normally taken by the neo-Fregean theorist as an almost inevitable result of any attempts on the part of the Millian theorist to deal with certain aspects of the problem of singular content. The aspects in question consist mainly in issues about the cognitive significance of our use of sentences containing syntactically simple and unquoted singular terms. In trying to accommodate such problems within a directly referential approach, the Millian theorist is apparently led to introduce a conceptual apparatus which, according to his Fregean opponent, would not significantly differ from a framework of modes of presentation.

The general upshot of the Fregean criticism is that one could hardly expect to be offered a satisfactory account of singular content which would qualify as being purely *Millian*, i.e. an account on which the propositional value of a singular term (as used in a certain context) is exhausted by its referent (relative to the context). Putative genuinely Millian theories, it is claimed, do not provide us with a real alternative to Fregeanism since a careful analysis will reveal them to be mere terminological variants of an essentially Fregean account. Indeed, the sense-like entities that such theories are allegedly forced to posit — e.g. Nathan Salmon's singular guises (SALMON, 1986) or John Perry's ways of apprehending individuals (PERRY, 1979) — would in some way or other play an intermediate semantic role between the singular terms, on the one hand, and their referents, on the other; and this would presumably preclude the theories in question from being *purely* Millian (in the above sense).

More surprising is the fact that the converse claim has also been advanced, though perhaps not so often, on the Millian side. In effect, the view has been put forward<sup>2</sup> that certain versions of a Fregean ac-

<sup>1</sup> For example, Evans argues that John Perry's account of indexical belief might be seen as a notational variant of a Fregean account, Perry's ways of apprehending objects being equated with Fregean indexical senses; see G. Evans (1981, p. 317-318). Graeme Forbes (1989b, p. 474-475) makes a similar claim in his article.

<sup>2</sup> E.g. by Scott Soames (1989, p. 153-156).

count of singular reference, especially those versions whose distinctive feature is a *De Re* construal of singular *Sinne*, on which singular modes of presentation are object dependent, might in the end be counted as being mere terminological variants of a direct reference theory.

A typical pattern of reasoning used by the Millian theorist to reach such a conclusion might be synoptically described as follows. Once subjected to a close scrutiny, putative *De Re* senses attached by speakers to singular terms in the language, besides being obscure or ill-defined, turn out to be spurious or redundant. And the general reason usually adduced to establish this redundancy is that every substantive semantic role which could be reasonably assigned to the postulated singular senses could apparently be entirely carried out by, or naturally passed on to, either the referents of the singular terms or other theoretical entities available in the conceptual machinery of a direct reference theory (e.g. David Kaplan's characters or Perry's belief states). Hence, by applying Ockham's razor, it seems that one would be in a position to eliminate *De Re Sinne* from the ontology of a neo-Fregean theory of reference, in which case such a (reconstructed) theory would indeed dissolve into a Millian theory. Therefore, if the arguments given for the eliminability of *De Re* singular senses on the basis of their alleged semantic vacuity were sound, then neo-Fregean accounts resting upon them would not constitute a serious alternative to Millianism.

I shall label as follows the two conflicting general views, both grounded on "notational variance" considerations, sketched above. I shall call the view that certain forms of Millianism are (in the sense mentioned) notational variants of a Fregean theory of reference, the *Fregean Notational Variance Claim*; and I shall call the view that certain forms of Fregeanism are (in the sense mentioned) notational variants of a direct reference theory, the *Millian Notational Variance Claim*. To sum up, while the former claim rests on the supposition that a direct reference theory could be easily turned into a particular version of a neo-Fregean one by showing that it is bound to acknowledge certain sense-like entities, the latter claim is based upon the supposition that a neo-Fregean theory could be easily turned into a particular version of a

Millian one by showing that *De Re* senses are theoretically superfluous and hence eliminable.

Now the question how many accounts of singular reference and content are we confronted with here — two different (and mutually antagonistic) theories? Or just two versions of what is in essence the same theory? — is surely of importance to anyone interested in the topic. And this question should be answered by means of a careful assessment of the soundness of each of the above claims. Before trying to adjudicate between the two accounts, one would naturally want to know whether or not there are indeed two substantially disparate accounts. *Grosso modo*, if the Fregean Claim were sound then we would have a single general conception of singular reference to deal with, viz. Fregeanism; likewise, if the Millian Claim were sound we would be facing a single general conception of singular reference, viz. Millianism. And, while not intending to neglect other reference theories — even those theories about the impossibility, in principle, of setting up a systematical account of singular reference (perhaps following a Wittgensteinian model or the model of Schiffer's "No-Theory Theory of Meaning"<sup>3</sup>) — it appears that the contemporary dispute in the field turns mainly around the two sorts of approach under consideration.

My view is that both the Fregean Notational Variance Claim and its Millian counterpart are wrong, though naturally on different grounds. I think that they are clearly wrong if one takes them literally; notice that, in this case, they are very strong claims indeed since they involve very strong assumptions concerning the two theories, e.g. their full inter-translatability and the strict identity of their logical consequences. Moreover, I am inclined to think that they are also wrong if one weakens them in a certain way and construes them as claims which are only approximately true (in a sense to be introduced when particular proposals are considered).

On the other hand, such negative results about the two notational variance claims have to be independently established. For, at least given the way in which they have been represented, it is clear that the

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<sup>3</sup> SCHIFFER, 1989.

unsoundness of either of them would not entail either the unsoundness of the other (this one might still hold) or its soundness (they might both be false). Indeed, what we seem to have here are two claims each having the following conjunctive form. The Fregean claim is to the effect that the Millian theory — subjected to certain modifications which would not affect it in a substantial way — is a notational variant of a neo-Fregean account, and that the equivalent theories should eventually be regarded as two-level theories of semantic (singular) content. And the Millian claim is to the effect that the neo-Fregean theory — subjected to certain modifications which would not affect it in a substantial way — is a notational variant of a directly referential account, and that the equivalent theories should eventually be regarded as one-level theories of semantic (singular) content.

I have argued elsewhere<sup>4</sup> that the Fregean Notational Variance Claim — considered in its application to the semantics of propositional-attitude reports involving proper names — is unsound. I intend now to supplement such a result by trying to show that the Millian Claim — taken in its application to the semantics of indexical expressions — should also be rated as incorrect. I focus on a certain set of arguments for the Millian Claim, arguments which I take as adequately representing the general outlook of the Millian theorist with respect to neo-Fregeanism about indexicals.

One might summarize as follows the main line of criticism developed by the Millian theorist. It is argued that neo-Fregean theories about *De Re* senses for indexical expressions are bound to face the following dilemma. Either they can be reconstructed as notational variants of direct reference theories, *De Re* indexical senses having no clear explanatory function and being thus wholly dispensable in favour of a Millian semantics for indexicals; or they yield results which are unacceptable in the light of our intuitions about the use of indexicals in the ascription of attitudes. In what follows, my concern is basically with the first horn of the above putative dilemma.

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<sup>4</sup> BRANQUINHO, 1990.

For convenience, I take the target of the Millian notational variance arguments to be some such a neo-Fregean account of indexicality as the one expounded by Evans (1981); although the arguments in question are such that they apply to virtually any Fregean theory using the notion of a *De Re* indexical mode of presentation, e.g. Peacocke's (1981) account.

It is a curious thing to notice that Evans draws on translation considerations to attack John Perry's directly referential account of indexicals, which he charges with being a terminological variant of a Fregean theory. Furthermore, the sort of argumentative strategy employed is *prima facie* very much similar to the one used by the Millian theorist; indeed, the general pattern of reasoning seems to consist in trying, in both cases, to establish the following kind of disjunction (taken as constituting an inescapable dilemma for the rival account): either the opposite view is shown to conflict with some aspects of our ordinary practice of attitude-ascription (e.g. Perry's "P-Thoughts" — i.e. sequences of objects and senses of predicative expressions — are taken by Evans as utterly inadequate to serve as the objects of propositional attitudes), or it is shown to be a mere notational variant of the favoured approach.

As noticed, the direct reference theorist is likely to argue from the dispensability of indexical senses to the Millian Notational Variance Claim. And there is no immediate reason to think that such a move might not be a valid one, provided that it is at the same time shown that the conceptual machinery of a direct reference theory for indexicals is able to do everything which the allegedly superfluous senses were supposed to do. Let me then outline the central arguments which could be mounted in order to support the premise of the above move. The Millian strategy might be characterized as follows. First, we are given some enumeration of certain fundamental semantic roles which are standardly assigned to singular senses, such roles being normally regarded by the Fregean theorist as providing us with conclusive reasons for the introduction of *Sinne*. Then it is claimed that either *De Re* indexical senses are not really needed to carry out any of the listed semantic functions — these could be arguably transferred to theoretical entities

already available within a Millian framework — or they turn out to be simply inadequate to fulfil the semantic roles in question (or both).

I select the following two semantic properties of senses, both related to cognitive significance, as those which are more relevant for our general purpose; I refer to them as roles (a) and (b) of indexical senses.

Role (a) of indexical senses is that they are meant to account for potential differences in informativeness, relative to a fully competent speaker, between utterances of sentences constructed out of co-referential indexicals (with respect to given contexts of use). Let  $S(i)$  and  $S(i')$  be sentences which contain occurrences of indexicals  $i$  and  $i'$  and which are used in contexts  $c$  and  $c'$  (where one might have  $c = c'$ , as well as  $i = i'$ ). And let the referent of  $i$  in  $c$  be the same as the referent of  $i'$  in  $c'$ . Then there surely exist conceivable circumstances under which  $S(i)$  and  $S(i')$  might differ in informative value for a speaker (not necessarily the utterer) who understands both sentences. A familiar example is given in the pair of sentences “He is being attacked” and “I am being attacked” taken in a context in which I utter the former intending to refer to someone else, while what actually happens is that I do not recognize myself as the person whom I see — in a mirror I take to be a glass — being attacked. My knowledge would clearly be extended by my acquiring the information contained in the latter sentence, relative to the sort of knowledge I obtain from the former sentence in the same context. In general, the Fregean theorist would appeal to a difference in sense between  $i$  in  $c$  and  $i'$  in  $c'$  in order to explain possible differences in informativeness between sentences  $S(i)$  and  $S(i')$  (where  $i$  and  $i'$  are as indicated); concerning our example, there would be a difference between the types of ways of thinking of myself which I employ in thought — the third-person type *versus* the first-person type — and which I attach to the tokens of “he” and “I” in the envisaged situation.

Role (b) of indexical senses is given in the property they possess of accounting for possible failures of substitutivity of co-referential indexicals in attitude-attributions, as well as blocking other apparently problematic results involving attitudes, particularly the possibility of a rational subject’s having contradictory indexical beliefs at a given time (or, without changing her mind, at different times). Indeed, a

difference in (customary) sense between indexicals *i* and *i'* in contexts *c* and *c'* (again, possibly *c* = *c'* and *i* = *i'*) is usually postulated to block in general inferences from ascriptions of the form *x V's that S(i)* to ascriptions of the form *x V's that S(i')*; here *V* stands for a propositional-attitude verb, the (customary) referents of *i* and *i'* in contexts *c* and *c'* coincide, and the ascriptions are to be given their *De Dicto* readings. For instance, the invalidity of the move from “I believe that he is being attacked” to “I believe that I am being attacked” — taken with respect to the above sort of circumstances — would be explained in terms of a difference in the modes of presentation of myself referred to by the occurrences of the indexicals “he” and “I” within the “that”-clauses. And when, under such circumstances, I believe both that he (the man in question) is being attacked and that I am not being attacked, I cannot not be described as holding at the same time mutually contradictory indexical beliefs about myself; for, according to Fregeanism, the contents of my beliefs are a certain Fregean thought and the negation of a *distinct* Fregean thought.

Now the Millian theorist might argue to the effect that indexical senses are not needed to account for informative value. She might claim that there are notions available from a direct reference theory which are perfectly adequate for the purpose and which are more unproblematic than the Fregean notion of indexical sense. One might summarize this line of reasoning by means of the following thesis:

*Thesis 1: De Re* indexical senses are not needed to explain potential differences in informativeness.

The Millian philosopher might take the informative value of an indexical *i*, i.e. the contribution of *i* to the informative value of sentences in which it might occur, as being the *character* (or linguistic meaning) of *i*<sup>5</sup>. If one assumes that the conventional rules associated with indexicals as their characters are explicitly or implicitly known by fully competent speakers of the language, then a difference in character between

<sup>5</sup> See D.Kaplan (1988a). It is worth noticing that meanwhile Kaplan has given up this view; in his paper (1988b), he suggests that differences in informative value might be explained in syntactical (and not semantical) terms, by means of certain syntactic properties assigned to the words employed (Cf. p. 598-599).

co-referential indexicals  $i$  and  $i'$  in contexts  $c$  and  $c'$  might be exploited to account for a possible difference in informative value (for a certain speaker) between utterances of sentences  $S(i)$  and  $S(i')$  in  $c$  and  $c'$ . Thus, in our previous example, the difference in informativeness between “He is being attacked” and “I am being attacked” might be explained in terms of the different characters attached to the indexicals “he” and “I”; the character of the former could be given in the rule according to which a token of “he” (used in a given context) refers to the demonstrated male, while the character of the latter will determine the referent of a token of “I” in a context (which happens to be the same person in the envisaged situation) as being the speaker or writer. And Frege’s puzzle about informative identities — as applied to indexicals — could be (apparently) accommodated by letting  $S(i)$  be  $i = i$  and  $S(i')$  be  $i = i'$ , and by taking the different characters associated with  $i$  and  $i'$  as explaining the potential informativeness of utterances of sentences of the latter form (e.g. “I am he”) as opposed to the uninformativeness (in general) of utterances of sentences of the former form (e.g. “I am I”).

On the other hand, concerning role (b), let me mention a second line of reasoning the Millian theorist might pursue to reach the same general result about the semantic redundancy of indexical senses. I take such a line of reasoning as represented in the following thesis and its supporting argument<sup>6</sup>:

*Thesis 2: De Re* indexical senses are not needed to explain apparent failures of substitutivity of co-referential indexicals in attitude-ascriptions, or to block certain apparently problematic results about attitudes.

If sound, this claim would constitute a serious objection to any Fregean account of indexicality, since what is taken to be the privileged role of senses, and what is often proposed as the crucial *rationale* for their introduction, consists precisely in their status as theoretical entities postulated to explain why co-referential singular terms are not in

<sup>6</sup> See S. Soames (1989, p. 154-155). Although Soames’s arguments are mainly directed against Evans’s particular version of Fregeanism, they could be easily generalized to other neo-Fregean approaches.

general interchangeable *salva veritate* when occurring in the embedded sentences of propositional-attitude constructions.

The Millian argument for Thesis 2 runs as follows. Clearly, a necessary condition for inferences falling under the general pattern  $x V's \text{ that } S(i), i = i' \therefore x V's \text{ that } S(i')$  to be rated as invalid by the proponent of a Fregean theory is that such a theory must provide us with a criterion for sameness of indexical sense; that is, it should state clearly under what conditions an indexical  $i$  used in a context  $c$  has the same sense as an indexical  $i'$  used in a context  $c'$ . And, since sameness of reference is thought of as being necessary for sameness of sense, one should expect such a test to be given in particular for the case in which the referent of  $i$  in  $c$  is identical to the referent of  $i'$  in  $c'$ . Yet, the Fregean theory does not contain a uniform criterion for the sameness of indexical sense, i.e. a means of decision capable of being applied to the different categories of indexicals, such as personal pronouns like "I" and "he", demonstratives like "this" and "that", temporal indexicals like "now" and "today", etc. Therefore, it is in general unclear how an appeal to senses might even account for failures of substitutivity (assuming for the sake of argument the anti-Millian thesis that co-referential indexicals are not interchangeable *salva veritate* in attitude contexts).

The Millian critic would discern a certain tension in the neo-Fregean account, a tension which reflects the alleged absence of a clear and uniform means of individuating indexical senses. On the one hand, the Fregean treatment of temporal indexicals, spatial indexicals, and perceptual demonstratives allows utterances of sentences containing different but co-referential indexicals of these kinds, as used in distinct contexts, to express the same (token) Fregean thought; hence, it allows the possibility of the same particular mode of presentation being associated with different indexicals in different contexts of use. As a result, substitutivity and other problematic results about attitude-ascriptions would apparently be forthcoming in a neo-Fregean account of such categories of indexicals. On the other hand, the Fregean treatment of personal pronouns precludes utterances of sentences containing distinct but co-referential indexicals (used in possibly different contexts) from expressing the same (token) Fregean thought; hence, it disallows the

possibility of the same particular sense being attached to different indexicals of that sort (in possibly different contexts). As a result, substitutivity and other problematic results about attitude-ascriptions would be blocked in a neo-Fregean account of such a category of indexicals.

The consequences the Millian theorist urges us to draw from the adoption of such allegedly disparate verdicts on sameness of indexical sense are as follows. If indexical expressions are treated along the lines suggested above for temporal indexicals etc., then the resulting theory will no longer be Fregean in nature; it will be simply a notational variant of a direct reference theory, redundant *De Re* indexical senses being eliminable and the referents of indexicals in given contexts doing all the relevant semantic work. If, on the other hand, indexicals are to be treated on the model of personal pronouns, then the resulting theory, though presumably Fregean in nature, will be implausible since some of its consequences are incompatible with the way we intuitively use indexicals in attitude-ascriptions. The implication is, of course, that we should generalize in the former direction, i.e. from temporal indexicals to other indexicals, in which case the Millian Notational Variance Claim would be warranted.

However, if one restricts the Millian claim supporting Thesis 2 to substitutivity results involving temporal indexicals, spatial indexicals, and perceptual demonstratives, then such a claim seems to be misplaced; for the simple reason that, as far as I can see, one could hardly find any cases of genuine interchangeability *salva veritate* of indexicals of those sorts in attitude-attributions (assuming that these are given their *De Dicto* readings).

Take the case of temporal indexicals. Consider the sentence-type

(1) Today is fine,

as uttered on a particular day, say *d*, and the sentence-type

(2) Yesterday was fine,

as uttered on *d+1*, so that the referents of “today” on *d* and “yesterday” on *d+1* coincide. Evans and other neo-Fregean theorists, following Frege, hold that under certain conditions the particular Fregean thought expressed by (1) on *d* may be the same as the one expressed by (2) on *d+1*; hence, the sense a speaker may attach to “today” on *d*, i.e.

the particular way of thinking of *d* she entertains on *d*, is allowed to be identical to the sense attached to “yesterday” on *d*+1, i.e. the particular way of thinking of *d* she entertains on *d*+1. Thus, here we have different indexicals, same reference, different contexts of use (the times are distinct), and (possibly) the same sense.

The Millian theorist would typically claim that this amounts to admitting that the referents of “today” and “yesterday” on *d*, *d*+1 fully determine the senses these indexicals may express on these occasions, in the sense that sameness of reference seems to be employed to individuate and equate the senses in question, determining the thoughts expressed as being one and the same on both occasions. It apparently follows that the putative *De Re* senses associated with the indexicals are entirely irrelevant for the semantic purpose of fixing the propositional contents of utterances of (1) and (2); the referents of “today” and “yesterday” on *d*, *d*+1 — taken as fixed by their associated characters — are clearly sufficient to the effect.

Furthermore, it is held that an appeal to indexical senses to block substitutivity results would be useless here, since the neo-Fregean account would be in fact committed to such results. Yet, this appears to be wrong; for it turns out that the envisaged cases are *not* cases of substitutivity at all. Suppose that, on the 28<sup>th</sup> October 1989, Jones sincerely and reflectively assents to (an utterance) of (1). Thus, the belief-ascription

(3) Jones believes that today is fine,

as uttered on that day, would naturally be counted as true. Yet, in the light of neo-Fregeanism, the belief-report

(4) Jones believes that yesterday was fine,

as uttered on the 29<sup>th</sup> October 1989, might also — under certain conditions<sup>7</sup> — be counted as true (provided that meanwhile Jones has not changed his beliefs about the weather on the previous day); indeed, *ex hypothesi*, the embedded sentences in (3) and (4) may denote the same proposition: under certain circumstances, Jones could not believe the

<sup>7</sup> Such conditions for belief-retention are discussed in Branquinho (2008).

Fregean thought referred to by the “that”-clause in (3) without believing the Fregean thought referred to by the “that”-clause in (4).

However, transitions such as the one from (3) to (4) — which are indeed licensed by the neo-Fregean account (as well as, on different grounds, by any Millian account) — are obviously not instances of substitutivity *salva veritate* of co-referential indexicals within the subordinate clauses of attitude-ascriptions; because the times of Jones’s believings in (3) and (4) are clearly different. And it is very likely that one come across the same sort of situation in dealing with spatial indexicals and perceptual demonstratives (where the times at which the attitudes are held are relevant in a similar way). Therefore, one should deem wrong the Millian claim that, since in this area of indexicality there are no failures of substitutivity for senses to explain (substitutivity being in fact licensed by neo-Fregeanism), senses would not be needed to explain failures of substitutivity; in effect, it simply turns out that no substitutivity results of the intended kind are forthcoming in the area.

Let me finish the exposition of what I take to be the Millian argument for Thesis 2 by briefly contrasting the foregoing account of temporal indexicals, etc., with the standard Fregean view on personal pronouns. Consider the sentence-type

(5) I am ugly,

as uttered by Jones at a time  $t$ , and the sentence-type

(6) You are ugly,

as uttered at  $t'$  (possibly  $t = t'$ ) by someone, say Ralph, addressing Jones. Thus, given such contexts of use, the referent of “I” in (5) is the same as the referent of “you” in (6), viz. Jones. Now Evans and other Fregean theorists, again following Frege, hold that the thought expressed by Jones when he utters (5) is *necessarily* distinct from the thought expressed by Ralph when he utters (6). Accordingly, the senses attached by Jones and Ralph to “I” and “you” must diverge, i.e. the particular way of thinking of himself Jones entertains in (5) is necessarily different from the particular way of thinking of him entertained by Ralph in (6). Hence, we have here the mentioned asymmetry between the treatment given to temporal indexicals, etc., and the treatment given to personal pronouns; with respect to the latter, in contrast with the former, it is

impossible for tokens of distinct personal pronouns used in contexts in which they are co-referential to express the same particular sense.

The Millian theorist would take the reason for such an asymmetry to lie mainly in the Fregean doctrine that each person attaches a sense to "I" which is not entertainable or graspable by anyone else. Thus, only Jones is in a position to think of himself by employing the first-person way of thinking, and such thoughts are only accessible to him. Ralph can only think of Jones by employing the second-person (or the third-person) way of thinking, and he might do this by uttering a sentence such as (6). According to Millianism, this conception of logically private modes of presentation is incompatible with our current practices in ascribing propositional-attitudes. For instance, it is said to imply that only I could be in a position to report e.g. the belief that I am ugly: it would be impossible for someone else to say about me "He believes that he is ugly", for the ascriber would have to entertain my particular way of thinking about myself (which *ex hypothesi* cannot be the case). In addition to this, I could not be in a position to report propositional attitudes someone else, e.g. Ralph, takes about me; for example, it would be impossible for me to say "Ralph believes that I am ugly" for I would have to suppose that my particular way of thinking about myself is accessible to Ralph (which again cannot be the case). Again, the upshot is that, given the apparent implausibility of such consequences, the Fregean should treat personal pronouns on the model proposed for temporal indexicals, etc.; but then the resulting semantic theory could allegedly be shown to be a notational variant of a directly referential account.

Having in mind our general purpose, I will not tackle the first-person issue here. But let me just mention that the Millian criticism might be countered by appealing to the distinction between *using* a sense in thought and *mentioning* a sense (Cf. PEACOCKE, 1981, p. 191-193). Roughly, the idea is that in order for a thinker to grasp or entertain a thought containing a certain mode of presentation it is surely necessary that she be able to *refer to*, or to think of, that mode of presentation; but it is not at all necessary that she be able to *employ* in thought the mode

of presentation in question, or to think the thought in question herself. Hence, it is certainly possible for someone else to grasp or entertain e.g. the thought that I am ugly; for when Jones thinks about me “He thinks that he is ugly”, he is not employing in thought my first-person way of thinking, or thinking the thought that I am ugly himself: he is referring to my first-person way of thinking. Likewise, it is certainly possible for me to report e.g. Ralph’s thought that I am ugly: from the fact that Ralph cannot think thoughts containing my first-person way of thinking it does not follow that such thoughts are inaccessible to him, or that he is prevented to refer to my first-person way of thinking.

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