Names, Sense & Kripke's Puzzle

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1. Sense and Reference

Frege introduced the distinction between sense and reference to account for the information conveyed by identity statements. We can put the point like this: if the meaning of a term is exhausted by what it stands for, then how can 'a = a' and 'a = b' differ in meaning? Yet it seems they do, for someone who understands all the terms involved would not necessarily judge that a = b even though they judged that a = a. It seems that 'a = b' just *says something more* than the trivial 'a = a' – it seems to contain more information, in some sense of 'information'. So either we have to add something to explain this extra information, or sever the very plausible links between meaning and understanding. This is what some writers have called 'Frege's Puzzle'.

It is undeniable that there is a phenomenon here to be explained, and it was Frege's insight to see the need for its explanation. But how should we explain it? Frege's idea was to add another semantic notion – *Sinn*, or *Sense* – to account for the information conveyed. Sense is part of the meaning of an expression: it is the 'cognitive value' of the expression, or that 'wherein the mode of presentation is contained' (Frege 1957 p.57). Sense has a role to play in systematically determining the meanings of complex expressions, and ultimately in fixing the contents of judgements. It is the senses of whole sentences – *Gedanken* or *Thoughts* – which are candidates for truth and falsehood, and which are thus the objects of our propositional attitudes.

Of course, introducing the notion of sense in this way does not, by itself, tell us what sense is. It only imposes a condition on a theory of meaning (and ultimately) belief: that it must account for distinctions in cognitive value or 'mode of presentation' (this is not a trivial thesis – some philosophers today would deny that an explanation of Frege's Puzzle must occur within semantics or the theory of meaning: see Salmon 1985). In this paper I want to explore one way of meeting this condition for the theory of names in natural language, by examining Kripke's well-known 'Puzzle about Belief' (Kripke 1979).

My reason for concentrating on names is simple. Frege wanted his distinction between sense and reference to apply to the chief semantic categories: singular terms ('Proper Names' in his terminology), predicates and sentences (see Wiggins 1984). But natural language names, a subset of Frege's 'Proper Names', have recently become problematic for a Fregean theory of sense and reference. This is because of the popularity of the doctrine that names are 'devices of direct reference': that the semantic contribution made to a sentence by a proper name is just the object it refers to (see Kripke 1972; Kripke 1979, esp. p.104; Richard 1983; Salmon 1986; Soames 1987). On this view, names are 'purely referential' – they have no Fregean sense.

So it is natural to suppose that, given this theory of names, versions of Frege's Puzzle will arise which are specifically problems about names. And in fact that is what I shall argue here: I shall argue that contrary to what Kripke actually says, his puzzle about belief is a consequence of the direct reference theory of names. I shall also argue that the way to solve these puzzles is to reject this theory, and embrace a version of the old-fashioned descriptive theory of names.

My claim will be that names have descriptive senses. But I do not exclusively contrast a name's having a *descriptive* sense with it having no Fregean sense at all. Some philosophers have done

theory can answer this in terms of the beliefs and intentions of language users. (It then has to explain the semantic or intentional properties of beliefs: but that is another question.) For want of labels that are both clear and memorable, I shall call the first theory 'semantics' and the second theory the 'belief-theory of meaning'.

The descriptive theory of names that I favour has a semantic part and a belief-theoretic part. The semantic part is entirely due to Tyler Burge (1973) and unpublished work by Gabriel Segal. The belief-theoretic part is inspired by certain remarks of William Kneale's (1962), and some similar points have been advanced by Kent Bach (1987).

The semantic side of the theory is this. The semantic role of ordinary proper names like 'Ghengis Khan', or 'Bevan Wardrobe' is not that of a singular term (the natural language analogue of an individual constant in logic) but that of a predicate, plus either a demonstrative or the definite article. The logical form of the sentence 'Bevan Wardrobe is Vicar of Rome' is, very roughly, 'The (*or* that) Bevan Wardrobe is Vicar of Rome'. The name serves, as Burge says, not as a constant, or as an abbreviation for a predicate, but as a 'predicate in its own right' (Burge 1973, p.428). Those unfamiliar with this view may find it very odd – so let me explain.

As Burge notes, the view derives from Russell (1918) and Quine (1953). One major difference between Russell-Quine and Burge, though, is over the issue of uniqueness. For Russell and Quine, the logical form of the sentence 'John Major is the Prime Minister' is:

(1) $(\exists x)(\text{John Major}(x) \,\&\, (\forall y)\{\text{John Major}(y) \rightarrow x = y\} \,\&\, \text{Prime Minister}(x))$

This says that there is a unique John Major who is Prime Minister. Burge (1973 p.431) thinks this is wrong: he points out that most of our proper names apply to many objects – there may well be many John Majors. So there should not be a uniqueness clause or operator in the logical form. Burge proposes that instead of a treating the name in the style of Russell and Quine, as a predicate plus a uniqueness operator, we should treat it as a predicate plus a demonstrative: '[that] John Major is the Prime Minister'; '[that] Bevan Wardrobe is vicar of Rome'.

However, supplementing the name with a demonstrative is not the only way for this view to avoid the undesirable explicit commitment to uniqueness. Gabriel Segal has suggested that a name should be treated as a context-bound definite description: 'the Bevan Wardrobe'. This definite description no more implies that there is one and only one Bevan Wardrobe than the description used in an utterance of 'I'm off to the pub' implies that there is one and only one pub. 'The pub' in this sentence is not, we can say, a *Russellian* description. Segal points out that very few actual definite descriptions in English are Russellian; so perhaps names too are in this category.

There is not much to choose between the demonstrative and the non-Russellian description proposals, so I do not need to decide between them here. I want rather to emphasise the essence of the theory: the claim that names are predicates.

But the issue of uniqueness is of course more complex than my simple remarks suggest. For when uttered in a given context, both demonstratives and non-Russellian descriptions *are* used to refer uniquely: particular utterances of 'that cat is hungry' and 'shut the door' are used to refer

to some particular cat and some particular door. It is the *context of utterance* which usually settles which door or cat is in question; and likewise with John Majors or Bevan Wardrobes. The difference between the Burge-Segal proposal and the Russell-Quine proposal is that on the former view, the logical form of

(2) Bevan Wardrobe is vicar of Rome

does not completely specify the reference of 'Bevan Wardrobe'. The sentence *type*, as such, lacks truth-value. In this respect, as Burge says, the name is again like a descriptive-demonstrative: the sentence *types*, 'Jim is 6ft tall' and 'That book is green' are 'incompletely interpreted - they lack truth-value' (Burge 1973, p.432). And non-Russellian descriptions clearly work like this too (consider the sentence type 'The door is shut').

So like demonstratives and non-Russellian descriptions, names pick out particular objects only in a context of utterance. When uttered in context, a sentence like (2),

> takes on a truth-value only if the user of the sentence carries out an act of reference in the process of using the sentence, and thereby performs extrasententially a task analogous to that which the iota operator performs in classical logical theory. (Burge 1973 p.433)

Of course, the notion of context-sensitivity is an easy one to invoke, but a harder one to explain. What Burge says here is not a theory, but a gesture towards one. But I think the general idea is clear enough for present purposes.

It should be obvious that this component of the theory has little in common with the descriptive theory attacked by Kripke in 'Naming and Necessity' (1972). The main difference is that on the Burge-Segal view, the description does not characterise some individuating property of the thing - some property that distinguishes it from all other things. The property of being an N is one that applies to all Ns: but to say that an object is an N is not to individuate that object.

So suppose the logical form of 'John' is 'the (or that) John'. What is it for something to *be* a John? The belief-theoretic aspect of my descriptive theory is a partial answer to this question. Central here is the idea that users of a name must have beliefs about the name itself. Burge points out that 'an object could be a dog even if the word "dog" were never used as a symbol. But an object could not be a John unless someone used "John" as a name' (Burge 1973 p.430; example changed).

Among the conditions that make naming possible are the following. To use a sentence, 'N is F', where 'N' is a name, speakers must believe that N is called 'N'. So they must know what it is for something to be called something. And they must have some beliefs about what (very general) kind of thing N is - person, place or whatever. Equipped with these beliefs, they will then believe that *the person (place, thing) called 'N' is F*. Without this they cannot really be said to have understood the sentence. Part of what it is for something to be a John, then is for it to be called 'John'. And this requires the users of 'John' to have beliefs about the name 'John', to the effect that some contextually salient person is called 'John'. (The useful term 'contextually

salient' is Segal's.)

This is not all it takes to be a John, of course. Language being, for the most part, a communal business, we should not expect that being called something can be explained entirely in terms of the beliefs of the individual using the name. So it will not be sufficient for X to be a John in a linguistic community that someone or other believes X is called 'John' (see Burge 1973 p.434). However, I am not at present capable of saying what would suffice for something to be a John. This would be to have a complete account of how names are attached to objects – an account of the relation *x is called y*. I will not investigate here the extra conditions that sustain this relation, since I do not need to for the purposes of dissolving Kripke's puzzle – the chief aim of this paper.

A number of writers have observed a link between the semantic and belief-theoretic components of the theory I am presenting. Gareth Evans, for instance, says that on Burge's view,

> "Jack Jones is F" is interpreted as "That Jack Jones is F" which itself amounts to something like "That man called 'Jack Jones' is F" (Evans 1982 p.374).

But this assimilates what I am calling the semantic and belief-theoretic aspects of the descriptive theory (cf. also Burge 1973 p.426). My claim is not that "That Jack Jones is F" *amounts to* "That man called 'Jack Jones' is F". I say that the latter sentence expresses a proposition that must be believed by anyone who uses the name. It is part of the underpinning conditions for name-using, not part of the logical form of the sentence containing the name.

Why not? Why isn't 'person called "Jack Jones"' part of the logical form of 'Jack Jones'? Essentially because of considerations of simplicity. The aim of the Burge-Segal theory is to give a compositional semantics: to show how the meanings of whole sentences systematically depend upon the meanings of their parts. This can be done by constructing, in the style of Davidson, a Tarskian truth theory that enables the semantic theorist to prove so-called 'T-sentences' from a number of basic axioms employing simple semantic concepts like *satisfaction*. On the Burge-Segal proposal, the axiom for the name 'Jack Jones' would be something like:

> Satisfies('Jack Jones', x) iff x is a Jack Jones

From the truth-theoretic point of view, there is no need to employ the more complex axiom,

> Satisfies('Jack Jones', x) iff x is a person called 'Jack Jones'

if the simpler axiom will do (see Burge 1973 p.428). This seems to be intuitively right too: for instance, it doesn't seem right to say that it is part of the *logical* form of the name 'Jack Jones' that it names a person.

There are thus a number of good reasons for distinguishing between two projects:
(i) the logical form of a name as it figures in a compositional semantic theory; and
(ii) the empirical conditions that make naming possible. (Once again, this distinction is explicit in Burge's paper: see 1973 p.435.)

With this distinction in mind, we can sketch a picture of what goes on when someone uses a

name. If someone says 'Jack Jones is F' with understanding, then they must at least believe that the person in question is called 'Jack Jones'. They may well have other beliefs about Jack Jones too: that he is a man, that he was once a trades union leader, that he is a famous singer – and so on. All these beliefs constitute the speaker's *concept* of Jack Jones. I shall call this collection of beliefs the speaker's 'Jack Jones *dossier*'.

The dossier can be thought of as a string of open sentences ('entries') in a 'Language of Thought', with their free variables bound by an existential quantifier. (However, this is for expository purposes only – the Language of Thought talk is not essential to the proposal.) Dossiers can be of any size, but it is essential to any dossier for an N that one of the entries in that dossier is *x is called 'N'*. So the Jack Jones dossier must contain the entry *x is called 'Jack Jones'* (where the *x* is bound by a quantifier binding the other free variables in the Jack Jones dossier). In other words, the speaker must believe that the person in question is called 'Jack Jones'.

But of course, to believe this, they also must also have the concept *x is called y*. That is, they must have some idea of what it is for something to be called something: and this is not part of any individual dossier. They must have beliefs about the notion of meaning, and about how names get attached to things. It is hard to deny that mature speakers have such beliefs or knowledge: I shall vaguely call this 'general linguistic knowledge'.

Finally, if like Burge (1973) and Segal, we want a semantic theory in the style of Davidson, we must also attribute knowledge of an axiom for the name 'Jack Jones', of the form already mentioned:

Satisfies('Jack Jones', x) iff x is a Jack Jones

This axiom is similar in form to any of the predicate axioms in the theory:

Satisfies('is a horse', x) iff x is a horse

There will be an axiom like the above for every typographically/phonologically distinct name in a speaker's language.

It is a nice consequence of the Burge-Segal view that their theory only needs *one* axiom for all the Jack Joneses that there are. This makes the theory considerably simpler than a theory which treats names as individual constants. Such a theory would have to have a separate axiom for each Jack Jones. Another way of putting this point is to say that the Burge-Segal theory makes more sense of the often ignored fact that many of us share the same name.

We can view the use of a name, then, as the exercise of three distinct capacities:

(i) the beliefs in the dossier, the one essential belief being that N is called 'N';

(ii) the general linguistic knowledge; and (iii) the knowledge of the axioms of a compositional semantic theory.

That's what my descriptive theory of names says; now what can be said in its defence?

4. Why Believe the Theory?

As I have already noted in §3, the theory will be immune to many of Kripke's objections against the traditional descriptive theory of names. One of Kripke's main arguments depends on showing, in effect, how the theory conflates contingent facts about the *bearer* of a name with analytic truths about its *meaning* (Kripke does not put it this way). He does this by imagining worlds in which the supposed 'definition' of the name is not true of the bearer of the name, and showing that intuitions based on our usual name-using practice do not license us to withhold the name in these cases.

I entirely accept these arguments. But they do not apply to the theory I am considering. For the only description at stake is 'the [contextually salient] F' where being an F is in part a matter of being called 'F'. So we do not have to say that Aristotle is necessarily an Aristotle. (Though we can, of course, say that Aristotle is necessarily Aristotle – that is, that the man Aristotle is necessarily who he is: viz. Aristotle.) Aristotle is not necessarily *an Aristotle* because he is not an Aristotle in all possible worlds. He is not an Aristotle in all possible worlds because he is not called 'Aristotle' in all possible worlds. So the theory is not committed to saying that Aristotle is necessarily called 'Aristotle'.

But is the person called 'Aristotle' necessarily the person called 'Aristotle'? This question is of course ambiguous, depending on how one takes the scope of the description relative to the modal operator. The descriptive theory should read this sentence with the quantifier taking wide scope: there is someone, X, such that: X is called 'Aristotle', but there is a world in which X is not called 'Aristotle'.

Having sidestepped this well-known argument, I shall now outline four sets of considerations which speak for the theory:

1) First, there is the grammatical data (see Burge 1973 pp.429ff). Proper names are commonly used in the singular form, and the standard philosophical examples tend to employ them in this way: 'Aristotle was fond of dogs' etc. But lots of people are called 'Aristotle' or 'John'. Thus we can use names in the plural - in fact, I once went on holiday with three Johns. At the conference in Prague where this paper was read, there were two Pavels and no Toms. As well as plurals, names can take definite and indefinite articles: I met *a Vladimir* at the conference; and when I was on holiday with three Johns, *the fat John* fell into a lake. They can even be used with quantifiers: all Kennedys are rogues.

Those who say that these are derivative uses of names are obliged to say what they have in common with the standard uses; for as Burge points out, it is theoretically undesirable to postulate special uses of a term if they are semantically unrelated to the standard uses, without an explanation of the different usage (1973 p.437).

2) Secondly, there is support from the theory of content. Many philosophers follow Frege in thinking that some 'Principle of Cognitive Significance' (call this 'PCS') should individuate belief content. Gareth Evans states such a principle in the following terms:

> (PCS) A sentence S has a different cognitive [significance] from a sentence S* just in case it is possible to understand S and S* while taking different attitudes towards them. (Evans 1982 p.19)

'Different attitudes' here must mean 'conflicting attitudes' – like belief and doubt. If the contents of beliefs are individuated by such a principle, then we should say that the beliefs expressed by S and S* differ just in case S and S* differ in cognitive significance.

How does PCS apply to belief-expressing utterances containing names? Take the case of a rational person who expresses their belief that John Major is the Prime Minister by saying 'Major is the Prime Minister'. Could such a person understand this sentence, and understand the sentence 'The person called "Major" is the Prime Minister', and yet take conflicting attitudes to the two sentences? If this is not possible, then the two sentences do not have differing cognitive significance.

It is hard to see how it is possible for a rational person to take conflicting attitudes to these two sentences. For how could one even *understand* the sentence 'Major is the Prime Minister' (and thus be able to assert it) unless one believed at least that

(a) there is someone called 'Major';

(b) that person is Prime Minister?

As Kneale says,

> it is obviously trifling to tell [someone] that Socrates was called 'Socrates', and the reason is simply that he cannot understand your use of the word 'Socrates' at the beginning of your statement unless he already knows that 'Socrates' means 'the individual called Socrates"'. (Kneale 1962 p.629–630)

This simple observation seems to me to embody an important fact. It seems to me that a speaker's sincere assertion of the sentence 'Major is the Prime Minister' entails that the speaker is disposed to assert 'The person called "Major" is the Prime Minister'. I think this consideration supports my claim that the belief that the person called "Major" is Prime Minister must underlie the sincere assertion of the sentence 'Major is Prime Minister'.

3) The theory also explains (though this is more contentious) how one can use a name and refer to its bearer, while knowing almost nothing about the bearer. It makes this apparently mysterious fact a consequence of the semantic role of names. For example: a child answers the phone, and reports to her parents 'It's Mr Smith on the phone'. She doesn't know who Mr Smith is, but she succeeds in conveying the information that Mr Smith is on the phone. She can do this without any further knowledge because (on the current view) to understand the sentence, she just needs to believe is that there is someone called 'Mr Smith' on the phone. And this is the belief that she conveys to her parents. (The example derives from Dummett.)

Reflective speakers sometimes talk explicitly in the style of this theory, when not much information about the named person or place is to hand: 'They went to a place called

"Ardnamurchan"' or 'I ran into a guy called "McTavish"'. The theory thus can make sense of the apparent mystery that names can be used to latch onto an object where, in Paddy Fitzpatrick's metaphor, the name is a spent rocket: there is no associated description, or only one (as in 'the servant's name was Malchus': see Fitzpatrick 1984 p.213).

But isn't the child in Dummett's example a mere 'mouthpiece', merely 'saying' the words without any genuine understanding? (See McCulloch 1989 pp.239-240.) This depends of course on what genuine understanding is. But I suppose part of what I am suggesting here is that it is a curious feature of names that it takes less to understand them than it does to understand most other words. And it is this that explains the fact that they can be used without much knowledge of their referent.

Names are clearly very different from other terms in this way. If I say to you 'The stylobate is under the peristyle' and you have no knowledge of architecture, then it is very plausible to say that if you were to utter these words to someone else, you would be a mere mouthpiece. You would, after all, only know that something was under something else; and how could this count as understanding? And I think everyone will agree – whatever their views on understanding – that this is a different sort of situation from the 'Mr Smith' case.

(These remarks on mouthpieces and similar phenomena are, I admit, very sketchy. The issues here are subtle and complex, and I hope to be able to say more about them in later work.)

4) Finally, in defence of the theory, it should be said that it could still take on board a lot of the merits of Kripke's account (and also details of Evans 1982 account). It could accept those parts of Kripke's picture that relate to the transmission of names throughout history, and accept the intuitions derived from this picture regarding what we would say if we discovered (e.g.) that Gödel was an encyclopaedia salesman, etc. It can accept that 'initial baptisms' can be ways of fixing the reference of the name. And it can acknowledge Kripke's distinction between fixing the reference and giving the meaning, and Evans' distinction between producers and consumers of names. This would all be part of a theory of what it is for something to be called by a name - but not, on this view, part of an account of the semantic role of the name.

Also, this descriptive theory does not entail that a *causal* theory of reference in general is false. The issue between descriptive and causal theories in the original debate was over whether the reference of a name was settled by the causal origin of the use of the name, or by the referent uniquely fitting a 'Russellian' description. But to take a stand on this issue does not commit one to opting for descriptive or causal theories of *reference* generally. In fact, I believe that there is no *general* dichotomy of 'descriptive *versus* causal'. To say merely that the content of a natural language name is descriptive does not entail that there is no causal chain linking the use of the name to its bearer, let alone that causation does not, in general, underpin reference. Maybe causation must underpin reference, but that is a separate question from that of the contents of names.

Finally, it is perhaps worth pointing out another spurious contrast: that between causal and *intentional* theories of reference. Whether or not causation is involved in reference entails nothing

about the need for reference to be determined by the intentional states of the referrer. It is a peculiar misrepresentation of history that according to some philosophers, Frege is aligned with intentional theories of reference, and Kripke with non-intentional theories. This is wrong, if only for the obvious reason that for Frege, the relation between sense and reference is set up independently of the mental processes of any thinker; while for Kripke, one of the ways in which the initial link between the name and its bearer is set up by a baptism – which is after all an *intentional* act. I do not mean to suggest that Kripke is guilty of this or the other confusion.

5. Objections to the Theory

But many will still find the theory difficult to believe. I anticipate the following objections:

1) The theory is *meta*linguistic, in the sense that it attributes to a speaker who uses a name a belief about that name whenever it is used. But, it may be said, this is implausible because it seems to make speakers too reflective in their spontaneous use of language.

But it is hard to deny that if a speaker did *not* believe that the person in question was called 'so-and-so', then they would not be prepared to use 'so-and-so' as a name for that person at all. Any explanation of how sentences in a language convey the contents of a speaker attitudes must attribute to the speakers beliefs about the what the words making up the sentence mean. Imagine asking someone who has just said 'Major is the Prime Minister' - 'but do you believe that Major is called "Major"?' What could be the point of saying this?

To this it could be said that by the same token, speakers need beliefs about all words in order to express their beliefs in language. So according to this line of argument, we don't just have a belief-theoretic descriptive theory of names, but of (almost) all predicates too - 'All whales are mammals' becomes 'All things called "whales" are called "mammals"' - which is absurd, since it makes it impossible to genuinely express facts about the world, as opposed to facts about what things are called (see Kripke 1972 p.69; Kripke 1979 p.139).

I agree that this result would be absurd; but the objection can be answered. The point about names is that, given general semantic competence, the belief that Major is the person called 'Major' is pretty much *all* you need to have in order to understand a sentence containing 'Major'. But with 'All whales are mammals' this is not so. Someone could not understand this sentence merely by knowing that 'whale' meant 'thing called "whale"' and 'mammal' meant 'thing called "mammal"'. (This may be the truth behind the idea that users of names refer in an 'unmediated' way.) And this is why I believe Kripke is wrong to suppose that 'there is no more reason to suppose that being so-called is part of the meaning of a name than of any other word' (Kripke 1979 p.140, n.12).

2) Second, when considering Kneale's account, Kripke objects too that the theory is circular, in that it attempts to explain the reference relation that a name has to an object in terms of an object's being *called* something. But if this is so, he says, then 'whatever this relation of *calling* is is really what determines the reference and not any description like 'the man called "Socrates"'

(Kripke 1972 p.70).

This is a perfectly fair point against any theory that does try to explain reference generally in terms of 'being called something' – obviously a hopeless task. But this is no part of the theory I am defending. Reference, on the present view, is *not* explained by the idea of being called something; *naming* is. Indeed, part of what I want to conclude is that one cannot explain reference in terms of naming, if naming is what it is in a natural language like English (not 'logically proper' naming in Russell's sense). What I am urging is that a belief with a descriptive content underlies the use of a name, but that having this belief requires having other general beliefs that are part of a speaker's 'semantic theory'. It is the fact that speakers of a language tend to agree in this theory, and in shared conventions, that underpins the possibility of naming. So 'being called something' is not a primitive notion in the theory, in terms of which the notion of reference is to be explained. Rather, it is derived from other shared beliefs and practices of the speakers of a language.

Moreover, if what is to be explained is the relation that 'glues' a word to an object, then Kripke's objection can be turned on itself. For on his account, although names have no descriptive meaning in their normal use, their references are often 'fixed' by means of an initial baptism using a description. This has to be construed as an intentional action - baptising is done by making pronouncements like 'this child shall be called "Zeno"' and the like. It is this that 'glues' the name to the object - after that it sticks.

Now Kripke is adamant that he does not want to reduce reference to any non-psychological notions. But then the notion of 'being called something' *is* being invoked in Kripke's account of how the glue sticks - at least at the level of reference-fixing. And it isn't obvious that a distinction between fixing the reference and giving the meaning is any help here, since it is not the *meaning* in Kripke's sense that makes the glue stick. The meaning is just the object.

3) The final objection I shall consider takes off from the fact that the theory entails that the sentence 'Aristotle was hairy' entails not just other propositions about Aristotle, but also propositions about the name 'Aristotle' - in particular, that Aristotle was called by it. But why should a proposition about Aristotle's *hairiness* entail anything about his *name*? After all, surely 'Aristotle was hairy' could be true even if Aristotle had never been called 'Aristotle'!

In response to this (and to some of Kripke's objections to Kneale: Kripke 1972 pp.69ff.) it should be said that it is the sentence as uttered in a context – or the 'proposition expressed' –that has the relevant entailments. So if the logical form of 'Aristotle was hairy' is 'The contextually salient Aristotle was hairy', then context fixes which Aristotle is in question. If it is Aristotle the philosopher who is the named man, then the baldness of Onasiss wouldn't make it false.

So it is worth emphasising that in most cases the context in question is the context of *utterance*, not that of (say) Aristotle's lifetime. So it wouldn't matter if the Ancients didn't pronounce 'Aristotle' as we do, or even if they didn't call him 'Aristotle'. What does matter is that in the relevant context - the here and now - Aristotle is called 'Aristotle'.

6. The Solutions to the Puzzles

Russell (1905) said that a philosophical theory should be judged by the solutions it gives to puzzles. I think that one of the main strengths of this descriptive theory of names is that it gives us a method for dealing with Kripke's puzzle (and *a fortiori* with other less extreme puzzles of referential opacity involving names). The conclusion I shall draw is that Kripke's puzzle is only a puzzle because of the thesis that names are directly referential. Instead of the cumbersome apparatus direct reference theorists use to solve this - apprehending propositions under 'guises' (Salmon 1985) and the like - the descriptive theory can solve the puzzle in an simpler and intuitive way.

So what does Pierre believe? According to the descriptive theory, the logical form of the sentence 'Londres est joli' will be (roughly) '[The contextually salient] Londres est joli'. The logical form of 'London is not pretty' will be '[The contextually salient] London is not pretty'.

That's what his words mean, if you like. However, the puzzle is a puzzle about belief, and what he *believes* is whatever it takes to express these sentences with understanding. According to the descriptive theory, he has two dossiers, one for Londres and one for London. In the *Londres* dossier Pierre has *x is called 'Londres'* and *x is pretty* and so on. In the *London* dossier, he has *x is called 'London'* and *x is ugly* and so on.

If this view is right, the content of the belief that Pierre expresses with the sentence 'London is not pretty' is *the city called 'London' is not pretty*. And the content of the belief that he expresses using the sentence 'Londres est joli' is *the city called 'Londres' is pretty*. The relevant belief he lacks, obviously enough, is the belief that *the city called 'London' = the city called 'Londres'*. So there does not seem to be much of a problem about giving the contents of his beliefs, without attributing to him any explicit contradiction.

Why is this simple solution not available to Kripke? Essentially because of the way he motivates the puzzle in terms of the *Disquotation* and *Translation* principles. So in the penultimate section of this paper, I shall try and explain why these principles are not perhaps as compelling as Kripke takes them to be.

7. Disquotation and Translation

So what about *Disquotation*? If we draw the lesson *not* that Pierre believes that London is not pretty, but that he believes that *the city called 'London' is not pretty*; and that he believes likewise that *the city called 'Londres' is pretty*, then it is clear we cannot move from the fact that Pierre is disposed to sincere reflective assent to 'p' to the claim that Pierre believes that p. We should therefore be cautious about reading the content of a belief *directly* from the sentence that a speaker would assent to: psychological reality is often more fine-grained than the sentences we use to chart it. (I owe this way of putting it to Scott Sturgeon.)

But surely *Translation* is undeniable? Normally, of course, it is. But in the case of belief-ascriptions employing names, there are complications. Take the case of Pierre when in France. If I am right about names, and about *Disquotation*, then the following sentence expresses a truth:

(F) Pierre croit que la ville qui s'appelle 'Londres' est jolie.

But what is the correct translation of (F)? Is it:

(E1) Pierre believes that the city called 'Londres' is pretty.

Or is it:

(E2) Pierre believes that the city called 'London' is pretty.

This question poses a dilemma for Kripke. If he is going to motivate his puzzle in his way - and thus avoid the charge that it is simply a consequence of direct reference - then he has to say that (E2) is the correct translation of (F). But then it seems that *Translation* is false, since although (F) expresses a truth, surely (E2) doesn't. After all, we know that Pierre has at that time no knowledge of anywhere called 'London' – the story would be ruined if he had!

But on the other hand, if (E1) is the best translation of (F), then there is no puzzle about belief at all. For no one could say that (E1) contradicts:

(E3) Pierre believes that the city called 'London' is not pretty.

So it is possible to hold that (F) is true and that (E1) is the best translation of it. But at least where it occurs in belief ascriptions, we therefore should not hold that 'London' is a translation of 'Londres'. Only to this extent are we compelled to give up *Translation*.

General scepticism about *Translation* is, I admit, very hard to accept. But scepticism about *Disquotation* recommends itself on other grounds, not specifically to do with names. For excessive commitment to *Disquotation* leads to the bizarre result Burge reaches in his paper 'Belief and Synonymy' (1978). He argues that we can quite easily make sense of someone who says

> For years I believed that a fortnight was ten days, not fourteen, though of course I never believed that fourteen days were ten days. (Burge 1978 p.126)

without having to attribute him any 'metalinguistic' beliefs about the meanings of his words.

I think that this remark does make perfectly good sense, and one who utters it does not say something contradictory. But surely this is *only* because we construe the speaker's previous erroneous belief as involving a mistaken belief about the meaning of 'fortnight'. What the speaker believed was that *'fortnight' means a period of ten days*. What else could his belief be? There is nothing more to being a fortnight than being a period of fourteen days; there would be nothing *about fortnights* for the speaker's beliefs to latch onto, apart from the definition of 'fortnight'. So in this case, we are surely obliged to fill out the content of the belief beyond the simple sentence (see Crane 1991 for a more extensive discussion of this issue).

In working out what others think, we often need to question them further, translate their use of words into our 'idiolects', and redescribe their attitudes as evidence accumulates. We do not, as Burge urges we should (Burge 1978 p.132), take utterances like the one above at face value, any more than we would take a speaker's sincere utterance of 'I have a hippopotamus in my

refrigerator' at face value (see Davidson 1984 pp.100–101). As Quine says

> Assertions startlingly false on the face of them are likely to turn on hidden differences of language. The maxim is strong enough in all of us to swerve us even from the homophonic method that is so fundamental to the very acquisition and use of one's mother tongue. (Quine 1960 p.59)

Serious attempts to assign contents to propositional attitudes must be constrained by evidence that goes far beyond *Disquotation* alone. I conclude that Kripke's way of motivating his puzzle is not as clear as he maintains.

8. Concluding Un-Fregean Postscript

Although I wanted this paper to be a vindication of Frege's theory of sense and reference as applied to names, I shall end with two general lessons that are somewhat un-Fregean in spirit.

First, one lesson of the descriptive theory of names is that ordinary proper names are not the best starting point for a solution to the philosophical problems about reference generally. This may be in contrast to a philosophical tradition, inspired by Frege, that places the notion of naming at the heart of any theory of reference. It may well be that understanding *something like* a naming relation underpins the understanding of quantification (see McCulloch 1989 chapter 1). But if I am right, then *ordinary* names cannot be like this, since their contact with reality is only apparent once more fundamental linguistic apparatus is in play. Here I agree with Colin McGinn that 'names are really a derivative mode of reference, with somewhat eccentric properties' (McGinn 1981 p.158).

Secondly, the idea that names are predicates does seem to be somewhat un-Fregean. The distinction between Proper Name (in his sense) and Predicate, and the corresponding distinction between object and concept, is at the core of Frege's mature philosophy. Given the appeal of the theory advanced here, I must deny that ordinary names are Proper Names in Frege's sense. But it is of course a mark of great ideas in philosophy that they advance the debate, not just by solving problems, but also by providing ideas against which we can then profitably react.

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank Gabriel Segal for discussing his unpublished work with me – though he should not of course be saddled with all the views I advance in this paper. The first version of this paper was read at the 'Truth and Reference' conference at the Inter-University Centre in Dubrovnik in September '90. I am indebted to the participants there, and particularly to Greg McCulloch and Mike Martin (for their scepticism) and to Jonathan Sutton. Later versions were read to an audience at the University of Durham (where Jonathan Lowe made useful suggestions) and to the Prague Open Conference in honour of Frege in August '92, where I received good advice from Pavel Materna, Graham Oddie, Vladimír Svoboda and Pavel Tichý. I am also very grateful to the organisers of this excellent conference (especially to Petr Kolář) for many vigorous philosophical discussions, and for their kind hospitality. Thanks to my colleague Sarah Richmond for useful last minute suggestions.

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