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Relational Belief (1995)

I

When faced with a philosophically problematic locution, Quine has proposed replacing the offending construction with one better suited to his philosophical temperament and point of view. At first sight this replacement strategy seems a profitable move. But on closer scrutiny the strategy can be somewhat puzzling. If the replacement means the same thing as the original construction, then surely nothing is to be gained in the substitution of the one by the other. But even if the replacement construction does not mean the same thing as the original, what is to be gained in the substitution—other than obfuscation? The problematic locution has merely been replaced with something less problematic; it has not been obliterated. It still exists; it just does not occur where it used to. Philosophical problems are not solved by diverting attention from them.

Part of the answer sometimes lies in the fact that the original locution is not only replaced, but also repudiated. It is deemed ill-formed nonsense. The replacement is made to fill the void left by the expulsion of the meaningless.

Such is the case with part of Quine's proposed solution to his famous puzzle concerning Bernard J. Ortcutt from his classic article 'Quantifiers and Propositional Attitudes' (Quine, 1956). Quine imagines a character, Ralph, who believes someone is a spy. Ralph believes this in both of two very different senses. Like all of us, Ralph believes that someone or other is a spy, i.e., that there are spies. This is the notional sense of believing someone is a spy. But more than this, Ralph believes someone in particular to be a spy. This is the relational sense of believing someone is a spy. Ralph believes that a certain man he saw under suspicious circumstances, wearing a brown hat, is a spy. Ralph also happens to believe that a certain pillar of the community named 'Bernard J. Ortcutt', whom he remembers having seen once at the beach, is not a spy. What Ralph does not realize is that the man at the beach and the man in the brown hat are one and the same. Consider this man Bernard Ortcutt. Does Ralph believe that he is a spy? One may be inclined to say that Ralph does, since he believes

that the man in the brown hat is a spy, and that man is Ortcutt. But Ralph does not believe that the man at the beach is a spy, and that man is also Ortcutt.

The problem concerns the sentence

0*a*   Ralph believes of Ortcutt that he is a spy.

To bring the problem into its sharpest focus, consider the following quasiformal sentence, which seems to assert the same thing as 0*a*:

(λx) [Ralph believes that x is a spy] (Ortcutt).

By the conventional semantic rules governing Alonzo Church's 'λ'-abstraction operator, this sentence is true if and only if the open sentence

1   Ralph believes that x is a spy

is itself true under the assignment of Ortcutt as value for the variable 'x'. Is 1 true under this assignment or is it false? To pose the same question in the terminology of Tarski, does Ortcutt satisfy 1? There does not seem to be a satisfactory answer. When the variable is replaced by the phrase 'the man seen wearing the brown hat', the resulting sentence is true. When the variable is replaced by the phrase 'the man seen at the beach', however, the resulting sentence is false. Whether Ralph believes Ortcutt to be a spy or not depends crucially on how Ralph is conceiving of Ortcutt. It seems impossible to evaluate 1 under the assignment of Ortcutt himself, as opposed to various ways of specifying him, to the variable. Quantification (or any other sort of variable binding) into a nonextensional context like 'Ralph believes that . . .' is thus senseless. These considerations seem to bar us from saying anything along the lines of

2   Ralph believes that he is a spy

with reference to Ortcutt (so that the pronoun 'he' in 2 plays the same role as the variable 'x' in 1)—as, for example, in the context 'As regards Ortcutt, . . .'. And this bars us from 0*a*. How, then, shall we express the obvious fact that Ralph believes someone is a spy in the relational sense?

It is important to notice that this problem, unlike Kripke's famous puzzle about belief (Kripke, 1979), primarily concerns the object that the belief is about, i.e., Ortcutt. Ralph and his notional beliefs (as represented by the sentences he accepts), considered in abstraction from Ralph's fellows, present no special difficulties. He is simply in a state of partial ignorance. He does not realize that the suspicious looking man wearing the brown hat is the man at the beach; he erroneously believes that the man in the brown hat is someone other than Ortcutt. The crucial philosophical question is whether Ortcutt, independently of any particular specification of him, satisfies a certain relational condition: Is he believed by Ralph to be a spy? The grounds for an affirmative answer—that Ralph does indeed believe that the man in the brown hat is a spy—seem perfectly counterbalanced by equally good (or equally bad) grounds for the opposite answer. One is invited to conclude that the question of whether Ortcutt himself, in abstraction from any particular conception of him,

is believed by Ralph to be a spy makes no sense—or at least that it has no sensible answer.[1]

The puzzle can be made out especially forcefully from the perspective of a Fregean philosophy of semantics. As Frege would have noted, although the expressions 'the man seen wearing the brown hat' and 'the man seen at the beach' both refer to Ortcutt, they differ in sense. They present Ortcutt by means of different individual concepts. In any belief attribution, such as

3*a* Ralph believes that the man in the brown hat is a spy

every expression following the phrase 'believes that' occurs in an indirect or oblique context, and refers in that position not to the expression's customary referent but to its customary sense. In this theoretical framework, quantification into an oblique context poses a special difficulty. The '*x*' in 1, taken under the assignment of Ortcutt as value, is supposed to refer in that position to its customary sense. But '*x*', under the assignment of a particular value, has no sense. (Alternatively, it ambiguously expresses infinitely many different senses, viz., every sense that determines its value as referent.) It would seem that 1, under the assignment of Ortcutt to '*x*', must therefore also lack sense. Once again, we seem driven to the conclusion that the question of whether Ortcutt himself satisfies 1 has no sensible answer—or at best, that Ortcutt satisfies neither 1 nor its negation, so that no one can ever believe of anyone that he or she is either spy or nonspy. How, then, do we express the fact that Ralph believes someone is a spy in the relational sense?

Quine proposed as a way out of this puzzle that, corresponding to the distinction between two senses of believing someone is a spy, we recognize a lexical ambiguity in 'believes' (and 'wishes', 'hopes', 'fears', etc.). There is the ordinary notion of belief expressed in a sentence like 3*a*. We may call this *n-belief* (for notional belief), so that 3*a* may be rewritten as:

3*b* Ralph *n*-believes that the man in the brown hat is a spy.

Quine urged that we also recognize an alternative kind of belief, which we might call *r-belief* (for relational belief). Grammatically, whereas one n-believes (or fails to n-believe) that such-and-such, one *r*-believes someone (or something) to be thus-and-so.[2] Ralph does not *n*-believe that Ortcutt is a spy, but he does *n*-believe that the man in the brown hat is a spy, and he thereby *r*-believes Ortcutt to be a spy. The sentence

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[1] Quine himself may not have been clear on this matter. In presenting the puzzle, he objects to the (correct!) claim that Ortcutt is indeed believed by Ralph to be a spy, on the questionable grounds that 'if so, we find ourselves accepting a conjunction of the type "*w* sincerely denies '...' & *w* believes that ..." as true, with one and the same sentence ['Ortcutt is a spy'] in both blanks' (1956: 185). In the first place, this involves the controversial assumption that if Ralph believes Ortcutt to be a spy, in virtue of believing that the man in the brown hat is a spy, then Ralph also believes that Ortcutt is a spy. (Who, besides one or two diehard Millians, would accept this assumption? Quine? If so, why does he not simply endorse Russell's solution to the problem?) In the second place, Quine's focus emphasizes the wrong set of issues, as if the main problem were to make Ralph come out consistent. The primary issues in Quine's puzzle are not those in the philosophy of psychology raised by Ralph's predicament; they are those in the philosophy of logic raised by Ortcutt's.

[2] Quine's preferred phrasing was somewhat more awkward. In place of 0*b* he wrote 'Ralph believes *z*(*z* is a spy) of Ortcutt', which is perhaps best glossed as: Ralph ascribes being a spy to

O*b* Ralph *r*-believes Ortcutt to be a spy

does not present the same difficulties as 0*a*, since 0*b* remains true whether the name 'Ortcutt' is replaced by either 'the man at the beach' or 'the man in the brown hat'—or by any expression that refers to Ortcutt. By contrast, the true sentence 3*b* is transformed into a falsehood when 'the man at the beach' is substituted for 'the man in the brown hat'. Consequently, replacement of the latter by a variable in the style of 1 is to be disallowed as ill-formed nonsense. Presumably, the same would hold for 2, and hence for 0*a*.

   Quine did not rest content, however, with the distinction between n-belief and r-belief. For sentence 3*b* entails the existence not only of Ralph but of an additional entity, that the man in the brown hat is a spy, and 0*b* likewise entails the existence of being a spy. The former entity is a proposition, the latter a property. Quine devoutly disbelieves in such 'intensions' (for reasons that are largely independent of the issues concerning relational belief). Quine proposed replacing 3*b* with

3*c* Ralph believes-true 'The man in the brown hat is a spy'

and likewise replacing 0*b*—which was itself a replacement for 0*a*—with

0*c* Ralph believes-true 'is a spy' of Ortcutt.[3]

   Whereas the former constructions employing '*n*-believes' and '*r*-believes' involve a commitment to the existence of intensions, these new, wholly artificial constructions involve a commitment merely to the existence of sentences and predicates. This is a meager commitment that Quine is prepared to accept (however reluctantly). Thus, these replacements portend ontological dividends. They portend conceptual dividends as well. For the substitutes apparently replace unclear notions like that of belief of a proposition with far less dubious notions like that of truth (which might even be mathematically definable in the style of Tarski).
   Quine's solution thus consists in a chain of replacements. An 'unregimented' belief attribution

I*a* β believes that ϕ

where ϕ is a closed sentence, may be perspicuously formalized as

I*b* B_n(β, that ϕ)

Ortcutt. (Both occurrences of '*z*' in '*z(z* is a spy)' are bound by a nonextensional variable-binding operator. Whereas Quine objects to occurrences of variables in 'nonreferential position', and the second occurrence of '*z*' here is evidently not in referential position, Quine's objection, properly understood, is actually to bindable free variable occurrences in nonreferential position.)

   [3] The particular formulation of 0*c* is extrapolated from a combination of Quine, 1956, and Quine, 1979. In the former work, the moves from attributes to expressions is accompanied by a switch from an abstracted attribute name (see the previous note) to an open sentence, whereby 0*a* is replaced with 'Ralph believes "y is a spy" satisfied by Ortcutt' (which is perhaps best glossed as: Ralph believes-true '*y* is a spy' under the assignment: '*y*' → Ortcutt). The rationale for the switch from an abstract to an open sentence is unclear, and in any event in the later work the open sentence has been dropped in favor of a predicate.

where 'B_n' is a dyadic predicate for notional belief and 'that' is a nonextensional operator that forms a term for the proposition expressed by the attached sentence. This construction is replaced directly with

Ic Believes-true(β, 'ɸ')

in which the sentence that forms the 'that' clause of *Ia* is taken out of the scope of 'that' and placed within quotation marks instead. By contrast, an unregimented sentence of the form

IIa β believes of α that $ɸ_{it}$

where the pronoun 'it' ('he', 'she') occurs anaphorically in $ɸ_{it}$, undergoes a two-stage modification. In the first stage it is replaced with

β *r*-believes α to be such that $ɸ_{it}$

This may be formalized as:

IIb $B_r(β, α, (μγ) [ɸ_γ])$

where $ɸ_γ$ is the same expression as $ɸ_{it}$ except for containing free occurrences of a variable γ where $ɸ_{it}$ contains 'free' occurrences of the pronoun 'it'. Here 'B_r' is a triadic predicate for relational belief, and the 'μ' in its third argument is a nonextensional variable-binding operator that allows for the abstraction of an attribute name from an open sentence. (See note 2 regarding Quine's alternative notation.) This formalization makes it obvious why the relevant notion is called 'relational'; α occurs all alone in a 'purely referential' argument position, where it is open to substitution and to quantification from without.[4] In the second stage, *IIb* is replaced further by

IIc *Believes-true-of* $(β, '(λγ)[ɸ_γ]', α)$.

In the more recent discussion of 'Intensions Revisited' (Quine, 1981: 115, 119), the move between *IIa* and its final replacement is described as a 'translation', one by means of which relational belief is explained in terms of 'believes-true'.

II

Owing largely to Quine's impressive rhetorical gift and persuasive skill, a great many philosophers of language today—perhaps most—are under the impression that quantification into a nonextensional context is dubious business, and that such innocent looking constructions as 0*a* are, from the point of view of philosophical logic, deeply problematic. This is ironic.

   A few critics (Kaplan, 1986: 264–266; Kazmi, 1987: 95–98; Forbes, 1985: 52) have objected to Quine's argument by noting that an analogous situation arises out of certain temporal constructions, where the corresponding claim analogous to Quine's

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[4] The relation asserted to hold between Ralph and Ortcutt may be defined as: $(λxy) [B_r(x, y, (μz) [z$ is a spy])].

in connection with 1 would be completely unwarranted. For example, the open sentence

S In 1978, *x* was a Republican

is true when the variable is replaced by the name 'George Bush' but false when the variable is replaced by the phrase 'the United States President', despite the fact that these two expressions refer to the same individual. (That is, they refer to the same individual with respect to the present time.) It hardly follows that *S* cannot be evaluated under the assignment of Bush as value for '*x*'—let alone that we are forced to acknowledge a distinction between a notional and a relational concept of being the case in 1978 (whatever that would mean). The open sentence *S*, as it stands, is straightforwardly true under the assignment of Bush to '*x*', since he (independent of any particular specification of him) was indeed a Republican in 1978. Quine's argument in connection with 1 is fallacious.

One may respond by rejecting the treatment of the phrase 'in 1978' as a sentential operator attachable to open sentences, insisting instead that *S* ultimately involves a dyadic predicate 'is a Republican at', which expresses a binary relation between individuals and times. (Very well. Suppose we invent an artificial, temporally neutral monadic predicate 'Republicanize' for the property of being a Republican—which applies with respect to any time *t* to exactly those individuals who are Republicans at *t*—and a sentential temporal operator 'During 1978' + past tense. What of that?) Fortunately, there is an alternative way of showing that Quine's argument against the logical intelligibility of 1 is fallacious, one that does not depend on any allegedly nonextensional context other than 'Ralph believes that . . .'.

A half century before Quine's influential discussion, Russell was able to draw a very general distinction, of which Quine's distinction between the notional and relational sense of believing (or wishing, etc.) some *F* is *G* is merely a special case.[5] Russell's distinction between primary occurrence and secondary occurrence applies to constructions involving any 'denoting phrase', i.e., any definite or indefinite description, in place of Quine's 'some *F*'—for example, 'Ralph believes every foreigner he meets is a spy', 'Ralph believes no friend of his is a spy', 'Ralph believes the union president is a spy', 'Ralph believes most Russians are spies', and so on. In fact, Russell's more general distinction is not merely twofold, but (*n* + 1)-fold where *n* is the number of operator occurrences in which the description ('denoting phrase') is embedded. For example, in addition to predicting its straightforwardly relational reading, Russell distinguished two notional readings for the complex attribution

Quine said that Ralph believes someone is a spy

Whereas the small-scope reading correctly reports the content of Quine's assertion when he attributes to Ralph a notional belief that someone is a spy (e.g., were Quine to utter the sentence 'Ralph believes that there are spies'), the intermediate-scope reading correctly reports the content of Quine's assertion when he instead attributes relational belief ('There is someone whom Ralph believes to be a spy').

5 'On Denoting', in Russell (1956: 39–56).

More significantly, Russell was able to explain his more general distinction as itself a special case of an even more general phenomenon: scope ambiguity On the theory of 'On Denoting', it is not in the least problematic that 1 is true when '*x*' is replaced by 'the man in the brown hat' and false when '*x*' is replaced by 'the man at the beach'. The resulting 'that' clauses 'denote', i.e. refer to, different propositions, one of which Ralph believes and the other one of which he does not. By contrast, the original 'that' clause

that *x* is a spy

refers, under the assignment of Ortcutt to '*x*', to yet a third proposition, one in which Ortcutt himself 'occurs as a constituent'. This is the singular proposition about Ortcutt that he is a spy. Logically, the question of whether Ralph believes this singular proposition is quite independent of whether he believes either, both, or neither of the other two.

Quine's philosophical bias precluded him from endorsing Russell's elegant account of the notional/relational distinction. The evidence suggests that, even while entertaining the theory of propositions as objects of belief, Quine dismissed out of hand the Russellian idea of a singular proposition as an object of belief.[6] Where Russell saw syntactic ambiguity Quine posited semantic ambiguity. One may quarrel over the

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[6] Kaplan (1986) is a thorough and penetrating critique of Quine's argument against the logical coherence of quantification into nonextensional contexts. Quine is probably correct, however, to protest (in Quine, 1986) against Kaplan's reconstruction (233–235) of his central argument as one involving a fallacy. (Kaplan admits that his reconstruction is speculative; *cf.* 277 n15; *cf.* also Kazmi [1987: 90–93].) Quine's main argument is for the conclusion that no singular-term position in an opaque context in an (open or closed) sentence can be occupied by a bindable free occurrence of an objectual variable. (See note 2.) I believe that the failure of the argument (or at least of later versions of it) should be traced to a largely implicit premiss (which was probably at least vaguely intended even in the earliest versions of the argument). This is the Fregean thesis that the referent of (i.e., the contribution made to the truth value of the containing sentence by) a singular-term occurrence that is not itself in purely referential position (i.e., that is in the scope of a nonextensional operator) is not, and does not involve, the term's customary referent. (An exception may be made in the rare case of a self-referential term whose customary referent is not a nonlinguistic object like Ortcutt but is rather the term's own meaning, or the term itself, etc.—like 'the meaning of the description quoted in note 6 of "Relational Belief" '.) This generalization, and Quine's conclusion, seem plausible when one considers the case of a term occurring within quotation marks. (Is an otherwise unbound variable occurrence within quotation marks free?) It breaks down in other sorts of cases. The treatment of 1 in Russell's semantic theory directly conflicts with Quine's Fregean thesis.

Kaplan (1986: 235, 244) replaces Quine's thesis that only free variable occurrences that are in purely referential position are bindable with the slightly different thesis (the denial of which he describes as incoherent) that only free variable occurrences that are themselves purely referential (i.e., that 'solely refer' to the variable's value, thereby preserving substitution of co-valued variables) are bindable. This thesis also breaks down in certain cases, however, even if only artificial ones. Ironically, Kaplan's notion of associative valuation, introduced on page 244, provides one such counterexample. (*Cf.* Richard [1987].) What, then, does account for the unbindability of otherwise unbound variable occurrences within quotation marks? Something significantly weaker than either Quine's or Kaplan's theses may be true: that only free objectual variable occurrences whose referent (contribution to truth value) involves the variable's value in a special manner are bindable. (An occurrence of '*x*' within quotation marks, even under the assignment of '*x*' itself as value, does not refer to '*x*' in the appropriate manner.)

relative merits of a theory that posits lexical ambiguity over one that posits singular propositional belief. Still, there is nothing in the logic (as opposed to the psychology) of the situation that precludes the theory of singular propositions. One may reject singular-proposition theory as false, as implausible, even as outrageously so. My own view is that one would be dead wrong in doing so, but there is room for debate. One may not similarly reject singular-proposition theory as logically incoherent. Indeed, Russell's theory is virtually inevitable. Wherever there is quantification into a propositional-attitude context, the idea of a singular proposition cannot be very far behind.[7] The mere coherence of Russell's 1905 theory was already sufficient to demonstrate that any argument for the thesis that quantification into the context 'Ralph believes that . . .' is logically or semantically incoherent is itself mistaken.[8] Given Russell's theory, it is puzzling that Quine and his many followers could have thought that quantification into this context creates any logical difficulty.

Although Quine's critics are correct to point out that his (apparent) argument against the legitimacy of quantification into notional belief contexts is fallacious, pointing this out does not constitute a demonstration that Quine's solution to his puzzle is not a viable alternative to Russell's. It can be shown, however, that insofar as one is prepared to accept Russellian singular propositions, Quine's proposal to translate sentences of form *IIa* into sentences of form *IIb* does not work. In fact, whether or not singular propositions are countenanced, Quine's proposal fails.

III

One immediate difficulty for Quine's account is that, as it stands, it does not accommodate such evidently valid inferences as the following:

> Everything Ralph believes is true (doubted by Quine, plausible, etc.).
>
> Ralph believes Ortcutt to be a spy.
>
> Therefore, Ortcutt is truly (doubted by Quine to be, etc.) a spy.

The problem is that, on Quine's account, the major premiss involves the notion of notional belief and the minor premiss instead involves the distinct notion of relational belief. One might hope to accommodate this inference within Quine's framework by adopting an analysis of the relational in terms of the notional, perhaps along the lines of David Kaplan's earlier commentary in 'Quantifying In'. Recent results in the theory of meaning and reference, however, leave little promise for the success of this type of an analysis, and Kaplan himself has abandoned the project. (The matter remains highly controversial.) In any event, Kaplan's original scheme does not validate all inferences of this type, and it is none too clear how to give an analysis within the spirit of Quine's philosophical views that does. (Indeed, Quine would probably reject such inferences, or at least many of them.)

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[7] *Cf.* Salmon (1986a: 2–5) and Salmon (1989a: 212–215).
[8] *Cf.* Kaplan (1986: especially 239–241).

Another serious flaw in Quine's proposal was uncovered by Kaplan in 'Opacity' (268–272). Following Quine, Kaplan proposes a distinction among propositional attributions (whether attributions of propositional attitude, of modality, or whatever), between what Kaplan calls the *syntactically de dicto* and the *syntactically de re*. The syntactically *de dicto* is illustrated by such attributions as 1, 2, and 3*a*—each of which involves the 'believes that' construction. Syntactically *de dicto* belief attributions would be formalized along the lines of *Ib*, where ϕ may be either open or closed. The syntactically *de re* is illustrated by 0*b*, which involves the 'believes . . . to be' construction. Syntactically *de re* belief attributions would be formalized along the lines of *IIb*. Kaplan sees Quine as proposing a method for translating an (apparently) *de re* (relational) belief attribution that is syntactically *de dicto* (such as 0*a*) into a pure *de re* form, i.e., something that is both semantically and syntactically *de re*. Kaplan pointed out, however, that Quine's method of translation is insensitive to subtle distinctions in content involving the phenomenon that I call 'reflexivity'.[9] The problem arises in the case of sentences of the form *IIa* where there are multiple (two or more) free occurrences of the pronoun 'it' in ϕ_{it}. Thus suppose Ralph is under the illusion that the man in the brown hat is taller than the man at the beach. It would seem then that the following sentence is true:

Ralph believes of Ortcutt that he is taller than he.

Quine's procedure translates this sentence into

B_r(Ralph, Ortcutt, (μx)[x is taller than x])

which may be read: Ralph *r*-believes Ortcutt to be a thing that is taller than itself. Unless Ralph is insane this is false. Kaplan improved upon Quine's scheme by employing a procedure that Kaplan calls 'articulation'. Kaplan translates the problem sentence instead into something along the lines of:

B_r(Ralph, <Ortcutt, Ortcutt>, (μxy) [x is taller than y]).

This may be read: Ralph *r*-believes Ortcutt and himself to be so related that the former is taller than the latter.[10]

Unlike Quine, Kaplan sees no logical difficulty with 0*a* as it stands. Nevertheless, in 'Opacity' he apparently accepts Quine's contention that all such mixed (syntactically *de dicto* semantically *de re*) belief attributions can be paraphrased into the pure *de re* form using the syntactically *de re* 'believes . . . to be' construction—as long as articulation is employed wherever possible. On this view, Quine's proposal to replace 0*a* with 0*b* (when stripped of the proposal's philosophical underpinnings) is neither superior nor inferior to Russell's account of quantifying in. In the long run, Quine's translation, modified to incorporate articulation, is simply a rephrasing of Russell's account.

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[9] These differences in content are of a sort highlighted in Salmon (1986b): e.g., the difference in content between 'Ortcutt loves Ortcutt' and 'Ortcutt is a person who loves himself'.
[10] Kaplan's procedure of articulation is introduced independently in Church (1989).

More recently, in 'Afterthoughts' (605–606), Kaplan suggests instead that the pure *de re* construction is significantly stronger than the mixed (syntactically *de dicto* semantically *de re*). On his more recent view, the mixed 0*a* does not say that Ralph believes Ortcutt to be a spy (although this may well be what we generally mean when we utter 0*a*). The difference, according to Kaplan, is that if Ralph were to introduce a new name by means of some definite description that, unknown to Ralph, happens to refer to Ortcutt (say 'the world's shortest spy'), then Ralph could believe of Ortcutt that he is a spy even if Ralph has had no epistemic contact with Ortcutt and, to use Russell's phrase, knows him only by description.[11] By contrast, according to Kaplan, in order for Ralph to believe Ortcutt to be a spy, Ralph must be, in a certain epistemological and perhaps interest-relative sense, *en rapport* with Ortcutt.[12] On this view, Quine's proposal (even when modified to incorporate articulation) fails, since 0*b* is significantly stronger than 0*a*.

This view does not reject all translation between the mixed form and the pure *de re*. It is just that the translation will have to be complicated. Presumably, the epistemologically stronger *IIb* would analyze into something like the following:

β is *en rapport* with α and β believes of α that ϕ_{it}, grasping the proposition about α that ϕ_{it} in such-and-such a manner by means of β's acquaintance with α,

where 'it' has only one free occurrence in ϕ_{it}. (If the pronoun has multiple occurrences, *IIb* must be replaced by an articulated expansion.) In this way, the pure *de re* form is equivalent to a complex mixed form that entails the simple mixed form.

The problem is to specify that special 'manner' in which the belief is held. Kaplan says that this particular problem with translating between the mixed form and the pure

involves understanding the conditions under which we correctly ascribe to [Sherlock] Holmes, for example, the *de re* attitude that there is someone whom he believes to have committed the murder [as opposed to asserting merely that there is someone such that Holmes believes *that* he committed the murder]. It seems clear that the mere fact that the murderer has given himself a *nom de crime* and leaves a message using this name should not suffice. (In fact, I suspect that there are no fixed conditions, only conditions relative to the topic, interests, aims, and presuppositions of a particular discourse.)   (605–606n)

Here Kaplan is surely mistaken. Quite the contrary, it seems clear that the mere fact that Holmes has drawn inferences from clues gathered at the scene of the crime suffices in order for Holmes to form relational beliefs concerning the murderer—even without a *nom de crime* to facilitate Holmes's expression of those beliefs. ('Elementary, Watson. On the basis of my preliminary investigation, I believe our quarry to be

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[11] Do not confuse this with the very different claim (which I accept) that introducing a name by means of a description in this manner is sufficient to enable Ralph to say of Ortcutt that he is a spy. Kaplan's claim concerns believing the singular proposition thereby asserted. He makes the same latitudinarian claim concerning Ralph's merely apprehending the singular proposition.

[12] The text of 'Afterthoughts' is somewhat obscure on this point. Kaplan has confirmed in conversation that this is his current view. In some respects Kaplan's notion of being *en rapport*, though not nearly so restrictive, is a descendant of Russell's notion of acquaintance. *Cf.* Kaplan (1969).

an elderly bachelor who is fond of pasta and owns a sheep dog.') Kaplan has evidently confused two potential states of Holmes: (*i*) *r*-believing someone to be the murderer; and (*ii*) having an opinion as to who the murderer is. The second notion is far more plausibly regarded as interest-relative. Whereas obtaining the murderer's *nom de crime* does not suffice (in most ordinary contexts) to place Holmes in the second state, it is overkill for the first. Of course, in the special case of Holmes, the first state is invariably followed by the second, but this is a matter of Holmes's powers of deduction, not of ours.[13]

Whether Kaplan has confused (i) and (ii) or not, I have to confess to not knowing exactly what he means by a sentence like 0*a*. As I use 0*a*, it is straightforwardly equivalent to 'Ralph believes Ortcutt to be a spy'. Each requires that Ralph have some (albeit perhaps minimal) epistemic connection to Ortcutt—and neither requires that Ralph know, or even have any opinion about, who Ortcutt is (in any nonvacuous sense).[14] Perhaps Kaplan means instead that there is some sentence *S* satisfying the conditions that: *S*'s content is the singular proposition about Ortcutt that he is a spy; Ralph knows what *S*'s content is, though perhaps only by description; and Ralph believes *S* to be true. To be sure, this does not require Ralph to be epistemically connected to Ortcutt in any manner beyond knowledge by description, but it also has nothing to do with relational belief concerning Ortcutt. It involves only relational belief concerning *S*.[15]

Beware of wanting too much to have one's cake and eat it too. Kaplan offers little or no evidence on behalf of the nonequivalence of 0*a* and 0*b*. In my view, the contrary claim that the latter is indeed equivalent to, and even definable by means of, the former is so intuitive, and so theoretically smooth, that a great deal of evidence indeed should be required to warrant its rejection. The definition I have in mind is captured neither by Quine's schema nor by Kaplan's. It is the following:

$$B_r(\beta, \alpha, (\mu\gamma)[\phi_\gamma]) =_{\text{def.}} (\lambda\delta)[B_n(\beta, \text{that } (\lambda\gamma)[\phi_\gamma](\delta))](\alpha).$$

Notice that this definition does not provide for a translation of an arbitrary mixed belief attribution into one that is pure *de re*. In some sense, what it provides is precisely the opposite.[16]

In any event, there are examples that simultaneously refute Quine's original proposed translation, Kaplan's improved method invoking articulation, and Kaplan's more recent view that 0*b* is stronger than 0*a* in the manner suggested. One such example is obtained by a natural extension of Quine's story concerning Ralph and Ortcutt. Perhaps the most straightforward version of the argument assumes the theory of Russellian singular propositions—a theory that Kaplan accepts, even if

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[13] *Cf.* Salmon (1987/1988). Ironically, Kaplan himself entreats us to keep the epistemic analogues of these doxastic notions sharply distinct. *Cf.* 'Opacity' (258–260) and 'Afterthoughts' (607).

[14] *Cf.* Salmon (1987/1988).

[15] *Cf.* Donnellan (1979) and Salmon (1987/1988).

[16] The internal occurrence of 'λ' in the definiens is every bit as critical as the external occurrence. Kaplan makes the mistake of equating the definiendum instead with the simpler '$(\lambda\delta)[B_n(\beta, \text{that } \phi_\delta)](\alpha)$'.

Quine does not—but this assumption can be weakened considerably, to an extent evidently acceptable even to Quine.

<div align="center">I V</div>

My aim is first to show, by example, that a sentence of the form *IIa* will often (typically) attribute a different belief from that attributed in the corresponding sentence of the form *IIb*. Suppose Ralph has a reflective but commonsensical friend, Kevin, who realizes what Ralph does not: that the suspicious-looking man that Ralph saw wearing the brown hat is none other than Bernard Ortcutt, the pillar of the community whom Ralph saw that time at the beach. (Like Ralph, Kevin knows fully well who Ortcutt is.) When asked whether Ralph believes that Ortcutt is a spy, Kevin responds as follows:

No, Ralph does not believe that Ortcutt, the man he saw at the beach, is a spy. In fact, he believes that Ortcutt is not a spy. But he also believes that the man he saw wearing the brown hat is a spy, and although Ralph does not know it, the man in the brown hat is Ortcutt.

So far, so good. Now we press Quine's puzzle question: 'Very well, consider this man Ortcutt. Does Ralph believe that he is a spy?' Suppose Kevin replies, cautiously and philosophically, as follows:

Well, as I said, Ralph doesn't believe that the man seen at the beach is a spy. But if you are asking about Ortcutt himself—as opposed to various ways of conceiving of him—yes, Ralph believes that he is a spy. Ralph believes that the man he saw wearing the brown hat is a spy. Thus Ralph believes of Ortcutt that he is a spy, without believing that Ortcutt is a spy. Of course, Ralph also believes that the man he saw at the beach is not a spy. He therefore also believes of Ortcutt that he is not a spy. So if you're asking about Ortcutt himself, Ralph believes that he is a spy, but Ralph also disbelieves that he is a spy. It all depends on how Ralph is conceiving of him.

Well spoken. Kevin's position is coherent, rational, well considered, and very plausible. Although the matter remains controversial, no doubt many readers (and many more nonreaders)—perhaps even Quine—are in perfect agreement with Kevin.[17]

We consider the following complex sentence:

4*a* Kevin believes of Ortcutt that Ralph does not believe that he is a spy

Is this sentence true? Support for an affirmative response begins with the truth of the following sentence:

5 Kevin believes that Ralph does not believe that Ortcutt is a spy

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[17] I am not. I agree with everything Kevin says except that Ralph does not believe that Ortcutt is a spy. Ralph does not believe the man at the beach is a spy, and Ralph does not believe that the man called 'Bernard J. Ortcutt' is a spy, but on my view, however strongly and sincerely he may deny it, Ralph believes that Ortcutt is a spy. Moreover, he even knows that he believes that Ortcutt is a spy. *Cf.* Salmon (1986a) and note 1. The argument that follows does not require any particular decision with regard to these matters.

One argument for the truth of 4*a* comes by way of the theory of singular propositions. Assuming that the contribution made by the name 'Ortcutt' to the propositional content of sentences containing the name is Ortcutt—the man himself—sentence 5 says that Kevin believes that Ralph does not believe the singular proposition about Ortcutt that he is a spy. On this same assumption, the proposition (which is believed by Kevin) that Ralph does not believe the singular proposition about Ortcutt that he is a spy is itself a complex singular proposition about Ortcutt, to wit, the proposition about Ortcutt that Ralph does not believe the proposition that he is a spy. Thus, since 5 is true, Kevin believes the singular proposition about Ortcutt that Ralph does not believe that he is a spy. Therefore, Ortcutt himself is such that Kevin believes that Ralph does not believe that he is a spy.

Not everyone subscribes to the theory of singular propositions. But it should be clear that even without singular propositions, a similar line of reasoning will quickly lead to the same conclusion that 4*a* is true.

Consider in particular the theory advanced in 'Intensions Revisited' (Quine, 1981: 120–121). There Quine declares that the following form of exportation is valid:

β believes that ϕ_α
$(\exists \gamma)[\beta$ believes of γ that it $= \alpha]$
Therefore, β believes of α that ϕ_{it}

Quine also suggests that the second premiss might be taken instead as

β knows who α is[18]

In the case at hand, there is indeed someone whom Kevin believes, and even knows, to be Ortcutt—and Kevin knows who Ortcutt is. Given 5, it follows by either of Quine's suggested forms of exportation that 4*a* is true.

In its simplest terms, the argument for the truth of 4*a* is this: If 5 is true, then Kevin stands in a certain relation to Ortcutt, by virtue of Kevin's believing that Ralph does not believe that Ortcutt is a spy. That relation is the relation that *a* bears to *b* when *a* believes that Ralph does not believe that *b* is a spy. Thus if 5 is true, then Kevin has a certain belief about Ortcutt: that Ralph does not believe that he is a spy. And 5 is true.

If there is a more direct argument for Kevin believing of Ortcutt that Ralph does not believe that he is a spy, it can only be this: So what else does it take if not 5?

Applying Quine's proposal to the present case, in the first stage, 4*a* is to be replaced with (or 'translated' into):

4*b* Kevin believes Ortcutt to be such that Ralph does not believe him to be a spy

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[18] Quine discusses only the special instances in which β is 'Ralph', α is either 'Ortcutt' or 'the shortest spy', and ϕ is '_____ is a spy'. Presumably, the discussion is meant to generalize to arbitrary α, β, and ϕ (where ϕ_α is the same expression as ϕ_γ except for having free occurrences of α wherever ϕ_γ has free occurrences of γ).

Evidently a third premiss '$(\exists\gamma)[\gamma = \alpha]$' is also required. Although Quine rejects (1981: 119–120) the simplest form of exportation (which results from the deletion of the second premiss), in part, on the grounds that α may be nonreferring, he fails to consider this possibility in attempting a corrected version of the inference.

The rub is that *4b*, unlike *4a*, is false. When asked whether Ortcutt himself was such that Ralph believed that he was a spy, Kevin answered that Ortcutt was indeed. Kevin thus believes Ortcutt to be such that Ralph does believe him to be a spy. This evidently precludes the truth of *4b*.

One might respond by pointing out that, as we have seen, it is possible for Kevin to believe Ortcutt to be thus-and-so even while disbelieving Ortcutt to be thus-and-so (that is, even while believing Ortcutt not to be thus-and-so)—just as Ralph does—so that the fact that Kevin believes Ortcutt to be believed by Ralph to be a spy does not prove that Kevin does not also believe Ortcutt not to be such.

Quite so. But assuming Kevin is sane and rational, he will not believe Ortcutt to be thus-and-so while also disbelieving Ortcutt to be thus-and-so unless he somehow mistakes Ortcutt to be two different people—just as Ralph does. In order for Kevin to form a belief about Ortcutt that he is not believed by Ralph to be a spy, without altering his opinion that Ortcutt is believed by Ralph to be a spy, Kevin must encounter Ortcutt under different circumstances, and failing to recognize him, come to believe that he is someone Ralph does not believe is a spy. Kevin does no such thing. It is because Kevin is not thus confused that his believing Ortcutt to be someone Ralph believes is a spy precludes the truth of *4b*.[19]

There is an interesting complication: Kevin does indeed have inconsistent beliefs about Ortcutt. For it is part of Kevin's view that Ralph believes of Ortcutt that he is a spy. This belief of Kevin's concerning Ralph is also a belief concerning Ortcutt, to the effect that Ralph believes that he is a spy. Thus, even though Kevin has not mistaken him for two different men, Ortcutt is such that Kevin both believes and disbelieves that Ralph believes that he is a spy. How is this possible if Kevin is rational?

The matter is controversial. My own answer (see note 17) is that Kevin has indeed mistaken a single thing for two different things—or is at least committed to doing so. That thing is not Ortcutt himself but the singular proposition that he is a spy. Kevin's incompatible beliefs concern this proposition; he believes it to be something that Ralph believes, but he also believes it to be something that Ralph does not believe. In judging that Ralph does not believe that Ortcutt is a spy, Kevin does not recognize the proposition in question, the belief of which he thereby denies to Ralph, as the very same proposition the belief of which he ascribes to Ralph in maintaining that Ralph believes of Ortcutt that he is a spy. Kevin does not have similarly inconsistent beliefs concerning Ortcutt, to the effect that he is thus-and-so and he is not thus-and-so. In particular, Kevin is in no position to see that it would follow from his (mistaken) belief that Ralph does not believe that Ortcutt is a spy, that Ortcutt is not believed

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[19] Alternatively, Kevin may rationally come to believe that Ortcutt is someone Ralph does not believe to be a spy without mistaking Ortcutt to be two different people (and without relinquishing his belief that Ortcutt is someone Ralph believes to be a spy) by mistaking the logically incompatible properties of being someone Ralph believes is a spy and of being someone Ralph does not believe is a spy—which are properties that such individuals as you, I, and Ortcutt either have or lack in an absolute de re way—for properties of individuals-under-guises (or equivalently, for binary relations between individuals and ways of conceiving them). This philosophically sophisticated confusion would rescue Kevin from irrationality even when he both believes and disbelieves Ortcutt to be believed by Ralph to be a spy, if only he were so confused.

by Ralph to be a spy. Kevin does not recognize that in dissenting from the attribution 'Ralph believes that Ortcutt is a spy', he commits himself to something he explicitly rejects, Ortcutt's being someone Ralph does not believe is a spy.[20]

The example also demonstrates that Kaplan's more recent view (as I have reconstructed it) concerning the import of the pure de re form must also be incorrect. Consider the following variant of 4*b* (replacing the pure de re 'Ralph does not believe him to be a spy' with the allegedly stronger 'Ralph does not believe that he is a spy'):

6 Kevin believes Ortcutt to be such that Ralph does not believe that he is a spy

On Kaplan's view, 6 says something like the following: Kevin is acquainted with Ortcutt and believes the singular proposition about Ortcutt that Ralph does not believe that he is a spy, when grasping that proposition in a special [such-and-such] manner by means of Kevin's aforementioned acquaintance with Ortcutt. If that were what 6 meant, it evidently would be true (as the entirety of facts underlying the truth of 4*a* would seem to attest) instead of false.

What has gone wrong? The defect in Quine's original scheme that Kaplan's articulation was introduced to correct stems from the fact that in moving from the syntactically *de dicto* semantically *de re*

β believes of Ortcutt that ϕ_{he}

to the pure *de re*

β believes Ortcutt to be an individual such that ϕ_{it}

(formalized by *IIb* with α = 'Ortcutt'), one reparses the attributed belief into two components—an objectual component and a qualitative component—by simultaneously isolating the individual the belief is about and abstracting a property from the complement 'open sentence' ϕ_{he}. That is, one consolidates the internal propositional structure of the complement clause into a single property. One then depicts the referent of β as ascribing this property to Ortcutt. Thus Ralph's complex belief of Ortcutt that he is taller than he is erroneously rendered as the absurd belief about Ortcutt that he is a thing-that-is-taller-than-itself. The reparsing into objectual and qualitative components alters the nature of the belief attributed to Ralph, and Quine's translation fails to capture any relational belief of Ralph's. Articulation more discriminantly consolidates the propositional structure into a relation, in a manner that is sensitive to beliefs that (unknown to the believer) involve a reflexive structure. But articulation remains a method of reparsing and abstraction, whereby the structure of the belief attributed in the untranslated construction is fundamentally altered in the course of translation. The general problem remains: One's relational belief may have the propositional structure indicated by the sentence ϕ_{he} without the believer also ascribing to Ortcutt the corresponding attribute (property or relation), as the proposed translation requires. Kevin's belief about Ortcutt reported in 4*a* has a complex structure; it is the denial of an attribution to Ralph of a particular belief involving Ortcutt. The belief attributed to Kevin in 4*b* has a very different structure; it is the

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[20] For further details, see Salmon (1989b).

attribution of a certain property to Ortcutt. Kevin has the first belief and not the second.[21]

The example demonstrates that no such attempt to reduce the allegedly problematic mixed form to the pure form can succeed, since reparsing into an objectual and a qualitative component is required by the very form of the syntactically *de re*—to fill the second and third argument places of 'B_r' in *IIb*.

<p style="text-align:center">V</p>

Quine's ultimate goal is to replace the 'that' clauses of belief attributions with quotations, thereby replacing a field of unruly weeds with neatly arranged fruit trees. Since the problem we have noted with the attempt to reduce the syntactically *de dicto* semantically *de re* form to the pure *de re* arises from the abstraction on the open sentence occurring in the 'that' clause of the former, Quine's ultimate goal might be attained by simply bypassing the intermediate stage and moving directly from 4*a* to

4*d*   Kevin believes 'Ralph does not believe that *x* is a spy' satisfied by Ortcutt

In general, the allegedly problematic *IIa* may now be replaced with

IId   Believes-satisfied-by(β, 'ϕ_γ', α)

in which the open sentence that forms the 'that' clause of *IIa* is quoted directly without first abstracting a predicate from it.[22]

At first sight, the replacement of 4*a* by 4*d* does not seem an improvement over the earlier replacement by 4*b*. Kevin does not believe Ortcutt to be someone that satisfies the open sentence 'Ralph does not believe that *x* is a spy', any more than he believes Ortcutt to be someone Ralph does not believe is a spy. Indeed, the new replacement

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[21]   The propositional objects of these two potential beliefs are, on my view, equivalent. That does not alter the fact that Kevin believes only one of them. Indeed, it is (in some sense) part of Kevin's view that the assertion that Ralph does not believe that Ortcutt is a spy is not equivalent to the assertion that Ortcutt is not believed by Ralph to be a spy.

The example can also be adjusted to refute certain contemporary theories of so-called *de se* belief attributions, i.e., attributions of first-person belief concerning oneself. Specifically, the example can be made to refute any attempt to analyze a *de se* attribution of the form ⌜α believes that $\phi_{he-himself}$⌝ by means of something along the lines of ⌜α self-ascribes the property of being someone γ such that ϕ_γ⌝. Such attempts are made in Lewis (1979) and inn Chisholm (1981: 34–7 and *passim*). Simply let Kevin be Ortcutt himself, and let him express the belief reported in 4*a* by means of the first-person 'Ralph does not believe that I am a spy'. ('What Ralph believes', he adds 'is that the man in the brown hat is a spy. The man in the brown hat is in fact me, but Ralph doesn't realize that.' It may help for this purpose to suppose that Ortcutt subscribes to Frege's theory of the first-person pronoun, on which it expresses a particular private sense in Ortcutt's idiolect.) Ortcutt may nevertheless believe himself to be someone that Ralph believes to be a spy. (He is such a person after all.) Being fully rational, Ortcutt would not also believe himself to be someone that Ralph does not believe is a spy (although he may believe himself to be someone that Ralph also disbelieves is a spy). Thus Ortcutt would not self-ascribe the property of not being believed by Ralph to be a spy.

[22]   It should be noted again here that this is indeed how things end up in Quine (1956) where for some unexplained reason, the abstraction that occurred at the intermediate stage is dropped at the final stage. It is restored in Quine (1979). See note 3.

seems even worse than the old. Even if Kevin were to come to believe of Ortcutt (say, by failing to recognize him in his new black hat) that he is someone Ralph does not believe is a spy, Kevin need not conclude that Ortcutt satisfies the open sentence in question. Kevin may know nothing of formal semantics. A similar concern arises in connection with Quine's proposed replacement of *3a* by *3c*. Ralph may believe that the man in the brown hat is a spy without believing 'The man in the brown hat is a spy' to be true—for example, if Ralph speaks no English.

In a revealing passage, Quine acknowledges (in effect) that his terminology is misleading:

This semantical reformulation [of *Ia* into *Ic*] is not, of course, intended to suggest that the subject of the propositional attitude speaks the language of the quotation, or any language. We may treat a mouse's fear of a cat as his fearing true a certain English sentence. This is unnatural without being therefore wrong. . . . [If] anyone does approve of speaking of belief of a proposition at all and of speaking of a proposition in turn as meant [i.e., expressed] by a sentence, then certainly he cannot object to our semantical reformulation . . .; for [*Ic*] is explicitly definable in *his* terms as ['β believes the proposition expressed by "φ"']. Similarly for the semantical reformulation [of *IIb* into *IIc*].   (Quine, 1966: 192–193)[23]

Despite appearances, believing-true φ is something very different from believing φ to be true (which is something the mouse cannot do). Truth is not involved in any way in Quine's concept of 'believing-true'. Indeed, the concept would be more perspicuously written 'believes-the-content-of'. For the propositionalist (such as myself), this concept involves not truth, but the relation, usually called 'expressing', between a sentence and its propositional content. For Quine, it involves neither.[24]

Quine's terminology in the passage quoted remains misleading. For Quine, the 'semantical reformulations' are more pragmatic than semantic. The supposed point of writing *3c* in place of *3a* is precisely that the former allegedly avoids the latter's commitment to Ralph's belief of a proposition. Believing-true, for Quine, is evidently a relation that a subject bears to a sentence by virtue of a certain kind of match between the subject's psychological state and some ontologically thrifty feature of the sentence—perhaps its associated assent-producing and dissent-producing stimuli (in Quine's jargon, its stimulus meaning) or its conventional use in communication, where this is taken as not involving the assignment of a proposition as semantic content. If this thin notion is deemed semantical, our concern is with 'semantics' in a very loose sense. In its more restrictive sense as a term for the formal study of the symbolic nature of language—a subject that essentially involves the assignment of semantic values (truth values, or 'intensions', etc.)—believing-true, for Quine, is about as semantical as True Value Hardware Stores or *The Plain Truth* magazine. It is semantical in name only. Any comfort or security derived from the use of the words 'true' or 'satisfy' in Quine's proposal is based on illusion.

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[23] Although the matter is somewhat unclear, in the last sentence quoted here Quine evidently means that *IIc* may be defined for the intensionalist along the lines of 'β ascribes the property expressed by "$(\lambda\gamma)[\phi_\gamma]$" to α'.

[24] In Quine (1979), the syllable 'true' is dropped altogether from the predicate 'believes-true'.

Since it is an attempt to eliminate propositions and the like from propositional-attitude attributions in favor of expressions, Quine's proposal faces Alonzo Church's powerful objection from Church, 1950. Church points out that typical purported analyses that seek to do away with propositions in favor of such things as sentences 'must be rejected on the grounds that [the analysans] does not convey the same information as [the analysandum]' (97–98). In the present case, 3*a* conveys the content of Ralph's belief—specifying that it is a belief whose content is that the man in the brown hat is a spy—whereas 3*c* specifies certain words that express that content 'without saying what meaning is attached to them'. Adapting Church's objection to the present case, he argues that

(3*c*) is unacceptable as an analysis of (3*a*). For it is not even possible to infer (3*a*) as a consequence of (3*c*), on logical grounds alone—but only by making use of the item of factual information, not contained in (3*c*), that 'The man in the brown hat is a spy' means in English that the man in the brown hat is a spy.

Following a suggestion of Langford [in *Journal of Symbolic Logic*, 2, 1937: 53] we may bring out more sharply the inadequacy of (3*c*) as an analysis of (3*a*) by translating into another language, say German, and observing that the two translated statements would obviously convey different meanings to a German (whom we may suppose to have no knowledge of English). (Church, 1950: 98)[25]

Quine, by way of response, concedes Church's point but dismisses the objection as inapplicable to his proposed replacements, since 3*c* and 1*c* are offered as materially equivalent substitutes, and not as meaning-preserving analyses, for the constructions they replace. He writes:

a systematic agreement in truth value [between *Ic* and *Ia*] can be claimed, and no more. This limitation will prove of little moment to persons who share my skepticism about analyticity. (194)

This response makes it extremely difficult to understand just what is going on in the last seven paragraphs of Quine, 1956. Church (1950) begins with the following observation:

For statements such as *Seneca said that man is a rational animal* and *Columbus believed the world to be round*, the most obvious analysis makes them statements about certain abstract entities which we shall call 'propositions' . . ., namely the proposition that man is a rational animal and the proposition that the world is round; and these propositions are taken as having been respectively the object of an assertion by Seneca and the object of a belief by Columbus. . . . [Our] purpose is to point out what we believe may be an insuperable objection against alternative analyses that undertake to do away with propositions in favor of such more concrete things as sentences.

Church may thus be seen as issuing a challenge: A true propositional-attitude attribution like 3*a* expresses a fact that appears to require not only a believer but also a

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[25] I have altered the wording to adapt the argument to the present case. Notice that the deficiency that Church notes remains even after 'believes-true' is defined (for the propositionalist) as 'believes the proposition expressed in English by'. At most, 3*c* merely describes the content of the belief attributed to Ralph (as the content, in English, of a certain sentence); it does not actually provide that content, in the fashion of 3*a*.

proposition for the believer to believe. (Consider, for example, the intuitively valid inference from 3*a* to 'That the man in the brown hat is a spy is something Ralph believes' or to 'There is something that Ralph believes, which is that the man in the brown hat is a spy'.) If you reject propositions, then propose an analysis of 3*a* that avoids them (and that explains, or otherwise accommodates, such phenomena as the intuitive validity of the two inferences just mentioned), while also avoiding the apparently insuperable objection noted above. In admitting that 3*c* is put forward only as a substitute and not as an analysis, Quine fails to address—let alone to meet—this serious challenge.

Perhaps Quine rejects any notion of analysis that such a challenge might presuppose, and therefore respectfully declines. He motivates his proposal to substitute 3*c* for 3*a* on the ground that this is sufficient to avoid the latter's commitment to Ralph's belief of a proposition. He admits 3*a*'s commitment to a proposition; it is for that very reason that he proposes replacing it with something less extravagant.

At this juncture the question posed at the start of this essay arises with overwhelming force. Given Quine's admission that *Ia* and *Ic* are alike in truth value, how can the replacement of the former by the latter serve his purpose? Specifically, what can be the point of writing 3*c* 'instead of' 3*a* if it is granted that the latter, though not equivalent to its proposed replacement, is literally true and entails the existence of a proposition? One cannot avoid the ontological commitments of a theory merely by refraining from asserting the theory, if at the same time one concedes the theory's truth. If Quine's proposal to replace 3*a* with 3*c* is not simply an attempt at subterfuge, it can only be a confusion. In making the substitution one may camouflage the commitment to an 'intension', but the commitment remains. Indeed, given Quine's admission of 3*a*'s truth as well as its commitment to a proposition, his own commitment to that proposition remains quite visible.

This is a curious inconsistency. The only viable remedies are three. Quine could recant his concession that 3*a* involves a commitment to an 'intension'. Alternatively, he could recant his concession that 3*a* is true, and renounce 3*a* along with 1*a*. Similarly for 1*b*, and indeed for all attributions of either the syntactically *de dicto* form *Ia* or the syntactically *de re* form *IIb*.

The second alternative must be regarded as extremist; as Quine himself has insisted, both the theory and practice of psychology—not to mention our ordinary conceptions of everyday human affairs and of what it is to have a cognitive life—depend heavily on just such attributions. The first alternative is perhaps even less attractive. For it would obligate Quine to rise to Church's challenge; it remains highly doubtful whether that challenge will ever be met in a completely satisfactory way.

The third alternative is to admit propositions. There are problems here as well, but it seems likely that their solution lies within our grasp. To make the conversion to intensionalism as painless as possible, one might begin with Russellian singular propositions. Admitting singular propositions has the additional feature that Quine's proposed replacements, one and all, may be discarded in favor of an extremely resilient and satisfying account of relational belief, the essentials of which have been with us since 1905.

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