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A Problem of Belief Ascription

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This work has not been previously submitted in whole, or in part, for the award of any degree. It is my own work. Each significant contribution to, and quotation in, this dissertation from the work, or works, of other people has been attributed, and has been cited and referenced.

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Abstract

This thesis examines Saul Kripke's puzzle concerning belief ascriptions, whereby he appears to prove that we are able to attribute directly contradictory beliefs to ostensibly quite rational individuals. One is led to such a puzzling conclusion by reliance on a supposedly innocuous principle that is said to guide belief ascription, the principle of disquotation. In the thesis I argue that Kripke's version of the principle is far from innocuous and proffer an alternative that is able to account for the puzzling cases, as well as other central aspects of the practice of ascribing beliefs.

More specifically, it is demonstrated that Kripke's version of the disquotational principle assumes that two tokenings of the same proper name, being lexically cotypical, may be represented as and taken to be identical. I argue, however, that proper names should be regarded as similar to cases of indexicals and the like, in that there is information affecting their meaning that is disregarded by the disquotational principle. An amended version of the principle is offered that does not ignore crucial informational asymmetries, whatever form they may take, between the context of the believer and that of those in the context of belief ascription. This amended disquotational principle construes the truth of a believer holding a belief to be dependent on the truth of the world being as the believer takes it to be in certain relevant respects. Whether the notion of 'disquotation' that I finally settle on can be seen as true disquotation as we ordinarily understand it, is a question in need of further research.

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Introduction

The puzzle about belief ascription¹ that Saul Kripke has constructed, seems to establish that we are able to ascribe blatantly contradictory beliefs even to those who otherwise give us no reason to doubt their rationality. The puzzle is an intriguing one, because on first reading it appears so obviously ridiculous. What tempers this view is the fact that so many detailed and complex responses to the problem have been forthcoming, many set on debunking the notion that there is a puzzle at all, others content to analyse the nature of the puzzle and confirm its existence. I think that the appearance of a paradox may be explained and that it is possible to show that the puzzlingly contradictory belief ascriptions that Kripke observes turn out to be incorrect. However, any assumption of the simplicity of the fault inherent in the puzzle and the ease of its discovery, is very much mistaken.

In the two examples that Kripke considers in his detailing of the puzzle, the troubling ascriptions that arise are *de dicto* belief attributions, which appear to show that the believer holds both that something is the case and that it is not so. It is possible to explain away the contradiction by giving a fuller *de re* account of the beliefs concerned, but Kripke disallows this. His reason is that he wishes to know in particular which *de dicto* belief it is that the believer holds. The concern here is not that there is no possible explanation of the situation, on any terms, but that we are able to generate contradictory *de dicto* beliefs at all. That this can be done without the assumption of any kind of Millian notion of the transparency of proper names – that those that have the same referent are intersubstitutable, *salva veritate* – Kripke takes to show that it is not Millianism that is to blame for the kind of contradictory belief ascriptions typically assumed to decisively rule out the theory. Therefore, since such contradictory instances may arise independent of Millianism, Kripke's puzzle appears to dismiss perhaps the strongest argument against this view.

The solution of the puzzle requires careful assessment to reveal its weak spot – where it is that the problem that leads to the puzzle's untenable belief ascriptions actually

¹ Kripke, Saul, 1979, "A Puzzle About Belief" in Margalit, Avishai (ed.), *Meaning and Use: Papers Presented at the Second Jerusalem Philosophical Encounter, April 1976*, D. Reidel Publishing Company: Dordrecht.

gets in. What makes this particularly difficult, is that Kripke is extremely careful in his construction of the puzzle, and quite meticulous in accounting for almost every potentially questionable detail. On the other hand, all that is open to doubt aside from his reasoning are the two principles of translation and disquotation, which are required for the first of Kripke's two examples, though arguably the translation principle is not needed for the second example. But, these two principles are widely accepted and apparently self-evident ones that offer seemingly little cause for concern.

However, my contention is that it is the disquotational principle that allows for the problematic belief ascriptions. I aim to show, by means of considering first Kripke's puzzle and then a selection of responses that have sought to undermine the two principles on which it rests, that it is disquotation as we ordinarily define it that gives incorrect belief attributions. My concern, thereafter, is to develop a possible modification of the disquotational principle in order to ensure that it cannot give erroneous ascriptions in even the most extreme cases, while at the same time preserving what is intuitively plausible about the workings of the original principle.

The amendment of the disquotational principle turns out to be necessary because of its disregard, as it stands, for relevant and significant differences in the information available in the context of the believer and in the context in which the belief ascription is being made. If we do not provide a means to reconcile the informational differences across these contexts, then the meaning of the belief ascription may differ materially from that of the actual belief. In addition, the process of the assessment and modification of the disquotational principle, appears to show that the very nature of the belief being disquoted is other than it is ordinarily taken to be.

Kripke's Puzzle

Kripke's paper 'A Puzzle about Belief'² was intended to provide a defence of the Millian conception of proper names – more precisely, a response to the strongest and most widely supported argument against Millianism. The response is that the contradictory conclusions that Millianism allows us to draw, are in reality not the fault of this approach, but indicative of a broader problem, quite independent of Millianism. Kripke's claim is that he is able to demonstrate, by means of two examples, that the same contradictions that are blamed on Millianism can as easily be generated without it, using only those apparently basic and uncontroversial principles of belief ascription of translation and disquotation.³

The Millian view⁴ is that proper names are transparent as they appear in belief attributions: that is, that any name that has the same referent as another may be substituted for the original name in a given belief statement, *salva veritate*.⁵ So, to take the well-worn example of Lois Lane's beliefs, it may be that Lois believes, "Superman can fly."⁶ Now, according to the Millian, we can make not only the ascription, "Lois believes that Superman can fly," but also, "Lois believes that Clark Kent can fly," since he and Superman are the same person. However, the trouble with

² *Loc. cit.*

³ Kripke, 1979: 248–254.

⁴ Mill, John Stuart, 1843. *A System of Logic*. Longmans: London: Book 1: 1–2.

⁵ *Loc. cit.*

⁶ Throughout this thesis, I use the perhaps somewhat odd locution, "Lois believes, 'Clark Kent is a reporter'," instead of something along the lines of, "Lois believes that, 'Clark Kent is a reporter'," to make a clear and deliberate distinction between the former – the bald, uninterpreted statement or expression in direct speech of Lois's actual belief – and the latter – which could be taken as samesaying that belief, providing a version of it in indirect speech that either expresses or makes clear its content. I deliberately avoid using the locution "believes *that*" in order to avoid any possible appearance of interpretation or determination of the semantic content of the belief at this point. Only once such a belief statement has been disquoted – that is, transformed into a belief ascription – is its content specified in a manner that allows it to be, amongst other things, compared for logical consistency with other belief ascriptions.

What is between quotation marks, after "a given individual believes," I intend to be read as a belief statement, standing in for her actual belief. In contrast, what is contained by the quotation marks following "the ascription" or "the attribution" (I use these two terms synonymously) I intend to specify the person concerned, as well as giving the content of her belief in the *that*-clause of the ascription. Therefore, the ascription, "Lois believes that Clark Kent is a reporter," provides an interpretation or specification of what it is that she believes – that is, her belief's content – namely, the fact that Clark Kent is a reporter.

The significance of keeping this strict distinction between belief statements pre-disquotation and belief attributions post-disquotation will become clear in the course of the explanation of Kripke's puzzle and of its solution.

this is evident. Lois would happily assent to the former attribution, but flatly deny the latter. Therefore, using a Millian assumption, we are able to attribute directly contradictory beliefs, since if we just substitute one proper name for another that has the same referent (as Millianism allows us), then we may make the following ascription: "Lois believes that Superman can fly, and Lois believes that Superman [substituted here for 'Clark Kent'] cannot fly." Surely, then, proper names cannot be intersubstitutable, *salva veritate*, in belief contexts. If it is possible for Millianism to lead us to such troubling conclusions, then it must be that intersubstitutability is false and the Millian view of proper names is not correct.⁷

It is at this point that Kripke brings in his example of Pierre, and later of Peter. He argues that these cases demonstrate that it is entirely unnecessary to assume Millianism in order to create just such contradictory instances of belief attribution as are typically held against the theory. He does not come to a conclusion as to what it is that is generating these puzzling belief ascriptions, but he does maintain that his arguments nevertheless exonerate Millianism.

Kripke's first example is that of Pierre. He is a monolingual Frenchman, who has never left France. Despite this, he has heard about a certain city called London, but, of course, speaking only French he knows it as *Londres*. From what people have told him he comes to hold the view that London is pretty, and he expresses this in French, as "*Londres est jolie*". Kripke makes quite clear the Pierre is no way special. He is an ordinary French speaker, and he uses the name '*Londres*' in the standard way.⁸

It happens that Pierre then moves to England, from his home in France, and settles in London. Clearly not being one to plan ahead, Pierre arrives in the city knowing not a single word of English. As it turns out, his neighbours – in the ugly, grimy part of the city in which he ends up living – are also monolingual, though naturally in English rather than French. So, Pierre must learn to speak English directly, through interaction with his neighbours, gradually learning the language. In particular, since he speaks only French and his London neighbours only English, he does not receive the benefit of any kind of translation between the two languages. In this way, it comes about that

⁷ Kripke, 1979: 242–244.

⁸ *Ibid.*: 254–255.

although Pierre develops into a fluent English speaker and learns something of the city he is living in, having made his home in an ugly part of the English capital and not travelling much outside this area, he never realises that 'Londres' and 'London' are one and the same. Nonetheless, as with his use of the name 'Londres', and of French in general, Pierre can be said to be a perfectly standard speaker of English. His neighbours use 'London' in the ordinary way to refer to the city they live in, and having learnt English from them Pierre too uses the name in the standard manner. Unfortunately for Pierre, he has made his new home in an unpleasant part of the city, and on this basis has formed the belief, "London is not pretty."⁹

The position Pierre is in, then, is one in which he is disposed to give his assent to the statement (in English):

(1) London is not pretty.

He is not, Kripke notes, at all disposed to assent to:

(2) London is pretty.

However, he remains equally disposed as he was when he lived in France to assent to the statement (in French):

(3) *Londres est jolie.*

Since we may conclude by means of a simple translation that (3) entails (2), it turns out that Pierre holds two contradictory beliefs, namely (1) and (2). We could try to argue that Pierre does not genuinely believe that London is pretty, because that was a belief formed before he actually came to city, lived there and got to know it. But that would have unacceptable consequences, since it would imply that all monolingual French speakers currently living in France, as Pierre did previously, somehow cannot have a belief about whether or not London is pretty – either at all, or depending on

⁹ *Ibid.* 255–256.

whether they subsequently happen to move to that city. Clearly, this is untenable, and Pierre can and must be said to believe (2).¹⁰

Similarly, we cannot deny that Pierre also believes that London is not pretty. If we attempt to argue that this belief should be construed differently or that it cannot be attributed to him, due to his former life as a monolingual French speaker living in France, then we would be committed to this position even were Pierre to receive a blow to the head, say, which wipes out all memory of life before he came to live in London. Despite his only remaining remembered experience being that of an English-speaking Londoner, we would be forced to deny that he believes London is not pretty. Again, as Kripke argues, this is an insupportable position, and it is clear that Pierre does indeed believe (1).¹¹

Therefore, we cannot maintain that Pierre does not hold both beliefs (1) and (2). However, we also cannot contend that he *does* hold both of these beliefs. Kripke asks us to imagine that Pierre is a distinguished logician, who would never allow himself to hold any kind of contradictory beliefs; yet it is impossible by means of logical reflection alone for him to discover the contradiction in his beliefs. Therefore, since it is the case that Pierre “lacks information, not logical acumen[. . .] he cannot be convicted of inconsistency: to do so is incorrect.” In addition to the fact that it would be inappropriate to ascribe contradictory beliefs to Pierre, to do so would be to make an inconsistent claim ourselves. In attributing both (1) and (2) to Pierre, we would be claiming that we both hold that he believes that London is pretty, and we simultaneously hold that he believes that London is not pretty – thereby involving us in a contradiction. So, we are left in a position where we both must and cannot attribute to Pierre beliefs (1) and (2). Following from this, it appears that Pierre is also at once rational and irrational. It seems plain that he is perfectly rational and that we must, accordingly, think of him as such. There is absolutely no evident fault in any of his reasoning. However, at the same time, it seems that he must be deemed irrational, since he simultaneously holds two directly contradictory beliefs. If someone assents (or would be disposed to assent) at the same time to p and to $\neg p$ then they are

¹⁰ *Ibid.*: 255–265.

¹¹ *Loc. cit.*

quintessentially irrational. Since Pierre fulfills this criterion, it appears we are forced to say that he is irrational. Yet he is, nonetheless, obviously rational.¹²

Kripke is able to establish this troubling position, specifically that we ourselves are forced to make an inconsistent claim, by means of a strengthened version of the disquotational principle. It is worth digressing slightly here to detail the exact definition of this principle, and of its strengthened form that Kripke uses in the construction of his puzzle about belief.

The commonly accepted disquotational principle that Kripke uses, he defines as follows:

*If a normal English speaker, on reflection, sincerely assents to 'p', then he believes that p.*¹³

It is intended that any acceptable English sentence may be substituted for *p*. Not acceptable are sentences containing any kind of indexical, pronominal device or ambiguity.¹⁴ If, for instance Mpho were to say to his friend Enid, "You are my very best friend," we would not be licensed to apply the disquotational principle, thereby attributing to Mpho the belief that *you* are *my* very best friend – 'you' being whoever happens to hear or read this sentence.

Regarding the requirement of a 'normal' English speaker, we have stated already that Pierre is just such a normal English (and, originally, French¹⁵) speaker. Kripke elucidates his view of a normal speaker with the explanation that:

When we suppose that we are dealing with a normal speaker of English, we mean that he uses all words in the sentence in a standard way, combines them according to the appropriate syntax, etc.: in short, he uses the sentence to mean what a normal speaker should mean by it. The 'words' of the sentence may include proper names, where these are part of the common discourse of the community, so that we can speak of using them in the standard way.¹⁶

¹² *Loc. cit.*

¹³ Kripke, 1979: 248–249: original emphasis.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*: 249.

¹⁵ Naturally, this principle can be adapted appropriately to apply in any other language (*Ibid.*: 250).

¹⁶ *Ibid.*: 249.

The requirement that assent be made "on reflection" is intended to prevent the speaker assenting to something she does not actually mean simply because she is answering in a hurry, or without proper care or attention. The qualification 'sincerely' is included to rule out instances where the speaker is trying to deceive, happens to acting a part or is trying to be ironic, and any similar concerns.

There is also the strengthened form of the disquotational principle, of which Kripke makes use in constructing his puzzle. This he states as:

*A normal English speaker who is not reticent will be disposed to sincere reflective assent to 'p' if and only if he believes that p.*¹⁷

The strengthened form takes not only assent to indicate belief, but also failure to assent to be a sign that the speaker does not believe *p*. The addition of the requirement that the speaker not be reticent, is intended to allow for cases where the speaker is too shy to make her assent known, where she is trying to keep her assent a secret for some reason or wishes not to give offence by means of her assent, and so forth.¹⁸

The other crucial principle that Kripke makes use of in the example of Pierre, above, is that of translation. Like the disquotational principle, it too is a quite straightforward and uncontroversial one, but it is worth making it explicit. The principle of translation Kripke uses is this:

*If a sentence of one language expresses a truth in that language, then any translation of it into any other language also expresses a truth (in that other language).*¹⁹

The force of this principle is that it does not allow for translation such as that which changes the particular meaning of a given sentence, say, to preserve its function in the broader structure of a piece, for example.²⁰

These then are the details of the two principles on which Kripke's example of Pierre rests. They both (including the strengthened version of the disquotational principle) appear to be quite sound, and are fundamental to our practice of belief ascription, and yet using only these Kripke is able to generate a profoundly troubling puzzle for our

¹⁷ *Loc. cit.*

¹⁸ *Loc. cit.*

¹⁹ Kripke, 1979: 250.

²⁰ *Loc. cit.*

ordinary manner of attributing beliefs. After explaining Pierre's case, he then moves on to the even more parsimonious example of Peter²¹, in that here he makes no use of translation from one language into another²², but only of the disquotational principle. "Even if we confine ourselves to a single language, English say, and to phonetically identical tokens of a single name, we can still generate the puzzle."²³

Peter knows that there was a famous pianist, called Paderewski. Unsurprisingly, since Peter knows of him by virtue of his musical prowess, he believes that Paderewski had musical talent. However, it happens that Peter has also, quite separately, heard that there was well-known politician by the name of Paderewski. In his experience of people in political life Peter has found that none of them are particularly creatively inclined, with the result that he forms the belief that Paderewski the politician had no musical talent. Of course, unbeknownst to the hapless Peter, there was one highly accomplished and over-achieving individual who managed to become famous as both a pianist and a politician; there is just one Paderewski. However, labouring under the misapprehension that he is, Peter believes that there are two Paderewskis – one whom he believes to have had musical talent, and another whom he believes to have had no musical talent. Therefore, using only the disquotational principal, we may say the following:

- (4) Peter believes that Paderewski had musical talent.
- (5) Peter believes that Paderewski had no musical talent.²⁴

However, given that the 'two' Paderewski's of which Peter holds these beliefs are in fact one and the same person, the result of this is that we have attributed contradictory beliefs to the seemingly quite rational Peter, and once again we are guilty of a contradiction in having ourselves asserted two contradictory statements. Also, as with the case of Pierre, we cannot avoid the problem by denying one or other of the beliefs.

²¹ Technically, Peter is the same person used in the first example, just with his name now Anglicised, but it is often simpler and clearer to treat him as a separate individual, which I do throughout.

²² Kripke does acknowledge that one might have a problem with the idea that there is homophonic translation occurring here, of 'Paderewski' in Peter's idiolect into our own. I deal with his response to this slightly further on.

²³ Kripke, 1979: 265.

²⁴ *Loc. cit.*

It makes no sense to disavow Peter's belief regarding the politician's lack of musical talent simply because of his preexisting belief in the pianist musical talent, and vice versa.²⁵

As Kripke is quick to point out, "Here, however, no restriction that names should not be translated, but should be phonetically repeated in the translation, can help us. Only a single language and a single name are involved." So, by means of the disquotational principle alone, we are able to arrive at the same puzzling conclusion – without need of the principle of translation. It might be argued that some translation is still needed, except that in this instance it is homophonic translation from Peter's idiolect (different from ours, in that it uses 'Paderewski' ambiguously, to refer to two people, a politician and a pianist) into ours (in which 'Paderewski' unambiguously refers to a single individual). Can 'Paderewski' in Peter's idiolect then be translated into ours, when we use the name in these different ways? the argument goes. The problem with this line, is that before Peter learns of 'Paderewski the politician', there is clearly no trouble in translating from his (then still unambiguous) use of 'Paderewski' into ours, and vice versa. Similarly, there is no problem for his use of the name with regards to the politician (once he has learnt of him), should he somehow have lost all memory of 'Paderewski the musician'. Clearly, then, this objection does not hold.²⁶

Kripke's explanation of his two examples is all very well as it goes, but the seemingly natural response to both of the puzzle cases is to point out that there is an obvious solution to the problem. We need only give a *de re* reading of Pierre's beliefs, say, and state, "Pierre believes of London, as *Londres*, that it is pretty, and Pierre believes of London, as London, that it is not pretty." However, Kripke is clear in disallowing this. It is only *de dicto* ascriptions, of the form, "Pierre believes that London is pretty," in which he is interested. "I am fully aware," Kripke points out,

that complete and straightforward descriptions of the situation are possible and that in this sense there is no paradox [...] No doubt some of these are, in a certain sense, *complete* descriptions of the situation. But none of this answers the original question. Does Pierre, or does he not, believe that London is pretty?

²⁵ Kripke, 1979: 265–266.

²⁶ *Loc. cit.*

[...] It is no answer to protest that, in some *other* terminology, one can state 'all the relevant facts.'²⁷

It seems that there must be something wrong with this somewhere. In the end, there is a problem lurking in the puzzle that does account for the worryingly contradictory belief attributions, but in a sense Kripke is correct in his insistence that we provide an answer on the terms he demands. What he is saying, essentially, is that although there may be perfectly good ways in which we can describe Pierre's beliefs without arriving at a contradiction that is nonetheless irrelevant here. We still need to explain how it is that we *are* able to generate a contradiction, apparently without the introduction of any Millianism and using only two generally accepted tools of belief ascription.

What emerges from this account of Kripke's puzzle – if we wish to provide a solution of it – is that there are a number of evident constraints on the nature of the answer we may give. Firstly, and mostly obviously, we cannot assume any kind of Millianism in our answer, since it is for the very reason that he believes the puzzle *not* to rest on any Millian assumptions that Kripke sees it as providing a vindication of this approach. If, however, we are able to discover some hidden Millianism that Kripke has sneaked into his example of Pierre and Peter, well, then, so much the better for dismissing the supposed problem. Secondly, for an answer to the puzzle to hold water, it cannot be an ad hoc measure that simply stipulates its way out of the dilemma. We cannot, for instance, just assert that no belief attributions may be made that call into question the rationality of clearly rational individuals, without providing any principled basis for such a prohibition. The third requirement of an acceptable answer to Kripke's puzzle, is that it must give Pierre's and Peter's beliefs a *de dicto*, rather than a *de re*, reading. There quite clearly is a possible, more detailed *de re* reading of their beliefs that avoids the contradiction altogether, but that is not relevant. The fact is that we seem, nonetheless, able to give a reading of their beliefs that *is* contradictory, but without introducing Millianism. It is this worrisome outcome that is in need of explanation. The fourth necessary feature of an answer to the puzzle, is that it must deal with Pierre and Peter's cases equally well. Also, it must do so by the same means in each case, unless a cogent argument is provided as to why the problem leading to the troubling belief ascriptions in each case must be a different one.

²⁷ Kripke, 1979: 259.

Fifthly, and finally, we also need to provide an answer that does one of the following: Either it must propose and substantiate (in a principled way) the need for some modification – or even the straight rejection – of one or both of the principles of translation and disquotation, or it must explain where Kripke goes wrong in his argument. It appears to me that his reasoning, as set out in his construction of the puzzle, is free of flaws²⁸, as the examples of Pierre and Peter both stand up to scrutiny in all their details. Therefore, any possible answer must centre on the two supposedly uncontentious principles Kripke uses to make his belief ascriptions.

If Kripke is correct in the formulation of his puzzle about belief ascription, then a significant argument against Millianism is undone. It seems that the contradictions ordinarily blamed on the intersubstitutability allowed by this theory can be produced without any substitution being made. And, if such contradictory belief attributions can be generated without the assumption of Millianism, then it is not clear that the Millian transparency of proper names is to blame for these problematic ascriptions. All that Kripke's puzzle rests on is the putatively uncontroversial principle of disquotation, as well as the principle of translation, though the second example appears to do away with the need for this. But, given that there seems to be no fault in Kripke's argument, and if these widely accepted and seemingly innocuous principles are the only ones used in the construction of the two troubling examples, we are left with a situation where we have to discard or modify the principles of disquotation or translation, or both.

²⁸ There is one relatively small flaw that I can see, and which will be made evident in the course of this thesis, but it does not form the crux of the puzzle.

Challenges to the Principles of Translation and Disquotation

Given the lack of evidence of error in Kripke's arguments in the development of his puzzle about belief attribution, two of the most basic principles that we make use of in ascribing beliefs are called into question. From amongst the numerous resultant responses, I have made a selection of a few significant counter-arguments, which I examine in order to bring out what it is that might be genuinely problematic with the principles that Kripke uses in his construction of the examples of Pierre and Peter. Firstly, I consider the principle of translation – how its application differs across the two cases, and whether it is to blame for trouble – before looking at the principle of disquotation.

Taschek is one of those who attacks Kripke's puzzle via the principle of translation – or, more accurately, the way in which it is applied.²⁹ He does this by means of focusing specifically on the logical structure of Pierre's belief statements and of those attributed to him. His view is that we must concern ourselves with the 'global logical structure' of a sentence, meaning that its logic cannot always be assessed compositionally, in terms of its smaller semantic parts. It is on this basis that Taschek criticises Kripke's puzzle, as he claims that it falsely generates a contradiction by artificially considering each of the belief attributions in its examples in isolation.³⁰

When we think of Pierre's beliefs, for instance, in the way in which we would actually deal with them in reality, we find that Kripke's application of the principle of translation is incorrect, as it does not preserve the global logical structure of the sentence concerned. Taschek states that:

[I]o guarantee that the content sentence of our (oblique or de dicto) belief reports accurately or systematically reflect the logically relevant features of what our subjects believe, we standardly require that the content sentences themselves possess, on the occasions of their use, corresponding logical properties. Let us call this the logic requirement (LR).³¹

²⁹ Taschek, William, 1998, 'On Ascribing Beliefs: Content in Context' in *The Journal of Philosophy*, 95(7): 323–353.

³⁰ *Ibid.*: 335–336.

³¹ *Ibid.*: 323–324.

Given LR as a fundamental part of our belief ascription practices. Taschek's argument is that it is illegitimate (in that it is not logic-preserving) to translate (6) into (7):

(6) *Pierre croit que Londres est jolie.*

(7) Pierre believes that London is pretty.

We cannot take the translation of (6) in isolation, as Kripke would have us do. We must look at in light of our pre-existent attribution:

(8) Pierre believes that London is not pretty.

Given that we take (8) as an instance of the logical schema " $\neg\Phi\alpha$ "³² we cannot translate (6) so as to ascribe to Pierre a contradictory belief, that is one corresponding to the logical schema " $\Phi\alpha$ "³³ – namely, (7). The way that Taschek suggests we avoid this (though he does not claim it as the definitive approach), is to retain what he calls the "name-shape"³⁴ of '*Londres*', thereby translating (6) as, "Pierre believes that *Londres* is pretty" – corresponding to the logical schema " $\Phi\alpha$ "³⁵ and thereby preventing any conflicting attributions to Pierre.

However, what Taschek does not provide is a principled basis to support the modification of the standard application of the principle of translation in this case. It is quite true, as he begins his piece by noting, that we attribute beliefs in such a way as to render the believers we encounter maximally rational. Nonetheless, this does not seem to me to license the ad hoc modification of what he otherwise accepts as a perfectly correct belief attribution solely when it is translated. If (6) is accurate, then why should we not allow the straightforward, undoctored translation of this belief attribution into the English (7)?

Taschek's response would obviously be that this would not preserve the logic of the belief as Pierre holds it (for Pierre is rational and therefore would not hold a belief

³² *Ibid.*: 337.

³³ *Loc. cit.*

³⁴ Taschek, 1998: 338.

³⁵ *Ibid.*: 339.

whose logic contradicted that of another of his beliefs). But surely that cannot be true. For, consider, if we were to take (6) *first* and translate it into (7), then the alteration would have to be made to the belief ascription (8). And how might this be achieved? Even if we could provide some modification that would avoid the apparent logical inconsistency between (7) and (8), such a modification would still seem to be quite arbitrary. Taschek's answer (though he does not deal with this possibility in regard to the example of Pierre) is to be found in his consideration of Peter's case. Here the answer is, when attributing beliefs to Peter, to make reference to, "[...] Paderewski (thought of by Peter as a statesman but not a musician) [...]" in one case, and, "[...] Paderewski (thought of by Peter as a great pianist but not a statesman) [...]" in the other.³⁶ And lest this be immediately taken as a violation of Kripke's clear stipulation that we not resort to a *de re* explanation of what Peter believes in order to overcome the contradiction, Taschek is quick to point out that this is a merely pragmatic aid to the audience of the belief ascriptions, in order that the global logical structure of the belief statements is made evident. As he observes, he could just as well have used "'Paderewski₁'" and "'Paderewski₂'"³⁷ to indicate this difference.

However, it seems to me that, despite Taschek's protests, this does indeed violate Kripke's specifications. Why is global logical structure to be privileged over other considerations? Whatever cipher we use to distinguish the two tokenings of 'Paderewski' we are bringing in additional information, and it is this that Kripke disallows. It needs to be shown why such information, whether logical or semantic, should *ordinarily* be included in belief attribution – otherwise, its inclusion in instances only such as the puzzle cases is arbitrary and unjustifiable.

In both cases, what Taschek needs to, but does not, show is precisely why we may not attribute irrational beliefs to Pierre or Peter. To make my point by means of the former – certainly, Pierre does not give us any justification for deeming him irrational – in fact, it is clear that he is perfectly rational. But this is the very heart of the puzzle! He is rational, and yet without any apparent misstep we are able to attribute irrationally contradictory beliefs to him. We cannot simply stipulate this away.

³⁶ *Ibid.* 346.

³⁷ *Ibid.* 346.

Taschek claims that it is not the nature of the translation principle that is at fault here, but the way in which it is applied – that is, in a manner that does not preserve Pierre's rationality. What Taschek needs to provide, then, is a principled basis for tampering with the principle's application, and not with the character of the principle of translation itself, or with the disquotational principle or even with the claim of Pierre's rationality. Admittedly, Taschek's strategy is one we might well adopt in ordinary life if confronted with a case such as that of Pierre or Peter's, as he suggests. However, this is still an ad hoc solution which we arbitrarily impose on the assumption of a believer's rationality. It is not a philosophically justified escape from Kripke's puzzle.

To bring out just what is wrong with Taschek's approach, consider the case of those people who are *not* rational, or those who hold the odd irrational belief. Take, for example, Aaron, who believes that flying is more dangerous than car-travel, even though he also believes that the latter is far more likely to result in his death. Aaron refuses to fly because he believes he might well die in a plane crash. On Taschek's argument, would I not be obliged to rework the beliefs that I would ordinarily attribute to him in the standard way, such that they would no longer logically contradict one another? So, if I ascribe to him, "Aaron believes that it is too dangerous to fly in an airplane," but also, "Aaron believes that daily car travel is far more likely to result in death than flying," and, "Aaron believes that daily car travel is not so dangerous that it need be avoided" Taschek's argument would seem to require me to modify the second belief attribution in some way, so as to preserve (or in this instance actually *create*) rationality. This is despite the fact that in this instance, these two of Aaron's beliefs are genuinely contradictory, since the first belief is an irrational one, not supported by the facts required to characterise air travel as dangerous, in terms of the standard of evidence he otherwise uses in his personal conception of what constitutes intolerable risk.

That said, it might be argued that I have here merely stipulated Aaron's irrationality, much as Kripke does in asserting that Pierre is a leading logician and would never assent to nor hold any contradictory beliefs.³⁸ Well, then, let us assume rather that

³⁸ Kripke, 1979: 257.

Aaron is entirely rational, or at least that we take him to be. Say that I talk to him and find him on first impression to be a perfectly normal and logical person. When the conversation turns to transport, Aaron says that he refuses ever to fly, and makes the comment, "It is too dangerous to fly in a plane." I respond by saying something to the effect that one is more likely to die in a car than a plane crash. "Yes," Aaron agrees. "Daily car travel is far more likely to result in death than flying." However, shortly after, he adds, "Daily car travel is not so dangerous that it need be avoided." At this point it would seem that I am able to ascribe to Aaron the contradictory beliefs I mentioned above.

Following Taschek, and trying to maximise Aaron's rationality, I could argue that the attributions should rather be made as follows, with two of the attributions remaining the same: "Aaron believes that daily car travel is far more likely to result in death than flying," as well as, "Aaron believes that daily car travel is not so dangerous that it need be avoided." The third attribution, though, should be altered to, "Aaron believes that, however small the likelihood of a plane crash, the danger of its happening makes it too frightening to fly on a plane." Certainly, this will preserve Aaron's rationality – and perhaps this is what he genuinely believes and he is rational – but what if he happens *not* to be rational, and his beliefs are just as he originally expressed them? It seems that there is no principled basis on which to adjust our statement of the beliefs we attribute to him, in translating from his idiolect into ours. It may be that there is the need to make such an adjustment, but we must have a justified basis on which to make it, which Taschek does not appear to provide.

The point of my example here is that while we can, and indeed must, interpret others in such a way as to maximise their rationality, we cannot do so in an arbitrary manner that thereby disallows the very possibility of their being in any way irrational.

Taschek's point about the necessity of preserving global logical structure is an apparently plausible one, but what he does not show is how this is to be achieved on a *principled* basis and how we are to *determine* the global logic of a given collection of belief attributions, other than by simply assuming rationality in every case. It seems that in trying to preserve rationality, what Taschek has in fact done is to prevent even the *possibility* of irrationality.

Over makes an argument along roughly the same lines as Taschek. He disputes Kripke's use of the translation principle, maintaining that 'Londres' should not be translated into 'London' when attributing beliefs to Pierre: "Technically we would say that 'Londres' [...] must, *pace* Kripke, be given a homophonic translation. This is the only way to explain the actions of Pierre [...] through [his] beliefs."³⁹ The trouble with this response is that Kripke freely admits that there are perfectly clear and uncontentious ways in which to explain Pierre's beliefs, so that his actions are quite rational and understandable. That, however, does not interest Kripke. What he wants to get at is why, in addition to these explanations, we are able to produce contradictory belief attributions simply by applying two quite basic principles in the ordinary manner. As Kripke makes quite plain, we would have no qualms about translating Pierre's belief, "*Londres est jolie*," into, "London is pretty," if he did not later move to London and form an apparently contradictory belief. Suggesting, then, that 'Londres' should not be translated as 'London', purely in light of subsequent occurrences, seems unjustifiably arbitrary.⁴⁰

Over explains Kripke's second example, of Peter, in the same way. He points out that Kripke acknowledges the possibility that one might dispute the fact that Peter's own personal idiolect may be translated into our language. However, Over also acknowledges Kripke's response that (as in Pierre's case) we happily accept such translation in the first case, when we learn of Peter's belief about the 'first' Paderewski. It is only when we hear that he has a contradictory belief about 'another' Paderewski, whom he believes to be a separate person from the first, that this concern is brought into play.⁴¹ Such an objection, therefore, appears again quite arbitrary – introduced purely out of convenience, rather than on any principled basis.

Nonetheless, Over believes that Kripke was too quick to dismiss this objection that he himself raises to his own view. "Why do we suddenly reject homophonic translation when Peter formulates his idea of Paderewski-the-pianist?"⁴² he asks. Unlike Kripke, he contends that, "The answer is that we take this step as the only way of matching

³⁹ Over, D.E., 1983. 'On Kripke's Puzzle', in *Mind*, 92(36): 255.

⁴⁰ Kripke, 1979: 263–265.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*: 265–266.

⁴² Over, 1983: 255.

Peter's beliefs and his actions."⁴³ The problem for Over is that this does not appear to be the only way of reconciling Peter's beliefs with his actions. There are other ways in which to tackle the puzzle. And, regardless of whether we are currently able to provide a satisfying solution or not, it seems deeply implausible that the only *possible* answer is one where we must arbitrarily tweak certain elements until we have set them so that they give us the result that we want.

One cannot simply assert that homophonic translation should hold in one case and not in another – especially when it turns out that either case may be the one in which it is accepted or denied – without any underlying, principled reason, merely in order to make things gel between Peter's beliefs and actions. It is precisely the discordance between the two that Kripke seeks to explain, and we cannot simply make ad hoc changes to avoid the problem. It could perhaps be argued that Over's approach be adopted as a useful workaround so long as no clear answer to the puzzle is forthcoming. Maybe so; however, I would argue that it cannot be thought of as a true solution in itself. To genuinely address Kripke's concerns it needs to be made clear why the strange and seemingly unjustified contradictions in Pierre and Peter's beliefs arise at all.

It seems, then, that the principle of translation does not provide a particularly promising avenue of exploration in trying to solve Kripke's puzzle. Those who try to approach the problem in this way do not appear to bring translation itself into doubt, but rather its application. When we probe a little deeper, though, it becomes clear that the application for which they wish to fault Kripke is a well supported and even-handed one. In place of this, they want to introduce an artificially-controlled application of the principle, which changes seemingly without justification merely in order to ensure no irrationality is attributed to rational individuals. Certainly, this is an obviously desirable outcome. But tampering with our ordinary practices of belief ascription until the right answer is given does precisely nothing to illuminate the underlying problem causing the untenable contradictory belief attributions in the first place.

⁴³ *Loc. cit.*

Unlike the principle of translation, the disquotational principle appears to be a far more likely candidate to be the root of the problem that leads to the troubling belief ascriptions of Kripke's puzzle. I would like to begin my consideration of this principle in terms of Moore's argument concerning the possibility of 'misdisquotation'.⁴⁴ I believe that Moore makes the correct point about Kripke's argument in suggesting that it relies on ignoring the significance of contextual shifts; in the process of exploring this some significant issues come to light, and so I deal with Moore's ideas at some length.

Contextual changes are relevant to, but overlooked, in the application of the disquotational principle in both of the examples Kripke uses. The significant context, for Moore, is that in which the believer finds herself when the statement of her belief is disquoted. He entitles his article 'Misdisquotation and Substitutivity: When Not to Infer Belief from Assent', because he maintains that to attribute the disquoted statement of a belief to a believer, without taking cognisance of the context in which the believer has a belief, opens up the possibility of *misdisquoting* the belief. A believer may assent to a statement of her belief in one circumstance, but a subsequent change in her context may proscribe the disquotation of that belief (if no details of the contextual shift are included) and, hence, disallow the inference that the believer now holds that particular belief in the new context, despite her earlier assent in another context.⁴⁵

Kripke himself, in constructing his puzzle, does take the disquotational principle to exclude, or to be inapplicable to, specific kinds of cases, such as those that rely on ambiguity or the fact that the believer concerned does not fully understand what he claims to believe, or where the belief statement contains pronomial devices or indexicals, say.⁴⁶ However, in addition to excluding those instances clearly disallowed due to "explicit semantic parameters", such as indexicals, Moore takes Kripke to intend to include as ambiguous those "implicit or 'hidden' parameter[s] of a sentence

⁴⁴ Moore, Joseph G., 1999, 'Misdisquotation and Substitutivity: When Not to Infer Belief from Assent' in *Mind*, 108(430).

⁴⁵ *Ibid*: 361–363.

⁴⁶ Kripke, 1979: 249.

– that is, a semantic context-dependence that isn't explicitly associated, as a matter of language-meaning, with any individual word or phrase that occurs in the sentence."⁴⁷

Moore takes Kripke to allow the exclusion of instances of more subtle ambiguity, such as that just discussed, but maintains that in letting hidden parameters of this nature count as valid grounds for disallowing disquotation he is opening the flood gates. The contention is that in allowing those limitations to the disquotational principle that he does, Kripke cannot prevent his own examples of Pierre and Peter from being deemed cases of misdisquotation as well, given that these cases used to construct his puzzle are also, in fact, significantly context-dependent. Though this may be less immediately evident, and far less clearly indicated in our belief-reporting practice than those belief statements containing unmistakable indexicals, it nevertheless implies the inapplicability of the disquotational principle in these instances too.⁴⁸

According to Moore, the truth-value of a disquoted belief statement is dependent on the context of the believer when her belief is attributed to her. What then are the salient contextual facts that Moore takes to affect truth-value? The significant factor here is that of 'guises'. The objects of two distinct beliefs may in fact be identical, and therefore a single object, but this one object may still have more than one guise associated with it.⁴⁹ Moore explains guises as, "some class of semantic entities such that more than one can be associated with a unique actual individual."⁵⁰

To make this clearer, take the second example Kripke gives: Peter believes both that Paderewski had musical talent and that Paderewski had no musical talent.⁵¹ It seems that something crucial has been left out in the disquotation of these belief statements. For Moore, it is a question of which guise of the object of a belief is dominant, in the context of the believer, when the belief is attributed to her.⁵² In the case of Peter, the

⁴⁷ Moore, 1999: 340.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*: 348–355.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*: 348–349.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*: 348. Moore is purposefully vague as to the precise nature of guises, as he believes these 'semantic entities' may be successfully fleshed out in a variety of different ways, according to one's preferred semantic theory.

⁵¹ Kripke, 1979: 265.

⁵² Though it is not made explicit, it seems to be that the fact of which guise is dominant, or more salient than another, is that which the believer herself takes it to be.

disquoted belief “Peter believes that Paderewski had musical talent” is true only when Paderewski’s ‘musician-guise’ is dominant for Peter at the time at which we attribute the belief to him. In other words, it is true when Peter is sitting at home and listening to some of Paderewski’s music (when beliefs concerning Paderewski the musician are dominant). It is false (a misquotation) when Peter is in the midst of political rally (when beliefs concerning Paderewski the politician are dominant). In a neutral context – when neither of the guises Peter associates with Paderewski is more salient than the other – Moore maintains that we cannot assign any truth-value to the disquotation “Peter believes that Paderewski had musical talent”⁵³. It is neither true nor false. In this case, we *are* still able to state what it is that Peter believes, but we cannot do it in the terms that Kripke demands. We must make use of a more detailed report, such as: “Peter falsely believes that there were two distinct individuals named ‘Paderewski’ – one a pianist, and the other a politician. He believes that the pianist had talent, but the politician did not.”⁵⁴

The separation Moore claims between a believer’s assent to a belief statement and the attribution of that belief to him, lies in the context-dependent nature of guises – and, while I agree that assent (as typically construed) and attribution ultimately do come apart, I differ from Moore as to the reasons for this and the type of context in which this occurs. We can conclude from Moore’s argument that a believer’s assent to a statement such as, “Paderewski had musical talent,” given in the context of listening to Paderewski’s music, say, does not automatically license the attribution of the belief “Peter believes that Paderewski had musical talent” at another time, when Peter is in a quite different context.⁵⁵ The solution to Kripke’s puzzle then, on Moore’s view, is that in whatever contexts it is true Peter believes that Paderewski had musical talent, it will be false that Peter believes that Paderewski had no musical talent, because it is only Paderewski-as-musician that is salient for Peter in such contexts (and vice versa for contexts in which Paderewski’s politician guise is more salient). If we try to ask in general terms – without any particular context being dominant, or even specified –

⁵³ Moore, 1999: 350.

⁵⁴ *Loc. cit.*

⁵⁵ Of course, if for instance Peter was asked whether he thought ‘Paderewski the musician’ had musical talent in a context in which Paderewski’s politician-guise would naturally seem to be more salient (at a political rally, say), then clearly the dominant guise, with respect to the context of that specific question at least, would be that of musician and not politician. One clearly cannot falsify Moore’s view simply by approaching the matter of the saliency of particular guises in a heavy-handed manner.

whether Peter believes Paderewski had musical talent or not. Moore simply says that this is a question that cannot be answered; or, at least, that the answer would have to be a more detailed one. Hence, we are never forced to ascribe Peter contradictory beliefs.

Kripke's obvious response to Moore's challenge would be that it is an illegitimate one altogether. After all, he has warned that, "It is no solution in itself to observe that some *other* terminology, which evades the question whether Pierre believes London is pretty, may be sufficient to state all the relevant facts."⁵⁶ The puzzle, he reminds us, is this: "Does Pierre, or does he not, believe that London is pretty?"⁵⁷ That is the only question he wants answered, and, in effect, the only question whose answer he will take to be a legitimate solution to the puzzle.

Moore, however, is well aware that Kripke would object to his response and I think that in providing a justification for his position he makes a significant point regarding the nature of the answer or solution that may be given. Does Peter believe Paderewski had musical talent? "[S]uch questions cannot always be answered[.]" says Moore.

According to the contextualist, this question gets a determinate (though different) answer in each of the first two contexts [that of the musician-guise being dominant and that of the politician-guise being so], while in the combined context we must shrug our shoulders, or say that the answer depends upon which guise we take to be relevant.⁵⁸

With Moore, I am inclined to see it as perfectly acceptable not to be able to give a simple yes/no reply to these kinds of questions. That they are not susceptible to a neat binary answer is not strange or inexplicable, since they have this in common with many similar questions – such as those concerning perfectly ordinary cases of ambiguity. Someone could demand that I answer only 'yes' or 'no' to the question: "Is your Aunt Helen a blood relation?" However, I would have no option but to ignore that directive and give a qualified answer, making my 'yes' or 'no' dependent on whether the questioner was referring to my father's sister or his sister-in-law.

⁵⁶ Kripke, 1979: 259.

⁵⁷ *Loc. cit.*

⁵⁸ Moore, 1999: 350–351.

Now, Kripke clearly implies that it is illegitimate to avoid giving a 'straight' answer to the question of whether, in the end, Pierre believes London is pretty or not. I assume that the difference he would point out between this question and the one regarding my two aunt Helens, is that in the latter case the ambiguity arises from the very fact that there are *two* of them, sharing the same name. In the former case, there is only one London – whether it is referred to as 'London' or '*Londres*' is irrelevant, as it remains one and same place. Therefore, there is no ambiguity, and consequently no way to wriggle out of giving a simple yes/no answer to the question.

What both Moore and I argue, however, is that there are good grounds for refusing to answer in this way. Moore's position is that when the matter of which guise is dominant (in the context that Pierre finds himself when the question is asked) is no longer ignored, then it becomes clear that there is an ambiguity as to which of the two London guises is more salient with regards to answering the question at any given time. Is it the guise of 'London', the city Pierre lives in and gives an English name to, the dominant one, or is it the guise of '*Londres*', the city he once saw on a postcard and heard spoken about in French? It is ambiguity generated by overlooking the contextual sensitivity of these guises that provides the grounds for insisting that the question of whether Pierre believes London to be pretty or not be allowed a more detailed answer, claims Moore. Hence, we are not forced to say, without qualification, that Pierre simultaneously does and does not believe that London is pretty, and so there is no contradiction – the puzzle appears to be solved.

I agree with the broader point Moore makes that belief attribution cannot be insensitive to context in the manner that Kripke assumes in his argument. My own view has important similarities to his, but, although I see his focus on context as fruitful and focusing on the correct kind of oversight in Kripke's puzzle, I would maintain that he both picks out the wrong kind of context and that, while he is on essentially the right track, the problem he characterises in terms of contextual shifts might better be thought of in terms of informational differences.

The trouble, I would argue, is that Moore does not accurately pinpoint which contextual insensitivity it is that fundamentally undermines Kripke's puzzle. The context he highlights is that of the believer, so that as his context changes but with no

change at all in the believer himself, a disquoted statement of his belief may go from being true to being false, from false to true, or become unsuitable for a truth-value to be applied to it. Moore explains as follows:

(Contextualism) It is possible that a belief sentence containing no obvious indexicals (or other explicit parameters) is true of a believer relative to one context, and – simultaneously, without contradiction, and with no change in the believer – false of that believer relative to a different context.⁵⁹

It seems that Moore's contextualism not only does away with Kripke's puzzle, but also neatly accommodates the exceptional cases that Kripke is happy to exclude – those instances where factors such as a lack of believer knowledge, ambiguity, the presence of indexicals, and so forth, prevent the application of the disquotation principle. For example, the attribution "Monique believes that Jessica likes books" – generated by disquoting the statement of my belief, "Jessica likes books" – would be false (a misdisquotation) if attributed to me when, for example, I am in the context of chatting to an entirely different person who just happens also to have the name Jessica. The guises I associate with the name 'Jessica' includes that of Jessica₁ the book-lover, and Jessica₂, who is a passing acquaintance. When I am speaking to the latter, the 'acquaintance' guise is the more salient one for me at that time with regards to the name 'Jessica' – therefore, it would be false to attribute the above-mentioned belief (which I believe only of Jessica₁) to me while I was in that context.

Now, I do think that Moore has hit on the essential illicit move that Kripke makes in constructing his puzzle – that of ignoring context (though I think that this can be perhaps more productively thought of in terms of the information available in given contexts, which is how I consider it in the following chapter) – but that he has drawn the wrong conclusion, or, rather, concentrated on the wrong contextual element of belief attribution. The mistake of the puzzle is not that the belief "Paderewski had musical talent" is true when Peter is in a context where Paderewski is taken in his 'musician-guise' or false in a context where his 'politician-guise' is dominant. This is because the significant factor is not the context of the believer at the time that a

⁵⁹ Moore, 1999: 347.

particular belief is attributed to him, but the context of the *attribution* – meaning the context of the attributer and the audience for whom the belief attribution is being made⁶⁰.

To illustrate this, consider the example of misdisquotation mentioned just above: Imagine that I am now back in the presence of Jessica₁, about whom I have the belief “Jessica likes books.” The belief-attributer, however, is speaking to a group of people who know me and Jessica₂, but have never met or heard of Jessica₁. In this context of attribution, the attributer attributes the belief (regarding Jessica₁) to me. Naturally, the attributer’s audience takes this attribution to mean that I believe that Jessica₂ likes books, when I in fact have no such belief. Thus, this is a false attribution, in that the attributer made it in a context where she could reasonably expect that her audience’s construal of the belief, as attributed, would be incorrect.

Clearly, Moore’s guises run into difficulties with this example of a fairly straightforward case of ambiguity – turning out to be unable to account for an instance of this type. According to his view, as long as I am in a context in which the guise of ‘Jessica the book-lover’ is more salient, any attribution of a belief of mine regarding that Jessica can be legitimately disquoted. Yet it seems equally clear that this is not the right conclusion to draw in this situation. Here we may have a simple case of ambiguity, but the relevant contextual consideration is actually the likely meaning the intended audience of the attribution will understand by the disquoted belief.⁶¹

The reason that Moore does not propose a solution to Kripke’s puzzle of the kind I am suggesting, is that he sees it as requiring a refined conception of the disquotation principle, which he takes to be problematic. That version of the disquotation principle necessary here is as follows:

- (DC) If (i) a normal, English speaker, *S*, sincerely and reflectively assents to “*P*”, (ii) “*P*” expresses content *C* in the context of assent, and (iii) “*P*”

⁶⁰ Of course, in some cases the attributer might form part of this audience, and might even be her own sole audience member, as in the case of writing in her journal, say.

⁶¹ The attributer may, of course, be mistaken as to what the audience knows and is likely to take the belief ascription to mean. What is required, therefore, is that she makes the most informed and reasonable estimation she is able to in this regard – though error cannot ever be entirely ruled out. Any remaining doubts on this score will, I think, be settled in two related notes (70 and 130), below.

also expresses content *C* in the context of attribution, then (iv) “*S* believes that *P*” is true in the context of attribution.⁶²

Of course, as Moore notes, there many ways to interpret (DC), depending on such things as what one takes representational content to consist of and what its relationship is with the believer. And, the problem he believes to arise from this, is that Kripke’s argument can only be sustained by the refined disquotational principle (DC) if it is interpreted in one particular way – a way that already presupposes Millianism, which would simply beg the question. The only interpretation open to Kripke, Moore maintains, is to determine the equivalence of contents in the context of assent and attribution as resting on their truth conditions.⁶³ Evidently, this means that if I assent to the belief statement “Superman can fly” – whose truth conditions in the context of assent happen to be identical to those of “Clark Kent can fly” in the context of attribution – then to make the attribution “Monique believes that Clark Kent can fly.” is quite correct. So, clearly, Millianism has merely been assumed in the interpretation of this version of the disquotational principle, instead of being independently supported by it.

The Millian interpretation of (DC), equating contents according to truth-value, cannot work, for the usual Fregean reasons.⁶⁴ It is not difficult to make the case that disquoting the statement of my belief “Superman can fly” as “Monique believes that Clark Kent can fly” – whatever the context of attribution – is problematic if I reflectively deny an identity between Superman and Clark Kent.

Thus, this interpretation of (DC) is certainly a problem for Kripke if Moore is correct. However, I would argue that Moore is wrong in saying that only an already Millian interpretation of (DC) would sustain Kripke’s puzzle. On my view, *no* interpretation of it lets the examples of Pierre and Peter stand. The refinement of the disquotational principle into the form of (DC) is, in fact, a very promising revision of the principle and able to bar the kinds of cases Kripke holds up as puzzling, without having to rely on an interpretation that is question-beggingly anti-Millian to start with. Even the

⁶² Moore, 1999: 341.

⁶³ *Ibid.*: 337: 341–343.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*: 342–343.

seemingly more favourable Millian conception of (DC) turns out to prevent the puzzling contradictions Kripke points to from arising. As evinced by the example of the two Jessicas, above, there are cases where (i) of (DC) may be satisfied (the believer has given or would give assent to the statement of his belief), but (iii), and consequently (iv), is not satisfied (the meaning of the belief is mistakenly understood in the context of attribution, and does not therefore have the same content as in the context of assent), and hence the belief in question may not be legitimately disquoted. Kripke's Pierre and Peter examples are cases of this kind, on my view.

The error that Moore makes, I believe, is that in dismissing (DC) as ineffectual for sustaining Kripke's argument unless it is interpreted question-beggingly, he fails to appreciate that, regardless of the manner in which the belief content that it refers to is construed, Kripke's examples do not in fact satisfy this refined version of the disquotation principle. By demanding that the content of a belief statement, however construed, be the same in the context of assent and of attribution, (DC) effectively requires that the believer assent (or that she would assent) to the statement of her belief in the attribution context.

The problem arises because the ordinary disquotational principle licenses the disquotation of a belief in any context (no matter how the disquoted belief contents will be there construed) on the basis of the believer's assent to the statement of his belief in another context (wherein it may have been quite differently construed). Surely it is quite plausible to assume that Peter would not assent to the statement of his beliefs regarding Paderewski if fully informed of the context in which these beliefs were to be disquoted? Once given in such a way as to make their true meaning clear and thereby to avoid their misdisquotation, though, the beliefs' apparent contradiction of one another falls away.

Similarly, it seems uncontentious to claim that were Pierre asked to consent to the disquotation of his beliefs regarding the English capital by means of the ascriptions "Pierre believes that London is pretty," and "Pierre believes that London is not pretty," in the context in which Kripke makes use of them, he would refuse. Were Pierre sufficiently informed of what was known in the context in which the statements of his beliefs were to be disquoted, he would assent only to a report of his beliefs that

would accurately give their content in the context, such that all apparent contradiction between them would be avoided.

Therefore, the beliefs in Kripke's two examples of Pierre and Peter fail to contradict one another, not because they are compared in a context in which neither of the two different 'guises' is dominant, as Moore suggests⁶⁵, but because in the context of their ascription, the statements of Pierre and Peter's beliefs are no longer accurate ones for the purposes of disquotation. Obviously, I need to provide a substantive argument as to why it is the case that the contents of the beliefs of the two puzzle cases might be rendered inaccurately if disquoted in a different context from the one in which they were originally expressed by Pierre and Peter. This I do in the following chapter, as I look at what kind of cases generate problematic disquotations, and how this is relevant to the puzzle cases as well. Also, although I believe that (DC) is a promising modification of the disquotational principle, I do think that the final modification should be somewhat different, as I explain later in the thesis.

⁶⁵ Moore, 1999: 350.

Pulling Apart the Disquotational Principle

The disquotational principle appears to be the source of all the trouble in Kripke's puzzle. Therefore, I attempt to show in what respects it is problematic and how this affects Kripke's examples of Pierre and Peter. I also need to defend my contention, that the disquotational principle is central to the puzzle's paradox, from Sosa's denial of its importance in generating the puzzle cases.

Kripke speaks of indexicals, pronominal devices and ambiguities "ruin[ing] the intuitive sense of the [disquotational] principle"⁶⁶. Why, then, should the examples of Pierre and Peter allow the ordinary application of the principle, when this would also seem to ruin the intuitive sense we take it to have? Kripke would be quite happy to deem the disquotational principle inapplicable in the case of beliefs such as those making use of pronouns – Ferozia's belief, "You have good taste in shoes" – indexicals – Riaan's belief, "A bird is sitting on the ground over there" – or ambiguity – Kuhle's belief, "There are many banks in Cape Town". Disquoting belief statements of this kind would indeed "ruin the intuitive sense of the principle." However, this is not a sufficient basis on which to accept their ineligibility for disquotation: Kripke is merely stipulating, without any clearly principled reason, that such statements cannot accurately be disquoted. If his approach is an acceptable one, then surely we may equally well deny the principle's applicability to cases such as those of Pierre and Peter, since these kinds of belief appear also to produce results that spoil the "intuitive sense" of the disquotational principle? I doubt, though, that Kripke would allow such a proposal. However, in order to prevent its going through, he would need to provide clear grounds on which belief statements containing indexicals and the like are excluded – and, as importantly, explain why this exclusion does *not* apply to the proper names contained in the belief statements of his puzzle cases as well. In fact, it is not possible to give such a justification, as belief statements involving proper names suffer from the same potential ambiguity that makes those containing indexicals, pronominal devices, and of course ambiguous terms, and the like ineligible for disquotation – which contention I explore in more detail and offer supporting arguments for below.

⁶⁶ Kripke, 1979: 249.

As it turns out, when we look at why belief statements involving elements such as indexicals cannot accurately be disquoted, it seems that these must be excluded for reasons that encompass those of cases such as Pierre and Peter's too. In the next chapter I consider possible modifications of the disquotational principle that allow it to accommodate not only the standard types of belief statement ordinarily disquoted, but also typically ineligible cases. This process also further clarifies why it is that the examples of Pierre and Peter generate problematic conclusions when their belief statements are disquoted in the ordinary manner. If, instead of searching the details of the puzzle cases themselves for a solution, we focus in this way on revising the disquotational principle, we are left ultimately with a principle that can be applied to any genuine belief statement, and does not need, seemingly quite arbitrarily, to exclude those that make use of pronouns, ambiguous terms and so forth, simply because they would yield an incorrect result. Kripke does acknowledge that one of his readers might come up with some necessary modification of the principle to prevent it from allowing particular counter-examples. However, he says that he doubts, "any such modification will affect any of the uses of the principle to be considered below"⁶⁷, that is, in the construction of his puzzle about belief. On the contrary, though, I would argue that the puzzle cases are exactly such counter-examples and it is exactly such a modification that undermines the puzzling nature of the instances he considers.

On Kripke's definition of it, the requirement for the application of the disquotational principle is that the believer give his sincere, reflective assent to the statement of his belief. Let us term the principle (D). Therefore, as Kripke specifies it, it goes as follows:

(D) *"If a normal English speaker, on reflection, sincerely assents to 'p', then he believes that p."*⁶⁸

The trouble is that the need for reflective assent is defined by Kripke merely as a qualification to guard "against the possibility that a speaker may, through careless inattention to the meaning of his words or other momentary conceptual or linguistic confusion, assert something he does not really mean, or assent to a sentence in

⁶⁷ *Loc. cit.*

⁶⁸ Kripke, 1979: 248–249; original emphasis.

linguistic error.”⁶⁹ As it stands, even the belief, “A bird is sitting on the ground over there.” should be able to be legitimately disquoted – if the believer satisfies the requirements given by the definition Kripke provides of the principle and the qualifications he details. Though certain kinds of instances do generate problematic belief ascriptions, the question remains as to *why* this should be the case. It appears that, strictly according to Kripke’s specification of the disquotational principle, instances that include indexicals, say, should be eligible for disquotation. If it is not the definition of the disquotational principle itself, what then makes their exclusion non-arbitrary? I would argue that while there is a clear practical rationale for disallowing them, there is no good justification for doing so while at the same time allowing belief statements such as those of the puzzle cases to be disquoted.

The obviously problematic outcome that the exclusion of statements involving indexicals, pronominal devices, ambiguities and the like is used to avoid, is that the resulting disquoted belief attribution is inaccurate or unclear in some way. To take the first of my two examples mentioned above: We could disquote Ferozia’s belief, “You have good taste in shoes”, which she expressed to a good friend of hers, as: “Ferozia believes that you have good taste in shoes.” It is evidently unclear from the disquoted statement to whom the pronoun refers. The reader would appear to be entitled to take the statement to be referring to her own taste – but in creating this impression the application of the disquotational principle has generated an inaccurate statement of Ferozia’s belief. Similarly, the application of (D) to the third example, Kuhle’s belief, “There are many banks in Cape Town,” would result in another problematic attribution: “Kuhle believes that there are many banks in Cape Town.” Without knowing the context of her expression of the belief, and, therefore, the fact of whether she is referring to the sides of rivers or to financial institutions, the meaning of this belief ascription is unclear.

Now consider the puzzle examples: Pierre believes, “London is pretty,” as well as, “London is not pretty.” If we disquote his beliefs in the standard manner, then we can say, “Pierre believes London is pretty *and* Pierre believes that London is not pretty.” In the case of Peter, we can disquote his beliefs, “Paderewski had musical talent.”

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*: 249.

and. "Paderewski had no musical talent." in the same way. This gives us. "Peter believes that Paderewski had musical talent *and* Peter believes that Paderewski had no musical talent." Surely the fact that we land up with these obviously contradictory belief ascriptions in both cases, when the believers to whom we are attributing the beliefs are perfectly rational, tells us that this is merely another case in which applying the disquotational principle is inappropriate, going against its intuitive sense?

What Kripke would likely argue, is that these are not the same kind of cases as those in my own examples of Ferozia and Kuhle. There is a lack of clarity as to the identity of the 'you' to whom Ferozia's belief refers and as to what the 'banks' of Kuhle's belief might be: there is no corresponding problem for 'London' or 'Paderewski'. We know what both of these proper names refer to in the disquoted belief statements, and therefore the problem cannot arise because of disquotation, as it does in the case of statements containing indexicals, pronomial devices and the like.

The problem for such a response is this: It arbitrarily assumes here that the difference in information between the believer and those in the context of attribution⁷⁰ is significant when the asymmetry favours the believer, but irrelevant when it favours those in the context of attribution. Thus, when they are in the dark as to the referent of 'banks', as in the case of the attribution, "Kuhle believes that there are many banks in Cape Town," then it is agreed that the principle should not be applicable to such a belief statement. However, when it is the believer who does not know the referent of the tokenings of the proper names he uses, as reflected in the ascription, "Pierre believes that London is pretty," and "Pierre believes London is not pretty," then the asymmetry is not seen as disallowing the application of (D).

⁷⁰ I take 'those in the context of ascription' to refer, throughout, to all and any audiences that are interpreting, or may in the future interpret, the disquoted belief, which may of course include the ascriber as well.

Naturally, it is possible that the information available to or known by various individuals in the context of ascription may differ. What is important is that, as I noted in the previous chapter, the ascriber make the most informed and reasonable judgment that she is able to, regarding the informational state of the audience of the ascription.

It might be argued that this will, nonetheless, inevitably lead to error in some cases. However, though error is indeed possible, I do not think that it is problematic. That the ascriber is not omniscient and infallible in the belief attributions she makes is not of great concern, since if the disquotational principle prevented the *possibility* of error in belief ascription in those cases where the ascriber has misunderstood the original belief statement, say, and/or misjudged the relevant informational difference between herself and her audience or the believer, then there would be something seriously amiss. All that is required is that, if the ascriber is fully rationally and not mistaken, that the principle enables her to produce the correct belief ascription. I consider this further, below, in note 130.

Naturally, this arose in our practice of making belief ascriptions by means of disquotation, firstly because the lack of relevant information⁷¹ (in whatever form it may take) in the belief ascription is clearly evident to those actually *making use of* (D) in the former case (and others involving indexicals, pronomial devices and the like), but much less obvious to them in the latter. Secondly, the former kind of case is far more common and one likely to occur often in everyday life, which is where we tend to make the vast majority of our belief ascriptions, and, as such, the problem it provides for disquotation is well known (and even more so for indexicals and pronomial devices, as with the ambiguous ‘you’ in the ascription of Ferozia’s belief). The latter kind of case is, I would contend, quite rare in normal life, and so we are not in the habit of disallowing disquotation when it arises. The default response when encountering any kind of novel instance is to apply the rule, rather than to assume an exception, as is evinced by young children trying to change unfamiliar verbs from the present to the past tense.

Thirdly, in the case of pronomial devices and indexicals these are typically used of very many different referents, so there is also no expectation that they should have a unique referent and we are consequently familiar with treating them accordingly. Proper names, however, more often have a single, obvious referent – or, if they do not (as with ambiguities also), we are in practice in the habit of clarifying belief ascriptions relating to them. If we were to attribute Kuhle’s belief, for instance, we

⁷¹ What constitutes ‘relevant information’ is, very roughly, that which causes the meaning of the content of the that-clause in the belief ascription to differ across various contexts. Of course, the term ‘relevant information’ cannot include all of the semantic information constituting the belief itself, as this would make my view only trivially correct – in that it would effectively be suggesting that if the ascriber knew the truth of the belief then she would know the truth of the belief (and be able to make an accurate attribution). There are also good arguments against this ‘relevant information’ being something, such as a Fregean sense, that is semantically embedded in the belief at all (as Bach points out, along with numerous others: Bach, Kent, 2000, ‘Do belief reports report beliefs?’ in Jaszczolt, Katarzyna (ed.), *The Pragmatics of Propositional Attitude Reports*, Elsevier Science: Oxford); although, as long as it is taken to constitute only a part of the belief’s meaning, my view is neutral as to this possibility, versus one that construes the information as something separate from the belief itself (for instance, Kripke and Brandom’s theories of reference for proper names, considered below).

A strict specification of relevance would require further examination and detail, but I do not think it is necessary to my argument or possible, within the constraints of this thesis, for me to give a definitive answer here. There is always a huge amount of information that is assumed to be shared amongst individuals in order for any kind of communication to be possible, and, when this assumption of commonality is not matched by an actual, sufficient informational commonality, then communication breaks down. The question of how communication is possible at all, is far broader one that hardly need be settled here.

would typically add some detail in order for our audience to tell which kind of bank it is that she believes there to be many of in Cape Town. However, we do this in an informal manner, and without being strictly required to by the disquotational principle. Thus, it seems that (D) does in fact clash with, or at least not support, our ordinary usage.

The source of the problem is that the (D) is oblivious to the crucial information necessary to preserve the very meaning of belief statements that include proper names, indexicals, ambiguities and pronomial devices. Disquoting Ferozia's belief, "You have good taste in shoes," would disregard meaning-constitutive information regarding who the referent of 'you' is, or the sense associated with 'you' – or however we may wish to construe it. I use 'information' here in a very loose, generic sense, merely as a placeholder for whatever it is, according to whichever theory one might prefer to use, that specifies precisely what it is that is being disregarded in the act of traditional disquotation.

No doubt there is always some kind of informational asymmetry between the believer and those in the context of ascription, but it is only when this asymmetry is one materially relevant to the belief being disquoted that it becomes evident. In the vast majority of cases the insensitivity of the disquotational principle to these informational asymmetries is inconsequential, as it is not a relevant one that materially affects meaning. Therefore, in the main, this failing of (D) poses no practical problem to our ordinary practice of belief ascription, which goes to explain why it is not immediately evident and is not taken to be the problem in Kripke's puzzle cases.

However, since the information available to believers and that available to those in the context of attribution is relevantly asymmetrical in both the cases of Ferozia and Kuhle, and in the cases of Pierre and Peter, we would need to be able to show some kind of pertinent difference between these kinds of instances, in order to maintain that an informational asymmetry should block disquotation only in the former case and not the latter. And, given that the very function of disquotation is to extract or provide the

content of a given belief⁷², the application of (D) to a belief statement that results in a belief ascription, the content of the that-clause of which is materially different to the content of the belief itself, cannot be seen as true disquotation. The content provided in the that-clause of a belief ascription is the content that those in the context of ascription take it to be. That it is they who determine this content, its meaning, can be seen by the fact that it is problematic when a belief ascription contains a term (such as ‘you’ in the instance above) about whose referent they are unsure.

Therefore, if the content of a belief statement containing a proper name is incorrectly rendered by the belief ascription arrived at by means of disquotation – namely, that its content is not the same as that of the belief actually held by the believer to whom the ascription is made – then, regardless of whether the disjunction in these two contents is result of additional information on the part of the believer or of those in the context of ascription is quite irrelevant. What matters is the disjunction, and that fact of its arising from disquotations made in a context of ascription where the available

⁷² There are those, such as Bach, who argue that the function of the that-clauses of belief ascription, which are produced by disquotation, is “not in general [to] *specify* things that people believe (or disbelieve) – [...] but] merely to describe or characterize them. A ‘that’-clause is not a specifier [...] of the thing believed, but merely a descriptor of it” (Bach, 2000: 121). Following on from this is the contextualist view that what is lacking semantically in belief ascriptions is filled in by pragmatic means, according to context, and, therefore, that the truth-value of belief ascriptions can be determined only by the ascription *in conjunction* with the relevant contextual pragmatic interpretation (Capone, Alessandro, 2006, ‘Belief reports and pragmatic intrusion (the case of null appositives)’ on <http://semanticsarchive.net/>, consulted 20 March 2006).

The trouble with this is that, while we do indeed add or ask for pragmatic adaptations according to context – saying, for example, “Riaan believes that there was a bird over there in the courtyard half an hour ago” – the problem in terms of the puzzle is that this is the kind of *de re* response that Kripke clearly disallows. It could be argued that this is exactly the problem with Kripke’s puzzle – that it does not take into account what we actually do in practice in making belief attributions and unjustifiably requires a solution in an unsuitable format. However, although I think that we are not obliged to answer the puzzle as Kripke stipulates, I maintain that this is not for the reasons offered here.

The contention is that giving such *de re* explanations is not ad hoc, because this is what we typically do, rather than its being an arbitrary ‘fix’ for the puzzle cases. Whether or not this is the case is an arguable point. However, even if it is true, this view cannot stand. For what is a belief ascription on Bach’s account? He claims that the that-clause of an ascription does not specify what the person to whom it is attributed actually believes. All that it does is give a proposition that must be true in order for the belief to be true (Bach, 2000). So, the truth of the that-clause is a necessary but not sufficient condition for the truth of the belief.

There are fatal weaknesses in this position. Not only does it go against our most basic understanding of what a belief ascription does – ascribe a belief – but, more importantly, it also renders it pointless. Why disquote a belief statement in order to give a belief ascription, if one is no better off at the end of the process? If the that-clause of a belief ascription (a belief report, on Bach’s terms) only characterises, but does not actually give the content of, the belief – then disquotation serves no purpose at all. We are left in exactly the position we were in *before* disquotation, at which point we cannot say whether two beliefs are identical or contradictory, as we have not yet specified the meaning of the belief statement inside quotation marks, in the form of an ascription, by means of disquotation.

information is materially different from that in the context of the believer's expression of the belief (or of her having the belief, if one prefers).

According to the information available to Peter, for example, there are two different Paderewskis, concerning the musical talents of each of whom he has beliefs. As Kripke himself acknowledges, "He lacks information, not logical acumen."⁷³ In this situation, there is no contradiction. It is only in the context of ascription, where it is known that Peter's two 'Paderewski' tokens both have the very same individual as their referent, that the contradiction arises. The contradiction is created by the fact that the beliefs ascribed to Peter are interpreted as having additional meaning, or simply different contents, than do Peter's actual beliefs. Therefore, his beliefs are misrepresented and the contradiction is not genuine, but one artificially generated by the fact that the disquotational principle fails to take into account significant informational differences between believers and those in the context of ascription.

If there is not some kind of information that is ignored by disquotation, then there can be no reason to deny the legitimacy of disquoting belief statements that include indexicals, pronominal devices, ambiguities and so on, and for impugning the correctness of the resulting belief ascriptions. However, that we are quite justified in so doing seems indisputable. Then, in order to assert that belief statements involving proper names should not be similarly excluded from being disquoted, we would need to provide evidence of a relevant distinction in this regard, which I maintain cannot be done for the reasons I have explained in detail above.

I have purposefully left the term 'information' relatively vague. That is because I believe that my view – that what is wrong with (D) is that it ignores crucial informational asymmetries – is entirely neutral as to the precise nature of this information. As I mentioned above (note 71), informational asymmetry is a problem for every kind of communication. Unless enough information is shared, communication cannot take place – which is what makes it so difficult for us to work out the details of what various different birdsongs mean, or the particular pitch of a dog's bark, say. So, it is nothing new or contentious to suggest that communication of

⁷³ Kripke, 1979: 257. Kripke makes this observation in the case of Pierre, but it is equally applicable to Peter's.

meaning between or amongst individuals requires relevant informational symmetry. The symmetry certainly does not have to be perfect, but the better it is the greater the degree of detail and accuracy with which we can communicate.

What makes the occurrence of ordinarily arising informational asymmetries particularly evident and problematic in the case of disquotation, is that the implicit assumption inherent in our practice is that (D) takes such asymmetry into account (in a way that belief statements within quotation marks clearly do not), when in fact it fails to do this. The details of what this information consists in are up for grabs by one's favourite theories. For instance, in the puzzle cases, the ignored information might consist of the fact that Pierre and Peter are actually using proper name tokenings resulting from two causal chains that may be traced back to the baptismal event⁷⁴ of a single referent on Kripke's causal theory of naming⁷⁵, or it might consist of the fact that their use of the tokenings is licensed by two chains of anaphoric-dependence having a single anaphoric initiator in the case of Brandom's theory⁷⁶ – or we could even say that the information is constituted by the two different Fregean senses with which they use each tokening⁷⁷. Specifying the nature of whatever kind of relevant information may be unaccounted for by (D) is not necessary here. The significant point is simply that such information, which we must share in order for any form of meaning to be communicated, needs to be taken into consideration by the disquotational principle in a systematic way and not added in post-disquotation on a purely ad hoc basis.

However, it might be argued that it would be obviously problematic for my view if the causal theory were used to explain the nature of the relevant overlooked information, given that Kripke quite clearly takes reference to be the sole determinant

⁷⁴ It is possible that there could be more than one such event, according to Evans (Evans, Gareth, 1985, 'The Causal Theory of Names' in Martinich, A.P. (ed.) *The Philosophy of Language*, Oxford University Press: Oxford).

⁷⁵ Kripke, Saul, 1980, *Naming and Necessity*, Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press.

⁷⁶ Brandom, Robert B., 1994, *Making It Explicit: Reasoning, Representing, and Discursive Commitment*, Harvard University Press: Cambridge, Massachusetts and London, England.

⁷⁷ Frege, Gottlob, 'On Sense and Reference', in Geach, Peter, and Max, Black, 1952, *Translations from the Philosophical Writings of Gottlob Frege*, Blackwell: Oxford. Devitt and Sterelny even argue for a modified causal theory of naming that holds that reference is determined according to causal chains, but that the meanings of proper names are not restricted to the fact of their referents as they *also* have senses, which are causally determined as well (Devitt, Michael, & Sterelny, Kim, 1999, *Language and Reality*, MIT Press: Cambridge, Massachusetts).

of meaning. For him, there can be no relevant information that is ignored by the disquotational principle, since the referent(s) of the proper names in the disquoted beliefs remain the same (regardless of whether one knows what they are), and therefore the meaning of, say, Peter's actual beliefs and of the that-clauses of the belief ascriptions must be identical. But, remember, we are not assuming Millianism. We are quite free to use Kripke's causal theory (or any other) to provide a possible explanation of the kind of information that (D) ignores – namely the origin of the causal chain leading to a particular tokening, on this theory – but we are not in the least obliged to endorse the assumption that the referent(s) in which the causal chains originate is the only significant information provided here. As it happens, this assumption suffers from the seemingly decisive objection that motivated Kripke's construction of his puzzle in the first place.

Brandom, on the other hand, asks, "Why should we not conclude from the puzzle cases offered [by Kripke] just that proper names, at least under some circumstances, are [like indexicals, pronominal devices and so forth] also locutions for which the disquotational principle is inadequate?"⁷⁸ Brandom argues that the reason the proper names used in the puzzle examples – those of 'London' and 'Londres' in the case of Pierre, and that of 'Paderewski' in the case of Peter – disallow the disquotation of the belief statements containing them, is because they must be construed as anaphorically-dependent, just as pronominal devices, indexicals and such like are. The concept of anaphoric dependence involves that:

[I]he tokening-repeatables corresponding to proper names should be understood not as equivalence classes of lexically cotypical tokenings but as anaphoric chains. Such chains are anchored in a tokening that plays the role of anaphoric initiator, which corresponds to the introduction of the name.⁷⁹

What this means is that there is an 'anaphoric initiator', an anchoring instance of reference to Paderewski, say, which is an immediate one – stating, "This is Paderewski," as we point to him, for example – and not a reference to any other, earlier reference (that is, one anaphorically dependent on this preceding reference).

⁷⁸ Brandom, 1994: 577–578.

⁷⁹ Brandom, 1994: 573.

Each subsequent, successive link in the chain of anaphora leads from this initiator to whatever particular instance is in question.⁸⁰

In the case of indexicals, pronominal devices and other anaphorically-dependent terms, Brandom argues that, simply because two terms are lexically identical, it does not follow that they also have identical referents; that their respective anaphoric chains lead back to the same source.⁸¹

The whole problem of indirect discourse consists in specifying the relation between the tokening actually uttered, or that the believer could utter to express the belief, on the one hand, and the tokening another can admissibly use in reporting what was asserted or believed, on the other. Specifying this relation involves a [sic] myriad subtleties, which the 'disquotational' strategy simply ignores.⁸²

Therefore, without knowing the referent of the anaphoric initiator, or even most of the chain from that initiator to the particular anaphoric-dependent reference we are dealing with, we cannot rule out ambiguity or inaccuracy in disquotation. If this information is not taken into account by the disquotational principle, then we are unable to say, for instance, to whom the pronoun in the belief attribution, "Ferozia believes that you have good taste in shoes," refers – hence, this disquotation is at best unclear and at worst inaccurate.⁸³

I think that Brandom is correct in suggesting that proper names are not eligible for disquotation according to the principle as formulated in (D). However, the problem is a less specific one than he allows, affecting not just those kinds of terms he deals with. Brandom also does not call into question (D) itself or ask why it is that belief

⁸⁰ In contrast to Kripke's causal theory, however, Brandom's view is a normative rather than a descriptive one. Using an anaphoric term that is dependent on another, or on an anaphoric initiator, counts as an undertaking to commit to all that follows from this. Therefore, maintaining that Paderewski had no musical talent, commits Peter to all that is entailed by the fact of to whom it is that his tokening 'Paderewski' actually refers, via the chain of anaphora, each of which someone has committed to and in so doing licensed the transmission of that and previous commitments further down the chain (which were also licensed in this way) to next person. This holds even if he is entirely ignorant of the relevant truths – for instance, that the fact that Paderewski *did* actually have musical talent, makes his belief false. (Brandom, 1994.)

⁸¹ Brandom, 1994: 574–579.

⁸² *Ibid.*: 577.

⁸³ Ferozia would, nonetheless, be committed to all that is entailed by her belief, "You have good taste in shoes," regardless of what or how much she knows about the person referred to by the pronoun 'you', given that her belief would, for Brandom, consist in her having been accepted by other speakers as being so committed.

statements containing anaphorically-dependently terms should be excluded from disquotation in the first place. My aim here, though, is not to provide or defend a particular theory of how best a given type of information should be conceptualised; the central point is simply that it is the indifference to crucial information relating to the meaning of belief statements that makes the disquotational principle unsuitable for application to many of them.

Let us consider, then, the implications for the puzzle examples. In the case of Pierre, he is ignorant of the information known to us, namely that *Londres* and London are in fact the same city. The disquotation of Pierre's beliefs into, "Pierre believes that London is pretty," and, "Pierre believes that London is not pretty," leaves out all relevant information known to those making the belief ascription, who are able to spot the contradiction only because they know that the proper names in each belief ascription have a single, shared referent. Given that this information is not available to the believer being disquoted, Pierre, the meanings of his beliefs are different to those of the that-clauses of the belief attributions generated by means of disquotation, which is therefore in these cases illegitimate. It is not open to Kripke to argue that what is in fact illegitimate is deeming (D) inapplicable in such cases, since the principle would then have to be applied to those belief statements containing indexicals, ambiguities and other similar terms that he specifically (and quite rightly) excludes. Either belief statements containing *all* such terms may be disquoted (which seems deeply implausible) or those of the puzzle cases are not legitimately disquotable.

Whatever the form of the relevant information of which the disquotational principle does not take account, clearly this is what renders it inapplicable to (amongst others) belief statements containing indexicals, ambiguities and the like, as well as those containing proper names. It is strongly intuitively plausible, an intuition that I think has been supported by my arguments above, that the informational problem is the same in these cases. This is further borne out by the complete absence of any evidence suggesting that proper names and indexicals, ambiguities, pronomial devices and the like should be viewed differently in this regard.

Thus, disallowing the application of the disquotational principle in Pierre's case is no longer an arbitrary move: it is justified on the grounds that the act of disquotation

ignores essential information regarding the proper names concerned and thereby sets up an apparent and artificial contradiction between the two disquoted statements of Pierre's beliefs.

What causes it to seem that Pierre endorses two clearly contradictory beliefs at one time, is this suppression of the fact, known to those considering his disquoted beliefs that the two different tokens of the proper name 'London', though lexically identical, are not informationally identical. That they happen to know in this case that the referent of each of the two 'London' tokenings is one and the same city, does not make (D) any more applicable, since it does not make the principle's belief attributions any more accurate. In fact it is precisely the disquotational principle's disregard for their additional knowledge, relative to Peter, that makes it inapplicable. It is entirely reasonable to claim that Pierre is not in an adequate position to decide whether or not to assent to a given statement of his belief as suitable for disquotation in a particular context, if he is not privy to all the relevant information that those in the context of ascription are.⁸⁴ If he is not given this additional information, then he cannot rationally assent to the statement, as he cannot be certain what altered, and hence possibly incorrect, meaning that statement might take on when viewed in light of that information.

In the same way, the difference in the information available to Peter, who uses the two 'Paderewski' tokens involved in the statements of his beliefs as if their referents are two distinct people, and that available to those in the context of attribution, who are aware that each tokening refers to one and the same person, is not reflected in the disquoted belief statements ascribed to Peter, which makes this disquotation inappropriate.

The analysis Boghossian gives of Kripke's puzzle could be taken to show what is so problematic about the informational asymmetry between Pierre (and similarly Peter) and those privy to the context of ascription.⁸⁵ In examining the example of Pierre, he

⁸⁴ It is worth reiterating here that this includes not just those *presently* in the context of ascription, but also future members of the audience of a particular disquotation, in those cases where an ascription is written down, recorded, preserved or repeated in some other way.

⁸⁵ Boghossian, Paul A., 1994. 'The Transparency of Mental Content', in *Philosophical Perspectives* 8(Logic and Language): 33–50.

argues that Kripke is attempting to have his cake and eat it. He requires both epistemic transparency for Pierre's belief contents, while simultaneously making use of a conception that assumes their opacity.⁸⁶ What he means by 'transparency' and 'opacity' here is, as per Dummett's observation, that, "meaning is *transparent* in the sense that, if someone attaches a meaning to each of two words, he must know whether these meanings are the same."⁸⁷ Similarly, the opacity of belief contents entails that we do not necessarily know that the meanings of two words, to which we attach the same meaning, are in fact the same. As Boghossian sees it:

There is a pervasive tension between our conception of rationality and the practice of psychological explanation it underwrites, on the one hand, and currently dominant conceptions of mental content, on the other. The former presupposes what the latter deny. One or the other conceptions must be reconsidered.⁸⁸

He does not see a clear answer to this dilemma to be forthcoming. His one possible proposal is that "A thinker is to be absolved for believing a contradiction, provided that the contradictory character of the proposition that he believes is inaccessible to mere *a priori* reflection on his part."⁸⁹ However, the obvious problem with this is that it is far too inclusive. True, it would quite correctly exclude those who would be prepared to acknowledge that they hold contradictory beliefs and at the same time refuse to give either of them up – an undeniably irrational position, but hardly exhaustive of all instances we would normally take to be irrational. The contradictory nature of their beliefs is typically not accessible *a priori* to those who are irrational, but, if this is the case, they would have to be deemed rational on Boghossian's speculative suggestion, as he points out. In fact, the tension noted above remains unresolved.⁹⁰

As I observed earlier in my discussion of Over's treatment of the puzzle, we cannot arbitrarily modify our attribution of Pierre or Peter's beliefs in order to preserve their rationality – though certainly it does seem that they *are* perfectly rational and we do

⁸⁶ *Ibid.* 33: 47–49.

⁸⁷ Dummett, in Boghossian, 1994: 33.

⁸⁸ Boghossian, 1994: 49.

⁸⁹ *Loc. cit.*

⁹⁰ *Loc. cit.*

want the beliefs that we ascribe to them to reflect this. There seems to be a tension, Boghossian indicates, between the opacity of the contents of Pierre's (and Peter's) beliefs, as far as his own *a priori* reflection is concerned, and the evident transparency Kripke requires of these contents from our perspective when we observe that the beliefs "London is pretty" and "*Londres est jolie*" have the same meaning.

However, Boghossian's approach does not accurately represent the puzzle cases. The fact is, as I have shown, that the meanings of Pierre's beliefs are *not* exactly the same. Transparency holds throughout the puzzle, since Pierre would indeed be able to tell if he had two beliefs with identical meanings. What he has, though, are two beliefs that those in the context of ascription believe to be about the same city, but which Pierre takes to refer to two different places. In his context their meanings differ, and so the requirement for epistemic transparency is not violated.

Pierre and Peter are not able to discover the contradiction between their beliefs through introspection alone, as their beliefs are not identical. As Brandon observes, in terms of his view of reference as constituted by anaphoric dependence, "Just as one cannot tell 'by pure logical and semantic introspection' whether two [anaphoric] chains that one is continuing are anchored in one object or in two ordinary anaphoric dependents, so one cannot for the anaphoric chains that govern the use of proper names."⁹¹ The fact that we wish to ascribe to Pierre and Peter what we take to be contradictory beliefs is solely because of the additional information we have about their cases that causes us mistakenly to assume that their beliefs have mutually exclusive meanings. Of course, we could just as well have less rather than more information than Pierre and Peter – the important point is that the information in each context is material different: that is, that the information asymmetry affects the meaning of the beliefs concerned.

Unfortunately for the usefulness of the disquotational principle, the rot does not stop with proper names, since informational asymmetries are not restricted to these alone. Kripke himself points out that his puzzle is not in fact limited solely to proper names. Natural kind terms are also vulnerable:

⁹¹ Brandon, 1994: 581.

[A] speaker of *English* alone may learn ‘furze’ and ‘gorse’ normally (separately), yet wonder whether these are the same, or resembling kinds. (What about ‘rabbit’ and ‘hare’?) It would be easy for such a speaker to assent to an assertion formulated with ‘furze’ but withhold assent from the corresponding assertion involving ‘gorse’.⁹²

And so it seems that the disquotational principle is beginning to hemorrhage cases to which it remains applicable. Since ‘furze’ and ‘gorse’ mean the same thing, we can easily come up with an instance where, by means of ‘translating’ one of these terms into the other, we would be able to state, “Ferozia believes that gorse is hardy and Ferozia believes that gorse is not hardy.”⁹³ It is evident that the problem here involves precisely those considerations just discussed above: the trouble is that the crucial distinction between the information available to Ferozia and that available to those in the context of disquotation is ignored in the application of (D).

It seems the flow cannot be staunched:

[A] bilingual may learn ‘*lapin*’ and ‘rabbit’ normally in each respective language yet wonder whether they are one species or two, and this fact can be used to generate a paradox analogous to Pierre’s.⁹⁴

If this is true for a French–English speaker and ‘*lapin*’ and ‘rabbit’, why not for an Afrikaans–English speaker and ‘*skoën*’ and ‘shoe’, ‘*tafel*’ and ‘table’?⁹⁵ It is quite

⁹² Kripke, 1979: 269; original emphasis.

⁹³ It might be objected that the problem here only arises because Ferozia uses either ‘gorse’ or ‘furze’ in a non-standard way. However, on consideration, this does not seem to be a convincing criticism. It is perfectly plausible to assume that Ferozia uses both of these terms in such a way that we would be happy to deem her an ordinary user of both, and yet that she holds a mistaken belief about the hardness of the plant (to which both terms, unbeknownst to her, refer) only in relation to ‘furze’, which she takes to be a distinct species from ‘gorse’. If such a mistaken belief were to mean that Ferozia does not use ‘furze’ in the standard way, then none of us could be in the slightest error about the terms we use and still be said to be ordinary speakers of our language, which seems a highly unpalatable suggestion.

⁹⁴ Kripke, 1979: 269.

⁹⁵ Say Riaan has grown up in a rural farming community, where there is no interest in or knowledge of industrial design and where all the various different tables are quite ordinary ones. Speaking Afrikaans, as he does, when he sees a table he refers to it as a ‘*tafel*’, and since he is bilingual he would say that it was a ‘table’ if he spoke about it in English. Now imagine that he ventures to a city for the first time. On entering a coffee shop a waiter says to him, “Have a seat at one of the tables,” gesturing at them as he speaks. The café tables are oddly-shaped avant-garde affairs, made from high-density foam in one solid piece and cut out so as to resemble the establishment’s logo.

Now Riaan assumes – wrongly, as it happens, but not *illogically* – that the English term ‘table’ includes such oddities as these, but continues to think of the Afrikaans ‘*tafel*’ as restricted to the kind of functional table he has had experience of back in his town. It seems quite reasonable to say that Riaan uses both ‘*tafel*’ and ‘table’ in the standard way, even though he may not be perfectly accurate in believing that the two are largely but not entirely coextensive. If this is indeed the case, then, since the two terms do in fact mean precisely the same thing, it is a simple matter to imagine an instance in

possible for Riaan, say, to use both ‘tafel’ and ‘table’ in the standard way and still form two beliefs that would be directly contradictory if they were to be disquoted.

So, it seems that any belief statement containing ordinary nouns, too, and not just proper names, is ineligible for disquotation. And why not verbs as well? We can construct convincing examples using such identical Afrikaans and English verbs as ‘*stap*’ and ‘walk’, ‘*glimlag*’ and ‘smile’, or ‘*wys*’ and ‘show’⁹⁶ along exactly those lines used above in the case of Ferozia and her ‘gorse’ and ‘furze’, and Riaan and ‘*tafel*’ and ‘table’.

We are left with a situation where, even if one takes issue with, and wishes to entirely discount, the claim that it is illegitimate to disquote any belief statements that contains ordinary nouns and verbs (on the basis that a case could in fact be made that they would have to be used in a non-standard manner to allow for the possibility of contradictory belief attributions), it still seems irrefutable that all belief statements containing proper names must join indexicals, pronominal devices, ambiguities and the like in being at least technically ineligible for disquotation – given the potential for inaccurate belief attributions.

This gives us a disquotational principle either applicable to no belief statements whatsoever, or significantly restricted in its application – or, alternatively one that is not strictly correct, but may ordinarily be employed without concern, given the relative infrequency of relevant informational asymmetries. Just as I may use (D) to make the ascription, “Ferozia believes that your shoes are in this room,” if you and I both happen, coincidentally, to be in the same room as Ferozia was when she

which we would be forced to wrongly convict Riaan of holding contradictory beliefs, if the disquotation of his beliefs were admissible.

As considered in note 93, above, regarding Ferozia’s use of ‘gorse’ and ‘furze’, we can well imagine Riaan being mistaken about some characteristic of tables as he refers to them by means of ‘table’, but not as he refers to them with ‘*tafel*’. As Kripke points out: “This is especially plausible if, as Putnam supposes, an English speaker – for example, Putnam himself – who is not a botanist may use ‘beech’ and ‘elm’ with their normal (distinct) meanings, even though he cannot distinguish the two trees” (Kripke, 1979: 265). And, if Kripke’s puzzle can be generated by means of ‘*tafel*’ and ‘table’, this means that essentially any noun could suffice.

⁹⁶ The same could be done with English and any number of other languages, although the notion of translation in operation here must necessarily be a strict one. Any two words in different languages (or a pair of synonyms in one language) must be identical and not merely sufficiently similar to be used interchangeably in informal translations, or any translations that seek primarily to preserve something other than sameness of meaning.

originally expressed a belief lexically identical to the one contained in the that-clause of this attribution, so too may we use (D) to produce correct belief ascriptions involving proper names (and common nouns and so forth) – although our success is not strictly due to the flawless nature of (D), but to the fortunate coincidence that we just happen to be, in all relevant respects, in the same informational context or state as the believer was when he originally stated his belief. The problem is that we cannot rely simply on coincidence to ensure correct belief ascriptions, which means that the disquotational principle as it stands cannot hold for formal belief ascription, though it may offer a generally workable approximation of an entirely sound version of the principle in most informal, practical use.

Having pinned so much blame on (D), I need to provide a clear case for the fact that it is this principle that lies at the heart of the problem. In apparent contrast to my contention that Kripke's puzzle is the result of a problem with the disquotational principle, Sosa maintains that we do not need (D) (or the principle of translation) to generate puzzle cases. On the basis of this, he goes on to undermine Kripke's view by attempting to show that it inadvertently assumes precisely what it seeks to defend.⁹⁷ The way in which Millianism is assumed in the very construction of the puzzle, is, according to Sosa, inherent in the unacknowledged principle underlying Kripke's argument:

(H)ermeneutic If a name in an ordinary language has a single *referent* then it may correctly be represented logically by a single constant.⁹⁸

Sosa claims that (H) begs the question, since it presupposes Millianism (and, hence, the puzzle cannot hope to defend Millianism from the intersubstitutability problem, as Kripke intended). "In effect," Sosa argues, "(H) takes a name's having a single referent as sufficient for its being *unambiguous* (in the sense relevant to representation by a single logical constant)."⁹⁹ The problem, clearly, is that it is only by means of (H) that we are able to indicate the contradiction between beliefs such as the following:

(9) Pierre believes that London is pretty.

⁹⁷ Sosa, David. 1996. "The Import of the Puzzle About Belief", *The Philosophical Review*, 105(3): 373-402.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*: 388; original emphasis.

⁹⁹ *Loc. cit.*

(10) Pierre believes that London is not pretty.

If 'London' cannot be represented by a single logical constant, then we do not have two statements of the form "Pierre believes that 'Fa'¹⁰⁰" and "Pierre believes that '-Fa'¹⁰¹." However, Sosa's argument rests on his claim that (D) is not vital to the generation of puzzling cases, which are instead down to Kripke's own unjustifiable and question-begging assumption of (H) elsewhere in the puzzle – namely in opposing (9) and (10) and alleging a contradiction. In so doing Kripke takes no notice of the fact that 'London' in (9) has a different sense (on Sosa's terms – we can think of it simply as a difference in informational value of some kind, however this may be construed) to 'London' in (10). However, when we examine Sosa's view, we see that Kripke has been unfairly charged with introducing Millianism by the back door.

It is the disquotational principle that assumes (H), and given that even Sosa himself – in a paper arguing the case for proper names as requiring consideration of the Fregean senses believers associate with them, over a Millian conception – maintains that, "the principle of disquotational is a relatively basic principle governing our practice of belief attribution[.]"¹⁰² it does not seem possible to accuse Kripke of using (D) as a means of deliberately sneaking in Millianism. That (D) could in fact be termed Millianist, at least insofar as it assumes (H) and that this assumption is indicative of Millianism, is the key to the puzzle. Oddly enough, Kripke's examples neither illicitly presuppose Millianism, nor, in so doing, manage to defend Millianism from the charge that it leads to contradictory belief ascriptions. This is because the examples do require what could be termed a Millian principle, which ignores relevant information regarding proper names involved in the belief statements, in order that a contradiction may be artificially created. The somewhat surprising truth of the matter, though, is that Kripke does not illegitimately slip in his own Millian convictions, but uses a principle that even a sharp critic of Millianism such as Sosa is willing to allow.

In order to support my analysis, I need to show that it is genuinely possible to deny Sosa's dismissal of (D) as central to the puzzle. He offers four supporting arguments

¹⁰⁰ *Loc. cit.*

¹⁰¹ *Loc. cit.*

¹⁰² Sosa, 1996: 383.

for removing the disquotational principle as a suspect in the generation of problematic cases, which I will deal with here it turn. Firstly, he points out that although there may be “many principles that we rely on in our practices which are philosophically dubious.”¹⁰³ (D) is a seemingly basic and important principle, which it might be troublesome and difficult to replace insofar as it may be flawed. I acknowledge the point, but, as he himself notes, this is not to deny such a possibility, so much as to indicate its disadvantages. Secondly, Sosa makes reference to Salmon’s argument that, even if we adopt a “different and obviously unobjectionable”¹⁰⁴ version of (D), the puzzle problems still arise. My response is simply that I do not take the following conception of (D) to be unproblematic: The suggested version of (D) is one that allows that reflective assent to a statement does not necessarily indicate belief, but undoubtedly does imply that one asserts the proposition it contains. This may be so, but, regardless, the trouble remains that the context in which disquotation is licensed by such assertion is a limited one. Whether the proposition concerned is truly believed or merely asserted – this does not legitimate disquotation in a context wherein additional information is available that was not known by the believer/asserter in the original context of assent. The same problems arise precisely because this version of (D) fails to address the fundamental flaw of the principle.¹⁰⁵

The third argument Sosa offers is that if the blame is put on (D), then an explanation must be given as to why, in the puzzle examples, disquotation is the primary problem, whereas in the seemingly parallel traditional cases, where Fregean concerns are highlighted, this is not the cause of the trouble.¹⁰⁶ How might our intuition, that these cases follow a similar line and therefore should indicate similar problems, be assuaged? Consider cases such as those where we can say:

(11) Lois Lane believes Superman is very strong.

(12) Lois Lane believe Clark Kent is not very strong.

¹⁰³ *Loc. cit.*

¹⁰⁴ Salmon, in Sosa, 1996.

¹⁰⁵ Sosa, 1996: 383.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*: 383–384.

If we substitute one name for the other in (11) or (12), on the basis that they have the same referent, we arrive at a contradiction. However, these cases suffer from precisely the same problem as the puzzle examples, in that there is an informational asymmetry between Lois in the context of her assertion of that belief (or disposition to so assert) and us in the context of ascription. This asymmetry explains why her belief, which she originally expressed as, "Clark Kent is not very strong," *cannot* legitimately be disquoted as (12), since this ascription, as interpreted in the context of ascription, is inaccurate. The fact that (D) ignores these differences and focuses purely on the terms' referents is what causes the trouble in such traditional instances and in Kripke's puzzle examples as well.¹⁰⁷ Therefore, the cases do indeed suffer from the same kind of problem, and our intuition that they should parallel one another is preserved.

So, as it happens, there was no need for Kripke to create his puzzle – the same problem was inherent in the traditional argument against Millianism as well. But this is a decidedly hollow victory for Kripke, since, while post-disquotational intersubstitutability may have been saved (by virtue of the fact that (D) is only applicable in cases where both those in the context of ascription *and* the believer know of the relevant possible substitutions), the Millianism turns out to have been introduced already, at an earlier stage, by (D). Sosa might argue that we could equally well assume disquotation to be unproblematic and maintain that the Millianism gets in only at the point of the later intersubstitution of proper names with a single referent. However, this would lead to a contradiction of Sosa's own view – namely, that, "We can and do disquote people when they use ambiguous expressions. However – and this is crucial – *our use of an ambiguous expression in the belief attribution should be disambiguated in a way that matches the original use of the ambiguous term by the person disquoted.*"¹⁰⁸ This implies that the problem does indeed come in at the point of disquotation. However, to be fair, Sosa clearly acknowledges that his argument against Kripke, that he presupposes Millianism in the form of (H), may be reframed in terms of *limiting the application* of (D), but not in denying the principle itself in any

¹⁰⁷ Moore denies that the traditional argument relies on (D), since we can conceive of possible instances where the necessary belief reports might be justified by non-linguistic behaviour, rather than by assent to a particular belief statement (Moore, 1999). Even were this true, it is not problematic for my view (as I explain further in note 114, below), nor Moore's either – though he appears to take it to be.

¹⁰⁸ Sosa, 1996: 394–395: original emphasis.

way.¹⁰⁹ The fact is, though, that we would not be able to make accurate belief ascriptions (and I am assuming that accuracy is crucial!) by means of disquotation in the case of any ambiguous term, such as ‘Paderewski’ in the example of Peter, without effecting the disambiguation Sosa insists upon. The argument, then, is that there is nothing inherently wrong with (D), except for the fact that it generates incorrect ascriptions when disquoting any belief statement involving an ambiguous term (and this is even more problematic when we consider that this may include not just indexicals and the like, and proper names, but also possibly common nouns, verbs and so on). But, if this is the case, then surely it must be the insensitivity of (D) to the senses, on Sosa’s terms, (we may think of the insensitivity as pertaining to a more generic kind of information that allows for any number of different specific conceptions) associated with proper names, say, that causes the trouble, rather than some subsequent illicit introduction of Millianism.

Therefore, either there is something wrong with (D) and it must be modified, or the illegitimate Millianism Kripke is indulging in, in the construction of his puzzle, consists either in his not excluding statements, such as Pierre’s belief, “London is not pretty,” because of their ambiguity, or in not disquoting such belief statements in a manner that disambiguates them. The latter is a plausible charge, but the trouble is that this is not in fact the criticism Sosa (at least initially, in the main body of his argument) appears to be levelling against Kripke, and that this kind of exclusion Sosa appears also to see as unnecessary on his own view. But, if the charge against Kripke is the former, then there must be something wrong with (D), since it requires no disambiguation as it stands. Any clarification of ambiguous terms is done on a purely arbitrary basis, in order to make the belief ascriptions come out correctly, but without addressing why it is that (D) requires such ad hoc intervention. Given that this ambiguity may potentially apply to every belief statement, or at least a significant number – it would seem more than justified to lay the blame at the door of the disquotational principle and require that it be modified so as to accommodate all and any ambiguous terms.

¹⁰⁹ Sosa goes on to provide a suggested modification of the principle, in order to broaden its applicability, but I believe that this attempt fails for reasons that I make clear in note 116, below.

The fourth and final argument Sosa makes (and the one that he takes to be the strongest), is that we are able to produce puzzle-type cases without making use of (D) at all. He gives an example concerning his own experience, since he at one time believed that there was a famous astronaut called John Glenn, who had died, and also a living politician of the same name. It happens that Sosa was wrong, the astronaut had not been killed on a mission, and was in fact exactly the same person as the politician John Glenn. The significant point here, is this:

Considering my situation before I discovered my error, I would attribute *to myself* the belief that John Glenn has been in space as well as the belief that John Glenn has not been in space. It's not that I *infer* from assent to ordinary-language sentences, by means of the principle of disquotation, that I must have had those beliefs. I don't need to infer which beliefs I had: I remember them.¹¹⁰

There is a crucial problem with this argument, though. As Moore points out, there is evidently something distinguishing the two tokenings¹¹¹ of 'John Glenn' in Sosa's thought – otherwise, he would be unable to say whether it was Glenn the astronaut who had been in space or Glenn the politician¹¹², without *inferring* this from the fact that astronauts are more likely to have been in space than politicians. Moore refers to Sosa thinking of the name 'John Glenn' in terms of two different 'guises', but regardless of how one wishes to construe it, it seems obvious that Moore is correct in saying that "homonymous differentiation is taking place nevertheless."¹¹³ It appears plain, therefore, that puzzle cases cannot be created without the use of the disquotational principle – at least by the means Sosa suggests.¹¹⁴ So, while Sosa's criticism, that we are only able to attribute contradictory beliefs to rational individuals

¹¹⁰ Sosa, 1996: 384; original emphasis.

¹¹¹ We may think of them in other terms if we dislike the idea of tokenings of thought.

¹¹² Moore, 1999: 359-361.

¹¹³ *Ibid.*: 360.

¹¹⁴ It may be that belief attributions do not always, necessarily have to be made by means of disquotation (as per Moore's suggestion, which I mention above in note 107). It is reasonable to suppose both that the source of the trouble in Kripke's puzzle is due to (D), and that the principle's essential problem, of ignoring informational asymmetries, is one that must be taken into account by any other mode of belief ascription. My focus is on (D) because my analysis here is of this particular puzzle of Kripke's, in which I believe (D) to be the relevant trouble-maker, and also because I think it worth pursuing, since (D) is a widely (although not universally) accepted and used tool for belief ascription.

by means of the illegitimate introduction of (H)¹¹⁵, does indeed hold, it holds of (D), rather than some post-disquotational move of Kripke's as he imagined.

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¹¹⁵ Laurier makes essentially the same point as Sosa does with (H), though in a different way. He argues that Millianism is assumed by Kripke, in that only by presupposing a non-intentional view of proper names as the standard usage of such names can we generate the puzzle. If we do not, then either the assumption is that Peter, for example, uses 'Paderewski' non-standardly (if it is not standard to assume that the name must necessarily refer to just one individual) or standard usage of proper names is non-intentional. Either way, the puzzle is solved, although the contention that standard usage might be non-intentional seems obviously false. (Laurier, Daniel, 1986, 'Names and Beliefs: A Puzzle Lost' in *The Philosophical Quarterly*, 36(142): 37-49.) Like Sosa, though, Laurier fails to attribute the problem to an inherent defect of (D) – which, if applied, treats all proper names contained in belief statements as non-intentional. Peter *does* use the name 'Paderewski' in the standard way, but (D) is insensitive to this.

Amending the Disquotational Principle

Having established that (D) is indeed the troublesome element in the puzzle, my goal is to explore possible ways in which it might justifiably be adapted so as to prevent the ascription of contradictory beliefs to perfectly rational believers, as well as the implications this might have for the nature of the beliefs that we are attempting to disquote. I come, then, to considering the possible modification of the disquotational principle, in order to accommodate those belief statements that I have shown it to be inappropriate to disquote.

The puzzle that Kripke presents arises because of an asymmetry in the information actually known to the believer and that assumed by those in the context of ascription. Part of what helps to explain why we take Pierre and Peter's beliefs to be irrational, is that in our ordinary practice of interpreting belief ascriptions we assume cotypicality to license identity – specifically, that the believer takes the lexically cotypical terms to refer to and mean precisely the same thing. Assent being the means of licensing the application of (D), the believer must be taken to be disposed to assent to the statement of her belief that is to be disquoted; but such an assumption of assent is unreasonable, as it is not one made on an informed basis – she should know if she has any beliefs involving lexically identical terms, but that cotypicality alone is not sufficient to make their meaning identical, otherwise any belief she had about a friend called 'Riaan' would also be a belief about every other Riaan she knew, and vice versa. To make this clear, let us go back to Kripke's example of Peter and his beliefs. Peter believes that there is one Paderewski who is a musician and another separate individual who is a politician. In this Peter is mistaken, but this is merely a factual error and not a logical one, and so does not bring Peter's rationality into any doubt. On the basis of his erroneous understanding that there are two different people, both called Paderewski, Peter comes to hold simultaneously the beliefs, "Paderewski had musical talent," and, "Paderewski had no musical talent."

This is not an ordinary case of ambiguity – a case of the type that Kripke, of course, acknowledges it would be inappropriate to disquote – only insofar as the context in which relevant information is lacking is that of the believer, Peter, and not that of

ascription, but this is not a significant difference in terms of disallowing disquotation. Those of us privy to the context of the attribution of the beliefs know who the person is to whom Peter's 'Paderewski' tokenings refer. We know, but Peter does not, that the person so referred to is in both cases one and the same individual. Because we have more (or perhaps simply different – after all, it could conceivably be we who are mistaken) information regarding the referent of these tokenings, it is not legitimate for us simply to assume that Peter would assent to the statement of his beliefs as disquoted in the context of attribution, when he is ignorant of the information relevant to his beliefs available to those in this context. This is analogous to asking someone whether he would prefer to be given the thing that is on table A or that on table B, when both tables are in the next room, currently hidden from his view, and the items on each have been switched around since his last sight of them. Attributing to him his asserted preference for the thing on table A (made on the now mistaken assumption that he knows what this thing is), in response to the question, cannot accurately reflect his true preference. Similarly, Peter cannot reasonably assent to the statement of his beliefs, as given above (or be taken to be so disposed), if he does not know their meaning in the context of attribution – determined in light of information he is unaware of. In order for Peter to be said truly to assent to the statement of his beliefs, he must be fully informed of the meaning they have in the context of ascription. Otherwise, Peter is in actual fact giving (or disposed to give) his assent to something other than what is attributed him. Of course, similarly, the same is true in the case of Pierre.

How then might the disquotational principle be modified in order to accommodate this concern? My proposal is the Modified Disquotational Principle:

(MD) *If a normal English speaker – fully informed of all the relevant information known to those in the context of ascription – on reflection, sincerely assents to 'p', then she believes that p.*¹¹⁶

¹¹⁶ Sosa concedes that his argument against Kripke's puzzle may be reframed in terms of a limitation on the applicability of the disquotational principle, though not a denial of the principle itself. In order to broaden its application, Sosa offers the following modification of (D):

(D'') If S, a normal L-speaker, on reflection, sincerely assents to 'p' (a sentence of L), and if 'q' is a translation (into English) of 'p' such that there is a sense of 'q' that is the same as the sense of 'p' in which the speaker assented to it, then S believes that q, in that sense of 'q'. (Sosa, 1996: 395.)

It is not completely clear, though, that this modification will do the real work that the disquotational principle is intended to do. In the case of Peter, it seems that if we were to apply (MD) he would certainly not be disposed to assent in the context of ascription to the statements of his beliefs as Kripke gives them (although these may be lexically identical to statements Peter himself made earlier, in other contexts and with other information). If Peter knew the referent of each of his ‘Paderewski’ tokenings, he would surely alter either the statement of his belief to which he would be prepared to assent, or even the belief itself. What we would likely gain, or could legitimately assume, assent for, is a statement of Peter’s beliefs such that it could be disquoted as, “Peter believes that Paderewski had musical talent, and Peter believes that Paderewski

The problem with this statement of the disquotational principle is that allows for difference only in terms of senses, rather than more widely in terms of informational asymmetries (however these may be realised, by means of sense of otherwise), and is consequently vulnerable to any successful argument against them. More important, even, is that this modification has distinctly undesirable consequences.

For, consider, according to (D’), if S were to reflectively assent to, “*Londres est jolie*,” we would only be justified in translating this into English so that it reflected the sense in which S believes this statement. So, then, presumably we could make the translation and disquote so as to end up with something along the lines of, “S believes that London, in the sense of being a generic far away city and distinct from London as the capital of England, is pretty.” (Kripke’s point that trying to define different senses of London here would run into the problem that any definite description we might come up with would be equally well satisfied by both conceptions of city (Kripke, 1979), comes to mind. But Sosa suggests this is not decisive (Sosa, 1996), and I will not consider it further as I believe it is subsumed by greater problems here.)

We might possibly be able to come up with some kind of translation of the French belief statement, such that it truly captures the sense in which London as involved in this belief is distinct from the sense of London involved in any later belief S might form that would – stripped of these senses – not be contradictory of one another. The trouble is that, even if this is possible, what are we to do in cases where we are translating statements of S’s first and only belief involving a given proper name (or even common noun, or verb, and so on)? Are we to define the sense of this name in a manner so exhaustive that it could generate no possible contradiction as viewed against any conceivable future belief involving this proper name (or common noun, and so forth)?

The alternative is that we translate it in the normal way, as Kripke would, and then translate any future, potentially contradictory, belief statements in a manner tailored so as to preserve their sense in a way not conflicting with the original belief ascription. The problem is that seems to make the translation if not flatly impossible, then indefensibly arbitrary. Once again, the approach is effectively to avoid troublesome belief ascriptions by means of ad hoc changes in the way in which we make translations, without having uncovered and dealt with what it is that has caused the problem in the first place – namely, the difference in information available to S in the context of her assent to a given belief statement and that available to those in the context in which it happens to be disquoted. Once this is made clear, we can demand the preservation of information concerning the senses associated with proper names on a principled basis (assuming senses to be the relevant asymmetrically available information).

Also, notice that, following (D’’) we are only able to disquote and actually ascribe a belief to S in English, and not in L. If we begin with a belief statement in English that we wish to disquote, then we would need to formulate an acceptable translation of it in some other language and subsequently translate this formulation back into English, and only then would we be permitted to disquote it. In Sosa’s defence, though, it is not clear that he meant (D’’) to replace (D) in all instances of disquotation, rather than merely to accommodate problematic instances involving translation from one language to another, as with the case of Pierre. Regardless, (D’’) does not seem to be supportable modification of the disquotational principle.

had no musical talent, provided that it is the case that the Paderewskis referred to are indeed two different people.” Alternatively, he might simply revise his belief to something that could be disquoted as, “Peter believed that there was a politician called Paderewski who was a separate individual to the great pianist Paderewski and who had no musical talent. However, as these two Paderewskis are in fact the same person, Peter believes that he was mistaken and that Paderewski did have musical talent.”¹¹⁷

But, while (MD) takes care of the illegitimate informational asymmetry between the believer and those in the context of ascription¹¹⁸ that is permitted by (D), if the act of disquotation may now require the (possibly quite substantial) alteration, even the denial, of the statement of a belief in order to be legitimately applied, then can this really be said to be *disquotation* in the true sense? The answer appears to be ‘no’. If it is specifically Peter’s belief, “Paderewski had no musical talent,” that I wish to disquote, I can hardly have been genuinely successful in doing this, if the disquoted belief is significantly different in form to the original. It would seem highly contentious to maintain that I had indeed disquoted *that* belief which Peter originally had, as opposed to simply creating a new one through my act of supposed disquotation. This in turn implies that disquotation is far from being the neutral act it has typically been thought to be – if, in fact, it is (legitimately) possible at all. It is this and other rather troubling implications of the modified version of the disquotational principle that I attempt to deal with further, below.

The same concerns arise when we try to disquote Pierre’s beliefs by means of (MD). There appears to be no single, unique and definite belief ascription in the case of either of his beliefs, although we are able to state them – perhaps as, “Pierre believes that the view of London he saw on a postcard and was told about when he lived in France is pretty, and Pierre believes that the part of London in which he now lives is

¹¹⁷ Barcan Marcus makes a relevant point, though it is motivated by a somewhat different view to that which I am suggesting here. She notes that, “Just as norms of truth lead to retroactively revisable knowledge claims; norms of rationality should lead to retroactively revisable belief claims.” (Barcan Marus, Ruth, 1990, ‘Some Revisionary Proposals about Belief and Believing’ in *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research*, 50(Supplement, Autumn 1990): 133–153; p. 150.) It is possible that this is the way in which this should be taken, though I am not convinced that the essence of the belief has actually changed. Either way, I think that this is a matter for much further research.

¹¹⁸ It should be borne in mind that the asymmetry could, of course, consist of those in the context of ascription having *less* rather than more information than the believer, and that both parties may be entirely wrong in what they believe to be the case – that is, in how they take the world to be in respects relevant to the belief in question.

quite different and not pretty.” Though this smacks of the kind of more detailed, *de re* description that Kripke outlaws, it is nonetheless permissible, and on a principled, rather than ad hoc basis. We must give this kind of statement of what Pierre believes and not the kind Kripke demands, because the latter would be necessarily inaccurate, since it takes no account of the relevant informational asymmetry between Pierre’s context and that of ascription. In applying (MD), the consideration of additional, relevant information is not in any way ad hoc. The possibility of there being such information must now be taken into account in *every* instance of disquotation (although it may be found that there is none in some or even many cases).

The remaining concern, though, is that the way in which someone expresses a belief in a given context says relatively little about the likelihood of her assenting to that particular expression as an accurate description of the belief in another, relevantly informationally different context. The fact that many such expressions are general enough, and/or are typically used in similar enough contexts, so as to warrant assent without change across these contexts is a happy accident, and not the basis for claiming such applicability for all belief statements that may be given assent in the context of their original expression. It may be that for very many statements of belief no significant informational asymmetry even arises. My assent to the belief statement, “squares have four sides,” for instance, may be disquoted in any number of different contexts on the quite reasonable assumption that I would be equally well disposed to assent. The greater difficulty (though perhaps not impossibility), in cases such as this one, of introducing a relevant asymmetry in information between myself in the original context of expression and those in the context of ascription, perhaps reveals why the failure of (D) to convey significant informational changes is typically overlooked for all but instances involving indexicals and the like.

In ensuring by means of (MD) that relevant information is not ignored, the disquotational principle is thereby (quite rightly and necessarily) made sensitive to any kind of informational change that might introduce an asymmetry between the believer and those in the context of attribution. We may now disquote belief statements containing indexicals, pronominal devices and proper names, as well as ordinary instances of ambiguity, such as Kuhle’s belief, “There are many banks in Cape Town.” There are also other types of belief statement that would have been

problematic for (D), but may be disquoted by applying (MD), such as those instances of belief that are predicated on a mistaken assumption not about the identity of a place or individual referred to by means of proper name tokenings, as in the puzzle instances, but about the nature of a physical substance referred to by noun phrases, say, as in the example I consider below. It is also possible to disquote beliefs that the believer does genuinely hold, but that are expressed by means of irony, metaphor and the like.¹¹⁹ I by no means intend this to be an exhaustive list of the possible kinds of belief that may be disquoted. My point is simply that, whatever the information relevant to the meaning of the belief (the fact that it must be understood as being expressed sarcastically, say), the modified version of the disquotational principle provides us with a principled way in which to take cognisance of this in the act of disquoting.

Let us consider an example of a type of belief that would be problematic for (D), for reasons somewhat different from those in the puzzle cases, in order to make clear the greater generality of the problem of informational asymmetries for standard disquotation. Take, for instance, a case where I am wandering about at the opening of an exhibition of works by an artist called Audrey, with my friend Ivan. After having a look around, I state my belief, "Audrey's exhibition is genuinely tasteful," just before dashing off to find the snack table. Ivan starts talking to a mutual friend of ours, Helen, out of my earshot. Helen comments that she has become very bored of the controversy surrounding Audrey's use of animal blood to paint the pieces in this exhibition. Ivan agrees and says that one would have to have been living under a rock to have avoided the debate, although he knows, but does not mention, my ignorance of such debate. Helen therefore assumes I do know about the medium in which the works have been done. As it happens, though, I've been busy and have not heard a thing about it.

Having just remarked that no-one can have failed to have heard about the controversy, Ivan then disquotes my earlier statement, saying to Helen,

¹¹⁹ It is possible that (MD) might be able to handle instances of beliefs being asserted without sincerity or reflection, though this question would need to be further explored. My feeling is that a non-reflective, insincere belief would be difficult to term a "belief", as such, and would run counter to our intuition of what it means for something to be held as a belief; likewise for belief statements asserted by non-standard speakers of a language.

(13) Monique believes that Audrey's exhibition is genuinely tasteful.

However, on the modified disquotational principle, this would appear to be an illegitimate disquotation, since I might be far from disposed to assent to this disquoted statement of my belief, in light of the additional information about the exhibition that I did not know when I originally expressed it. This demonstrates an obvious, greater practical difficulty with (MD) – namely, that a believer's disposition to assent is not as immediately clear (nor may it be even after some reflection, in certain cases) as it seems when making use of the standard disquotational principle. Ivan may not know me well enough to say whether, given this new information, I would still assent to the same statement of my belief. If he does not, then he may not disquote me without making my lack of information evident.

As it stands, Ivan would be licensed (by the reasonable assumption of my disposition to assent) to state:

(14) Monique believes that Audrey's exhibition is genuinely tasteful, but that may be only because she has not heard about the medium in which the works were painted.

From this disquotation, Helen is likely to make the perfectly reasonable assumption that my belief rests on a lack of information, but not that I would necessarily find the idea of using animal blood for painting tasteful.

Say that, as Ivan is disquoting to Helen my earlier comment – without clarification, as in (13)¹²⁰ – about the exhibition, I walk up and join them. Having heard the belief Ivan is attributing to me, I add, "Yes, her art really is so delightfully restrained." But, Helen then asks how I can believe this, given the shocking medium in which Audrey painted the works. Realising that they have additional information about the exhibition that I do not, my natural inclination would be first to ask Helen what this

¹²⁰ It might be the case that Ivan *could* legitimately attribute the belief that Audrey's exhibition is genuinely tasteful to me, if I were the kind of person about whom it would be reasonable enough to assume that I would happily re-assent to the initial statement of my belief, even in light of having been given the additional information.

shocking medium might be, second to ask if Ivan too knew about this, and then to rebuke him for having ascribed to me the belief that the exhibition is a genuinely tasteful one, pointing out that this was only because I had not heard about the medium used. Now it seems that if we wish to say anything about my belief regarding the exhibition, it should be something along these lines:

- (15) Monique believed that Audrey's exhibition was genuinely tasteful, on the understanding that it was done in the traditional medium of oil paint. Given that she now knows that it was created using animal blood, Monique believes that the exhibition is not genuinely tasteful.

It is clear, therefore, that in modifying the disquotational principle to avoid the crucial flaw of (D), highlighted by Kripke's puzzle cases, other instances of informational asymmetry – such as that of this example, where the relevant information is knowledge of the nature of a physical substance, that of Audrey's paintings' medium – are also affected by the change from (D) to (MD). It seems now that *any* genuine belief statement may be disquoted, for the act of disquotation itself provides a mechanism by which any known (in the context of belief attribution, that is) ambiguity, error or the like can, indeed must, be corrected. The trouble is, however, that the notion of 'disquotation' is growing increasingly dim. It is no longer clear that what is happening is really *disquotation* at all, given that (15), for example, is significantly different from the actual initial expression of my belief, "Audrey's exhibition is genuinely tasteful." The implications of this, I will attempt to tease out a little further on.

To return to the example, imagine, then, that shortly after the opening Ivan attends a conference on contemporary South African art, and there discovers during a seminar on her work, that, contrary to popular consensus, Audrey's art genuinely *is* tasteful. It turns out that her paintings were not created using animal blood, and that this was merely a rumour started by the gallery showing her work, as a cheap publicity stunt in order to generate controversy and so gain free media coverage for the exhibition.

After the seminar, Ivan chats to another mutual friend of ours, Justin, who also attended the talk. During the course of the conversation Justin asks Ivan about the

exhibition and about what I believe regarding Audrey's work. According to (MD), Ivan is licensed to disquote me only in a manner to which I would be disposed to assent were I fully informed of all the available information in this particular context of the disquotation of my belief. Therefore, he might say¹²¹:

- (16) Monique believed that Audrey's exhibition was genuinely tasteful, on the understanding that the paintings in it were done in the traditional medium of oil paint. Given that she later thought they were not, Monique then believed that the exhibition was not genuinely tasteful. However, from the information we have subsequently learnt, it is clear that Audrey's art can truly be said to be tasteful. In light of this new evidence, Monique would be very likely to believe that Audrey's exhibition is, in fact, genuinely tasteful.

But this seems even less like something that could be called a disquotation of my original belief than (15) was. As I discussed above, the modified disquotational principle may not prove to be particularly useful in providing a straightforward explication of belief, but that does not mean that it cannot in fact give any such explication – it is simply a more complex one, in certain cases, than the standard disquotational principle allowed for. What the question comes down to, though, is whether it is in fact accurate – given my proposed modification of the disquotational principle, (MD) – to talk of 'the same belief': something complex, but fixed, that may need to be stated in a significantly different manner in varying contexts of disquotation, but nonetheless remains one and the same belief, however characterised.

The disquotational principle is intended as a way in which to extract the contents of a belief statement: a way in which to say what it is someone's belief actually means.¹²²

But, as Kripke notes, with the puzzle cases, "we enter into an area where our normal

¹²¹ Of course – as throughout this example – what actually would be said would likely be far more colloquially put! I am using somewhat more formal and precise language for the sake of accuracy and clarity, but I do not think that anything material hangs on it, in terms of what I am trying to clarify by means of the example.

¹²² Particularly in light of my explanation of the trouble with Bach's denial of this view (note 72), I think that it is most plausible to take disquotation as intended to specify the meaning of a given belief. And, even if this were not the case (which I take to be an essentially insupportable contention), my analysis could still hold, but applied to the formation of belief statements themselves, as opposed to belief ascriptions (or in the treatment of belief ascriptions post-disquotation), or whatever else it might be that specifies belief contents.

practices of interpretation and attribution of belief are subjected to the greatest possible strain, perhaps to the point of breakdown. So is the notion of the *content* of someone's assertion, the *proposition* it expresses."¹²³ Whether it is the case that having a belief with a specific content consists in being disposed to assent to a particular statement, or if the relation holds the other way around, with the disquoted statement providing the content of an essentially distinct belief, separate from its expression – the fact is that the degree of changeability inherent in the accurate 'disquotation' of a belief in terms of (MD), would seem to have significant implications for the nature of belief. I am inclined to speak in terms of the disquoted statement of a belief as the specification of an intrinsically separate belief, rather than that which constitutes having a belief by virtue of one's disposition to assent to it, but I do this merely for convenience and consistency. I think that the relation of (MD) to the nature of belief allows us to remain neutral between these two positions, but still has important implications for whichever is correct.

What is common to the view of belief as something expressed, its contents clarified, by a disquoted statement, as well as that of its being embodied, in a sense, by the disposition to assent to such a statement, is that both take a belief to be something fixed and stable enough that the act of disquoting itself has no impact on the nature of the belief. However, if my modification of disquotational principle is justified and correct, then quite the opposite is true. Each disquotation of a belief must necessarily occur at some time subsequent to its original statement by the believer¹²⁴, say. Therefore, there will be additional information that has accrued to those in the context of any ensuing ascription of the belief during the time that has passed, not to mention any existing informational asymmetry (and, following (MD), the believer must needs be fully informed of this information). What is important, then, in each and every subsequent instance of disquotation, is whether the additional information accrued *has any material bearing* on the belief in question.

Regardless, though, whatever additional information comes to light must be taken into account (even if only for it to be deemed irrelevant) for a belief to be accurately disquoted. And, if this is the case, then there must either be something in the nature of

¹²³ Kripke, 1979: 269; original emphasis.

¹²⁴ I am taking such expression merely as a convenient marker of the origination of a belief.

belief itself that mandates this, or such considerations are arbitrary and unjustified. What I mean is that there appears to be something missing from the content of a belief as stated in the that-clause of a belief ascription. And, yet, this cannot be the case, since that would render us unable accurately to interpret others' beliefs, as specified in ascriptions. What is it, then, that makes a belief stated as, "Audrey's exhibition is genuinely tasteful," for instance, sensitive to informational change? The answer is indicated by my exhibition case above. Why I went into this example at some length, was to bring out just how (MD) makes evident the apparently more complex content of beliefs that (D) obscures. What (MD) points to, is that belief should not be thought of as static, definite and proposition-like, but rather as a conditional. To say that I believe, "Audrey's exhibition is genuinely tasteful," is to say that I believe now that, *if* the world is, in those respects relevant to the proposition contained in the consequent, just as I now take it to be, *then* Audrey's exhibition is genuinely tasteful.

Since the satisfaction of this requirement, in effect that whatever information relevant to a belief be known by both the believer and those in the context of attribution, is always implicitly assumed (for it is only when it *is* satisfied that communication can take place), this additional content of belief is typically overlooked, and we are able to take it that the that-clause of a belief ascription does, for all intents and purposes, specify belief. However, on those occasions where this requirement is not satisfied, belief ascriptions generated by (D), which ignores this aspect of belief, are rendered inaccurate. With this in mind, the disquotational principle may be restated somewhat – as the provisional Altered Disquotation Principle – to take explicit account of this characteristic:

(pAD) *If a normal English speaker, on reflection, sincerely assents to 'p' then she believes that p-provided-that-(w) – (w) being that the world is, in all respects relevant to 'p'¹²⁵, just as she takes it to be.*

The advantage is that this allows us to use disquotation to make most ordinary belief ascriptions with just the same outcome as we would have had, had we used (D). The

¹²⁵ Those 'relevant respects' in which the world is taken to be just as the believer believes it to be, may be understood in the same way (and subject to the same restrictions) as the notion of 'relevant information' (which I consider in note 71, above).

critical difference is that while I may still, by means of (pAD), be able to disquote Ivan's belief statement, "Chocolate tastes good," and attribute to him, "Ivan believes that chocolate tastes good" (which includes the implicit assumption that this is predicated on the world being in relevant respects as he takes it to be) I am able to do so without making this assumption explicit only because there is no relevant informational asymmetry between the context of ascription and that of his original expression of his belief. The amendment that we are licensed to disquote in this way as long as there is no relevant informational asymmetry, solves the problem I raised earlier, that whatever belief attributions (D) might successfully provide, would be generated only on the basis of blind luck (or ad hoc tinkering), rather than due to any principled underpinning.

However, though (pAD) does work as advertised, it cannot be applied to those belief statements that would have been problematic for (D) (as, it could possibly be argued, is also the case with (MD), depending on how one understands it). Clearly, we need a more accommodating version of the disquotational principle. And, further, what emerges from considering my belief about Audrey's exhibition, is not only that belief must be conditional: there is also the implication that if I do find out that the world is not as I take it to be, but is different in any way materially relevant to my belief, then I am bound by the commitment of having used a particular term to refer to the way that Audrey's exhibition truly is in reality, and not merely how I take it to be, to amend my belief. This must be the case, or there would be no possibility of error or learning. If I intend my use of 'Audrey's exhibition' to refer solely to the way I take her exhibition to be, then it would make no sense to talk of my learning, for instance, that I was mistaken about the medium used to create her artworks. We may account for a believer's commitment to modify her belief, in light of rationally plausible evidence that she is mistaken in some way about the thing to which she referred in her original belief (thereby also overcoming the shortcomings of (pAD)), by means of the final and complete Altered Disquotation Principle:

(AD) *If a normal English speaker, on reflection, sincerely assents to 'p' then she believes that p-provided-that-(w) – (w) being that the world is, in all respects relevant to 'p', just as she takes it to be. However, if the world is in state (w*) – that is, in any respect relevant to 'p', not in state (w) – then if she would be*

disposed, on reflection, sincerely to assent to 'p', provided that 'p*' is a modification of 'p' such that it accounts entirely for the material difference between (w) and (w*), and is in no other way different from 'p' – then she would believe that p*-provided-that-(w*). And, if she does in fact so assent to 'p*', then she believes that p*-provided-that-(w*).*^{126:127:128:129}

¹²⁶ It is necessary to distinguish, in the case of (AD), between what the speaker *would* be disposed to assent to (and so would believe) and what she *does* in fact assent to (and so does believe), to prevent confusion between instances where her belief has actually changed and those instances where we may say that her belief would be different, *if* we can say that she would be disposed to assent to the belief. It is for this reason that this amendment is not equally applicable to Kripke's strengthened disquotational principle.

A remaining concern, which may require further consideration, is that it might not be clear on the application of (AD), in cases where the speaker does assent and the belief may be attributed to her, whether she has changed her belief from 'p' to 'p*' because of the fact of being asked by the ascriber and given the relevant information she lacked, or whether the change was one that occurred independently of the ascriber's input. It would have to be argued, though, that this potential confusion is a substantive and problematic one, so that belief ascriptions, as generated by (AD), do actually need to make this distinction evident.

¹²⁷ It is possible for (w) and (w*) to involve identical times (or even that (w*) might involve a time before that which (w) does), in which case the ascription of the speaker's belief 'p*' would be in the past tense.

¹²⁸ Perhaps (AD) might be altered to allow for instances where we are not sure that the believer would assent, but think it likely (or unlikely), and wish to reflect this in our attribution. It may also be that (AD) should be stronger, such that the speaker not merely would, but in fact *should*, be disposed to so assent – since, if the world is genuinely materially different, then she is bound by rationality to be so disposed. Of course, this strengthening of (AD) – and perhaps its existing form as well – does not seem to take account of the fact that, if the world *is* a single given way, many people may still each have significantly different and conflictual beliefs about one thing without any of them being irrational. This is something that is beyond the scope of this thesis to settle fully and would need to be considered further if my view is correct.

Perhaps a possible line for consideration, though, is that it may be those beliefs motivated primarily by emotion, rather than logic: those concerning matters too complex or indeterminate for any single, clearly correct belief to be dictated by rationality; and those concerning matters of taste, that turn out to be the sorts of instances that are problematic in the situation I mention above. Fortunately, if it is the case that these are the kinds of beliefs that would be problematic, it seems that (AD) could have no practical applicability to them. For, if a person's holding such a belief cannot be determined purely by means of rationality, then we would be unable to ascertain that (AD) applied in any way to such beliefs and so would not be able to make any ascriptions on the basis of (AD) and maintain that there are such beliefs a speaker would or should have.

¹²⁹ Subsequent to my formulating (AD), I came across another suggested revision of (D), as follows: "If a normal English speaker, on reflection, sincerely assents to 'p', then he believes that the world conforms to the truth conditions that he believes 'p' conventionally has in English." (Sharpless, Seth, 2005. Informal forum posting: <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/analytic/message/4301?viscount=100>, consulted 20.03.06) At first glance, this appears to be a fairly similar kind of reworking of the disquotational principle to (AD); however, there are in fact fundamental differences.

An example will help to make this clear. Imagine that Riaan sees his friend Dirk across the room at a party and notices that he is wearing a red T-shirt. On the basis of this, Riaan expresses the belief, "Dirk wore a red T-shirt to the party." As it happens, though, while Riaan would reflectively assent to the fact that the person he saw was Dirk, it was not, unbeknownst to Riaan, the individual in the red T-shirt was Dirk's identical twin. Now, by applying (AD) we may make the attribution, "Riaan believes that Dirk wore a red T-shirt to the party," only if the person he saw genuinely was Dirk (that is, that the world is, in all relevant respects, as Riaan took it to be). Since that person was not Dirk, Riaan would not be disposed to assent to his previously stated belief.

But what if it just so happened, entirely coincidentally, Dirk *did* wear a red T-shirt to the party, just as his twin did. Then, following the "improved disquotational principle" (Sharpless, 2005), we would

Let us say it happens that someone overheard my original statement of my belief about the exhibition being genuinely tasteful and my subsequent discovery of the reason why it is not so – which led to a change in what statement of my belief I would assent to – but that he knows nothing more about my views or knowledge. Imagine that he subsequently finds out that Audrey’s exhibition did not make use of any unconventional medium and *is* genuinely tasteful, then he is licensed by (AD) – *if* he believes that I would be disposed to assent in the context of ascription¹³⁰ (this context being part of the way I would take the world to be) – to make the ascription.

be able to make the attribution, “Riaan believes that Dirk wore a red T-shirt to the party,” even though this is not something to which Riaan would be disposed to assent if he had the same information available to him as those in the context of ascription. This particular modification of (D) requires only that the believer takes the world to satisfy the truth-conditions of the belief to be ascribed. If Dick was indeed wearing a red T-shirt (though Riaan does not know this), then the truth-conditions of Riaan’s beliefs are satisfied, even though this is purely accidental.

It seems that we would want such coincidental instances to be ruled out by whatever form of the disquotation principle we adopt. Using (AD) in this situation, we might make the attribution, “Riaan would have believed that Dirk wore a red T-shirt to the party, if the person wearing a red T-shirt had been Dirk and not his twin.” Rather convoluted this may be, but (AD) does not allow us to make the incorrect ascription that the improved disquotational principle does.

A possible response is that this modification does not in fact make an incorrect disquotation, since this version of the principle is not claiming that it is *true* (from the ascriber’s perspective) that “Riaan believes that Dirk wore a red T-shirt to the party.” On this view, all we are saying when we ascribe a belief is that the believer takes what is contained in the that-clause to be true, and *not* that we take the ascription to be true. But, if this is the case, then it is unclear how this can meaningfully be seen as disquotation, since this only ‘solves’ the puzzle by leaving us in precisely the same situation as we are before disquotation, when we state that, “Riaan believes, ‘Dirk wore a red shirt to the party.’”

¹³⁰ Naturally, the ascriber may be mistaken either about what the believer would assent to, or about the informational state of the current or future audience of the ascription. This is one way in which (AD) is unproblematically similar to (D). Let us assume that, many years ago, Kuhle’s mother made the ascription, “Kuhle believes that Brett worked very hard on their joint science project,” on the understanding that all the criteria for applying (D) had been met. However, long after that original ascription was made, I discover that Kuhle had actually been speaking ironically and that what she had really believed was that Brett was intensely lazy, as he had left all the work to her. I would then be able to say that, in hindsight, Kuhle’s mother was not justified in disquoting Kuhle as she did.

Similarly, on (AD), it may well happen that the ascriber takes his ascription, which he is writing down, say, to be one that will be read and interpreted only by audiences (who, on my definition, are constituents of the context of ascription) in the same relevant information state as he himself is in at the time of writing. It turns out, though, that he is wrong and that some of the subsequent audience members misinterpret the belief ascription, because of an unforeseen asymmetry of relevant information available to them in their context and that available to the believer in hers. It turns out, then, that the ascriber made an incorrect attribution, but clearly not one that is in any way problematic for (AD), just as the error of the previous example was not problematic for (D). (That (D) does, incidentally, suffer from fatal flaws is irrelevant in this regard.)

It might be suggested, though, that the potential for error is much greater with (AD), since one has to assess not only whether the belief statement itself is eligible for disquotation, but in effect also whether the informational state of the believer, as well as all present and future audience members makes disquotation permissible. The answer is that, yes, strictly speaking one’s situation is more difficult, but that this kind of worry is likely to be of relatively little practical concern, given that in ordinary life we typically make ascriptions for an audience of people who are well known to us and limited in number, and that if unintended others should overhear and misunderstand our ascriptions, say, this is generally of no real consequence.

“Monique would believe that Audrey’s exhibition is genuinely tasteful.”¹³¹ His other option is to inform me of the newly discovered truth about the innocuous nature of the painting medium and have me explicitly give or deny my assent.

And, how does (AD) fare in disquoting the puzzle cases? In the case of Pierre, his belief would be inadmissible for the application of (pAD), given that the world is not in all relevant respects how he took it to be (in the context(s) of the assertion of his beliefs) in the context in which Kripke seeks to ascribe them to Pierre. However, (AD) could be applied, to produce the ascription, “Pierre would not believe that all of London is pretty, if he knew that the place he calls ‘*Londres*’ is actually the same city.” and, “Pierre would believe that it is specifically the part of London in which he lives that is not pretty, if he knew that the place he calls ‘*Londres*’ is the same city.”¹³² Importantly, (AD) also allows for the possibility of irrationality. If Pierre, say, *was* in fact irrational, then there would be no ascription licensed by (AD) such which he could be ascribed a rational belief. For instance, suppose he finally bought a French–English dictionary and discovered that London and *Londres* are the same city, and yet in that situation – with absolutely no relevant informational asymmetry between the information available to him in his context and to us in the context of ascription – he asserted, “London is pretty and London is not pretty.” We would be able to make the ascription, “Pierre believes that London is pretty and not pretty,” which is clearly irrational, and thereby determine that he is not fully rational.

(AD) also does not rule out the possibility that Peter may be irrational – but, he is clearly not irrational, and an accurate ascription of his beliefs would be something such as, “Peter would believe that there was just one Paderewski, and that he had musical talent, if Peter knew that the pianist and the politician by the name of ‘Paderewski’ are one and the same person.” It appears that both this ascription and the relevant one above do justice to Peter and Pierre’s rationality respectively: in neither

¹³¹ Or, he may make the ascription: “Monique *must* believe that Audrey’s exhibition is genuinely tasteful after all,” if he thinks that I am bound to alter my belief in this way by having committed to the reality of Audrey’s exhibition by referring to this in my original belief. Of course, in practice, the ascription made may not actually account *entirely* in every specific for all the details of material difference between the believer’s context and that of ascription.

¹³² In this case, and that of Peter, the implicit assumption is of course that the that-clauses of these ascriptions are predicated on the way the world is *now* taken to be (by those in the context of ascription).

instance is there any contradiction – puzzling, troubling or otherwise – between either their beliefs or even between our ascriptions of belief to them.

However, it appears that, just like (MD), (AD) too leads to such convoluted locutions as (16), without any indication that this is the only or indeed the best ‘disquotation’ of the belief in question. With (D) we knew that the only possible disquoted version of a belief was one of the form: “[The believer] believes that [the statement of the belief taken out of quotation marks].”¹³³ Now, it seems, there are numerous different possible correct options, and none of them true disquotations in the ordinary sense. Could there be a way out? Just as we would not have expected (D), even when we assumed it to be unproblematic, to provide a belief ascription that detailed the whole history and evolution of the belief concerned, so to, perhaps, we may discard all the background contained in (16) in favour of the attribution: “Monique would believe that Audrey’s exhibition is genuinely tasteful.” The obvious trouble with this approach is that such an attribution immediately invites the question, “If *what?*” and all the rest of the explanation contained in (16) will have to be given (as it would likely, and perhaps should, be given in the above example, beginning on p. 70).

Further, and more importantly, the that-clause in this case is only coincidentally lexically identical to the original expression of the belief. And, if it is argued that in sufficiently many cases the world is, in all respects relevant to the belief in question, precisely as the believer takes it to be when she first expressed her belief *and* in the context of attribution – so that the application of (AD) would more often than not generate belief ascriptions that do not violate our intuitive sense that disquoting should produce belief ascriptions with that-clauses identical to whatever is within the quotation marks of a belief statement – unfortunately, the same point still applies. Even in the case of those beliefs for which the that-clause of the belief ascription is lexically identical to the belief statement, the identity is a contingent rather than a necessary one – since, had the context of attribution been different (so that an informational asymmetry arose – or, in the example above, returned – between that particular context and the believer’s), the ascription would have been lexically different. Therefore, the ascriptions now being made by means of ‘disquotation’

¹³³ Insofar as (D) may be applied to the other propositional attitudes aside from belief, so too may (AD), as it is in this respect not relevantly different from (D).

appear to be *de re* rather than *de dicto* explanations of belief. The seemingly unavoidably contingent nature of any lexical identity arising from the application of (AD) appears to imply that there may be no real sense in the idea of a *de dicto* belief ascription.

On the other hand, even though a belief ascription now can have only a contingent lexical identity with the original *expression* of the belief, it may still be an accurate disquotation of *the belief itself*. Perhaps the confusion is made possible by the use of the belief statement as a convenient stand-in for the actual belief. If we think of disquotation as giving the content of a belief by removing the quotation marks (*disquoting*) from around whatever belief statement most accurately represents the belief itself in a given informational context – rather than as simply removing the quotation marks from around whichever belief statement just happened to be used to represent the belief first – then we can adopt (AD) and also retain our intuitive sense of what it is that a *disquotational* principle should do.

A possible consequence suggested by this approach (although it would need to be considered far more thoroughly than is possible here¹³⁴) is that understanding disquotation in the manner just described might in fact mean that it is *de re* explanations of belief that fall away – all accurate renditions of a belief being necessarily ones to which the believer has given or would be disposed to give assent, which assent could be taken to be a form of assertion, in a sense, perhaps thereby making them essentially *de dicto*.

Regardless, for most practical intents and purposes, (AD) will produce essentially identical ascriptions to (D). It would require further research to defend the contention that (AD) is genuinely the strict formulation of the rough and ready principle according to which we do in practice make belief ascriptions. However, I think that this is at least a plausible claim. As regards the implications for the nature of belief, this too needs a great deal of additional consideration and research. It seems to me, though, that very roughly speaking one of the two following options must be the case:

¹³⁴ Particularly, it might need to be established whether there is one maximally accurate statement of a belief in any given context, or whether a number of different statements may be equally accurate, with nothing that could help choose amongst them.

firstly, that there is a single 'flexible' belief that may be expressed by a number of very different belief statements, depending on informational context (as with those disquoted as (15) and (16)), if this could truly be considered the same belief; or, secondly, that each largely different belief statement reflects a different belief, so that an ascription made in one context refers to a different belief from that made in another context (making (15) and (16) refer to different beliefs)¹³⁵. Whatever the implications and nature of the necessary alteration of (D), though, it seems quite clear that the disquotational principle is not, after all, the "self-evident truth"¹³⁶ that it might appear to be.

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¹³⁵ Though, how one might adequately distinguish between beliefs so that every minisculely different belief statement need not correspond to another separate belief, I do not know.

¹³⁶ Kripke, 1979: 249.

Conclusion

I have argued in this thesis that the disquotational principle, in the form of (D), is far from being the innocuous and uncontentious principle that it is normally taken to be. The disquotation used to ascribe beliefs to Pierre and Peter in the puzzle cases in effect introduces the Millianism that Kripke so studiously tries to avoid. In its disregard for information relevant to the terms contained in the belief statements it disquotes, (D) has the potential to generate ascriptions that render the meaning of beliefs inaccurately. In the cases of Pierre and Peter, this enables Kripke to produce belief attributions that contradict one another and seem to put the rationality of apparently quite rational individuals into question. However, once we appreciate (D)'s insensitivity to the potentially significant informational asymmetries between the believer and those in the context of ascription, it becomes evident where the problem has crept in. The belief attributions made concerning Pierre and Peter do not give the genuine meaning of their beliefs as they originally expressed them, since these ascriptions are being interpreted in the context of attribution in light of additional information, regarding the identity of the referents of the proper name tokenings involved, of which Pierre and Peter are entirely unaware.

If we take this asymmetry into account, then we must make quite different belief ascriptions – ones that make clear either Pierre and Peter's ignorance of the information known in the context of ascription or the fact that they would be disposed to assent to non-contradictory beliefs if they had this additional information. As for the nature of this information, I believe that my view may be neutral on this question.

My attempt to offer a version of the disquotational principle that can accommodate these considerations – and thereby truly fulfill the principle's function, to accurately provide the meaning of belief statements, so that we may assess people's beliefs in whatever manner we wish to, whether to learn from them, make sense of their behaviour or the like – produced the Modified Disquotational Principle, which, when applied, makes evident that belief should not be thought of as an invariant proposition, but as a conditional, its truth dependent on the world being, in relevant respects, as the believer takes it to be. From this arises the provisional Amended Disquotational

Principle, and then its final version, which I think offers a way of accurately disquoting beliefs construed in this manner and for allowing (or requiring) that relevantly different information regarding her beliefs be taken into account by the believer.

It seems likely that the notion of belief assumed by (D) is of something that commits us actually to believing (rather than simply respecting or accommodating) the truth of the matter regarding the terms we use in expressing our beliefs. So, if I use the term '*Londres*', then regardless of how I intend to use it or even how I think of it, I am still committed to the truth of its referent. The problem is that this is an essentially Millian conception, and is insupportable for just those Fregean reasons that prompted Kripke's development of the puzzle. It is perfectly reasonable to contend that we are committed to acknowledge errors in our beliefs – and to assent (reflectively and sincerely) only to a belief statement that takes account of the fact of the actual referent of a term that may have been used in an earlier belief statement, once we are informed of our error – but not that we may be held to *believe* what follows from knowledge of the genuine referents, when we are ignorant of such information. To maintain this is to return to the woes of Lois Lane and her beliefs about Superman and Clark Kent, and of Kripke's puzzle cases as well.

Does my approach, then, give a satisfactory answer to Kripke's puzzle, according to the requirements I outlined near the beginning of this thesis? The first requirement was that no Millianism be assumed in the puzzle's solution, and I think it is safe to say that I have not only avoided this problem, but shown it to be part of the very trouble with (D), and therefore with the puzzle itself. Secondly, my answer is not an ad hoc one, but instead a reformulation of (D) that removes its ad hoc exclusions and provides a unified principle that may be applied to all genuine belief statements. Thirdly, although it is arguable whether on my solution Pierre and Peter's beliefs are given *de dicto* or *de re* readings, it is nonetheless clear that their beliefs are attributed, on a principled basis, by the only means capable of producing an accurate ascription, and that Kripke's stipulation in this regard is an unjustifiable one, to which there appears to be no cogent reason to accede. Fourthly, since (D) is the problem in both the case of Pierre and of Peter, and the reformulated principle (AD) is applied and

works equally well in both instances, it is evident that the requirement that they be addressed by the same means has been fulfilled.

Finally, I do, obviously, challenge either one of the principles on which Kripke bases his puzzle or his reasoning in constructing the puzzle. Apart from his apparently insupportable stipulation that any solution be given in *de dicto* terms, Kripke's reasoning is irreproachable. My solution hinges on the nature of the disquotational principle, as ordinarily construed, and the fact of its inability to accommodate relevant informational asymmetries between the believer, and the ascriber and her audience.

Amongst the issues raised by my view – and which, if it is correct, require further research – are implications for, and questions as to, the nature of belief; whether belief should in general be taken to be conditional, and what more follows from this. There is also the question of whether the disquotational principle as specified by (AD) should be thought of *disquotation* at all, given that it can produce, in certain cases, belief ascriptions that are markedly different from the belief statements 'disquoted', and are not disquotations as we typically think of them.

As much as we may wish to disquote simply by removing the quotation marks from a belief statement – and although the essentially inaccurate nature of (D) may not be evident in most cases – it seems that there is the potential for significant differences between a belief in the context of a believer having it and a belief as ascribed to the believer in the context of ascription that must be taken into account.

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