

ON BEING CALLED BY ONE'S NAME

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Abstract

Is a name *N* an abbreviation of the uniquely identifying description: “the individual called *N*”? A recent negative answer to that question, saying that the description is associated with the name and that the name is not reducible to that description, is first considered. Then it is shown that the introduction of the indexical operator “actually” allows one to assimilate the name and the description.

1. Introduction

It is well known that one of the partial objectives of Kripke's theory¹ of rigid designation is to show that ordinary proper names cannot have the same semantical behavior as definite descriptions. Usually, rigidity is said to be a question of the way we evaluate sentences with respect to counterfactual situations (“possible worlds”). An expression is a rigid designator if there exists an individual such that, with respect to every counterfactual situation, what makes a sentence in which has an occurrence true (“truth-conditions”) involves this very individual. Aristotle was the teacher of Alexander. However when we imagine a situation where we evaluate the proposition that Aristotle is bald, it is the very individual who bears that name in *our* world which is supposed to be bald; whereas when we evaluate the proposition that the teacher of Alexander is bald, nothing indicates that it is Aristotle we are speaking of. After all, it is possible that the teacher of Alexander might not have been Aristotle.

Yet, we had better say that a definite description, by its very meaning, only conveys a set of general conditions (possibly a singleton) that an object has to uniquely satisfy if it is to be the object which is

¹ See S. Kripke [9]

spoken of. As it is not given in the meaning of the definite description that it is the object that happens to satisfy this set of conditions which is talked about, it is not excluded that another object might have satisfied this same set. There thus exists a possible variability of the object satisfying the conditions with respect to counterfactual situations. On the contrary, a proper name is such that it refers to an object without imposing to the individual the fulfilment of any condition, at least not of the ordinary kind: it *directly refers* to it. One might say that the proper name is individuated by the object it refers to. It is natural to conclude that the individuation is only possible if the proper name bears a *real* relationship to the object designated by it, for example a *causal* relationship. Kripke's famous causal theory of proper names is supposed to substantiate this requirement. "Cicero" is the name of Cicero in virtue of a chain of name-transmission which begins with an initial baptism *where Cicero himself is involved* and ends with the present use of his name.

My aim here is to consider a thesis which has been put forward notably by Russell and taken up again recently by F. Recanati, in a sense which radically differs from Russell's view of the matter, and which says that a proper name is or might be essentially linked to the uniquely identifying description: the person who is called . I would like to show that in a sense, once we admit the semantical peculiarity of ordinary indexicals, a variant of the Russellian analysis of proper name is acceptable (given the premises).

2. The indexical theory of names

Russell² contends that even though you might not be able to associate with your use of a name any *substantial* description, you can be sure that there is at least one condition that is satisfied by the man we call, for instance, "Cicero", namely that he is precisely called "Cicero", a condition that itself could be called *linguistic*. And the conclusion is that the name Cicero *is* an abbreviation of the definite description: "the man who is called "Cicero" " or "the man who bears the name "Cicero" ". According to this view, we should conclude that the sentence "Cicero is the man called "Cicero" " is analytic and even logically true since it is semantically equivalent to the sentence: "the man called "Cicero" is the man called "Cicero" ". Yet, if on the one side it is undoubtedly natural to regard that sentence as logically true, it seems, on the other side, that it does not do justice to another intuition which goes

² See B. Russell [13], ch. 6.

naturally with the original sentence, namely that Cicero might not have been called "Cicero" and hence that it is a contingent fact that Cicero bears that name. But how is it possible, according to the traditional view, for the same sentence to be both logically true, therefore likely to be known *a priori* to be true, and contingent?

Russell's point rests, however, on the assumption that when a mode of presentation is associated with a term, the sentence in which the term has an occurrence is a general proposition which imposes a condition to be satisfied by the object, if any, the speaker is talking about. The truth-conditions of the proposition include then the condition conveyed by the mode of presentation. Nevertheless, indexicals have proven to be resistant to that kind of analysis. The indexical "I" conveys a rule which permits the hearer to determine the reference of the term in the context in which it is uttered, namely that the reference of "I" is the utterer of the token "I" in the context. If I, Bruno G., say that I am dark-haired, the hearer can infer that the person whom the mode of presentation presents as the utterer of "I" is dark-haired. Nonetheless, the condition that Bruno G. is the utterer of the word "I" is not a part of the truth-conditions of the sentence. The sentence "I am dark-haired" uttered by Bruno G., is true if and only if Bruno G. is dark-haired. Even if Bruno G. had been incapable of uttering any sentence, it would have been true that he is dark-haired. The relational condition of reference of the term is not among the truth-conditions of the sentence, and the relation himself, although *involved* in the determination of reference, is not something the object *has necessarily* to bear to the sign which designates him to be what the speaker is talking about. All this, I think, is more or less connected to the principle, of both an Aristotelian and Fregean flavor, that *the way* we think or speak about anything is no part of *what* we think or speak about. If Everest is high, it is true that Everest is high even if nobody thinks that Everest is high, even if no sentence expressing that very fact is uttered. Therefore, if the thought or the sentence according to which Everest is high turns out to be true, it cannot thus be true in virtue of the fact that the height of the mountain has beforehand to satisfy the condition that it is the subject of my thought or what I say. It is not because I think that Everest is high that it is (possibly) true that Everest is high. On the contrary, it is because Everest is (possibly) high that my thought is true. As a corollary, if we admit the principle of compositionality of sense, the way we determine the reference of the singular term "Everest" and the way we think about Everest are no longer involved in the truth-conditions of the sentence. Whatever the real connection between that line of thought and the rigidity thesis may be, it cannot be denied that the difference established

by Donnellan and taken up again by Kripke between the reference-fixing use and the descriptive use of definite descriptions is closely related to the idea that even though I think of an object under a specific mode of presentation, that object is not necessarily tied to the condition it has *de facto* to satisfy. I can first fix the reference of an expression in saying that it is the object that contingently possesses such and such a property and then, in using the expression so introduced, speak of that very same object even with respect to counterfactual situations where it does not possess the property.

Now, as the examples above show, it is not absurd to regard names, even if they are associated with a mode of presentation, as referential and, seen from that angle, as *akin* to indexicals. But it does not mean that they *are* indexicals. In order to lay claim to that title, they need, at least, be associated with a *constant linguistic* rule which, as in the case of ordinary indexicals, determines, when applied in the context of use, their reference. Furthermore those references should bear a real relationship to the names. Now, Recanati's thesis³ states that such a rule is available for names, and therefore that they are indeed to be counted among indexicals. It suffices to keep the Russellian idea that a man (for instance) is called by his name, but to maintain the view that to be called by one's name is not among the truth-conditions of the sentence where the name has an occurrence. In fact, in Recanati's framework, two different rules are involved. The first one is social: in a given community, an object is, by (a social) convention, given a name which is then used by the members of the community to designate the object. Those baptism and name-use are real social facts. The other one is linguistic and is the same for every name: for every proper name-type N, an object is the reference of a token of N if there exists a social convention which associates that name with the object. So, if I hear that Cicero is a great orator, I know, if I know the linguistic rule, that the reference of "Cicero" is the man who is called "Cicero" in the community. Therefore, when the general rule is involved in the use of a specific name, for instance "Cicero", it can be inferred *a priori* from it and the name that Cicero is the man called "Cicero". Moreover, although known *a priori* to be true, the fact that Cicero is called "Cicero" is truth-conditionally irrelevant (to use Recanati's phrase). It is then perfectly intelligible that the proposition "Cicero is called "Cicero" " is contingent. So we have got a particularly clear example of a proposition which is at the same time *a priori* true and contingent.

³ See F. Recanati [12], ch.8.

Recanati is at pains to show, against objections carefully worked out by Kripke, that a sentence like “Cicero is called “Cicero” ” does not manifest any form of vicious circularity. It would indeed be viciously circular to say that Cicero is the man *I* call Cicero. If, being asked whom I am referring to by using the name “Cicero”, I am only able to answer that it is the person I am referring to by that use of the name, I am undoubtedly stuck. But B. Loar has worked out a credible, if funny, scenario to illustrate the way a theory which associates a name N with the mode of presentation *the object that people in the community call “N”* can avoid circularity:

“At time zero, Adam dubs a certain ape “Arnolfo”. At time one, various persons utter the sentences of the form “Arnolfo is F”, meaning thereby that the ape Adam dubbed “Arnolfo” is such and such. At time two, certain persons, having forgotten Adam’s contribution, utter such sentences and mean the ape that people have been referring to as “Arnolfo” is such and such. And so through continuous such usage down to the present.”⁴

The solution is to separate *my* present use of the name and the *past* uses of the name, essentially by other people than me. There is no circularity because when I am using the name, I claim to refer not to what I am referring to by that use of that name, but to what the other members of the community claimed to refer to by *their* uses of the name. So when I say that Cicero is a great orator, I only mean that the person whom has been dubbed “Cicero” and whom, in virtue of this baptism, and a chain of name-uses down to me, has been referred to, is a great orator.

Now I am not sure that the proponents of that theory of ordinary proper names are aware of the price to be paid for keeping their theory upright. To better understand this, one may look towards another case where circularity is likely to be involved and which concerns a Russellian analysis of natural language proper names. When the direct reference theorist opposes the synonymy of proper names with definite descriptions, one of the (semantic) arguments he advances says that, for any description one may propose as synonymous with the name, it is always possible that in fact the object which bears the name, does not satisfy the description. And yet, when we use the name, it is the bearer of the name we are referring to. Even though Einstein turned out not to be the

⁴ B. Loar [10], p. 83.

discoverer of the theory of relativity, Einstein would be the man we are referring to when we use the name “Einstein”, and not the real discoverer of the theory of relativity, whoever he is. Consequently the name “Einstein” is not synonymous with the definite description “the discoverer of the theory of relativity”. Now, there is one natural reply to that argument. If there is a fact whose existence nobody would be ready to deny, it is that Einstein is *believed* to be the discoverer of the theory of relativity. So why not say that when I use the name “Einstein”, I intend “the person who is believed to be the discoverer of the theory of relativity”? But the question we are entitled to ask is *by whom* Einstein is believed to be such a discoverer. I am certainly not the person who believes that; what I believe is not that Einstein is the discoverer of the theory of relativity, but only that he is believed to be this discoverer. So it must be that the *other* members of the linguistic community consider Einstein the discoverer of the theory of relativity. Maybe, but then what they believe is *not* that Einstein is believed to be the discoverer of the theory of relativity, but that he is really this discoverer. Therefore, if I want to avoid absurdity, I must say that *for me*, “Einstein” means the person who is believed by most people to have discovered the theory of relativity, and *for the other people*, it simply means the man who discovered the theory of relativity. What is impossible, on pain of circularity, is that everybody thinks that Einstein is the man who is believed by everybody else to be the discoverer of the theory of relativity. But the price to be paid for escaping circularity is to admit that the name “Einstein” as used by me and “Einstein” as used by the other people have not the same meaning. They are only homonymous, a conclusion which is hardly receivable.

I think that to accept the indexical theory of proper names is to face up to the same difficulty, but that it is not impossible that the theory should find out a feasible solution to it. In Loar’s story, the individual concept that goes with the name “Arnolfo” as used by the last members of the community is roughly “the ape that has been dubbed “Arnolfo” by the first member(s) of the community”. But for the first members of the community, the “producers” of the name, to use Evans’s phrase, the individual concept linked to the name, if there is one, is not this one. In particular, a name, for example “Arnolfo”, is used in a ceremony to baptise an object and when it is being so used, it would be senseless to say it is associated with the mode of presentation: *the ape that is called “Arnolfo” by the members of the community*. There are really two uses of the name “Arnolfo” in Loar’s imaginary community. Now, one may think that it is not a case of pure homonymy because the causal theory of names just explains the link

between the two uses. I think it is a very difficult problem. We can say that the rule presents the object as that animal which has the property of having been baptised by the name of "Arnolfo" and, in a sense, it is a real property of the object (it is possible in principle to say where and when the baptism took place). Yet, that description is referential owing to the fact that there is a real relationship between the name used to baptise and the name I use now to designate Arnolfo. So, one may say that the difference of modes of presentation at the beginning and at the end of the practice of using one and the same name is overcome by the existence of a continuous real relationship between the two uses of the name.

It is not irrelevant to say that for a present user of the name "Cicero", the mode of presentation *the man who has been dubbed "Cicero"* serves as a tool to fix the reference. It is all the more relevant considering that it sheds light on the distinction between two uses of definite descriptions, the meaning-giving use and the reference-fixing use, distinction which is always likely to be misinterpreted. The fact that the proper name is not synonymous with the description which has been used to fix its reference does not mean that the name does not *retain* this description as a mode of presentation of its reference. If it were not the case, so that the meaning of "Cicero" and the meaning of "Tully" were determined by their sole reference, "Cicero is Tully" would be not only necessary true, but also *a priori* known as true. Russell consistently says that if "Scott" and "The author of Waverly" had to be regarded as names, then "Scott is the author of Waverly" would have to be ranked among truths of logic no less than "Scott is Scott". Such a theory, which claims that natural language proper names are logically proper names, deserves to be called "Millian", because Mill can justly be credited with proposing it, but it is beyond question that this theory seems as senseless to the modern direct reference theorist as it seemed to Russell. For it is hard to see how one could deny the fact that that Scott is the author of Waverly or that Cicero is Tully can only be known *a posteriori*, although they are necessary truths.

Nevertheless, one could object that "Scott is the author of Waverly" is an *a posteriori* truth only if it is not reference-fixing and that it is always possible to *regard* a seemingly necessary *a posteriori* truth as a contingent *a priori* truth. The linguistic theory of name is precious here precisely because it lays stress upon the fact that the simple identity statement with two proper names, like "Cicero is Tully" is also obviously *a posteriori*. If it is necessary that "Cicero is Tully" is not *a priori* true, it means that the simple fact that two co-referential names are different is sufficient to locate the source of the empirical nature of

the truth. It is therefore natural to conclude that the *a posteriori* character of the sentence is due to a difference in the modes of presentation which concerns only the names themselves: the simple fact that the proper name “Cicero” is associated with the mode of presentation “the man called “Cicero” ” and that the proper name “Tully” is associated with the mode of presentation “the man called “Tully” ” explains why nobody is able to know *a priori* that Cicero is Tully.

In a brief passage, Putnam has rightly emphasized the point:

“the statement “Cicero is identical with Tully” is an empirical statement. *Epistemically* it is “contingent” [...] even though it is *metaphysically* necessary (The intention when we use the name “Cicero” is to refer to whomever the person who taught us to use this name in this way was referring to; in this way we get a chain of linked referring-uses, a history of referential use going back in time [...]) If we trace the chain back to the original name-giving, we find a certain individual: that this individual is the same individual that we find at the origin of another chain of linked uses, the chain ending with our present referring use of “Tully”, is empirical. But the name “Cicero” is not synonymous with the *description* “the individual dubbed at the origin of the chain which ends with my present use of “Cicero” ”; rather it is that I use “Cicero” as a *rigid designator* for a certain individual whom I am able to pick out by the non-rigid description.).”⁵

This passage may be interpreted as follows: if I am to understand the possibility of metaphysically necessary propositions such as “Cicero is Tully”, which are at the same time only empirically true, I have to understand beforehand how the sentence “Cicero is Tully” is empirical even though the *a posteriori* nature of the sentence can not be accounted for by the traditional theory of definite descriptions since the names are taken to be rigid designators. The *solution* is to contend that “Cicero is the individual dubbed at the origin of the chain of my present use of “Cicero” ” is a contingent nevertheless *a priori* proposition which expresses a part of what we know of “Cicero” and that the proposition does not give the meaning the name, but only fixes its reference. That is why, even if all I know of Cicero, namely that he is the individual

⁵ H. Putnam [11], p. 57.

dubbed "Cicero", does not allow me to infer that he bears any other name, for instance "Tully", it is metaphysically necessary that Cicero is Tully. In a sense, there could not be *a posteriori* necessary propositions, if there were not contingent *a priori* propositions.

Therefore one may say that *every* natural language proper name N is essentially linked to at least one mode of presentation: the man called N. Now the idea that a reference-fixing condition is *systematically* associated with a proper name gives strong support to the view that modes of presentation of a non-Russellian kind do exist. By "non-Russellian", I only mean here that the sentence which contains a proper name is really what it seems to be, namely singular, and that, although the object the name refers to has to satisfy a certain type of condition, the sentence cannot be translated into its usual quantificational Russellian duplicate. The conclusion that the Fregean conception of the mode of presentation is therefore vindicated should not be drawn too promptly, however. As is well known, different Fregean senses may be associated with the same reference, but a unique Fregean sense cannot have different references. Now, an indexical mode of presentation is such that it may have different references in different contexts. And if the context had been different, if for instance Socrates had been called "Plato", and Plato "Socrates", "Socrates" would not have been the name of (our) Socrates, but of (our) Plato, even though the same (reference-fixing) mode of presentation "The man called "Socrates" " would have been associated with the name "Socrates".

Before entering into a critical examination of the indexical theory of names, I would like to discuss an objection that we are inclined to raise against the theory and show why it does not reach its target.

The proponent of the indexical thesis for proper names seems to forget that the sentence: "Cicero is called "Cicero" ", *if it is taken as an a priori truth*, is nevertheless truth-sensitive to substitution in its name place. "Tully is called "Cicero" " is certainly not *a priori*. So we should conclude that the sentence is obviously not only about the man Cicero, but mainly about the name "Cicero", and as soon as we realize that, we cannot avoid thinking of the similarity of our case to the Quinean Giorgione example. It is then not senseless to draw the conclusion that "Cicero is called "Cicero" " roughly means the same as "Cicero is so called because of his name". The original example by Quine, i.e. "Giorgione was so called because of its size", was not meant to be an *a priori* truth, because Giorgione might have been so called for another reason than his size, but our example, due to its particularity, is an *a*

priori truth according to the standards put forward by the proponent of the indexical thesis.

As far as I know, few people, if any, have remarked that the well-known example given by Quine is very particular. “Giorgione was so called because of his size”, which is probably true, does not tolerate substitution in its name place, since “Barbarelli was so called because of his size” is probably false. This impossibility of a truth-preserving substitution is supposed to show evidence for the fact that the “singular” term “Giorgione” is at the same time used and mentioned in the context: “... was so called because of his size”, and that the context itself is opaque, in fact so opaque that it is not possible to extract from the sentence any real predicable. The confusion arises from the conflating of the two ways of employing the name “Giorgione” in the sentence: Giorgione was called “Giorgione” because of its size. In this last sentence, “Giorgione” is now used to refer to Giorgione and now mentioned. We should then rather say that the sentence says something about Giorgione and his name. Of course the first occurrence of “Giorgione” in the sentence is transparent and tolerate universal substitution, hence the predicable “...was called “Giorgione” because of his size” is a real one. And of course the second occurrence of “Giorgione” is opaque and the predicable “Giorgione was called “...” because of its size” is a spurious one. But in this case, we *can* extract from the whole sentence, a viable predicable, namely the (relational) predicable: “...was called “...” because of his size”, which expresses a relation between a man and a name.

Nevertheless it should be noted first that the impossibility of substitution is linked to the reason given in the last clause of the sentence. It is because “Giorgione” means, under one of its aspects, “tall” that the replacement of “Giorgione” by “Barbarelli” alters the truth-value of the sentence: it is certainly *not* because of his size that Barbarelli was so called. But if the last clause of the sentence devised by Quine is eliminated, it seems that the principle of substitutivity *salva veritate* applies without any obstacle: “Barbarelli was so called” is also true. Indeed “Giorgione was so called”, if true, is not made false by *any* substitution for “Giorgione”, and not only “Barbarelli”. Newton was so called too, and so was Gödel. Secondly, even though one thinks necessary to avoid confusing mention and use and to reject a predicable like “...was so called” as ill-formed, it is always possible to rephrase our original sentences with their Quinean counterparts: “Newton was called “Newton” ”, “Gödel was called “Gödel” ”, and so on, and to extract from them the predicable “x was called “x” ”, which seems to form a perfectly transparent context. Moreover, “x was called “y” ” seems to be a transparent context too. If Cicero was the same man as Tully, then,

if it is true that Cicero was called "Cicero", it is also true that Cicero was called "Tully", and that Tully was called "Cicero".

It could be objected that such a predicable is only apparently, not really, meaningful, because quantification does not seem to make sense in such a context: from "Cicero is called "Cicero" ", or "Cicero is a great orator and is called "Cicero" ", it would be odd to conclude that: " x (x is called " x ") and " x (x is a great orator and x is called " x) ". If the *objects* of the domain of quantification are taken to be persons, then we can understand what, for instance, the first two variables of the last expression refer to, but not what the third one designates. And if the *objects* of the domain of quantification are expressions, the inverse is true, unless we imagine a very strange situation in which persons are also expressions.

But, as P.T. Geach has argued persuasively⁶, it is the objectual (tarskian-style) interpretation of quantification which is at issue here. *If* we read the quantifier as saying: there is an object x such that..., and *if* we determine the truth-value of an existential sentence by looking for an object which satisfies the predicate, absurdity follows. But if we consider, in a Fregean way, that an existential sentence is true if and only if the sentence obtained from it by deleting the quantifier and substituting a proper name for the variable (in all its occurrences) could be true, then difficulties vanish and the above inference becomes perfectly acceptable.

Of course, we are compelled to give up the traditional conception of quotational contexts, in particular when variables have an occurrence in them. Indeed, one could object that, even if one is ready to accept that the expression " "Cicero" " uses the very same expression, namely "Cicero", as the one which occurs in "Cicero is a great orator", it is much harder to understand the use of a variable inside quotation marks: if " "Cicero" is the name of Cicero" implies that Cicero is called by the expression enclosed within the quotation marks, namely "Cicero", must we not conclude that " " x " is the name of Cicero" implies that Cicero is called by the name " x "? But how could a variable be the name of anybody? And if it is a name, how can we quantify into the context? The letter " x " thus would have to be both a name and variable. Nonsense!

But this conclusion follows only if we suppose that mention and use are opposed devices. In fact, to mention a name is also a use of the name and the quotation marks are historically a very late way of marking out that use. If so, nothing forbids us to adopt new conventions of use. Following Geach, we can introduce a new kind of quotes, #...# (in fact reminiscent of Quine's corners of quasi-quotation), such that

⁶ See P. T. Geach [5], p. 205 sq. and [4], p. 83 ff.

#Cicero# and #Cicero is a great orator# are the same expressions as “Cicero” and “Cicero is a great orator”, but such that #x# is not the name of the variable, but equivalent to the mention of whatever name, for example, to “Caesar”, “Kotarbinsky” or “Cicero”. #x is a great orator # is then the result of substituting in “x is a great orator” for “x” whichever expression #x# was. In such way it is no longer absurd to say that for some x, x was a great orator and #x# is the name of x. It will be true if we could find a proper name whose substitution for “x” in the context gives a true proposition, which is the case, since it is true that Cicero is a great orator and “Cicero” is the name of Cicero or that Talleyrand was a great orator and “Talleyrand” is the name of “Talleyrand”.

One reason for adopting the above analysis of quotation is that it solves what is an inextricable puzzle for the alternative Quinean-style theory: how can we tell someone our own name or the name of anybody else? Or how can we *give* a name to anybody? According to the Quinean theory, if we say that “Cicero” is the name of a great orator, the name in question is not the one within the quotes since it has no occurrence in the sentence: only the whole expression composed of the six letters and the quotation marks has a real occurrence. Yet, this expression is not the name of Cicero, only the name of the name of Cicero, so that it is not true that “Cicero” is the name of a great orator, namely Cicero. Nor can we say that Cicero is the name of a great orator because, of course, the man Cicero is not a name. Geach’s analysis of quotation does not meet that obstacle since it is the name itself which appears in the quotational context to refer to itself.

3. The indexical “actually” and a sensible way to reduce names to definite descriptions

I have tried to show how invaluable the thesis of the contingent *a priori* nature of the sentence “Cicero bears the name “Cicero” ” was. Now the indexical nature of the mode of presentation “whoever bears the name “Cicero” ” requires deeper investigation. It is well known since D. Kaplan that “Cicero is called “Cicero” ” shares the property of *a priori* contingency with a sentence, almost entirely composed of indexical expressions, like *I am here now*.⁷ Although that sentence expresses different facts according to the speaker who utters it, to the place and the time of its utterance, we know, in a sense, *a priori*, i.e. before it is uttered, that it is going to be true. What we need then is the notion of

⁷ See D. Kaplan [8].

something being true when uttered. In other words, we need a distinction between a world of evaluation and a context of utterance. H. Kamp has famously devised a formal representation of those sentences which require a “double indexation” in order to account for the logical behavior of the indexical “now”.⁸ When we say that it will be the case that it rains *now*, it is necessary that the truth of “it rains”, which is evaluated at a future time, nonetheless receives its true-value from the time the sentence (itself part of a longer sentence) “it rains” is uttered. The time of evaluation need not coincide with the time of utterance, even if normally it does. What is to be determined is the truth-value of the formula at time t when part of an expression uttered at time t' .⁹

What Kamp did for temporal logic can be done, and has been done¹⁰, for modal logic with the operator “Actually”, noted: @. We distinguish (always supposing that the underlying modal logic is S5) between a world of evaluation, i.e. the world where the sentence is evaluated to truth and the world of context, the world “where” the sentence is uttered and we give truth-conditional clauses determining recursively, for a given assignation a of truth-value for every propositional letter p_i and a model \mathbb{U} , *the truth of a formula in the world w when¹¹ uttered in the world w'* : $(\mathbb{U}, w, w') \models \dots$

We have for every propositional letter p_i :

$$(\mathbb{U}, w, w') \models p_i \text{ iff } a(p_i, w) = 1$$

The truth-conditional clause for the operator “actually” reads naturally:

$$(\mathbb{U}, w, w') \models @ \text{ iff } (\mathbb{U}, w', w') \models \dots,$$

i.e. the formula “actually \dots ” is true in any world w when it is (part of a formula) uttered in the world w' iff “ \dots ” is true in the world of utterance w' . The formula “actually \dots ” evaluated at any possible world inherits the truth-value the simple formula “ \dots ” has in the world where it is uttered.

Lastly, the clause for the necessity operator reads:

$$(\mathbb{U}, w, w') \models \Box \text{ iff for every } w'' (\mathbb{U}, w'', w') \models \dots$$

⁸ H. Kamp [7].

⁹ H. Kamp, *op. cit.*, p. 239.

¹⁰ I follow H. Hodes [6]; see also J. Crossley & L. Humberstone [2] and M. Davies & L. Humberstone [3].

¹¹ “When” here is not to be taken in the temporal sense of the term, but of course as indicating the world “where” the formula is uttered.

Now we ask two questions: is a formula *true when uttered*, whatever the assignation in the model U ? If it is the case, one can say that the formula is *contextually valid with respect to the model U* . And if it is the case for any model U , the formula will simply be said *contextually valid*. So a formula is contextually valid if for any model U , for any assignation a , for any world w , $(U, w, w) \models \phi$. It can immediately be seen that, as expected, “ $\Box @$ ” is contextually valid, since for any w' , $(U, w', w') \models \phi$, if and only if, according to the clause for “actually”, for any w , $(U, w, w') \models @ \phi$, in particular for w' itself, so that $(U, w', w') \models @ \phi$. Of course, if it is the case that it is raining in the actual world (i.e. in a possible world regarded as actual), we expect that the sentence “it is raining in the actual world” is true when uttered in the actual world and vice versa.

But a second question can be asked: is a formula simply *true in any possible world*, whatever the assignation in the model U ? If it is the case, the formula is *valid with respect to the model U* , and, if it is the case for any model U , the formula is said to be *valid*. A formula is then valid, if for any model U , for any assignation a , for any world w , $(U, w) \models \phi$. Now “ $\Box @$ ”, although contextually valid, is not valid. We can construct a model U , with worlds w and w' , such that ϕ is true in w and false in w' , the possible world regarded as actual. In this case, $(U, w', w') \not\models \phi$ and $(U, w, w') \models \phi$. So $(U, w', w') \not\models @ \phi$ and $(U, w, w') \not\models @ \phi$. Therefore, $(U, w, w') \not\models \Box @ \phi$.

A valid formula is contextually valid, but a formula may be contextually valid without being valid. Besides, it is quite obvious that only the set of valid formulae is closed under necessitation. A mere contextually valid formula may not be necessary. For instance, it is not difficult to build a model where “ $\Box @$ ” is not true in every possible world of the model, since that is what we have just done in the previous paragraph: in w , “ $\Box @$ ” is false, so that in particular, $(U, w', w') \not\models \Box (@ \phi)$. We have just given a sense to the idea that a proposition can be contextually valid (therefore “contextually true”, true when uttered), so that it is knowable *a priori* that it is true, even if it is contingent (not necessary true, nor false). Of course it is open to us to devise an operator of necessity which allows the application of the rule of necessitation even for contextually valid formulae. We could introduce an operator “ \blacksquare ” such that $(U, w, w) \models \blacksquare \phi$ iff for every world

$w', (U, w', w') \models$. Obviously, a contextually valid formula is going to be necessary in that sense. But it only implies that we have to distinguish between various meanings of the word “necessary”, and that is exactly what the direct reference theorist would like us to do.

It is also clear that for any contextually valid formula ϕ , $\Box @ \phi$ is a valid formula (and so contextually valid too) and therefore necessary. Since the rule of necessitation applies, $\Box @ \phi$ is valid, and so contextually valid. A formula may not be necessary and yet, when it is preceded by the operator of actuality, it becomes necessary true.

Now, reverting back to our main topic, we can say that if the sentence “Cicero is called “Cicero” ” had been uttered in another possible world, when that world is taken to be real (even if in fact it is not since it is *our* world which happens to be the real world), the sentence would have been true when uttered in that world. Therefore, every sentence of this type is true when uttered and so contextually valid. Yet “Cicero is called “Cicero” ” is not necessary true as it is not the case that whatever the possible world we regard as real, the sentence is true in every possible world accessible to that world. In particular, since the real world is in fact our world, the proposition is not necessary true when uttered in our world.

Now we can see that *exactly the same argument could be used if we substitute for the first occurrence of “Cicero” in “Cicero is called “Cicero” ”, the rigidified definite description: “the man who is actually called “Cicero” ”*. For, the sentence:

“the man who is actually called “Cicero” is called “Cicero” ”,

or better:

“the man who is actually called “Cicero” is the man who is called “Cicero” ”

is contextually valid, because, when uttered in any world regarded as actual, the definite description “the man called “Cicero” ” is satisfied by the exactly the same individual as the one who satisfies the rigidified description “the man who is actually called “Cicero” ”. And yet, as expected, the sentence, in whatever world it is uttered, is contingent. The man who actually bears the name “Cicero” could have borne another name. Of course, a sentence that contains a definite description, for example: the greatest roman orator is the greatest roman orator, is not, in spite of appearances, *ipso facto* valid, nor contextually valid, since it could be false (it is possible that nobody satisfies the description, i.e. that there is no greatest roman orator). But it is certainly not what we *mean* when we surmise that the sentence “the man who is actually called “Cicero” is the man who is called “Cicero” ” may be contextually valid. We mean that every individual who is identical with the man actually

called “Cicero” is identical with the man who is called “Cicero” as well, i.e. (with “ ... ” =_{def} “ ... is called “Cicero” ”):

$$z(z = \text{ix}@ x \quad z = \text{iv} \ v),$$

i.e.

$$z[(x(@ x \quad y(@ y \quad x=y) \quad x=z) \quad v(\ v \quad w(\ w \quad v=w) \quad v=z)].$$

This formula, although not necessary, is true every time it is uttered and so contextually valid, since if the antecedent is true in the context of utterance, the consequent is also true in that context. In fact, it is also true that if someone is the man called “Cicero”, he is the man actually called “Cicero” too, so that we have got the equivalence:

$$z(z = \text{ix}@ x \quad z = \text{iv} \ v),$$

i.e.

$$z[(x(@ x \quad y(@ y \quad x=y) \quad x=z) \quad v(\ v \quad w(\ w \quad v=w) \quad v=z)].$$

We can thus conclude that, *when effectively used in a particular context*, the rigidified description “the man who is actually called “Cicero” ” can always be replaced by the ordinary description “the man who is called “Cicero” ” and, in reality, it is not difficult to see that we have got a quantified formula which is a great deal similar to the propositional formula: @ , and which allows the same consequences to be drawn. In the last instance, Russell’s minimal analysis of ordinary proper names, or something not far from it, is vindicated. To be sure, the compatibility of logical (contextual) validity and contingency rests entirely on the availability of the actuality operator which is supposed to be irreducibly *indexical*; so that it should be admitted that a *purely descriptive* definite description is not logically equivalent to a proper name and that a real relationship to the person who bears the name should be involved. Nonetheless, the indexical element is a “thin” element, even under one aspect, a trivial one, as every sentence is *de facto* uttered in the real world. As a *type*, a sentence can be considered purely general, but as a *token*, i.e. uttered in the real world, it cannot. Of course, this (almost always implicit) fact is generally of no consequence, but it can make a little difference sometimes, as the direct reference theorist (of the non-Millian kind) may insist upon when dealing with proper names. But it is precisely that indexical element which at the same time enables us to say that proper names are associated with a mode of presentation which is Russellian, that is always likely to be translated into a general, if par-

tially singular (due to the almost always implicit reference to the real world), proposition. To grant this conclusion, I think that one must suppose that bearing a name is a uniquely identifying property (that only one person bears the name) and that the (often implicit) indexical “actually” really connects us, so to say, to every item in our world; a connection that may be metaphorically represented, for example, by the way one place is linked to all the other ones through coordinate lines drawn on a map of the world. The word “actually” connects me to whoever bears the name N because both of us are real parts of this world. I think nonetheless that those two assumptions are not, from the perspective of the direct reference theorist, too unreasonable.

We must conclude that if 1) we suppose that a mode of presentation is systematically associated with the use of a proper name, 2) this mode of presentation is of the type “the person who actually bears the name N”, 3) the word “actually” is an indexical, 4) a proper name has two uses, then nothing forbids us to regard proper names as *Russellian* abbreviations of definite descriptions.

4. Perplexities

Finally, let me put forward some reasons that lead to perplexities about what has been proposed above.

First a minor point. The logic of actuality establishes that the word “actually” does not always occur vacuously. But it is done at a high cost: it is odd, to say the least, to be forced to admit that when I say “it rains”, my utterance is contingent, while, by just adding the word “actually”, my sentence, although expressing the same fact, becomes necessary. So, “actually” would seem to be magical as its mere utterance suffices to transform a contingent fact into a necessary one. Indeed we have already seen that a true contingent formula ϕ , when preceded by the operator “actually”, becomes necessary.

Secondly, the notion of a “uniquely identifying description” may deserve further examination. We tend to think that there are properties which by themselves individuate the object which possesses them. And indeed bearing such and such a name can be regarded as such a property in so far as the proper name has, among other things, the *function* to individuate the object named. So we are inclined to look at the set of names as something more or less similar to a system of geographical coordinates. Perhaps such individuating properties do exist. However we should note that one must be very careful when we say that their formal translation is given in the quantificational Russellian idiom. If I say that

Socrates is *the* post office worker, I mean that he possesses a property that *several persons could have possessed*, but that in fact he is the only one to have. To be a post office worker is not *by itself* an “individuating” property and that is the reason why, in the formal equivalent of the sentence, a clause of uniqueness is added. When numbering is at issue, we can be sure that a predicate of *second* order is involved. Indeed, it is sometimes useful to adopt the Priorist symbolism for definite description, namely $\iota x..x$, whose the empty place needs to be filled in by a *first* order predicate, just as the empty places of the second order predicates, $x..x$ and $x..x$, have to be filled by a first order predicate to yield complete sentences. When we say that the King of France is bald, we say *of* the first order property of being *a* King of France that it is uniquely instantiated and when we say that the King of France is bald, we say *of* the first order property referred to by the first order predicate “to be both *a* King of France and bald” that it is uniquely instantiated as well. In neither case is the property uniquely identifying. If it is *de facto* uniquely instantiated, it is something accidental, not inherent to the property. In the same way, when I say that Socrates is the post office worker, I say that the first order property of being both *a* post worker office and identical with Socrates is uniquely instantiated: ιx (Socrates = x). What is important is that there is not any property of *individual* involved, and so not any individuating property by itself. Of course there is a decomposition of that same proposition which brings out the fact that we say also something about Socrates, since I could say that “ ιx (Socrates = x)” is the result of giving the *first order* predicate: “ $\iota x (... = x)$ ” the argument “Socrates”. But then the first order predicate, “to be identical with the post office worker” is uniquely identifying once again “by accident”, if I may say. It is the presence of the identity sign in the predicate which conveys this uniqueness, and nothing which has a relationship to the “substantial” property: to be a post office worker.

But the most important thing I would like to draw attention to concerns the “double use” of the name I have already alluded to. When dealing with the sentence “Cicero is called “Cicero””, it is admissible to maintain the view that the first occurrence of the name can be replaced by the definite description: “the man actually called “Cicero””. It is admissible every time we are *talking or speaking about* Cicero. But such a substitution is manifestly impossible for the second occurrence of the name, for nobody is called: “the man who is called “Cicero””; that expression is not a name at all. We are *called* by our name, though, not by a description. Thus, the Russellian analysis of proper names is doomed to failure. A complete analysis of the name-bearer relation ought to

explain the internal link between the use of the name for calling or baptising (which implies a *real* relationship between the name and its bearer) and the use of the name for talking or thinking (which establishes an *intentional* relationship between the name and the object thought of or spoken of in using the name). The causal theory of names is only a “name” of the problem, not its solution.

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