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Names of Attitudes and Norms for Attitudes

Inga Nayding

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Abstract

Fictionalists claim that instead of believing certain controversial propositions they accept them nonseriously, as useful make-believe. In this way they present themselves as having an austere ontology despite the apparent ontological commitments of their discourse. Some philosophers object that this plays on a distinction without a difference: the fictionalist's would-be nonserious acceptance is the most we can do for the relevant content acceptance-wise, hence such acceptance is no different from what we ordinarily call 'belief' and should be so called. They conclude that it is subject to the norms applicable to paradigmatic empirical beliefs, and hence, *pace* fictionalists, ontological commitments must be taken seriously. I disentangle three strands in the objector's thought: the 'What more can you ask for?' intuition, a linguistic/conceptual claim, and a claim about norms. I argue that the former two are compatible with ontological deflationism, and therefore do not entail applicability of the norms. Nevertheless, if indeed there is no more robust acceptance with which to contrast the supposed nonserious acceptance, then the fictionalist's claim to austere ontology must be abandoned. Is there a reason to suppose there is any merit to the distinction-without-a-difference charge? I argue that there is, clarify it, and defend against objections, focusing on Daly 2008.

Keywords

Fictionalism, ontological deflationism, doublethink, make-believe, nonserious acceptance.

I

1 Fictionalism: two kinds of appeal

Fictionalists claim that while they do not believe certain controversial propositions, for example, those entailing the existence of numbers, they accept them as useful make-believe. The attraction of fictionalism is not merely that it promises to make life easy by allowing you to disavow apparent existential commitments of theories you use. Its attraction is also in validating certain intuitions, such as that there is something wrong with seeing one's acceptance of the existence of numbers as answerable to reality in any way whatsoever, with being troubled by their "strangeness", or with being concerned about the lack of epistemic access to them. Fictionalism allows one to view the answers to such existential questions as ultimately within the purview of pragmatic reasons, beholden to nothing else. According to the fictionalist, the propositions we accept as mathematical truths should be seen as truths in a fiction, constrained only via the stipulations of this fiction. Those stipulations themselves, the source of basic ontological posits, either are or should be accepted as fiction¹—in a way that does not amount to belief, and hence not subject to evidential norms. This allows one to have an ontology one could be proud of and not to have to worry about being forced into ontological commitments by the pressures of philosophical or scientific theorizing. The latter is important for those who are methodologically committed to viewing philosophy as continuous with science.

Some fictionalists might care more about the freedom to make existential claims as needed than about having an austere ontology. However, a view that completely abandons any claim to ontological advantages, moving under the "ontology does not matter" tent, thereby ceases to deserve the name of fictionalism, and should be classified as ontological deflationism. In view of that, I shall understand by 'fictionalism' a view that presupposes a contrast between

¹ 'Are' or 'should be' corresponding to the distinction between hermeneutic and revolutionary fictionalism, going back to Burgess (1983). This distinction will not play a significant role in the present discussion.

serious and nonserious acceptance of the contents at issue. In other words, the fictionalist, to deserve the name, has to see herself as believing differently than the realist.

Although the prototype of the fictionalist's nonserious acceptance is to be found in ordinary displays of make-believe, such as games, daydreaming, etc., the fictionalist needs to press such acceptance into much more onerous service than it is doing there. It can no longer be fleeting and situation-bound as we often find it in everyday make-believe. It must be a fairly stable, dispositional attitude towards certain contents. One is to rely on it whenever philosophical ontology is not squarely in one's sights. There can be nothing like the amount of indeterminacy of literary fiction when it comes to what is true in the mathematical fiction. This, and not that, number is a solution to the equation, and therefore the need to accept that solution must be fully determined against the background of the relevant stipulations. The freedom, characteristic of make-believe, is to come only at the outmost "layer", where we posit the existence of the relevant kind, e. g., numbers, whereas the majority of specific mathematical acceptances appear to be no less constrained than specific ordinary beliefs. In this way, the fictionalist's acceptance comes to seem increasingly *like* belief, which gives rise to the concern that it really *is* belief masquerading under another name and that fictionalists are engaged in *doublethink*.

There appears to be no consensus among the fictionalists on exactly what must be done to deflect the charge of doublethink, and the tendency is towards doing increasingly less. Field claimed that mathematics' conservativeness makes it "legitimate to introduce mathematics as an auxiliary device that aids us in drawing inferences" (Field 1980: 2). Later, Yablo reasoned that if it is legitimate to claim the fictionalist attitude towards the *deductively* auxiliary, then it should also be legitimate to do so for the "*representationally auxiliary*" (Yablo 2005). If for Field the fictionalist had to isolate the content to which the fictionalist attitude is adopted, for Yablo what is put forth in full seriousness and what is a mere representational aid could be inextricably mixed (2001: 82; 2002: 299; 2008: 18). While Yablo himself makes a detailed case for regarding mathematical discourse as fictional, he also argues for the ubiquity of the fictional. However, if the fictional is as pervasive and ubiquitous as he alleges, one is left

to wonder whether in the future it would be necessary to defend the fictional construal of any discourse at all, i.e., whether such a construal should not become the presumption.

2 A sham attitude?

The fictionalist makes apparently contradictory statements and claims that only one set of them expresses her true worldview. Her “true” ontology is austere, even as she makes all sorts of apparent ontological commitments when engaged in non-purely-ontological pursuits—pursuits that we would ordinarily count as serious, such as scientific research, rather than telling fairy tales to children.

There is the objector, whose intuition says that the fictionalist’s “nonserious acceptance” is sham. But the fictionalist responds: “How so? Surely, we all *do* sometimes hold a nonserious attitude towards a content; Quine admits as much himself;² so, why should we labor under a self-imposed constraint that serves no worthwhile purpose?”

The objector counters along some such lines as these: “Yes, no doubt, we do sometimes hold a nonserious attitude, but in such cases the nonseriousness is constituted in *such-and-such* a way, i.e., it is *this-and-that* that makes it the case that the attitude is nonserious, whereas in what you are proposing this is absent. Hence, you are invoking a distinction without a difference. The demands put on the attitude by the role *you require it to play* make it impossible to construe it as nonserious, make-believe, within-the-game acceptance. In no way does it fall short of serious acceptance. Hence your claim of nonseriousness is sham and your attitude is belief, plain and simple. That is why, when you turn around and deny what you have just said, and claim to have an austere ontology, you are nothing but a doublethinker. You ought to assume the responsibility that comes with believing.”

Leave blank for now the particular analysis of nonseriousness. There are three distinct strands of thought tangled up in the little speech that I have put in the objector’s mouth.

The first is that once you have accepted, say, the mathematical content, in the way in which the fictionalist proposes to accept it, there is *nothing else* for belief to *be*. You have done all you could

² Cf. Yablo 1998: 244-245.

possibly do acceptance-wise. You could feel or fail to feel some inner glow; you could make passionate inward affirmations—or not—none of that is relevant, because none of that goes towards constituting belief. When it comes to what *does* constitute it, it is all there in the supposed nonserious acceptance, and therefore you make a verbal distinction where there is none in nature. (Not a perfect analogy, but compare with the story about the “stone soup”: the trickster’s project to make stone soup gradually evolves, through addition of nutritious ingredients, to the point where you get something which is misdescribed as “stone soup”. By the time the fictionalist adds to everyday make-believe all that needs to be added, this is just plain belief, plus some irrelevant accompanying mental fluff.) The way to proceed from this intuition to something more solid is to show it entailed by an analysis of the distinction between seriousness and nonseriousness. We left that blank for generality’s sake.

This idea, that there is nothing that the supposed fictionalist acceptance falls short of, is the core of the objector’s thought—it is the *doublethink* charge proper. It is a thesis about the structure of our cognition. If true, the fictionalist’s claim to austere ontology cannot be sustained. The contradictory statements will not float by each other on different levels of seriousness as the view seems to envisage, but will clash head-on, so to speak. Note that the thesis is descriptive and not normative. Note also that it is substantive in the sense that it is not about how something well understood is best described.

The second thread is concerned with the latter. It proceeds from the doublethink thesis and concludes that, *therefore*, the would-be fictionalist acceptance must be classified as ‘belief’. This is a thesis about deserving a particular name. It is grounded in the idea that belief = full acceptance. It is a thesis about concepts. Its defense would have to come from the analysis of nonseriousness which we left blank.

The above is easily confused with the third thread: that the kind of acceptance that fictionalism requires, *whatever we call it*, is answerable to certain norms and that those norms prohibit the adoption of this attitude for pragmatic reasons. If this is right, the fictionalist is not free to posit whatever is convenient whenever convenient, and that defeats the point of fictionalism, making “Fictionalism is impossible” a fair assessment. This third point is crucial for those who

wish to insist on the importance of ontological commitments. The doublethink thesis is not sufficient for establishing that, as it is compatible with deflationism. A fictionalist who was persuaded by the doublethink charge could give up the idea of a contrast between the two attitudes, and with it the claim to an austere ontology, but insist on freedom to accept certain existential statements as needed in science. (Thereby such a fictionalist would turn into a deflationist.)

To recap, in brief, these are three separate theses: (1) The envisaged fictionalist acceptance amounts to full acceptance of the relevant content. In other words, nothing less than full acceptance will satisfy the demands fictionalism puts on the relevant acceptance attitude. (I call this ‘the doublethink thesis/charge/objection’.) (2) Full acceptance is belief. (3) Fictionalist acceptance is subject to certain norms, namely, the same norms as apply to paradigmatic cases of belief. What reason is there to hold (3)? Or rather, what reason is there to hold (3) that has anything to do with (1) and (2)? (If there is another reason, it is outside the scope of this paper.)

Perhaps one thinks: if full acceptance is belief, then it is subject to the norms that belief is subject to, and those, as we all know, are evidential norms. But certainly this is question-begging. If full acceptance deserves to be called ‘belief’ and it is a point of dispute just what norms full acceptance is answerable to, then it hardly helps to say that it is answerable to the norms that belief is answerable to. Those are *ex hypothesi* also in dispute. (The hypothesis here is that belief = full acceptance.)

Some philosophers think our concept of belief is normative, i.e., that it comes with a norm (or some norms) already in it.³ (I shall assume these are the very same norms that generate the responsibility for ontology.) There is some supporting intuition in favor of this. If so, then indeed (1) and (2) would entail (3). But ‘full acceptance’ in (1) cannot be a normative notion, and hence, if ‘belief’ is normative, then (2) should be rejected. ‘Full acceptance’ in (1) cannot be normative because it aims to characterize acceptance as understood by the fictionalist, whereas the fictionalist cannot reasonably take it to be a normative notion. That is because the notion of seriousness at play *cannot be normative*. Suppose it were. Then the fictionalist who says,

³ Shah 2003, Shah and Velleman 2005.

“I am not committed to the truth of what I am asserting here because I am not being serious, because I put it forth in the spirit of make-believe, etc.” would not be adverting to any psychological reality, but rather would be merely saying that she refuses to be answerable to the relevant norms. That would constitute coming full circle to the bad pre-Quinean days, when philosophers allegedly were given to saying things like, “In assessing my ontology, don’t count what I say there, count only what I say here,” and leaving it at that.

Let us then assume that ‘belief’ is not a normative concept and, for the sake of the argument, let us take (2) to be true. We can return to the question posed earlier: do (1) and (2) provide any kind of reason for (3)? My answer is “No”. It follows from what I have already said: (1) is compatible with deflationism, whereas (2) is simply a conceptual or terminological claim that should not make a substantive difference.

3 Common confusions

Why does it seem that (3) follows? It could be that the use of ‘belief’ is fluid and oscillates between a normative and a non-normative sense (as I suggested elsewhere⁴). This could account for a slide from (1) and (2) to (3) through ambiguity in (2).

Alternatively, the confusion could stem from a misunderstanding of the role of paradigmatic cases of belief for the issues at hand. This appears to be both widespread and pernicious and so deserves a somewhat extended discussion, which will take up the rest of this section.

There is a tendency to think that by pondering the clearest cases of belief (i.e., of full acceptance, as we agreed), one discovers the *true nature* of belief: in effect, its essence. Such paradigmatic cases are supposed to be the ordinary empirical beliefs. Their essence, let us suppose, somehow triggers the application of the relevant norms. One would need to conclude that this essence is present in any case of belief. It would not help to propose that ‘belief’ is a natural kind term for which the familiar empirical beliefs play the role of reference-fixing samples, that is, to think along the lines of the following.

⁴ Nayding 2011.

“We already found out what belief really *is*, just like we found out that water is H_2O . Just as by conceding something is water, you are conceding that it is H_2O , so by conceding an attitude is belief, you are conceding that it has an essence that makes it subject to those norms.” The mistake here is transparent: just as you should not concede something is water unless you know it is H_2O , so too, if you are committed to belief having a certain norm-triggering essence, you should not concede that an attitude is belief unless you ascertain its presence.

It might be said that, nevertheless, those clear cases create a presumption that the same norms apply: after all, why would not the same norms apply to *the same kind* of thing (i.e., to full acceptance, also known as belief)? This too is mistaken. Those clear cases might well co-instantiate several kinds, with the norms applying to one kind and not others. An analogy: perhaps the clearest cases of moral demands relate to objects that are both rational and capable of experiencing pain. In order to project the norm to other cases, one must come to understand which kind is relevant: which one of these properties triggers the applicability of the norm.

It seems that when it comes to belief this simple point is obscured because one can discern but *one* relevant kind: *belief*. We should distinguish, however, the fullness of acceptance (i.e., there being nothing further that could be done acceptance-wise) and whatever this acceptance *consists in*. These could diverge. I will dwell on this a little.

Consider an analogy. It is possible for there to be norms that prescribe conditionally on the absolute quantity of water in one’s possession, and it is possible for there to be norms that prescribe conditionally on the fullness of the glass. E.g., you might be required to share whenever you have 250 ml of water, because that is the absolute quantity of water you have, *or* you might be required to share whenever your glass is full, because of that very condition and regardless of the capacity of the glass. If you have a full glass containing 250 ml, you are required to share whichever of these possible norms is *in fact* the norm. However, it matters which of the two is the actual norm, because that determines what to expect in other cases. If fullness *as such* is what grounds the norm (i.e., is what figures in the content of the norm as the relevant condition), then *ceteris paribus* you have an

obligation when you have a smaller glass which is full with only 200 ml in it. Not so if the other possible norm is the actual norm. *Vice versa*, the norm based on the absolute quantity would create an obligation when you have 250 ml in a half-filled larger glass.

Similarly, it is possible that the norms applicable to full acceptance are predicated upon its fullness as such (i.e., upon there being nothing further to be done acceptance-wise) or that they are predicated upon what the acceptance of the relevant content is in itself, i.e., upon what it consists in. Which of these possibilities obtains cannot be determined by pondering cases where either norm would apply, such as beliefs about ambient tables and chairs.

What do I mean by ‘acceptance as it is in itself’ or by ‘what it consists in’? The idea is not that acceptance is something separable from the content that it is the acceptance of. On the contrary, I would like to underscore that acceptance is always acceptance-of-a-content. Nevertheless, there is something that this acceptance-of-a-content consists in *for a given content*. It is that which is to full acceptance of a given content as the absolute quantity of water is to its completely filling the glass. For example, if acceptance is a *sui generis* feeling, then it is that feeling. Perhaps it can vary in intensity, and then it could be that for one content the maximal reachable intensity is M, while for another it is N. Then acceptance of the same intensity could be maximal for one content and not for another. Alternatively, maybe acceptance consists in dispositions towards use. (I say ‘use’ in the most general sense, comprising mental use.) Likewise, then, such and such dispositions that go into acceptance of a given content C may or may not constitute the maximal, i.e., complete, acceptance of C.

It should be clear now that, depending on what grounds the norms (i.e., which properties of acceptance are implicated in the content of the norm: its completeness or something else), it may or may not be the case that the same norms apply to any acceptance that is, in the relevant sense, “complete”. Suppose acceptance is “use” (in some relevant sense), and suppose the content C1 lends itself to three kinds of use U1, U2, U3, while the content C2 lends itself to only one kind of use, U1. If the norms stem from completeness of acceptance vis-à-vis the kinds of use, then the same norms would apply to the full acceptance of C1 and C2. But if the norms stem from the kind of

use as such, then that might not be the case. Furthermore, it might then turn out that the same norms apply to *C2* as to a *partial* acceptance of *C1* (one comprising only *U1*).

A brief point of clarification. If acceptance consists in dispositions to use, then there is a very finely grained notion where every content would have an individuating profile and there is also a very high-level description ('act as if true') which will be invariant across contents. I am suggesting that there may be an intermediate level where systematic differences could be discerned. For example, some contents can be incorporated into a "map" which is continuous with the map of our environment and thus ultimately with the sensory content,⁵ while others cannot be so incorporated (purely mathematical contents, for example). This incorporating presents a kind of use that appears to be available for some contents and not for others. In this way, it is *prima facie* possible that different norms apply to full acceptance of such contents than to full acceptance of other kinds of contents.

To sum up, the claim that full acceptance deserves to be called 'belief' should not lead one to conclude that full acceptance is always subject to the norms that apply to it in a range of familiar cases of belief/full acceptance, specifically, evidential norms or norms requiring parsimony of existential posits. Therefore, the fictionalist who is more of a deflationist at heart—one who cares primarily about validating the intuition that there is something wrong with taking ontology seriously—can maintain that part of the view while granting to the objector that the acceptance of the relevant contents does not contrast with any more robust acceptance and hence giving up the insistence that she really is ontologically austere.

Of course, the mere fact that one *could* concede something is no reason to think one should. Is the doublethink objection anything for the fictionalist to worry about? I cannot give this subject an exhaustive treatment, but I would like to discuss Daly 2008, since it is often thought to have dispatched the doublethink worry. Daly does not endorse fictionalism, rather, he defends it from this objection to press another, but the latter will not concern me. The discussion will serve to illustrate several common misconceptions. I will then try

⁵ I am alluding, of course, to the treatment of belief in Armstrong 1973.

to improve on the presentation of the doublethink charge to prevent such misconceptions.

II

1 Daly 2008 – summary of the argument

Daly starts by summing up his understanding of fictionalism as the proposal to “exploit” rather than to believe the relevant proposition. He underscores that instead of believing some proposition P the fictionalist merely believes it to be useful. Daly then approaches the doublethink worry via a passage from O’Leary-Hawthorn (1994) where the latter points out that the fictionalist’s characterization of the would-be fictionalist attitude coincides with the usual characterization of belief. Having objected to what looks like a behaviorist take on that characterization, Daly nevertheless acknowledges that there must be a difference between belief and the fictionalist attitude and cites Rosen and Burgess (2005) to this effect. Daly responds that such a difference is plain for all to see: the person who adopted the fictionalist attitude to P would typically say that he does not believe P , for example. This ushers in a discussion of Horwich (1991) who claims that such professions of disbelief are merely expressions of mistaken self-attribution on the fictionalist’s part. Daly’s response is three-pronged, as follows. First, this puts the fictionalist in a no-win situation. Second, Horwich contradicts his own views on truth. Third, under the heading ‘Aren’t we all jobbing fictionalists?’ Daly advances the master-argument: we all admit there is a fictionalist attitude, so *that* is the attitude that the fictionalist is talking about. As Daly is aware, Horwich anticipates this move and draws the distinction between local and global fictionalism, objecting only to the latter. Daly makes two points to counter this. First, he offers a counterexample: the intentional stance towards chess-playing computers. He takes such an intentional stance to provide us with an example of global fictionalism. Secondly, Daly charges that Horwich is guilty of *ignoratio elenchi*. “What is at issue?” Daly asks, and answers that it is whether there is a distinction between believing a sentence and exploiting it. According to Daly, even qualified, local fictionalism gives

us a reason to accept that there is such a distinction. Daly concludes the relevant part of the paper with brief remarks on Blackburn and Teller, with which I will not concern myself here, since they do not add much to the substantive points made earlier.

The problem with Daly's treatment is threefold. First, his presentation of the fictionalist attitude as nondescript "exploiting" of propositions is overly broad and fails to acknowledge that it involves the use of the very same content the use of which can constitute belief. Second, he appears to misunderstand Horwich's distinction between local and global fictionalism, construing it as a matter of the scope of the subject matter rather than of the scope of *use* of the relevant content. Third, his master argument presupposes a misunderstanding of the role of paradigmatic cases along the lines I sketched earlier.

I will take up the issues in the order that helps better untangle them: (i) recap the doublethink charge in Horwich's rendition; (ii) discuss why Daly's characterization of fictionalist acceptance is inadequate; (iii) dismiss Daly's charge that Horwich contradicts his own views on truth; (iv) discuss what is at issue, and what I think Horwich was getting at with the local vs. global fictionalism distinction, and hence why Daly's counterexample misses the point. I will then (v) offer my own critique of Horwich's conception (or presentation) of the distinction between serious and nonserious acceptance and propose a better way to think about it; (vi) show how the charge of doublethink can be supported by this conception of the distinction; (vii) revisit, in light of the above, Daly's "readily forthcoming behavioral difference" between the fictionalist and the realist. I will put (v)-(vii) into a separate section since the bulk of it is not a direct critique of Daly.

2 Doublethink charge as advanced by Horwich

The discussion of Horwich 1991 is the centerpiece of Daly's argument, as Horwich offers the most sustained defense of the doublethink objection to fictionalism. Referring to fictionalism as 'instrumentalism', Horwich wrote:

I will try to show, not just that one should not follow [instrumentalism's ultimate recommendation], but that one cannot. This is because it

presupposes a distinction between, on the one hand, believing a theory and, on the other hand, being disposed to use it, or, in van Fraassen's terminology, merely accepting it. But there is no such distinction, or so I will argue. Believing a theory is nothing over and above the mental state responsible for using it; and so the attitude urged by instrumentalism is impossible. (Horwich 1991: 2)

The 'what more do you want?' theme, which we identified earlier, comes across very clearly. Horwich urges the reader to "...bear in mind what it is to *accept* a theory, and then try to say what more would be involved in *believing* it" (Horwich 1991: 3). This is backed up by the following remarks:

...when a theory is regarded instrumentally in normal scientific practice, it is always understood that its use is to be confined to a certain range of applications. It is understood that only predictions in a specified domain should be relied upon, and use of the theory in conjunction with other theories is also severely constrained... Thus, there is a crucial difference between the sort of acceptance involved in general, philosophical instrumentalism, and the attitude we have towards particular theories treated instrumentally for particular purposes. Consequently, our familiarity with qualified, local instrumentalism gives us no reason to acknowledge the conceivability of unqualified, general instrumentalism. (Horwich 1991: 4-5)

Note the distinction between local and general instrumentalism at the end of the quoted passage; we shall take it up later. I will sometimes follow Horwich's usage and call an acceptance 'instrumental' interchangeably with 'nonserious'. I will say 'fictionalist acceptance' to refer to such (supposed) nonserious acceptance as satisfies the requirements of fictionalism.

3 Fictionalist acceptance and beliefs in fictional truth

Daly uses the term 'exploitation' for the nonserious acceptance. I will do likewise when engaging with his text; however, I prefer 'nonserious acceptance'. 'Exploitation' is too broad. I think it is fair to say you *exploit* a sentence if you use it as a mnemonic device to remember the order of colors in the rainbow. But that is not the sense of 'exploit' that the fictionalist can adopt. The fictionalist has to use propositions of the theory as premises in arguments whose conclu-

sions she will accept. In this sense she *accepts or pretend-accepts* the content of those propositions.

It is true that some fictionalists, starting with Field 1980, sometimes wrote as if they merely meant to replace accepting that P with accepting ‘In the fiction F , P ’. However, this is not a tenable view. The difference has to be in the kind of acceptance, not in what one accepts. Some of the reasons why are spelled out in Yablo 2001 and lead him to conclude that “The fiction . . . functions as medium and not message.” (Yablo 2001: 76). (I take him to present the most thoughtful and clear version of fictionalism.) Even if it were a tenable view, the doublethink objection could still be pressed, but from a different angle, along the lines of the following. “What makes it the case that you accept the content that you say you accept, i.e., ‘In F , P ’, rather than just P ? You use the former in *almost all the ways* you would use the latter if you were a realist. Maybe ‘in F ’ is just a kind of soothing mantra, devoid of genuine meaning? Maybe, in light of that, if you say ‘not- P ’ you are a doublethinker.” Thus, the issue of attitudes is unavoidable. I suggest we proceed focusing on the clearer and better version of fictionalism and look for the difference in the attitude and not in the content.

Daly’s statement of fictionalism tends to obscure the fact that the fictionalist purports to adopt the fictionalist acceptance attitude to the relevant content. It thereby obscures the very source of the doublethink objection. Daly states merely that the fictionalist does not believe that P but believes something else entirely, thus leaving the fictionalist acceptance out of the picture. No wonder then that the doublethink objection seems well-nigh nonsensical to him.

Being a fictionalist about mathematics, then, involves not believing sentences such as ‘ $7 + 5 = 12$ ’. Instead, the mathematical fictionalist believes such sentences as ‘according to standard mathematics, $7 + 5 = 12$ ’, and ““ $7 + 5 = 12$ ” is a useful sentence’. (Daly 2008: 424)

Notice ‘instead’. What follows it, however, is not what the fictionalist does *instead*. Those who believe that $7 + 5 = 12$ typically also believe it to be useful and true according to standard mathematics. Clearly, ‘merely’ is omitted, but this is a trifling point. The important point is that the fictionalist cannot *make do* with merely believing this sentence *useful*; she will need to be *using* it, e.g., as a premise

in scientific reasoning. One could try a detour, via (i) ‘using P as a premise would produce the correct result’ and (ii) ‘if P then Q ’. From there you would go: (iii) ‘if I use P as a premise, the result would be Q and it would be correct’. And then you conclude: ‘therefore, Q ’. I say that if you concluded so—if you got to Q —then *you have used P* . The burden of proof is on those who reject this.

We can see that this is indeed a misconception and not merely a misstatement on Daly’s part from his charge that Horwich equates the belief that P with the belief that ‘ P is useful’ and thereby contradicts his own views on the nature of truth⁶ (Daly 2008: 429). In fact, it is clear that Horwich claims that there is no difference between the belief that P and *the (certain kind of) use* of the proposition that P ; in other words, that there is no difference between the belief that the theory is true and the *use* of that theory (i.e., the “unrestricted” use). The *use* of something is not the same as the *belief* that it is useful. (‘Use’ here need not mean anything physical or observable. It can be as mental as you like.) This misconception informs Daly’s other objections in subtler ways. I will not focus on this explicitly, letting it emerge instead.

4 What is at issue?

Consider another objection Daly puts forth.

...Horwich’s conclusion is an *ignoratio elenchi*. What’s at issue—and as Horwich originally presented the issue—is whether the fact that we use some theories for practical purposes without believing them is a reason ‘to think that belief and acceptance are distinct attitudes’. In other words, the issue isn’t whether qualified, local fictionalism gives reason to think that unqualified, general fictionalism is conceivable. The issue is whether even a qualified, local fictionalism gives reason to

⁶ Here is the relevant passage: “The fictionalist distinguishes between: (1) Theory T is true; and (2) T is useful. According to the fictionalist, one can believe (2) without believing (1). Horwich disagrees. He claims that to believe (1) just is to believe (2), because ‘belief simply is acceptance’. They are the same belief state. Belief states are identical only if their contents are identical. So Horwich is committed to claiming that (1) expresses the same content as (2). That, however, is incompatible with Horwich’s (entirely plausible) rejection of the pragmatic conception of truth.” (Daly 2008: 429)

think that there is a distinction between believing a sentence and exploiting it. And it surely does, because qualified, local fictionalism just is—as its name suggests—fictionalism about a localized and qualified subject matter. To be a fictionalist about a collection of sentences is to exploit, not to believe, the sentences in that collection. Unless there is a distinction between belief and exploitation, there can be no form of fictionalism whatsoever, including, *a fortiori*, a qualified, local fictionalism. (Daly 2008: 431-2)

There are two straw men set up here. One is misconstrued Horwich, who by ‘local fictionalism’ means ‘fictionalism about a localized and qualified subject matter’. It is clear that for actual Horwich it is, rather, the *use* that is supposed to be “local”, as opposed to “global”, in order to constitute nonserious acceptance, i.e., such use is supposed to be somehow bounded or circumscribed. This idea is not as clear as one might wish, but that should not lead us to adopt Daly’s construal, which leads him to offer as a counterexample the pervasive intentional stance we adopt to chess-playing computers. (Daly 2008: 431). We certainly *do not* treat a personal computer in all respects, in all contexts, as more than a mere machine—think of the computers waiting by the curb for trash collection. As I understand Horwich’s idea, such cases would suffice to show that the use of ‘Computer is a person’ is confined, bounded, and that its interaction with other theories (such as our emergency preparedness plans) is restricted.

The second straw man apparently denies that there is any distinction between serious and nonserious acceptance *at all*. Such a view is absurd: surely, there are plenty of entirely uncontroversial cases of nonserious acceptance. Every time we play a game or assume something provisionally we have a nonserious acceptance. Daly thinks he finds therein an easy proof that the distinction between belief and exploitation is well-grounded and that, therefore, Horwich’s concerns are misplaced. His proof comes to this: “Pretty much everyone should admit the distinction because pretty much everyone draws it” (430). Daly elaborates:

There are many things you exploit without believing them. You exploit a computer’s wanting to get its king’s bishop out early, or the sun’s rising, or electricity’s flowing along cables, and yet you believe none of these things. Again, it’s common practice in science to exploit talk of frictionless planes, perfectly inelastic bodies, and the like with-

out believing that talk. So mustn't the distinction between belief and exploitation be well-grounded since we frequently and more or less consciously draw it in our own cognitive lives? Aren't we all jobbing fictionalists? (Daly 2008: 431)

What is *really* at issue is whether the acceptance attitude toward the relevant range of cases, e.g., the mathematical, *which meets the fictionalist requirements*, could count as nonserious. As discussed, the central question here is whether there is any kind of more complete or robust acceptance for such contents. The sense in which the *clear cases* show that the distinction is well-grounded is just that: in those cases it is not a distinction without a difference, but rather there is something that constitutes the difference.

Perhaps one thinks, "Let me focus on what I do mentally when I pretend there are frictionless planes, and let me do *the same* with the proposition that there are numbers. That will be my instrumentalist acceptance of *that* proposition. Now, to illustrate the contrast, let me focus on what I do when I believe there is a table in front of me. If I adopt *the same* attitude to the existence of numbers, then I would surely have a different—*non-instrumentalist*—acceptance of their existence."

This might work if attitudes were *sui generis* feelings. But if the distinction between the fictional and the serious acceptance is along the lines of partial/complete, as suggested by Horwich, then, as we saw, the 'same' is open to different readings. One would have to know which sameness to aim at: sameness with regard to completeness or sameness with regard to the constituent dispositions to use. If the dispositions involved in the provisional acceptance of frictionless planes constitute the minimum required to "do the work" that the fictionalist needs done in the case of numbers, then one is bound to fail in an attempt at an incomplete acceptance of numbers within those constraints. Likewise, one might be bound to fail in an attempt to have the very same set of dispositions with regard to the number-content as with regard to the table-content, simply because the former might not lend itself to all the same kinds of use as the latter. In other words, one might only be able to succeed in an attempt that would bring about the acceptance (of numbers) that is the same as the acceptance of frictionless planes in the sense of the constituent

dispositions and the same as the acceptance of tables in the sense of completeness. Thus, though in each case one would succeed in *an* attempt, the attempts would not result in two non-identical attitudes to the target content.

III

1 Horwich's analysis

I noted that Horwich's idea that nonserious acceptance is somehow incomplete is not very clear. He has to share some of the blame if Daly misconstrues him. We find more difficulties with the account on closer inspection. It seems 'restricted' use should not be taken to mean 'narrow'. After all, 'narrow' is a matter of degree, whereas accepting instrumentally is not supposed to be. If we set aside any suggestion of narrowness, a deeper problem emerges. Suppose you believe that *not-P* and are working on a task for the purposes of which you instrumentally accept that *P*. Your acceptance that *P*, *ex hypothesi*, is "restricted" to that task. But you do not cease to believe that *not-P* even *as* you use *P* for the purposes at hand. Somehow you accept *not-P* contemporaneously. If you do not, your acceptance of *not-P* is restricted, and hence instrumental. So, either you accept both *P* and *not-P*, which *prima facie* does not look good, or you accept neither, which is contrary to the supposition that you accept *P*. (I do not find any help in the idea of simply adding awareness, which may be suggested by Horwich's phrase '*understood to be restricted*' [my italics].)

2 Towards a better understanding of the distinction

When you accept something provisionally, in a game, or as a simplifying assumption, your beliefs continue to operate "in the background". You try to make sure you do not rely on the instrumentally accepted in ways you did not intend, and such monitoring is done through beliefs. This suggests a two-tier picture of acceptances, with instrumental acceptance working against the background of belief. Trying to articulate this intuitive picture appears to be the only way forward.

We need a way to understand the distinction between the “background” and the “foreground” if we want to say that we continue to accept what we believe “in the background”. A first thought might be that the background acceptance is constituted by counterfactuals: if I accept something nonseriously, then there are some other circumstances where I would not accept it, even though they would not change my evidential base. However, this is clearly inadequate, because, equally, if I seriously accepted that *P*, there may well be some circumstances where I would cease to accept it (and accept *not-P* instead): the circumstances which would trigger the adoption of a nonserious attitude. We need to make this asymmetrical: only some counterfactuals should count.

Our intuitions about whether someone is serious (or sincere) in holding a belief (or another attitude) seem to be informed by our beliefs about how that person would behave in certain *specific* situations, that appear to us as “probative” for a given attitude (taken with its object). “Does she only pretend to love him?—Would she continue to act as if she does if he did not have any money?” “Does he only pretend that the computer is a person?—Would he show any concern for it if fire broke out in the house?—Well, maybe he does not show any concern for human persons either?—Then maybe there is no matter of fact as to whether he really believes the computer is a person.” Such intuitions are *far* from capturing the full complexity and all the nuances of our thinking about our real-life attitudes. They ignore our being compartmentalized and conflicted. Nevertheless, they might capture as much as is clear in the concept itself and serve well enough for our rather narrow focus on fictionalism and the doublethink charge. A scientist who habitually works on scientific problems assuming frictionless planes would nevertheless reintroduce friction into the model if she realized that the problem requires a greater degree of precision. We can suppose this to be partially and defeasibly constitutive of the nonserious attitude in this case (counting situations requiring greater degree of precision as probative for such content). In other words, we can suppose that there is a set of counterfactuals of this kind, such that a sufficient proportion of them holding true is constitutive of nonseriousness of acceptance of

a given content, while not each individual one is necessary.⁷ The set of probative circumstances will, obviously, depend on the specific content of the attitude in question. The *prima facie* difficulty is that the subject's desires and values, as well as her other beliefs, must also be seen as parameters that determine that probative set. Does reference to other beliefs amount to an objectionable circularity? It need not if there is a sufficient range of cases that are not in question. You need not expect *always* to find yourself in a situation where in order to show that the subject's acceptance that *P* is serious you have to show her acceptance that *Q* is serious *and vice versa*. And if you were to find that to be the case, your intuitions about seriousness would falter.

3 Contrast collapse

This analysis of the distinction would support the doublethink charge if one found oneself at a loss to think of probative situations showing that what is alleged to be instrumentally accepted is not "really" accepted.

What would be a situation where the use of mathematics would count towards its acceptance "in earnest"? I do not wish to suggest that our *serious* concerns are all of the gross down-to-earth kind. One cares also about *Truth*. We know of many people who made great sacrifices for what they saw as the truth, and we certainly think they were serious. Nevertheless, in such circumstances we would attribute belief even if we could not make any sense of its content. Thus, it could be that the attribution is *purely deferential*, where we simply go along with the person's self-attribution, just as an attribution of content could be purely deferential in certain cases. Furthermore, even under the most favorable assumptions, bravely standing up for the truth is at best a sufficient, but not a necessary, condition of belief. Adhering to a philosophical view ought to be compatible with fairly modest degrees of fortitude. Thus, the fact that we attribute seriousness in such cases does not show that we understand what it is to be serious and so does not put to rest the concerns animating the

⁷ It could be a bit more complicated, with different individual counterfactuals having different weight. In that case read 'proportion' accordingly.

doublethink charge against fictionalism.

Why not simply say with Daly the following?

If a behavioural difference is wanted, then it is readily forthcoming. Someone who believes theory T will typically say, 'I believe that T; I don't only believe that T is useful'. By contrast, someone who exploits T will typically say, 'I don't believe T; I believe only that it is useful'. (Daly 2008: 428)⁸

This statement seems again to evince Daly's tendency to conflate the belief in usefulness of a theory with its actual use. If we set this aside, we might read this as advising to look at self-attribution. I assume that one would be unwilling to make object-level avowals presupposing the existence of numbers in very same contexts where one likes to assert that one does not believe in numbers. The alternative is to suppose that fictionalism might have its sole expression in an odd disposition to make pronouncements in the form of Moore's Paradox. It is hard to see how such a disposition could reassure us if we suspected the fictionalist of doublethink. Any suggestion to this effect one could get from the quoted passage should be set aside, I think.

Still, looking at the object-level avowals, why not simply say that one who accepts mathematics seriously would be disposed to freely acknowledge the existence of numbers in certain circumstances: perhaps, at leisure, on reflection, etc., whereas one who accepts it nonseriously would not? The problem with this idea is that *both* the fictionalist *and* the platonist would on many occasions find themselves saying the very same things: that there are infinitely many primes, etc. We would need somehow to mark off the avowals that are made *seriously* in order to distinguish the fictionalist from the platonist. (Clearly, we cannot simply say "if one is serious", nor "if one takes oneself to be serious", as that would beg the question.) It will not do to say the subject must be focused and thinking hard, because a fictionalist might be thinking hard about a mathematical problem,

⁸ This passage is Daly's rejoinder to Rosen and Burgess (2005: 536). Unfortunately, they seem to share Daly's idea about the significance of self-attribution, as they grant that if scientists were indeed given to frequent verbalizations of the kind Daly suggests, then the doublethink objection would have less merit. I disagree with that, for reasons stated. If disavowals could do the trick, it would be of no consequence whether philosophers or scientists performed them, in my view.

thus presupposing the existence of numbers for the purposes at hand. It will not do to go the opposite way and say that the subject must be relaxed and not troubled by any immediate mathematical concern: the subject might nevertheless be in a state where the mathematical make-believe is dispositionally operative. (A fictionalist is lying in a hammock under a palm tree, pondering the starry sky above and the moral law within, when she hears, “I wonder how many primes there are?” She might not be disposed to challenge the presuppositions and might well respond, “Infinitely many”.) The subject needs to be engaged not simply “in reflection”, but “in reflection on what there is”.

Herein lies the problem. What constitutes a true instance of reflection on what there is—as opposed to reflection on what there is fictionally? We could say: in the former we set aside any presuppositions. But to set aside all presuppositions *just is* to be serious.⁹ Then we are back to the question of what constitutes being serious. Furthermore, the thought that there is a cognitive activity of “reflection on what there is” *distinct* from ordinary theory choice runs counter to the Quinean understanding of ontology that underlies indispensability arguments, the *raison d’être* of fictionalism. Of course, one might be engaged in a cognitive activity that one *thinks of* as such reflection, as peering into the fabric of reality, but this being an illusion, the avowals made on such occasions, contradicting the avowals made in more practical contexts, would be instances of doublethink.

Daly complains that the fictionalist is placed in a “no-win situation”: no matter what he says, “[i]t is claimed that [he] is in the same psychological state as the believer—namely, that of belief—and it is just that [he] is in the grip of a delusive theory and so misreports his belief as something other than a belief” (Daly 2008: 429). Thus, “It transpires that nothing would be interpreted [. . .] as evidence for someone’s being a fictionalist” (Daly 2008: 429). This complaint is not to the point, because we are not talking about evidence. Rather, we are trying to understand *what it is* for someone to accept mathematics instrumentally. We are trying to understand how the supposed state of instrumental acceptance, as invoked by the fictionalist,

⁹ I am not saying that we would ordinarily only call someone serious only if he literally set aside *all* presuppositions. This is contextual, cf. ‘Knowing that *P* is excluding all possibilities that *not-P*’.

differs from the non-instrumental acceptance of the same content. We cannot take the fictionalists at their word if we do not understand what they are saying. We can, of course, assess that a person is sincere even if we do not understand, but being sincere does not keep one from being confused or from invoking a distinction without a difference.

I conclude that Daly's discussion does not offer anything that could allow the fictionalists to dismiss the suspicion that the nonserious acceptance they are proposing cannot be contrasted with serious acceptance of the same content. If indeed it cannot be, there remains a separate question whether anything like the norms that apply to empirical belief apply to acceptance in such cases. If they do not, one could enjoy ontological freedom without the ability to claim an austere ontology.¹⁰

Inga Nayding
 inga.nayding@gmail.com

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¹⁰ The central idea here goes back to my dissertation, so I would like to thank Paul Benacerraf for doing what he could to help me develop it at the time, as well as for his recent helpful comments. Its presentation went through several transformations, and I am grateful to everyone whose criticism led to the paper taking its present shape. I am very grateful to the anonymous referee for *Disputatio* whose comments helped clear up several obscurities and improve the paper.

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Zombies Slap Back: Why the Anti-Zombie Parody Does Not Work

Duško Prelević
University of Belgrade

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Abstract

In his “anti-zombie argument”, Keith Frankish turns the tables on “zombists”, forcing them to find an independent argument against the conceivability of anti-zombies. I argue that zombists can shoulder the burden, for there is an important asymmetry between the conceivability of zombies and the conceivability of anti-zombies, which is reflected in the embedding of a totality-clause under the conceivability operator. This makes the anti-zombie argument susceptible to what I call the ‘Modified Incompleteness’, according to which we cannot conceive of scenarios. In this paper I also argue that conceiving of the zombie-situation is a good starting point for rendering the zombie argument plausible.

Keywords

The zombie argument, the anti-zombie argument, conceivability, scenario, situation.

David Chalmers’ zombie argument is one of the most important anti-physicalist arguments in contemporary philosophy of mind, and there is a long-standing debate whether the argument is valid and sound. In this paper, I assess Keith Frankish’s “anti-zombie argument” (Frankish 2007), which is intended to be an improved version of the parody of the zombie argument. I argue that Frankish’s argument does not prove what he claims it does, for there is an important asymmetry between the conceivability of zombies and the conceivability of anti-zombies. Namely, it will be shown in this paper that zombies might be conceivable by means of conceiving of a zombie *situation*, while the conceivability of anti-zombies might be formulated only by means of conceiving of an anti-zombie *scenario*. This is

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because the totality-clause,¹ a second-order sentence that serves to complete a description of a scenario, is contained in the definition of anti-zombies, which is not necessarily so with zombies. If so, then the anti-zombie argument is, in contrast to the zombie argument, liable to what I call the ‘Modified Incompleteness’, according to which we are not able to conceive of scenarios. Thus, the Modified Incompleteness might serve as an independent argument against the conceivability of anti-zombies and therefore against the anti-zombie argument as well.

After laying out both arguments (§1), and showing where the asymmetry lies (§§2-3), I will suggest a way in which the Modified Incompleteness can be applied against the anti-zombie argument, leaving the zombie argument intact (§4). Before I start, I want to emphasize that my primary aim in this paper is not to assess one by one *all* implicit or explicit premises of the zombie argument. Rather, my aim is to show how the zombie argument might be valid and sound (without being redundant), while at the same time the anti-zombie parody might fail. At best, some reasons will be given for favoring the reading of the first premise of the zombie argument that I will assume in the paper and call the ‘Non-Idealized Conceivability’.

1 The Zombie Argument and the Anti-Zombie Parody

Chalmers offers an elaborated version of the zombie argument.² For the sake of brevity, I will present the details of his argument only to an extent necessary to understand the key notions required for my response to the anti-zombie parody. Chalmers’ zombie argument can be formulated in the following way:

- (1) Zombies are ideally positively primarily conceivable.
- (2) If zombies are ideally positively primarily conceivable, then zombies are metaphysically possible.

¹ In the literature, the totality-clause is sometimes called ‘that’s all clause’ or ‘stop clause’, etc.

² See Chalmers (1996: 123; 1999: 473-96; 2002: 198; 2010: 161).

- (3) If zombies are metaphysically possible, then consciousness is non-physical.
- (4) So consciousness is non-physical.

Here, “zombies” are our physical (relational) duplicates who, unlike us, lack phenomenal consciousness (subjective aspects of conscious experience). A state of affairs is ideally positively primarily conceivable if one can conceive of a counter-actual *situation*, or a counter-actual *scenario*, which verifies a statement she is conceiving of,³ and which is undefeatable by better reasoning (Chalmers 2002, §§1-3; the conceiving of a situation is emphasized in Chalmers 1996: 67). In §2 this notion will be articulated in a more detailed way.

Now we can move on to Frankish’s anti-zombie argument (Frankish 2007), which is a new and interesting attempt of making parody of the zombie argument. This argument can be formulated in the following way:

- (5) Anti-zombies are ideally positively primarily conceivable.
- (6) If anti-zombies are ideally positively primarily conceivable, then anti-zombies are metaphysically possible.
- (7) If anti-zombies are metaphysically possible, then consciousness is physical.
- (8) So consciousness is physical.

Here, “anti-zombies” are considered to be our *bare* physical duplicates with the same mental and phenomenal properties. Frankish holds that “an object *x* is a *bare* physical duplicate of an object *y* if *x* is a physical duplicate of *y* and has no properties of a non-physical kind” (Frankish 2007: 653).

Frankish sets up his argument so that it makes premise (7) plausible in the same way in which premise (3) is (see Frankish 2007: 654). Namely, both zombists and anti-zombists agree that physical-

³ In contrast to positive conceivability, negative conceivability consists in the conceiving of a scenario (or a situation) that is underdetermined by two mutually exclusive statements (see Chalmers’ example with vague predicates in Chalmers 2002: 181).

ists presuppose the validity of the metaphysical supervenience thesis, according to which any two worlds that are physically identical are phenomenally identical as well. But if so, then premise (7) seems plausible because anti-zombies are physically identical to us, while premise (3) seems plausible because metaphysical possibility of zombies shows that the metaphysical supervenience thesis (and so physicalism as well) is false.

Frankish's argument also brings an interesting novelty. Namely, in contrast to its predecessor, the so called 'metamodal argument', the anti-zombie argument does not challenge *modal monism* (see Frankish 2007: 656), a view according to which the space of logical possibilities (scenarios) is co-extensive with the space of metaphysical possibilities (possible worlds). Yet it will be shown in §4 that this Frankish's improvement might also be a weakness.

Bearing in mind that zombists cannot accept the anti-zombie parody, let us see how they might try to cope with it. The most reasonable strategy to counter the anti-zombie parody is to reject premise (5). And Chalmers does so as well, arguing that anti-zombies (and physicalism) are, at best, *prima facie* negatively primarily conceivable (Chalmers 2010: 180). If this is true, then the parody cannot work because *prima facie* conceivability, unlike ideal conceivability, could be defeated by a better reasoning and it could not satisfy premise (6) (Chalmers 2002: 159).

But why should anti-zombists accept this? If we apply Chalmers' own criterion, namely that in the case of ideal conceivability the burden of proof is on someone who claims that a state of affairs that is conceived of is logically impossible (Chalmers 1996: 96), then Chalmers himself should show why anti-zombies are not ideally (positively primarily) conceivable and where the contradiction lies. This means that the burden of proof now lies on Chalmers' shoulders.⁴ In this way, parody neutralizes the zombie argument.

In fact, Chalmers is skeptical about whether anti-zombies (or physicalism) are ideally positively primarily conceivable. He thinks that we lack good reasons to use the conceivability of anti-zombies (or physicalism) as a *premise* in the anti-zombie argument. He is convinced of this because "many people have noted that it is very hard

⁴ Peter Marton has emphasized this point (Marton 1998).

to imagine that consciousness is a physical process” (Chalmers 2010: 180). In view of this fact, it seems that we have more reasons to accept (1) as a premise, and once we have done it, we can by *a priori* reasoning deny premise (5).

Yet this strategy does not work, according to Frankish, because “conceivability is all or nothing” (Frankish 2007: 660), that is, it is not a matter of degree but one of kind. Frankish’s reply seems plausible if we distinguish conceivability from similar notions, such as imaginability or even intuition, with which conceivability is easy to conflate. That is because conceivability as such is primarily connected to constructing a consistent description of a situation (or a scenario), and it does not depend on, for example, visualization or self-evidence (which are present in imagination and intuition, respectively) that are arguably a matter of degree. If so, then Chalmers’ preferring (1) to (5) is pitting one thesis against another (Frankish 2007: 663). Thus, it seems that Frankish’s parody might cope with Chalmers’ criticism.

If so, then Frankish suggests that zombists should find an *independent* argument against the conceivability of anti-zombies. Such an argument should not be as strong as to refute physicalism, for in that case it would render the zombie argument redundant. Frankish thinks that it is not clear that such an argument exists. He explores one option, the so called ‘transparency thesis’, and shows that it does not succeed, because it makes the zombie argument redundant (see Frankish 2007: 662-4). Frankish’s conclusion is that the zombie argument is either unsound (if parody works, then we should reject one of the premises of the zombie argument), or redundant.

In effect, Frankish has turned the tables. Now zombists should find an independent argument against the conceivability of anti-zombies that does not make the zombie argument redundant. Can zombists shoulder the burden?

I think they can, but not in the way Chalmers has done it. Nevertheless, I think that Chalmers’ conception of ideal positive primary conceivability, which will be exposed in a more detailed way in §2, has resources to cope successfully with the anti-zombie parody. So let us see more carefully which interpretations of ideal positive primary conceivability are at stake in order to find out where exactly the asymmetry between premise (1) and premise (5) lies.

2 Two Notions of Ideal Positive Primary Conceivability

As mentioned in §1, Chalmers holds that ideal positive primary conceivability might be deployed in terms of conceiving of either a counter-actual *situation* or a counter-actual *scenario*. This means that he deals with two notions of ideal positive primary conceivability:

Idealized Conceivability: free of any contingent cognitive limitations, a subject x positively conceives a counter-actual *scenario*.

Non-Idealized Conceivability: a subject x positively conceives a counter-actual *situation*, and no better reasoner can refute her.

In both cases, x denotes ourselves or an ordinary member of our community.

Contrary to Chalmers, who does not use this distinction in his reply to the anti-zombie parody, I think that such a distinction is crucial for the whole zombists strategy, as it will be shown in §§3–4.

It should be emphasized from the very beginning that both the Idealized and the Non-Idealized Conceivability are different from what might be called ‘Non-Ideal Conceivability’, or from what Chalmers calls *prima facie* and *secunda facie* conceivability (see Chalmers 2002: §§1-2). Namely, *prima facie* conceivability is, according to Chalmers, typically the case in which a non-expert conceives of a scenario (or a situation), while *secunda facie* conceivability is the case when an expert does so. Yet, both *prima facie* and *secunda facie* conceivability are fallible guides to metaphysical (primary) possibility, because they are refutable by a better reasoning. For example, an expert might think, after careful examination, that something is conceivable, yet such a conviction might be refuted by a better reasoner. An example for this is the Naïve set theory that was refuted famously by Russell’s paradox (Chalmers 2002: 155). Ideal conceivability is, in contrast to *prima facie* and *secunda facie* conceivability, undefeatable by a better reasoning. Another case of non-ideal conceivability is when one conceives of a situation (or a scenario) that misdescribes the statement she is conceiving of. For example, when one believes that the proof of Goldbach’s Conjecture is conceivable simply because she can conceive of a mathematician announcing a proof of Goldbach’s Conjecture instead of conceiving the proof of Goldbach’s Conjecture

itself (Chalmers 2002: 160). Given that the Idealized Conceivability and the Non-Idealized Conceivability are the two notions of ideal conceivability, they are different from *prima facie* and *secunda facie* conceivability.

Now we can turn to the distinction between situations and scenarios. Chalmers holds that a situation is “a configuration of objects and properties” (Chalmers 2002: 150). A situation is only a part of scenario, which is considered to be “a maximally specific epistemic hypothesis” or an epistemically possible world (Chalmers 2006: 81). To conceive of a scenario, one should provide a “complete qualitative description” of the world she is conceiving of (Chalmers 2002: 177). Chalmers says that a complete description of the world requires enumerating particular facts and giving indexical information; to accept that this is indeed a complete description, we must accept a second-order *totality-clause* (Chalmers 1996: 41), namely, that the enumerated particular facts are *all* the facts in the world. This in fact reflects a Russellian idea that enumerating particular facts is not sufficient for reaching an ontological inventory of the world that one aims to provide (Russell 2010). Thus, the totality-clause is introduced for the reason of completeness, because without this second-order clause one would not be able to determine whether her description might be expanded non-trivially by some other particular facts or not, that is, whether such a description might be filled with new details.

In contrast to scenarios, situations are not complete and do not contain the totality-clause. They can always be expanded non-trivially by adding a new detail. Bearing this in mind, the crucial difference between the Idealized and the Non-Idealized Conceivability is that in the former the totality-clause is embedded under the conceivability operator, while in the latter it is not.

From our perspective, the Idealized and the Non-Idealized Conceivability are not extensionally equivalent in cases in which the totality-clause might be but need not be embedded under the conceivability operator. This is because one might be able to conceive of a situation without being able to conceive of a scenario. On the other hand, from the perspective of an omniscient conceiver it might be that the Idealized and the Non-Idealized Conceivability are extensionally equivalent, yet Chalmers does not appeal to the perspective of an omniscient thinker, because he wants to avoid the trivialization

of conceivability arguments (Chalmers 2002: 148-9). In the cases in which the totality-clause is essentially involved in a description one is conceiving of,⁵ the description might be conceivable only as a scenario and not as a situation: in such a case, the Idealized and the Non-Idealized Conceivability are not extensionally equivalent. If the abovementioned considerations are correct, the premise (1) might be read in two different ways:

(1a) Zombies are Idealizedly conceivable.

(1b) Zombies are Non-Idealizedly conceivable.

Similarly, (5) might be *prima facie* read in two different ways too:

(5a) Anti-Zombies are Idealizedly conceivable.

(5b) Anti-Zombies are Non-Idealizedly conceivable.

However, it will be argued in the next section that (5b) is not available for zombies.

3 On the Asymmetry between Conceiving of Zombies and Conceiving of Anti-Zombies

Let us turn to the question about whether zombies and anti-zombies are conceivable in the same way. Here, Frankish gives us a hint. Namely, he notices an asymmetry between the conceiving of zombies and the conceiving of anti-zombies, yet he does not see the difference as an insurmountable obstacle to his argument. He says:

It might be objected that there is an asymmetry between (1) and (5),⁶ in that the latter requires us to embed a totality-clause ('no further properties of non-physical kind') under the conceivability operator, whereas the former does not. However, it is not clear that this make (5) less plausible, and both premises are on a par to the extent that they both require us to conceive the absence of something—phenomenal properties in one case, non-physical properties in the other. (Frankish 2007: 654)

⁵ It will be argued in this paper that the description of anti-zombies belongs to this category.

⁶ In this paper, these are premises (1) and (5) too.

I think this is a red herring. Of course, for finding an asymmetry between (1) and (5) it is important to see whether conceiving of the absence of something is a case of negative conceivability⁷ or not. For example, if zombies are positively conceivable, while anti-zombies are only negatively conceivable, we could apply ‘the inscrutability of truth’ objection against the anti-zombie argument, leaving the zombie argument intact.⁸ This objection would serve as an independent argument against the second premise of the anti-zombie argument. Yet Frankish remarks convincingly that both the conceivability of zombies and the conceivability of anti-zombies rest on conceiving of the absence of something. Thus, the asymmetry between (1) and (5), regarding the scope of the conceivability operator, does not bother him. Nevertheless, he ignores an important detail. He is silent on the question whether embedding the totality-clause under the conceivability operator has any connection with the *ideal positive primary* conceivability, or more precisely, with its two readings—the Idealized and the Non-Idealized Conceivability (laid out in §2). Here, I think the asymmetry between the conceivability of zombies and the conceivability of anti-zombies seems obvious.

I argue that the conceivability of zombies might be spelled out both in the Idealized and the Non-Idealized sense, while the conceivability of anti-zombies might be spelled out in the Idealized sense only. That is so because the totality-clause, which is used to describe scenarios only, is contained in the definition of anti-zombies, while zombies do not require the totality-clause. In §4 I will exploit this difference.

In order to see why the conceivability of anti-zombies might be understood in the Idealized sense only, let us suppose (for the sake of argument) that we can conceive of the anti-zombie situation. Can it be expanded in a non-trivial way? It seems that it cannot, because

⁷ The thesis, according to which conceiving of the absence of conscious experience is a case of negative conceivability, appears in Ashwell (2002: 87–93) and Marcus 2004; the opposite view is found in Alter 2007 and Chalmers (2010: 157).

⁸ Inscrutability of truth is the thesis that a complete description of a world does not entail all truths about the world. See Chalmers (2002: §8) on the relation between inscrutability and negative conceivability.

it has already been determined that whatever is referred to in the description of the anti-zombie situation has a physical nature, that is, we have already constructed “a complete qualitative description” of the world (see §2). In other words, by expanding the anti-zombie situation (for example, by introducing ghosts, non-physical ectoplasm, etc.) we would obviously get a world that is not the anti-zombie world, because not everything in that world would be of a physical kind.

As for zombies, they might be deployed both in terms of Idealized and Non-Idealized Conceivability, because the zombie situation can be expanded non-trivially in many ways. For example, we can expand it by adding a fact that there is no non-physical ectoplasm, a fact that there are no ghosts, angels, and other negative facts. The nature of non-physical ectoplasm, ghosts and angels is not determined beforehand as being of a physical kind, as is in the case with anti-zombies. Rather, these entities are considered to be of a non-physical kind. So it seems that the zombie situation, according to which the physical is not a sufficient condition for phenomenal consciousness, could be embedded quite coherently into a hypothetical scenario that contains, for example, non-physical ectoplasm or ghosts.

However, although Frankish’s actual definitions of anti-zombies require worlds and scenarios (Frankish 2007: 653), someone could still have certain doubts whether anti-zombies are conceivable in the Idealized sense only. After all, one can say that it is sufficient to conceive of a particular anti-zombie *situation*, that is, the bare physical duplicate of a spatio-temporally finite part of our world. Or, to put the objection in a slightly different way, one can try to go from partial conceivability to the metaphysical possibility of anti-zombies.⁹ If anti-zombies are conceivable both in the Idealized and the Non-Idealized sense, then the anti-zombie parody would still work, for no important difference between the conceivability of zombies and the conceivability of anti-zombies would be revealed.

This is a natural move for anti-zombists, yet I think that zombists can defend their view against it successfully. The zombist defense can be grounded on a proper understanding of situations and scenarios in both the zombie and the anti-zombie argument.

⁹ Thanks to an anonymous referee for raising this question.

We have seen in §2 that Chalmers describes situation as a part of a scenario, and as “a configuration of objects and properties”. However, it is unclear in which sense he understands these phrases. For example, according to Yablo, situations can be thought of as spatial, temporal or ontological parts of the world. Possible worlds are complete in every respect, while situations are not (see Yablo 1993: 28). So it seems that situations, in contrast to scenarios, can be complete in one sense and incomplete in another, or can be incomplete in every respect. We have already seen that the crucial distinction between situations and scenarios is that the former could be expanded non-trivially, while the latter cannot.

It seems plausible to consider the zombie situation spatio-temporally complete. Zombies are our physical duplicates that have the same physical (relational) properties that we have, yet they lack phenomenal consciousness. In our debate, ‘physical’ means something like ‘whatever completed physical theory (for example., the theory of everything) says’. Physical theories do not have spatio-temporal constraints, and physical laws should have universal validity. This is usually taken for granted in the debate over physicalism.

Physicalists believe that a physical theory is capable of explaining the whole nature of the world. Namely, spatio-temporal completeness does not ensure ontological completeness, because it is still left open whether the completed physics is capable of explaining everything in the world, or whether there is something ‘over and above’ the physical. Physicalists say that there is nothing over and above the physical, while their opponents disagree. Here, the issue is the ontological completeness of the physical description of the world, and this is exactly a matter of dispute between zombists and anti-zombists.

As for the zombie situation, it is sufficient to say that *at least one* arbitrary phenomenal truth about our universe is not necessitated by the physical base (see, for example, Chalmers 2010: 142), without supposing anything about other phenomenal truths, or about properties of some other kind. Thus, the zombie situation is ontologically incomplete, and we can fill it with new details in various ways, as mentioned above. In order to complete the situation, we need the totality-clause that excludes entities of that sort. In that case, we would get the zombie scenario. Bearing this in mind, zombists can

insist that the zombie situation is spatio-temporally complete, yet ontologically incomplete.

If the zombie situation should be considered spatio-temporally complete, then the anti-zombie “situation” should be considered spatio-temporally complete too, for anti-zombies are zombies’ (as well as our) physical duplicates. But, in contrast to the zombie situation, the anti-zombie “situation” is ontologically complete as well, for it already presupposes that every instantiated property in the world is of a physical kind. Here, we know in advance that everything is physical. So the anti-zombie situation is both spatio-temporally and ontologically complete.

Therefore, the anti-zombie “situation” is not a situation at all, for it is complete in every respect. At least, the burden of proof is on someone who tries to show that we can conceive of the anti-zombie situation; she must show in which sense the anti-zombie situation can be incomplete, that is, how anti-zombies are Non-Idealizedly conceivable.

This point can be expressed more clearly if we recall that Frankish himself presupposes the metaphysical supervenience for the anti-zombie argument to work (see §1). However, according to the standard meaning of the supervenience relation, the fundamental level is such that nothing outside it could exist in some other way except by supervening on the fundamental. Therefore, the very concept of supervenience requires the totality-clause: We cannot even define an anti-zombie in the anti-zombie parody without the totality-clause, because otherwise we cannot get the difference between the relevant cases in which the non-fundamental level (phenomenal consciousness in our case) supervenes on the physical, and the situation in which it is just added as something independent. This turns us back to the claim that the totality-clause is essentially involved in Frankish’s parody, and that one can spell out the conceivability of anti-zombies only in terms of the Idealized Conceivability, and not in terms of the Non-Idealized Conceivability. In other words, Frankish’s purported description of anti-zombies requires the totality-clause, which suggests that he needs scenarios in his argument instead of situations.

There is another worry on whether the anti-zombie situation is really complete or not. Namely, it seems possible, at least *prima facie*, to expand the anti-zombie situation by many sentences that describe

particular facts, such as ‘The author of this manuscript had a dinner on May 14th at 7 p.m.’,¹⁰ etc. Here, the worry is on whether the totality-clause that Frankish uses in his argument is the same totality-clause that Chalmers uses in constructing scenarios and possible worlds. If these two totality-clauses are not equivalent, then it seems that there is a sense in which anti-zombies are, like zombies, Non-Idealizedly conceivable, which would save the symmetry between premises (1) and (5).

Yet it seems that this objection might be avoided if we look more carefully what Frankish’s totality-clause means. Namely, it seems plausible to say that Frankish’s totality-clause ‘All further properties are of a physical kind’ refers to all *existing*, or, more precisely, all *instantiated* properties of a counter-actual anti-zombie world. Bearing in mind that those properties create (together with objects) particular facts, Frankish’s totality-clause, like Chalmers’, encompasses *all* particular facts of the anti-zombie scenario. Simply put, the totality-clause is a second-order sentence about first-order sentences that describe a world, so it can be applied only to the facts about the world that are fixed. In that respect, one and the same totality-clause is present both in the zombie argument and the anti-zombie parody. If so, the conceivability of anti-zombies can be understood in the sense of Idealized Conceivability only.

If these considerations are correct, that is, if the conceivability of zombies might be deployed both in terms of the Idealized and the Non-Idealized sense of ideal positive primary conceivability, while the conceivability of anti-zombies might be deployed in the Idealized sense only, then *an independent* argument against the conceivability of anti-zombies is on the horizon: It is possible to reject the Idealized Conceivability and to keep the Non-Idealized Conceivability.¹¹ But a simplistic denial is not enough. We need an independent *argument*

¹⁰ Thanks to an anonymous referee for drawing my attention to this problem.

¹¹ Bearing in mind that ‘*p* is conceivable’ is usually understood as ‘non-*p* is not *a priori*’, it is not necessary to deny the Idealized Conceivability in all cases. For example, one might still claim that the Idealized Conceivability is applicable to logical and mathematical truths, which are knowable *a priori*. The conceivability of zombies, as well as the conceivability of anti-zombies, does not belong to this category.

against the Idealized and for the Non-Idealized Conceivability. In the next section I develop such an argument.

4 Modified Incompleteness

There is an objection against our pretensions to ascribe ourselves omniscient abilities, as well as against any epistemology that posits such exaggerated claims. The objection is simple: We are not in the position of God and our cognitive capacities are limited. Therefore, every good epistemology should incorporate our real-life cognitive capacities, not idealized ones.¹² One way to put this point is by using what Rebecca Hanrahan calls the ‘incompleteness objection’ (Incompleteness) (Hanrahan 2009: 389), which contains two relevant ideas. The first idea is that we are not able to conceive of scenarios, because it would require constructing a complete and coherent set of propositions that is infinitely large, and in which a proposition that we are conceiving of is embedded coherently. It seems that conceiving of such a scenario is beyond our capacities. This claim is directed against the Idealized Conceivability, and if true, then both the anti-zombie parody and the Idealized Conceivability reading of the zombie argument fail, leaving hope for the Non-Idealized Conceivability reading of the zombie argument. Yet the second idea of the Incompleteness is directed against the Non-Idealized Conceivability reading. Namely, it seems that the conceiving of a situation does not guarantee that by expanding our system of beliefs we will not get a contradiction. Therefore, it is inappropriate to accept the Incompleteness in its entirety,¹³ because it would undermine the zombie argument as well.¹⁴

¹² See, e.g., BonJour (1980: 66) and Hanrahan (2009: 390), among others.

¹³ In what follows, it will be shown that the Incompleteness does not seem plausible as well, because the Non-Idealized Conceivability is a good starting point for rendering the conceivability arguments plausible.

¹⁴ A variation of the Incompleteness is the so-called Standard Objection, which might be understood as a dilemma in which the first horn is that the Non-Idealized Conceivability is not a reliable guide to metaphysical possibility, while the second horn is that the Idealized Conceivability is not accessible to us (see, for example, Worley 2003; Roca-Royes 2011). The Incompleteness is a stronger

But even if the Incompleteness is not acceptable as a whole, not *every* part of it should be rejected. We can propose the Modified Incompleteness, which questions the Idealized Conceivability and leaves the Non-Idealized Conceivability untouched. It seems that Chalmers is well aware of this, because he thinks that we can construct successfully the zombie argument by conceiving of a situation, which is likely within our means, without any further requirements concerning our conceivability of a scenario (Chalmers 1996: 67). Thus, the zombie argument can be reconstructed in the following way:

- (1') (=1b) Zombies are Non-Idealizedly conceivable.
- (2') If zombies are Non-Idealizedly conceivable, then there *is* a zombie-scenario.
- (3') If there is a zombie scenario, then zombies are metaphysically possible.
- (4') (=3) If zombies are metaphysically possible, then consciousness is non-physical.
- (5') (=4) So the consciousness is not physical.

Then by assuming modal monism,¹⁵ which was defined in §1, we can justify premise (3'), and the zombie argument will go through. In fact, it seems plausible that Chalmers uses the distinction between situations and scenarios in order to answer the Incompleteness.¹⁶ But how might (2') be justified?

Some places in Chalmers' work might suggest that he provides an argument for premise (2'). For example, we have seen in §1 that Chalmers understands ideal conceivability as undefeatability by a better reasoning, which suggests that ideal conceivability is a rational notion (Chalmers 2002: §1). In view of this fact, the Non-Idealized Conceivability entitles us to think that there is a scenario such that a situation that we are conceiving of might be coherently embedded

claim: it is a conjunction of the two horns of the Standard Objection.

¹⁵ It was noticed in §1 that both sides in our debate assume modal monism.

¹⁶ Or the Standard Objection; see footnote 13.

into. Thus, accepting premise (2') seems to be a rational solution. Namely, Chalmers' ideal conceivability is defined in such a way that the burden of proof is on a skeptic, who should find an underlying contradiction in a situation that one is conceiving of. In the case of zombies, the burden of proof is on those who claim that the zombie situation cannot be completed up to a scenario in a coherent way, and such a burden is hard to shoulder.

It is also worth noticing that the existence of a zombie scenario does not commit us to conceive of such a scenario, because such a possibility is left to an omniscient thinker, if he exists. Sometimes, Chalmers appeals to (hypothetical) God's omnipotence in order to illustrate that conceivability should be in accordance with logico-conceptual possibility (Chalmers 1996: 35). In that respect, logical possibility is a boundary of God's omnipotence. Therefore, when we conceive of the zombie situation in the sense of the Non-Idealized Conceivability, we have a good reason to think that God could have ensured (hypothetically)¹⁷ that the situation we conceived of was embedded coherently in a corresponding zombie scenario, had he so chosen. Given that both zombists and anti-zombists have *already* accepted modal monism as a premise (see §1), they should also accept that God (hypothetically) can do only what is logically and metaphysically possible. So, appealing to God's omnipotence can serve as an illustration that supports premise (2').

These considerations suggest that the zombie argument can be defended *without* appealing to the Idealized Conceivability, because the Non-Idealized Conceivability is a sort of ideal conceivability that is relevant in justifying conceivability arguments.

We have seen from the considerations above how modal monism, which both zombists and anti-zombists accept in the current debate, enables zombists to avoid the Incompleteness. Yet the objection against the Idealized Conceivability is still in play, because we have

¹⁷ This means that the validity of conceivability arguments does not depend on the existence of an ideal conceiver. Namely, Chalmers' primary conceivability can be defined by means of apriority and logico-conceptual possibility, which are probably mind-independent and mind-accessible at the same time. Here, mathematics can serve as an illustration, because it seems plausible that mathematical truths are a priori, yet it does not follow from this that we are capable of proving them all.

adopted the Modified Incompleteness instead of the Incompleteness. Here, only the zombie argument could benefit, for it, in contrast to the anti-zombie parody, can be read in the Non-Idealized sense. Thus, if the Modified Incompleteness is true, the anti-zombie argument does not work, while there is still a hope for the zombie argument to succeed. Because of this, the anti-zombie argument is not a successful instance of the conceivability argument, and therefore it should be rejected.

Finally, we should briefly raise the question whether the Modified Incompleteness makes the zombie argument redundant. We can easily see that this is not the case, for the Modified Incompleteness questions only the conceivability of anti-zombies and not physicalism as such. Namely, (weak) modal rationalists claim that (ideal positive primary) conceivability entails possibility. They are not obliged to claim that inconceivability (that is, in the sense of not being ideally positively primarily conceivable) entails impossibility, for these two theses are independent of each other (see, for example, Casullo 1979: 212). Modal rationalists can grant that something could be inconceivable due to our cognitive limitations and nevertheless possible. But this has no relevance for the reliability of our modal beliefs. It is still possible that everything we properly conceive of is *ipso facto* possible. Bearing this in mind, the Modified Incompleteness goes counter to the conceivability of anti-zombies, but not to modal rationalism or physicalism. Physicalists (for example, type-B physicalists in Chalmers' terminology) could still claim that physicalism is inconceivable (or not ideally positively primarily conceivable), yet metaphysically possible, and therefore true. Namely, physicalism is usually formalized as $\Box(PTI \rightarrow Q)$, where P is a physical description (physical facts, including the laws of nature) of the world, T is the totality-clause, I is indexical information, and Q is a phenomenal truth (see Chalmers 2010: 142, 161). Now, if physicalism is possible, that is, if $\Diamond\Box(PTI \rightarrow Q)$ is true, then, by the theorem of S5 system $\Diamond\Box p \rightarrow \Box p$ and *modus ponens*, we can infer that physicalism is true (that is, that $\Box(PTI \rightarrow Q)$ is true; cf. Frankish 2007: 656).

But then the zombie argument, if valid and sound, could finally refute physicalism, for it shows that physicalism is false and therefore (by *modus tollens*) metaphysically impossible. Thus, the Modified Incompleteness does not make the zombie argument redundant.

5 Conclusion

If previous considerations are correct, the anti-zombie parody does not succeed. The refined the zombie argument, based on the Modified Incompleteness, may cope with its anti-zombie antipode. Yet the anti-zombie parody reveals an important point about the nature of conceivability. It shows that zombists should be satisfied with the Non-Idealized Conceivability only, which is a quite acceptable solution, at least in the context of the present discussion in which modal monism has been presupposed. Thus, we can consider the anti-zombie parody as a useful heuristic device: It pushes us to use the Non-Idealized Conceivability in order to make conceivability arguments plausible.¹⁸

Duško Prelević
Faculty of Philosophy
University of Belgrade
Čika Ljubina 18-20, 11000 Belgrade, Serbia
dusko.prelevic@f.bg.ac.rs

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Exploitation as Theft vs. Exploitation as Underpayment

Lamont Rodgers
San Jacinto College

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Abstract

Marxists claim capitalists unjustly exploit workers, and this exploitation is to show that workers ought to hold more than they do. This paper presents two accounts of exploitation. The Theft Account claims that capitalists steal some of the value to which workers are entitled. The Underpayment Account holds that capitalists are not entitled to pay workers as little as they do, even if the workers are not entitled to the full value they produce. This paper argues that only the Theft Account can explain why workers ought to hold more than they do. The Underpayment Account cannot yield this conclusion. The Theft Account is superior to the Underpayment Account insofar as exploitation is to be an injustice—a wrong that requires the exploited party to hold more.

Keywords

Marx, exploitation, theft, underpayment, entitlements.

Marxists hold that capitalists unjustly exploit workers. As a result of this unjust exploitation, we are to be able to infer that workers should have more than capitalists give them. G.A. Cohen argues that the Marxist account of capitalist exploitation of workers rests on the belief that workers are entitled to the surplus product they produce.¹ Capitalists unjustly seize that surplus product. Call this the “Theft Account” of exploitation. Cohen argues that this commitment is anathema to the egalitarian concerns of Marxists.² If the

¹ Cohen 1995: 211.

² The way to think of Cohen’s position here is that he is pointing to a tension between the Marxist account of exploitation and Marx’s famous dictum “From each according to his abilities, to each according to his needs” (Marx 2008: 27).

worker is entitled to the full value of what he produces, that value (or the goods embodying it) may not be taxed away to achieve egalitarian outcomes. Thus, Cohen claims, the exploitation charge rests on principles at odds with egalitarianism.

Michael Pendlebury, Peter Hudson, and Darrell Mollendorf hold that Marxists can abandon a full-on commitment to the claim that workers are entitled to the value they add to a product while preserving an explanation of why capitalists unjustly exploit their workers.³ The crucial move in the Pendlebury piece is to diagnose the fundamental wrong in standard cases of capitalist exploitation, not as the unjust extraction of value to which workers are entitled, but as underpayment. The capitalist is not entitled to pay the worker as little as he does, though the worker may not be entitled to the full value he adds to a product. Call this the “Underpayment Account.” The Underpayment Account seeks to preserve the exploitation charge without taking on the problematic claim (for Marxists, anyway) that the worker is entitled to the full value of what he produces.

This paper argues that the Theft Account is superior to the Underpayment Account, insofar as the Marxist wishes to claim that exploitation is sufficient for showing the exploited individual should hold more than he does after the exploitation occurs. The thesis is confined to the role exploitation can play in showing that workers ought to have more than they receive from the capitalist. The Underpayment Account, I argue, renders exploitation neither necessary nor sufficient for the claim that workers ought to have more than they do. All the work related to justice in holdings will be shifted from the exploitative relationship between capitalists and workers to the egalitarian theory of justice Marxists tend to endorse. The Theft Account does not so neuter the role of exploitation in the Marxist analysis of justice in holdings and there is a means of employing the Theft Account without giving up a commitment to modest egalitarianism.

The paper unfolds as follows. Section 1 offers the Theft Account of worker exploitation that G.A. Cohen takes Marxists to accept. Section 2 constructs the Underpayment Account of the Marxist exploitation charge. Section 3 shows that Cohen’s understanding of the

³ Pendlebury *et al.* 2001.

exploitation charge offers a superior explanation that is superior to the Underpayment Account of why workers suffer an injustice. The Underpayment Account leaves open the possibility that exploitation is neither necessary nor sufficient for the worker's being due more than they receive.

1 Exploitation as theft

In synoptic form, the Marxist charge of worker exploitation is that capitalists steal labor time from their workers.⁴ The standard interpretation of the exploitation charge is that the capitalist unjustly seizes a portion of the value the worker contributes to a product. The worker is thus subjected to an injustice precisely because he does not receive the full value he contributes to a product. G.A. Cohen observed that you can only steal from a person what is properly his. This, Cohen claims, implies that the Marxist exploitation charge takes workers to be the rightful owners of the value they produce.

Cohen aims to show that Marxists are committed to something like the idea that workers are the rightful owners of the surplus product they generate through laboring for capitalists. Marx himself says that capitalists steal labor time from workers and this comes when the capitalists take some of the worker's surplus product. Surplus product here is the value the worker adds to the production process. Pendlebury *et al.*, who are the subject of the following section, nicely hone in on precisely what surplus product is here.⁵

[T]he value the worker adds to the relevant products or services will be worth more than the worker's wages if the capitalist makes a profit from (the worker's) labor. This holds even if value added is computed by subtracting all relevant direct and attributable costs other than the worker's wages from the value of the output towards which the worker has contributed. And here we mean to include the cost of fuel, input materials and services, rent, and the relevant attributable costs of management, accounting, and the amortization and repair of plant and equipment and so on. The only thing we wish to exclude is the surplus

⁴ Marx 2003: 307, 458, and 701.

⁵ In the text, I refer to the worker's being entitled to the value of what he produces. I should be understood to refer to 'surplus product' when I say that.

which goes into the capitalists' overall profits, which is not in the ordinary sense a cost. (Pendlebury *et al.* 2001: 211)

However we spell out this surplus, Marxists hold that capitalists unjustly seize it from workers. And Cohen observes that once one accepts this claim, it is all downhill to the belief that individuals are the rightful owners of their own labor power.

[Y]ou can only steal from someone that which properly belongs to him. The Marxist critique of capitalist injustice therefore implies that the worker is the proper owner of his own labour time...But he could only have that right without having the right to decide what to do with his own capacity to labor, his labor power. (Cohen 1995: 146-147)

Cohen holds that there must be a reason why individuals are the rightful owners of their surplus product. He takes it that the most natural explanation for why the worker who generates surplus product is the person entitled to that surplus is that the worker also owns his own labor time. If one labors, the time one spends laboring cannot be seized. Given Marxism's commitment to (something like) the labor theory of value,⁶ Cohen holds that workers generate titles to some of the value of their labor. Individuals can only own their own labor time, Cohen holds, if they also own their own labor power. For Cohen, labor power simply refers to one's capacity to employ one's body, talents and capacities. Barring the performance of an injustice, individuals cannot be forced to use their labor power for others.

The exploitation charge is a vital portion of the Marxist critique of capitalism. Marxists have long employed the exploitation charge to underpin their judgment that workers should hold more than they do after they suffer exploitation at the hands of capitalists. This claim is, I take it, uncontroversial. Still, to provide some evidence to those who require it, consider that Marx and Engels famously ended *The Communist Manifesto* by called for workingmen of all countries to unite.⁷ Similarly, Marx and Engels each accused capitalists of stealing from workers. Engels, in a letter to Marx, claimed that he would

⁶ Almost no one defends the labor theory of value in its original form nowadays, of course.

⁷ Marx and Engels 1987: 57.

charge the English bourgeois with robbery, among other things.⁸ The Theft Account, Cohen claims, explains why Marxists say capitalists steal from workers.

As I mentioned above, Cohen goes on to argue that the Theft Account of exploitation is at odds with the egalitarian designs of Marxists. If workers are entitled to the value they contribute to a product, that value may not be taxed away to achieve egalitarian goals. Given this, Marxists require an alternative means of sustaining the exploitation charge—at least to the extent they wish to retain their egalitarian commitments. Accordingly, Pendlebury *et al.* seek to offer such an account. Section 2 sketches this attempt.

2 Exploitation as underpayment

Pendlebury *et al.* hold that Marxists can abandon a full-on commitment to the claim that workers are entitled to the surplus value they produce. Marxists can drop this commitment while preserving an explanation of why capitalists unjustly exploit their workers. The crucial move in the Pendlebury piece is to diagnose the fundamental wrong in standard cases of capitalist exploitation, not as the unjust extraction of the fruits of the workers' labor, but as underpayment. In particular, the capitalist is not entitled to pay the worker as little as he does. Pendlebury *et al.* offer the following rival account of the injustice of capitalist exploitation.

In the standard case, the capitalist, because of the power he enjoys by owning means of production, is able to appropriate the product of the worker's labour without having to pay the worker, in exchange, the full value of that product, and the worker must accept this in order to survive. This is unjust exploitation because the capitalist is not morally entitled to pay the worker less than the full value of his labour. (Pendlebury *et al.* 2001: 209)

As Pendlebury *et al.* observe “it is absolutely crucial to the account that the capitalist has no moral entitlement to pay the worker

⁸ Marx and Engels 1953: 28. It is a fascinating complication to the argument I am making that Engels backed away from such strong language in the actual “To the Working Classes of Great Britain.” The language Engels uses is much weaker; and the charges of robbery and murder do not appear.

less than the full value of his labour” (Pendlebury *et al.* 2001: 210). They add that one might take the capitalist’s lack of a right to pay the worker as little as he does “to be inseparable from the worker’s right to receive that value from the capitalist” (Pendlebury *et al.* 2001: 210). The capitalist has no entitlement to pay the workers less than the full value of their labor because “of the absence of factors which could give the capitalist the appropriate moral entitlement” (Pendlebury *et al.* 2001: 210). Specifically, because the worker has no real choice in whether he will sell his labor or starve, the capitalist cannot offer the worker less than the full value of his labor. The standard cases of capitalist exploitation are unjust precisely because the capitalist is not entitled to pay as little as he does, even if the workers agree to it. The agreement is forced and thus not really an agreement.

It is crucial to see that the Underpayment Account does not aim to diagnose a form of treatment that is always wrong. It is not always wrong to underpay someone. Instead, it is always wrong to underpay someone *when the person is forced to choose between working for less than the amount he contributes to a product and starving to death*. Pendlebury *et al.* are forthright about their lack of an account of how entitlements are generated.⁹ But entitlements to objects or pay are irrelevant to the version of the exploitation charge they run. The Underpayment Account does not say the worker is *entitled* to full payment. Pendlebury *et al.* hold that a capitalist’s entitlement to his holdings does not undermine the Underpayment Account. What is more, the workers do not need to be entitled to the money the capitalist fails to give them.

[I]f a particular capitalist has a moral entitlement to his capital, there are still significant inequalities between his resources and those of his workers, whose survival (we may assume) depends on their being employed by capitalists. Thus, their agreeing to work for him is not an act of free choice, and it therefore does not give him a moral entitlement to pay them less than the full value of their labour. (Pendlebury *et al.* 2001: 210)

The Underpayment Account seeks to do away with the claim that the worker is entitled to the full value of the product he produces. The question is whether the Underpayment Account preserves the

⁹ Pendlebury *et al.* 2001: 210.

worker's claim to rectification against the capitalist. In the following section, I show that it does not.

3 Exploitation of the worker

At least implicit in the writings of Marxists, not to mention Marx himself, is the message that the worker should have more, as a matter of justice in holdings, than what the capitalists give them.¹⁰ But the Underpayment Account does not, in itself, provide a reason to believe workers should have more than the capitalists give them. In fact, the Underpayment Account says nothing at all about whether the workers should have anything. The Underpayment Account holds that workers are wronged, but it loses the vital claim that the workers should have more than they receive.

To clarify this last remark, notice that 'injustice' can be used broadly to refer to any sort of wrong, or it can be used narrowly to mean 'denied what one is entitled to as a matter of justice in holdings'.¹¹ Not all wrongs require the transfer of a holding from one individual to another. If Jones refuses to buy flowers from Smith because of Smith's race, Jones treats Smith unjustly. Suppose Jones purchases flowers from Ford. Smith is not entitled to the price he is asking for the flowers. He cannot demand money from Jones or Ford. Call such wrongs 'basic wrongs'. However, if Jones takes Smith's flowers and refuses to pay for them, Smith should have more than he does. Call these wrongs 'injustices'. Cohen observes that the Marxist exploitation charge means to point to an injustice workers suffer. The workers are entitled to their surplus value; and that is why it is unjust for the capitalist to seize that value. Thus, workers are due rectificatory payment from capitalists. But one must be struck by the fact that the underpayment account leaves it an open question whether rectificatory payment is due.

The Underpayment Account aims to make it possible that others

¹⁰ I leave aside here the possibility that Marx himself did not find exploitation of the worker unjust. Allen Wood argues that Marx did not in Wood 1981. Cohen challenges this claim in Cohen 1983.

¹¹ The distinction I draw here is sufficient for present purposes. It is certainly not exhaustive.

are entitled to some of the surplus value the worker generates. This aim introduces a vital shift in the Marxist position. As Cohen lays out the exploitation charge, exploitation is sufficient for showing that workers should have more than they do. The worker is entitled to the surplus value he takes and it is unjust to take it from him via exploitation. However, given that others may be entitled to some of the pay the worker receives, the Underpayment Account cannot treat exploitation as sufficient for that conclusion. The Underpayment Account makes it possible that at least some cases of worker exploitation are injustices done not to, but through, workers. To illustrate, imagine that a worker is entitled only to $.6V$, where V is the value the worker contributes to a product. Suppose the worker is entitled to $.6V$ precisely because there are many infirm individuals in the worker's society. Suppose a capitalist exploits this worker and pays just $.6V$. Now, if it turns out that others are entitled to $.4V$, say, to achieve egalitarian goals, the *worker* has no complaint of injustice against the capitalist. More guardedly, the worker is entitled to nothing more than he receives. Others suffer an injustice at the hands of the capitalist, of course, since *ex hypothesi* they are entitled to the remaining $.4V$ in order to achieve egalitarian goals. It seems that the question of whether the worker suffers an injustice is not to depend on background conditions like how many infirm people are in the society. But the Underpayment Account makes this a crucial question. So being exploited on the grounds diagnosed by the Underpayment Account is insufficient for generating a claim of rectification against the exploiter.

The previous paragraph also shows that being exploited is also unnecessary for being due more than one is paid. Both the infirm and the worker's children have a claim of injustice against the capitalist, yet *they* were not exploited. Pendlebury *et al.* acknowledge that exploitation is not a necessary condition for being due rectification. They hold that "exploitation is not the only possible evil a Marxist should admit" (Pendlebury *et al.* 2001: 209). And I gather they mean to refer to injustices rather than basic wrongs, for otherwise the claim is a mere banality. Obviously there are wrongs other than exploitation.

Now, Pendlebury *et al.* have available four lines of response to the primary problem I have diagnosed, viz. that on their model,

suffering exploitation is insufficient for being due rectification. First, they could hold that it is not outrageous to believe that most cases of capitalist exploitation are in fact cases in which workers should have more than they receive.¹² Even if that belief is not outrageous, two points are worth making in response. The first is that it is an open question whether workers should receive more payment, whether the belief in question is outrageous or not. On Cohen's rendering, it is not an open question. Notice also that within the Marxist tradition, the motivation for having workers become familiar with Marx was to have the workers see that they were entitled to more than they received, not to have them see that someone other than the capitalist is entitled to the money the capitalist keeps (provided the capitalist is not infirm).¹³

The second point is that, as Pendlebury *et al.* note, their treatment severely limits the scope of the exploitation charge. As capitalists seek cheap labor through outsourcing, the question of whether workers suffer an injustice ends up, on the underpayment model, depending heavily on the wealth of the capitalist and the wealth of other members of the workers' society. So the appeal to standard cases of exploitation loses its force if it aims to apply the Marxist critique to novel instances of exploitation. The appeal to standard cases seems to have us imagine a fixed society in which there are rich capitalists and lots of exploited workers. But as capitalists with varying degrees of capital enter new markets—markets where there may be no exploited workers—the Underpayment Account of exploitation will be insufficient to yield the judgment that the workers are very likely entitled to more than they receive. More guardedly, if the point of the exploitation charge is to pave the way for egalitarianism, then there are good reasons to believe exploited workers in third world countries, for example, are not entitled to the full surplus value they generate.

The second line of response available to Pendlebury *et al.* is that they are careful in their rendering of the exploitation charge to stay

¹² In a similar vein, Pendlebury *et al.* claim that it is not outrageous to hold believe that in standard cases, capitalists pay workers less than the full value of his labor. See Pendlebury *et al.* 2001:211.

¹³ Marx and Engels 1953: 556.

away from entitlements workers have. Instead, they locate the wrong in the capitalist's lacking an entitlement to pay workers as little as he does.¹⁴ What remains unanswered is the question of whether the capitalist's lacking a title to pay the worker what he does means that the worker should receive more. The natural answer for the Marxist is to say that the worker should, but one must notice that the Underpayment Account does not offer this natural answer.

The Underpayment Account holds that workers have a right to the surplus value they produce, but explicitly leaves it an open question whether and why the workers should receive that surplus value.¹⁵ One might wonder why workers have this right, given that they may lack titles to more than they hold. The fundamental point here is that the underpayment rendering of the exploitation charge does not by itself yield the judgment that workers should have more than they receive from the capitalist.

Insofar as Pendlebury *et al.* might seek to explain why workers have a right to the full surplus value they produce, even if others are entitled to it, notice that Pendlebury *et al.* cannot appeal to the workers' having transferred their titles to others. They cannot hold that the workers have transferred these titles and would thus be made guilty of an injustice against others by not receiving full payment from capitalists. Pendlebury *et al.* hold that the Underpayment Account leaves open that the worker's children and family might be entitled to some of their holdings. But that is insufficient to distinguish the Underpayment Account from Cohen's model.¹⁶ For almost no one denies that people can transfer titles to a particular quantity of payment even if they have not yet received that payment. A loan is a way of transferring titles to future earnings, for example. All that

¹⁴ Pendlebury *et al.* 2001: 210.

¹⁵ Pendlebury *et al.* 2001: 209.

¹⁶ Pendlebury *et al.* hold that the account Cohen offers is incompatible with the claim that the worker's family or children are entitled to some of the worker's pay. It is unclear why they believe this. Having children, many who believe individuals are entitled to the fruits of their labor hold, is simply a way of making those children entitled to a portion of one's earnings. See John Locke 2009: sections 83 to 89. Of course, some have denied this. Cf. Rothbard 1998: 100. But why the latter is taken as *the* view is unclear.

matters is that the individual is entitled to the payment in the first place. The Underpayment Account must leave open that others are entitled to some of the payment, irrespective of whether the worker has transferred titles to those people. But then it becomes a mystery why the worker must have the money pass through his hands as a matter of right.

It is here that a further problem with the Underpayment Account is clear. The Underpayment Account seeks to do without a theory of how titles are generated. Pendlebury *et al.* confess to having no theory of how entitlements are generated and provide the reader with a lecture to the effect that they are under no special obligation to provide one. However, the view that workers generate titles to their holdings via laboring has long been a centerpiece in Marxist theorizing. Pendlebury *et al.* purge this centerpiece from Marxist theory and fail to replace it with anything. It is thus unclear whether workers are entitled, even in the most standard cases in which they suffer exploitation, to more than they receive. Such is not the case with the model Cohen provides.

Here is perhaps the most powerful line of response available to Pendlebury *et al.* In fact, this response is suggested by Pendlebury *et al.*¹⁷ The idea is that in Marx's writings, workers are only entitled to the full value they produce *after* serious redistribution has occurred to achieve egalitarian goals.¹⁸ After all, Marx's mantra is "From each according to his abilities, to each accord to his need."¹⁹ A passage given this pride of place in Marx's writings cannot be ignored.

If this is right, the Theft Account leaves it an open question whether the worker is entitled to the full value he produces. It is in this regard no better off than the Underpayment Account. What is more, the Underpayment Account holds that in *standard* cases of capitalist exploitation, workers are underpaid. This is the injustice, because in these standard cases, sufficient redistribution to achieve egalitarian goals has not occurred. The Theft Account cannot market itself as an account of exploitation in these standard cases, because

¹⁷ Pendlebury *et al.* 2001: 212.

¹⁸ See Pendlebury *et al.* 2001: 210-212.

¹⁹ See note 2 above.

we rarely achieve the appropriation conditions for the workers to have entitlements to the full value of his own labor.

This line of response is of only limited success. Grant this reading of the Theft Account. It is still the case that the exploited worker, who is entitled to the full value he produces, provided egalitarian goals are achieved, who should have more than the capitalist gives him. The *Theft Account* gets us to that conclusion, but the Underpayment Account does not. In the Underpayment Account, we cannot move from the claim that the worker is underpaid to the conclusion that the worker should hold more—even if extensive redistribution has occurred to achieve egalitarian goals. If the worker has such a claim, it will be established by considerations other than that he was underpaid. So while the Underpayment Account might diagnose a *wrong* in the standard cases of capitalist exploitation, it does not pick out a wrong that shows the exploited ought to hold more than they do.

One final concern worth addressing is the following. One might object that the Theft Account marks too great a departure from the standard Marxist view of the capitalist-worker relationship.²⁰ Speaking of rectification suggests that justice is possible under capitalism. After all, if the capitalist offers rectification, their relationship with workers is just. However, Marx and many of his followers have believed that capitalism cannot be just. Thus, the Theft Account is at odds with the traditional view of capitalism.

I believe there are serious questions about whether Marx's stated objections to capitalism justify the judgment that the capitalist-worker relation cannot be just.²¹ The locus of these serious questions is the role exploitation is to play in justifying the judgment that capitalism cannot be just. It is common for Marxists to argue that capitalists exploit workers and this exploitation is what makes capitalism unjust. This is the standard rationale for deeming capitalism to be unjust.

If the Theft Account is to be suspect precisely because it suggests capitalism can be just, the Underpayment Account should be equally

²⁰ I thank an anonymous reviewer for raising this concern.

²¹ For explorations of this issue, see Roemer 1985 and section 5 of Mack 2002.

suspect. The shortcoming of the Underpayment Account is that it either suggests capitalism can be just or provides no reason whatsoever to believe capitalism cannot be just. Let me explain.

Suppose a Marxist were to resist the fundamental thesis of this paper. Suppose that Marxist takes exploitation as underpayment to be sufficient for showing that capitalism cannot be just, then that Marxist has subjected himself to the same objection raised against the Theft Account. If capitalists do not underpay their workers, capitalism can be just. There is nothing about capitalism that in principle precludes capitalists from paying workers for the full value of what they produce. Thus, if the Theft Account is flawed for suggesting capitalism can be just, so is the Underpayment Account.

Of course, I have argued that the Underpayment Account actually does nothing to show that exploited workers ought to hold more than they do. Because of this, the Underpayment Account fails to show that the capitalist-worker relationship cannot be just. As I showed above, underpayment is neither necessary nor sufficient to generate a claim on the worker's part against the capitalist. Thus, if capitalism cannot be just, it is not because of exploitation as underpayment. Marxists require a different explanation of why the capitalist-worker relationship cannot be just. Of course, I think there is an explanation to be had for Marxists: capitalism is incompatible with *egalitarianism*. This has been the fundamental thesis this article has urged: the Underpayment Account eliminates exploitation from playing any role in showing that workers are due more than they have.

The previous paragraphs do not vindicate the Theft Account of the charge in question, viz. that it suggests the capitalist-worker relation can be just. If a Marxist were interested in holding both that capitalism cannot be just and that exploitation generates a claim on the part of workers, the following move is available. A proponent of the Theft Account could hold that workers are entitled to their surplus only after redistribution has occurred to achieve egalitarian outcomes. I noted the availability of this move above. So the Theft Account could function as a claim-generating wrong only after egalitarian goals are met. As I also showed above, the Underpayment Account can never play such a role. Theft Account is superior to the Underpayment Account even if the conditions under which individuals are entitled to the full value of what they produce are severely limited.

Conclusion

Insofar as Marxism aims to offer an account of why workers suffer an *injustice*—a wrong that shows the exploited individual should hold more than he does after being exploited—the Underpayment Account, at least by itself, will not do. The reason for this is clear: the workers need to be entitled to something in order for the capitalists to be required, as a matter of rectificatory justice, to deliver it to them. Insofar as Marxists accuse capitalists of an injustice, Cohen is right to hold that Marxists have long implied that workers are entitled to the value they generate. The underpayment model commits itself to no such claim. The upshot, of course, is not that the underpayment model cannot be part of a Marxist theory. Instead, the upshot is that to the extent that Marxists wish to use the exploitation charge to show that workers are *entitled* to more than they receive, the explanation must come from reasons other than that they are exploited. Cohen's model is superior in this regard.²²

Lamont Rodgers
 Department of Philosophy
 San Jacinto College – North Campus
 5800 Uvalde
 Office N7.233
 Houston, TX 77049
 lamont.rodgers@sjcd.edu

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²² I am grateful to Travis Rodgers for providing helpful commentary on an earlier version of this paper.

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Opacity, Know-How States, and their Content

Josefa Toribio

ICREA-University of Barcelona

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Abstract

The main goal of this paper is to defend the thesis that the content of know-how states is an accuracy assessable type of nonconceptual content. My argument proceeds in two stages. I argue, first, that the intellectualist distinction between types of ways of grasping the same kind of content is uninformative unless it is tied in with a distinction between kinds of contents. Second, I consider and reject the objection that, if the content of know-how states is non-conceptual, it will be mysterious why attributions of knowing how create opaque contexts. I show that the objection conflates two distinct issues: the nature of the content of know-how states and the semantic evaluability of know-how ascriptions.

Keywords

Accuracy conditions, intellectualism, know-how, non-conceptual content, opacity.

1 Introduction

Propositional knowledge, i.e., knowledge attributed to a subject by sentences with the form ‘ S knows that p ’, is generally considered to be a propositional state whose content is a true proposition. What S knows is the content of S ’s knowledge state. Knowing that p is a factive state. When S knows that p , S stands in a particular knowing relation to a fact. There is less of a consensus on the appropriate analysis of practical knowledge, i.e., of the knowledge attributed to a subject by sentences with the form ‘ S knows how to Φ ’. According to Gilbert Ryle’s (1946, 1949) classic anti-intellectualism, S knows how to Φ in virtue of having some ability or disposition to Φ . Additionally, the practical knowledge attributed to a subject by sentences

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of the form ‘ S knows how to Φ ’ is regarded as a dispositional relation between a subject and the action type of Φ -ing. By contrast, classic intellectualists hold both that S knows how to Φ in virtue of S ’s having some propositional attitude(s) regarding Φ -ing and that this type of practical knowledge is a propositional-attitude relation between a subject and a true proposition (see e.g. Brogaard 2009, 2011; Stanley 2011a, 2011b; Stanley and Williamson 2001).¹ Classic intellectualism is the view challenged in this paper, especially Jason Stanley’s version (2011a, 2011b).²

To briefly complete the intellectualist picture, we need a few more strokes. First, Stanley’s preferred Fregean model of propositional-attitude ascription requires that true propositions are known under particular descriptions or modes of presentation. Furthermore, only true propositions are considered facts. The content of *all* our knowledge states involves, according to Stanley, these modes of presentation—these different ways of thinking about facts. Second, ways of thinking about facts include ways of thinking about ways of doing things. Third, and crucially, we think about the ways in which we do things either practically or demonstratively. The intellectualist ultimately explains the folk distinction between knowing how and knowing that in terms of this distinction between practical and demonstrative ways of thinking about ways of doing things. Here is the classic illustration. Even if Hanna does not know how to ride a bicycle, she may still know, while looking at John, who is riding a bicycle, that the way in which John rides it is a way for her to ride it. It would thus be true that Hannah knows that John’s way is a way for her to ride a bicycle, while thinking about that way demonstratively, even though she does not know how to ride it (Stanley and William-

¹ I am following here the well-known characterization offered by Bengson and Moffett (2011a) in terms of two different dimensions: what grounds knowledge how and what is the nature of the knowledge thus grounded. See Bengson and Moffett (2011a, 2011b).

² I thus do not take myself to be challenging Bengson and Moffett’s non-propositional, objectualist intellectualism, according to which “knowledge how to ϕ is a *nonpropositional, objectual relation* between a subject and an item—a method or way of ϕ -ing, say—that one has in virtue of having a certain *propositional attitude regarding ϕ -ing*” (Bengson and Moffett 2011a: 164). In what follows, I will use ‘intellectualism’ to refer to classic intellectualism as characterized above.

son 2001: 428-9). For the intellectualist, the folk notion of knowing how is instead accounted for in terms of a specific, practical, as opposed to demonstrative, way of thinking about ways of doing things. When a subject knows how to Φ , she knows that w is a way for her to Φ . This kind of propositional knowledge is first-person, *de se* knowledge of a way of Φ -ing, while thinking of that way practically and not demonstratively.

If intellectualism is true, the knowing-that / knowing-how distinction is a distinction between types of ways of thinking about the same kind of conceptual content. In what follows, I argue that such a distinction between types of ways of thinking is uninformative unless it is tied in with a distinction between kinds of contents. In the version of anti-intellectualism I endorse, S knows how to Φ in virtue of S 's being in a cognitive state whose content is, unlike the content of know-that states, non-conceptual. The non-conceptual content of know-how states has, however, correctness conditions. If S knows how to Φ , then S is in a cognitive state whose (accurate) non-conceptual content is a way of Φ -ing for S . In this anti-intellectualist version, the practical knowledge attributed to a subject by sentences of the form 'S knows how to Φ ' not only is grounded in, but *is* a non-propositional attitude that relates the subject to a mental state with non-conceptual content. The attitude is non-propositional because it does not relate the subject to a proposition.³ This non-dispositionalist version of anti-intellectualism is thus consistent with the claim—wrongly made an exclusive mark of intellectualism—that all knowledge is knowledge of facts, for knowledge how is placed back into cognitive territory in the realm of accurate representations.

³ Although, on the view defended here, the attitude relates the subject to a state whose content is accuracy assessable. From the claim that the content of know-how states is accuracy assessable, it does not follow that they have propositional structure or conceptual content. The notion of content and the notion of correctness conditions go hand in hand, regardless of whether the content is conceptual or non-conceptual. Furthermore, to claim that the attitude in which know-how consists is non-propositional does not amount to claiming that know-how states have relatively non-conceptual content. The notion of non-conceptual content is here understood as absolutely non-conceptual, i.e., as a monadic property of the content of know-how states as opposed to a relation between the subject and the state's content—the mark of relatively non-conceptualism. Please see below.

Note that, in arguing that know-how is a non-propositional attitude, the term ‘propositional’ may be taken to be ambiguous between (at least) two readings. On one reading, to claim that know-how states lack propositional structure means that they lack sentence-like, i.e., canonical compositional structure. This is a syntactic reading of ‘propositional’. On a second reading, ‘propositional’ means having conceptual content, in particular, content that is constituted by Fregean concepts, which is truth-apt. On this second reading, to claim that know-how is a non-propositional attitude means that the content of know-how states is not semantically evaluable. The position defended here characterizes the content of know-how states as non-propositional in the first of the two readings without thereby ruling out the idea that the content of such states has correctness conditions. The idea, endorsed by some neo-Fregean nonconceptualists (e.g., Heck 2007) with regard to the content of perceptual representations, is that the possession of such a different (non-propositional) structure is so cognitively relevant in the subject’s mental economy that the content of the relevant states—know-how states in this case—is of a different (non-conceptual) kind.

Since the intellectualist endorses the view that know-how states have propositional content (in the second sense) as their content, while also allowing that there may be representations without propositional structure in virtue of which we know how to Φ , it may appear as if the disagreement between the present proposal and the intellectualist’s is purely verbal—a disagreement about whether or not what is here characterized as accuracy-apt non-conceptual content qualifies as propositional or not.

This is an important point and one that should be addressed right away so as to clarify the spirit of the view defended in this paper. First of all, the claim that the content of know-how states is non-conceptual should be understood as encompassing two different, yet intimately related, ideas: that know-states do not have a canonical decomposition and that the content of such states does not have Fregean concepts as constituents. Since Fregean concepts lie at the heart of the intellectualist proposal as constituents of the content of know-how states, the dispute here is not merely verbal. The main difference between e.g. Stanley’s (2011b) account and the one suggested here lies precisely here. Since intellectualists hold that both

know-how and know-that states have the same kind of (conceptual) content, they need to appeal to practical modes of presentation in order to account for the distinctive cognitive abilities involved in knowledge how. This, I shall argue, does not seem to be informative. By contrast, the view defended in this paper, according to which the content of know-how states is accuracy-apt but non-conceptual offers, I contend, a more fruitful, parsimonious and explanatorily powerful alternative.

As part of my defence of anti-intellectualism, I will consider and reject an objection that has been brought against the view that the content of know-how states is non-conceptual. The objection is that, if the content of know-how states were non-conceptual, it would be mysterious why attributions of knowledge-how create opaque contexts. I show that the objection conflates two distinct issues: the nature of the content of know-how states and the semantic evaluability of know-how ascriptions. Once the conflation is debunked, the opacity of know-how attributions presents no mystery.

2 Ways: Wherein lies the difference?

As I have just outlined, intellectualists do not deny the folk distinction between knowledge how and knowledge that. They deny that the folk distinction entails there being two types of knowledge, i.e., they deny that there are two different types of knowledge states with different types of content. To explain the folk distinction, the intellectualist appeals, instead, to a difference in ways of thinking which involve the (same kind of) conceptual content. But if know-how states are states of the same cognitive type as know-that states, and are only set apart by a practical way of thinking that involves the very same kind of content, it is imperative to provide an account of *why* such a practical—as opposed to a demonstrative—way of thinking about the same kind of content turns out to be so different. The plausibility of the intellectualist picture depends on its being able to provide such an account. Yet, all the intellectualist has to offer instead is a characterization of *what it means* to think of a way of doing something practically; it means for that way to play a certain functional role in our mental economy. “Explaining what it is to think of a way of doing something in a practical way is ... a matter of spelling

out the distinctive practical functional role that way occupies in the mental life of the speaker” (Stanley, 2011b: 124).

Spelling out the functional role of our way of Φ -ing, however, does not seem informative unless it is accompanied by an account of *why* such a way of Φ -ing plays such a distinctive functional role.⁴ For the elucidation of the functional role of this way of doing things would inevitably involve the subject’s possession of some skill or skill-related disposition, thus making the intended explanation come extremely close to merely being a restatement of the original puzzle. In other words, the intellectualist distinguishes between demonstrative and practical modes of presentation of same-content, same-type states to account for the pre-theoretical distinction between theoretical knowledge and knowledge how—a pre-theoretical distinction reflected in their different functional roles. Yet, if, for me to know, under a practical mode of presentation, that w is a way to Φ just is for w to occupy a certain functional role in my mental life, then *explanandum* and *explanans* come to resemble each other dangerously. Indeed, Stanley and Williamson acknowledge being unable to clarify the idea of practical ways of thinking about ways of doing things in a nontrivial manner. Their claim that “thinking of a way under a practical mode of presentation undoubtedly entails the possession of certain complex dispositions” (Stanley and Williamson 2001: 429) does not throw much light on the issue. For the intellectualist (see also Stanley 2011b) also holds that *all* propositional knowledge, and hence also knowledge that consists in thinking about a way of doing things under a demonstrative mode of presentation entails the possession of dispositions, albeit perhaps different dispositions.⁵

⁴ One could argue that since the relation between practical modes of presentation and the relevant functional roles is constitutive, i.e., since for me to know, under a practical mode of presentation, that w is a way to Φ just is for w to occupy a certain functional role in my mental life, this why-question would be misguided. However, not all claims about X being just Y should be considered question-stoppers. Even though water just is H₂O, it is sensible and pertinent to ask why being composed of H₂O molecules makes water behave the way it does. This is the nature of the why-question I raise here. I thank an anonymous referee for pointing this out.

⁵ As it is all too well known, the intellectualists’ main support of their view comes from semantic evidence based on the analysis of sentences containing em-

Furthermore, since for X to play functional role Y is for X to play a specific causal role, i.e., for X to behave in a particular way, the characterization of practical modes of presentation in terms of the functional role of our ways of doing things ends up being rather unwieldy at best. It amounts to saying that our ways of doing things behave in a particular way. Or to be more precise, it amounts to saying that, for me to know, under a practical mode of presentation, that w is a way of Φ -ing, is for my way of Φ -ing to behave in a particular way.

Now, let's contrast the intellectualist picture with its alternative: anti-intellectualism. Here, again, we start with a pre-theoretical distinction between theoretical knowledge and knowledge how which reveals itself in their different functional roles. However, instead of appealing to (different) modes of presentation of the same (type of) content, which are in turn characterized in terms of the functional roles of our ways of doing things, we appeal to states with different kinds of content. We thus avoid falling into triviality territory in the way just described, and get a straightforward and informative answer. The question of why theoretical and practical knowledge appear to be so different (play such different functional roles) gets an informative answer when we say that know-that and know-how states have contents of different types. The content of the state we are in when we are in a know-that state is so different in kind to the content we are in when we are in a know-how state that the question of why, pre-theoretically, theoretical knowledge and knowledge how behave so differently gets a straightforward answer. Occam's razor favours anti-intellectualism.

Classic anti-intellectualists, needless to say, complete this claim with a characterization of know-how states as abilities or disposition to skilfully and reliably act (Ryle 1946, 1949).⁶ Crucially, they

bedded questions. The evidence makes it clear, they argue, that knowing-how attributions are best analysed as expressing a relation between a subject and a (true) proposition. Semantic evidence also underwrites their appeal to an ontology of ways of thinking (see e.g. Stanley 2011b: ch. 4). Yet, for reasons that will become clear in Section 4, I will avoid bringing to bear any of this semantic evidence into the present discussion.

⁶ Although perhaps counterfactually (see Hawley 2003).

also endorse the view that know-how and know-that states are different types of states because they have different kinds of content. While know-that states have conceptual content, know-how states have non-conceptual content—a type of content that they take to be not only non truth-apt, but not amenable to rationality. Here is Dreyfus on this matter: “embodied skills, when we are absorbed in enacting them, have a kind of content which is non-conceptual, non-propositional, non-rational (even if rational means situation specific) and non-linguistic” (Dreyfus 2007: 360).

In contrast to the classic anti-intellectualist view, I propose an accuracy assessable version of anti-intellectualism, according to which *S* knows how to Φ in virtue of bearing a non-propositional attitude to a personal-level cognitive state with non-conceptual content that accurately represents *S*'s way of Φ -ing. This proposal provides, on the one hand, an informative answer to the key question of why know-how states play a distinctive functional role that issues in a characteristic practical way of doing things. They play such a distinctive functional role because know-how states have non-conceptual content, i.e., content that is different in kind to the content of know-that states, and they are, for that reason, states of a distinctive type.⁷ The proposal sits comfortably, on the other hand, with the idea that skilful, intelligent action is guided by knowledge of facts—as opposed to a subject's ability or embodied skill—since know-how states are characterized as personal-level states, which accurately represent how to do something for a subject.

This version of anti-intellectualism avoids the two classic sets of criticisms usually brought against its classic cousin. The first set questions whether the possession of an ability could be either a necessary, or a sufficient condition, for knowing how—what Bengson and Moffett (2011a) call, respectively, the ‘pervasive inability’ and the ‘ignorant reliability’ problems. Cases like the infamous ski in-

⁷ My considerations here are solely methodological. Of course, it should also be clarified how the fact that the content of know-how states is non-conceptual explains why know-how states have such a distinctive functional role. I address this issue in Section 3. The answer, in a nutshell, is this: paradigmatic properties of knowledge how—its essential practical nature and its frequent resilience to linguistic inferential reasoning—are best accounted for by relying on this theoretical notion.

structor, who seems to know how to do ski stunts while not being and never having been able to do them, illustrate the pervasive inability problem. They challenge the view that abilities are necessary for knowing how. Cases like the (in)famous novice skater, who reliably and successfully performs complicated multiple jumps, despite her seriously mistaken views about how to actually do them, illustrate the ignorant reliability problem. These latter cases challenge the view that abilities are sufficient for knowing how. The version of anti-intellectualism proposed here, by making *S*'s know-how state a cognitive state instead of an ability, makes the problems of pervasive inability and ignorant reliability disappear.

The second set of criticisms against classic anti-intellectualism targets the idea that the content of know-how states is not semantically evaluable. The concern seems to be that, were we to characterize the content of embodied skills as non-conceptual, in this sense, know-how states would be implausibly located at the sub-personal level, and skilful action would fall outside the guidance of intelligence, outside the sphere of rationality. The version of anti-intellectualism I endorse here eases the burden of this type of concern—let us call it ‘the sub-personal worry’—by means of a basic philosophical tenet, namely, that contentful mental states are necessarily states with associated accuracy or correctness conditions—whether their content is conceptual or not. To talk about the content of a mental state is just to talk about the way the state represents the world as being. This accuracy assessable non-conceptual content of know-how states is thus subject to rationality constraints, and could guide skilful action in virtue of its correctly or accurately representing a subject's own way of doing things.⁸ In this version of anti-intellectualism, knowing how to Φ is a relation between a subject and a non-propositional object, the subject's way of Φ -ing, which is correctly represented by a personal-level state whose non-conceptual content consists precisely in that way of Φ -ing. The commitment to the representational, albeit non-conceptual, nature of know-how states does not thus belie the idea that, when we learn how to Φ , we learn a fact about the world—it just challenges the assumption that only true propositions can be facts.

⁸ I further discuss the sub-personal worry in the next Section.

I have arrived at this version of anti-intellectualism without examining any of the emblematic properties of knowing how, or identifying what makes non-conceptual content an appropriate notion to capture such properties. In the next Section, I will give reasons for thinking that non-conceptual content is indeed such a suitable notion. I will also consider and reject an argument against this view. But before doing that, let me emphasize that my considerations are largely methodological. The persuasiveness of the proposal suggested here hinges on its being able to provide an informative answer to the central question of why practical ways of thinking about doing things play such a distinctive functional role. By identifying ways of thinking with the functional role of the states themselves, the proposal offers an informative answer to this question, while avoiding the sets of objections usually raised against classic anti-intellectualism.

3 The non-conceptual content of know-how states

The claim that the content of know-how states is non-conceptual is here understood as a claim about the nature of the content of such states. The content is non-conceptual because it is essentially different in kind to the content of know-that states, i.e., it is essentially different in kind to Fregean propositions. Since Fregean propositions essentially have a canonical compositional structure and are composed of (Fregean) concepts, non-conceptual content, as understood here, is content that has no *canonical* compositional structure and is not composed of (Fregean) concepts.

That a representation lacks a canonical compositional structure means that the representation is decomposable, but its content and syntactic structure is not determined by the content and the syntactic structure of their constituents (see Fodor 2007).⁹ The claim that know-how states have non-conceptual content thus amounts to claiming that they are like pictures or cognitive maps, iconic. As such, they have an ability-based flavour linked—but not constitut-

⁹ Although I take the idea of canonical representation from Fodor, I do not thereby consider concepts as psychological representational primitives or “words” in a “language of thought”. The relevant, contrasting notion of concept here is neo-Fregean, i.e., concepts as the abstract constituents of content.

ed— by the set of skills that a subject deploys when negotiating a domain. This characterization of non-conceptual content is a form of what Speaks (2005) calls ‘absolutely non-conceptual content’ and Heck (2000) refers to as ‘the content view’ of non-conceptualism.

My relying heavily on the idea of canonical decomposition to characterize the content of know-how states as non-conceptual may invite the complaint that I am conflating syntax with semantics. It may be said that the structural properties of mental states of a given type do not tell us anything about the nature of their content. In fact, the move from state-structure to content-nature may appear to be a version of the vehicle-content confusion: the confusion of thinking that the representational properties of states of a certain type reflect their causally relevant structural properties. However, within a neo-Fregean account of concept and concept possession the move is fairly standard: conceptual content is usually characterized as content that is structured so as to satisfy the generalizations supported by some strong principle of compositionality, such as Evans (1982) Generality Constraint (GC henceforth). So, if there are indeed good reasons to grant this dialectical move in the case of conceptual content, the claim that nonconceptual content is content so canonically un-structured so as to fail to satisfy the generalizations supported by GC shouldn’t be regarded as theoretically suspicious.

The claim that conceptual content has Fregean concepts as constituents entails the idea that grasping a concept *F* is to exercise an ability—the ability to think of a thing as *F*. Possessing such an ability, in turn, partially explains the subject’s ability to entertain thoughts in which *F* occurs. Within a neo-Fregean account of conceptual content, to claim that the content of a state is conceptual is to be committed to the view that the content of perceptual experiences obeys GC in its stronger form (Evans 1982: 104, ft. 21), i.e., that the ability of a subject to think that *a* is *F* is not only composed of, but is also explained by, two distinct abilities: the ability to think of *a* and the ability to think of a thing as *F* (see Heck 2007: 123).

It is against the background of this neo-Fregean picture of conceptual content that the essentially contrastive notion of non-conceptual content has to be understood here. In claiming that the content of know-how states is non-conceptual, i.e., in claiming that their content is like the content of icons or cognitive maps, we are

denying that the content of know-how states has Fregean concepts as constituents and hence we are denying that, in order to know how to Φ , the subject has to possess the set of complex abilities that should be deployed whenever entertaining thoughts containing the relevant concepts involved in Φ -ing. Instead, the subject deploys a different set of cognitive skills: those involved in the negotiation of a practical domain.

Richard Heck (2007) illustrates this characterization of non-conceptual content in terms of cognitive maps as follows. An essential feature of cognitive maps, Heck (2007) claims, is that their spatial primitives, i.e., the landmarks, are always represented as a set of movements. But, this being the case, when we credit a subject with a spatial representation about an object a at location F , this does not commit us to the idea that the subject can represent a independently of F . Hence it does not commit us to the idea that the subject should also be able to represent a at location G or another object b at location F . Cognitive maps are not representations with canonical compositional structure. The lack of a canonical compositional structure reflects the lack of a certain type of cognitive ability, but not of all cognitive abilities. The claim that to know how to Φ is to have a cognitive map about Φ -ing amounts to claiming that to know how to Φ is to possess a certain cognitive ability pertaining to the practice of Φ -ing—a cognitive ability that may not be linguistically expressible or revisable on the basis of inferential and evidential relations, and that pertain to the set of skills subjects deploy when engaging in an activity.¹⁰

The natural question is: why would non-conceptual content, thus understood, be a suitable candidate for the content of know-how

¹⁰ Heck also exemplifies the lack of canonical structure of cognitive maps with a case of knowing how: “having a cognitive map of one’s environment is quite different from having a collection of explicit beliefs about it. One manifestation of this fact is that one can “know how to get somewhere” and yet have no idea how to give someone directions for getting there —except, perhaps, by imagining the route one would take, thus putting one’s cognitive map to use in imagination.” (Heck 2007: 128). Heck, however, does not endorse the idea that know-how states are cognitive maps. Neither does he offer an argument in favor of the non-conceptual nature of the content of know-how states, as Stanley suggests (2011b: 172).

states? The standard motivation behind the appeal to non-conceptual content in discussions of knowing how is the idea that the action-oriented aspects of cognition call for an explanatory tool that would allow us to ascribe know-how states to subjects without them having to possess the concepts used to correctly characterize such states. My argument, however, does not rely, directly, at least, on this kind of considerations. In some cases, the action-oriented aspects constitutive of knowing how do require that the relationship between subjects and their know-how states be such that they need to possess the concepts involved in a correct characterization of their content. I thus acknowledge the view, often endorsed by the intellectualist, that even if “I do not have to have an accurate descriptive conceptualization of my way of Φ -ing, in order to know how to Φ ... I do need to have the concept associated with the activity of Φ -ing” (Stanley, 2011b: 170).

It may indeed seem absurd to think that someone can, for instance, know how to fly a 747 jet without having to possess the concepts associated with the activity of flying a 747 jet. At the same time, the plausibility of this claim would only show that knowing how to do things, for a large class of actions, is not possible without having acquired certain concepts. It does not show that what justifies the ascription of knowing how is the subject’s possession of such concepts. Subjects may indeed need to possess certain concepts for knowing how to do certain things, even if such conceptual abilities do not constitute their know-how. This is, of course, at least partly, why the intellectualist appeals to practical ways of thinking about ways of doing things: to provide an explanation not based strictly on concept possession. After all, I may be related to a proposition that contains as its constituent the concept of FLYING A 747 JET only under a demonstrative mode of presentation. Yet, since the attempt to clarify the notion of practical ways of thinking in terms of their functional role is—as I have argued in the previous Section—explanatorily idle vis-à-vis the characteristic features of know-how, the most natural and straightforward explanation of such characteristic features will appeal to the different kind of (non-conceptual) content involved in the know-how states.

The appeal to states with non-conceptual content is not only methodologically fruitful. The notion of non-conceptual content

also seems to be especially well suited for characterizing the content of know-how states, as the lack of a canonical composition entails that the cognitive abilities that grant ascription of knowing how do not involve representational structures that support linguistic or quasi-linguistic inferential reasoning—something commonly associated with knowledge how. Non-conceptual content seems to be the appropriate notion for characterizing the content of representational states that are intimately connected to the subject's abilities to act upon objects or to perform a particular task. The arguments stressing this feature are abundant in the anti-intellectualist camp, but have suffered from a non-cognitivist, ability-based, take on the notion. Yet, as I clarified earlier, states with non-conceptual content, on the proposed account, have correctness conditions. Like cognitive maps, they can be correct or incorrect, accurate or inaccurate representations. States with non-conceptual content, although not governed by the compositional semantics applicable to natural language, still can enter, on the account defended here, into rational cognitive processes.¹¹

Interestingly, intellectualists like Jason Stanley (2011b) acknowledge that there is a role for the notion of non-conceptual content in their picture. Yet, it is the role, he claims, of *enabling* the appropriate propositional mental states through the operation of certain sub-personal mechanisms. Stanley thus attempts to undermine the arguments of those who rely, for instance, on the neuropsychology of motor-intentional behaviour to make a case against the propositional nature of the content of know-how states (see e.g. Kelly 2000; Toribio 2008a), by pointing out that whatever role non-conceptual content plays at the sub-personal level—i.e., at the level of the mechanisms involved in skilful action—, that role is perfectly consistent with the intellectualist view. When discussing the case of DF—a patient, who due to carbon-monoxide poisoning is completely unable to recognize the size, shape and orientation of visual objects, while nevertheless being able to execute tasks such as posting a card through a slot rotated at different angles—Stanley claims:

¹¹ See Rescorla 2009 for a defence of the possibility of rational cognitive processes involving computations defined over a particular type of cognitive map.

DF's knowledge of how to put a card into a slot is propositional knowledge that is based on a non-conceptual understanding of the orientation of the slot ... She is able to have propositional attitudes about a way of posting a card into a slot *in virtue of this non-conceptual understanding of orientation*. (2011b: 172)

Later on, while briefly discussing Heck's view about the non-conceptual content of cognitive maps, Stanley insists on this idea:

Perhaps we need non-conceptual content to explain some of the ways of thinking that constitute the content of my knowledge of how to grasp a doorknob, or my knowledge of how to get to Boston. It may be that non-conceptual content is needed to have the propositional attitudes that are required to guide an action, in order for that action to be skilled. This role of non-conceptual content, *as enabling propositional mental states*, raises no problem at all for the thesis that an action is skilled, or intelligent, in virtue of being a manifestation of propositional knowledge. (2011b: 173)

Stanley's concern is a version of the sub-personal worry. He seems to think that, were we to characterize the content of know-how states as non-conceptual, we would thereby be committed to a view of knowing how that locates it outside the sphere of intelligence—outside rationality. The general issue of whether there could be intelligence or reason-guided action outside the domain of conceptual thought goes beyond the scope of this paper. Let me make, however, two brief remarks about this issue.

First, Stanley's interpretation of Heck's view of non-conceptual content is far too hurried. Stanley's argument is summed up in this quote:

The fact that some representations take the form of cognitive maps does not mean that they are non-conceptual. A cognitive map can determine one kind of mode of presentation of a way of getting somewhere. Modes of presentation do not need to be characterized in descriptive terms. Knowing how to get to Boston is knowledge of a proposition concerning a way of getting to Boston, where the functional role of that way is specified via features of the cognitive map. (Stanley 2011b: 172-173)

The argument is, however, deeply flawed, as it is based on the (mistaken) idea that the structural properties of the states that can be said to be cognitive maps are not related at all to their content being conceptual or non-conceptual. Yet, once you take the *contrasting* notion of conceptual content to be a Fregean notion, to say of a state

that it takes the form of a cognitive map implies that the constituents of such a state do not have a propositional structure. The suggestion is that, by virtue of not having a propositional structure, cognitive maps cannot enter into the same kind of inferential relationships as states whose content has a canonical decomposition. As Heck (2007: 128) reminds us, cognitive maps are like geographical maps in that “one cannot, for example, form arbitrary Boolean combinations of maps: There is no map that is the negation of my cognitive map of Boston; there is no map that is the disjunction of my map and my wife’s; and so forth.” It is thus part and parcel of the idea of a cognitive map that its content is non-conceptual, in this strong sense. It is precisely this feature that explains why know-how states, as states that take the form of cognitive maps, play their distinctive functional role.

When Stanley claims (2011: 168) that endorsing a notion of non-conceptual content for know-how states is consistent with his intellectualism, he has in mind a form of what Speaks (2005) calls ‘relatively non-conceptual content’ or what Heck (2000) refers to as ‘the state view’ of non-conceptualism. On the state-view reading, ‘non-conceptual’ is a dyadic property that relates the subject to the content of the states she is in—the property of not needing to possess the relevant concepts. On this reading, the content of the know-how states can indeed be a proposition. Hence, the consistency between the two views. However, as I have stressed here, when non-conceptualism is taken in the stronger, absolute, content-view sense, and the contrasting notion of conceptual content is construed along neo-Fregean lines in the way I do, the consistency vanishes, as this view would entail that the subject could exercise cognitive abilities she does not possess (see Toribio 2008b).

Second, and more directly related to Stanley’s sub-personal worry. Both Heck’s view of cognitive maps as paradigmatic representations with non-conceptual content and the view of know-how states defended here, as states that take the form of cognitive maps, locate the operation of these representations at the personal level of the subject’s cognitive life. Stanley’s claim that the role of non-conceptual content is that of ‘enabling propositional mental states’ suggests that he instead conceives of non-conceptual content as the content of the states of the sub-personal systems that subserve the putative

propositional states in which know-how states consist. A sub-personal system is a physical mechanism—usually a part of an organism’s brain—that processes information in ways that are not available to the organism itself. The enabling role that Stanley assigns to non-conceptual content—as the content of sub-personal states—is thus a causal role. Indeed some authors (see e.g. Bermúdez 1995) have argued that the content of the sub-personal computational states posited by e.g. information-processing accounts of vision is non-conceptual. Thus understood, the appeal to states with non-conceptual content to explain knowledge how is consistent with intellectualism. However, the consistency of intellectualism with a characterization of non-conceptual content as the content of sub-personal level states, does not speak against there also being personal-level states with non-conceptual content which stand in a constitutive relationship, as opposed to a causal relationship, to knowledge how.

Crucially, on this latter understanding, it would make sense to claim, with Stanley, that DF knows how to put the card into the slot *in virtue of a non-conceptual understanding* of the orientation of the slot, without thereby entailing, as Stanley does, that the role of non-conceptual content is purely causal—an enabler of the propositional attitude in which know-how consists.¹² Although sometimes ‘in virtue of’ has such a causal slant, to claim that something is the case in virtue of something else usually carries with it the mark of a very different type of explanation—a grounding explanation. Grounding explanations are “a distinctive kind of metaphysical explanation, in which *explanans* and *explanandum* are connected, not through some sort of causal mechanism, but through some constitutive form of determination” (Fine, 2012: 37). To claim that DF knows how to put a letter through the box in virtue of her non-conceptual understanding of the orientation of the slot does not reduce knowing how to the tokening of a sub-personal state. Neither does it give necessary and sufficient conditions for her know how. If, as Gideon Rosen (2010:

¹² Stanley’s interpretation of DF’s case seems to conflate the idea of subjects’ having no conscious access to their know-how states with the idea that such states cannot guide intelligent action. Some unconscious states—typically e.g. unconscious beliefs—may and do indeed guide subjects’ intelligent (and, sometimes, not so intelligent) behavior in complex and subtle ways, and they belong, for this reason, to the personal level of our cognitive lives.

118) claims, that p obtains in virtue of q entails that q necessitates p , then DF's non-conceptual understanding may be considered only a partial ground. The full ground of the fact that DF knows how to put a card into a slot may then have to include the fact that DF is *capable* of having some other propositional attitudes—e.g. the belief that Kelly (2002: 388) reports DF expressing with the sentence: 'I believe the slot is oriented this way.' The claim that DF knows how to put a card into a slot in virtue of a non-conceptual understanding of the orientation of the slot may thus be compatible with the idea of there being sub-personal states enabling some relevant propositional attitudes (how could there not be?). But it should be read, on the accuracy assessable version of anti-intellectualism defended here, as conveying that DF's knowledge how is grounded in—and not caused by—her non-conceptual understanding of the orientation of the slot. Such a non-conceptual understanding is constituted by DF's bearing a non-propositional attitude to a personal level cognitive state with a non-conceptual content that correctly represents DF's way of putting the card into the slot.

Stanley also offers an argument against what seems to be a version of this latter view (Stanley 2011b: 167-170). If the content of know-how states were non-conceptual, it would be mysterious, Stanley claims, why attributions of knowing how create opaque contexts (Stanley 2011b: 169). I turn to this argument in the next Section.

4 Opacity

Propositional attitude contexts are characteristically opaque. They are linguistic expressions in which the substitution of co-referring terms changes the truth-value of the sentence—they create non-extensional contexts. The idea that attributions of knowing how create opaque context was already present in Stanley and Williamson (2001: 416), but it is Stanley (2011b) who addresses the issue in more detail. In order to do so, he relies on David Carr's famous example of a dancer who knows how to perform a particular dance, which happens to be, unbeknownst to him, a Semaphore recital of Gray's 'Elegy':

Suppose a famous dancer was to perform before an audience, an item from his repertoire to which he has himself given the following title:

(12) A performance of Improvisation No. 15

To the astonishment of a member of his audience who just happens to be an expert on communications, the movements of the dancer turn out to resemble an accurate (movement perfect) semaphore version of Gray's "Elegy", though the dancer is quite unaware of this fact. We may describe what is seen by the audience member as follows:

(13) A semaphore recital of Gray's "Elegy".

Although we can describe the dancer as knowing how to bring about (12) we cannot reasonably suppose that he also knows how to bring about (13). Even though (12) and (13) are...but different characterizations of the same action, we cannot safely switch these characterizations in knowing how contexts. So it appears that sentences about knowing how, unlike those about ability, are truly non-extensional. (Carr 1979: 407-8)

Stanley takes Carr's example to be conclusive about the opacity of knowing-how attributions and argues: "[i]f knowing how to do something is non-conceptual ... it would be utterly mysterious why attributions of knowing how create opaque contexts" (Stanley 2011b: 169). Stanley's argument can thus be formulated in the following way:

- (1) If ascriptions of know-how are opaque, then the content of know-how states is conceptual.
- (2) Ascriptions of know-how are opaque.
- (C) Therefore, the content of know-how states is conceptual.

To probe the argument, one may adopt one of the two following strategies. First, to deny premise (2) and argue that, if (12) and (13) are indeed coextensive, then the dancer knows how to bring about both (12) and (13). Second, to deny premise 1. Even though I believe ascriptions of knowledge how are indeed opaque, it would be helpful to see how someone interested in pursuing the first of the two strategies might argue for it. It will be helpful because it will further clarify the main distinction between classic anti-intellectualism and the proposal defended in this paper.

The obvious move for someone interested in denying premise (2) is to try to convince us that the dancer knows how to bring about

both (12) and (13), but does not know that he knows. We would have to assume, of course, that the dance is not just an unrepeatable improvisation, as the name may, perhaps misleadingly, suggest. It could then be argued that, if the expert on communications were to inform the dancer that he just danced a Semaphore recital of Gray's 'Elegy', the dancer would know, on the spot, how to dance the Elegy without having to learn anything else. This would allegedly show that what the dancer lacks is a piece of declarative knowledge, not knowledge how.

Perhaps some of the awkwardness one feels when trying to imagine someone dancing a choreography as complex as a choreography of the Elegy would look like without knowing that each of the movements corresponds to a symbol in Semaphore lies in the fact that the Semaphore telegraphic system has, like any other language, a canonical compositional structure. Would simpler cases of co-extensional descriptions of activities make the dialectical move of this first strategy more attractive? Think of the expert knitter who comes out with what he takes to be a rather original and improvised knitting stitch pattern, which he calls 'Pattern No. 5.' To the astonishment of the knitter's knowledgeable circle of friends, Pattern No. 5 is only a reproduction of what everyone in the knitting circles knows as a mock cable. Since knitting patterns, unlike the Semaphore system, lack a canonical decomposition, we may feel more inclined to grant that our expert knitter knows how to knit a mock cable; he just does not know that he knows. So, if a knitter comes up with an improvised pattern, which belongs, unbeknownst to him, to some extended repertoire, the opacity claim seems to lose some of its bite. But not all of it. If e.g. we asked our knitter to knit a mock cable before he is told that what he does is precisely *that*, he would not be able to comply with our request. In fact, *any* ascription of knowledge, including knowledge how, results in classic opaque contexts, because knowledge is a semantically evaluable state. It is only when we think about these cases along the lines of an ability-based characterization of knowledge how that we get conflicting intuitions. Yet, as we saw, an ability-based characterization of know-how is subject to powerful objections. It can also prompt, we can add now, misguided intuitions with regard to the opacity of know-how ascriptions.

The second, much more promising strategy, is the one I would

like to pursue here. As I said, it consists in denying premise (1) of the argument above. It is simply false that if ascriptions of know-how are opaque, the content of know-how states is conceptual. The conditional would be true just in case the only states with semantically evaluable content were states with conceptual content. This underlying assumption, however, would only hold if we thought of non-conceptual content in the way classic, Dreyfus style, anti-intellectualism does. This seems to be what Carr has in mind at the end of the text quoted above: “[s]o it appears that sentences about knowing how, *unlike those about ability*, are truly non-extensional” (*Ibid*, my italics). Yet, as I have made clear earlier, it is part and parcel of the notion of a contentful mental state that it is representational. Contentful states, including contentful states whose content is non-conceptual, represent the world as being a particular way—pace Dreyfus—and thus have correctness conditions. Whether their content is conceptual or non-conceptual is determined by their syntactic structure, i.e., by whether or not the content is canonically decomposable and by the nature of its constituents. This difference, in turn, explains the distinct ways in which these states behave in the subject’s mental economy. If the position defended in this paper is right, the characteristic functional role of know-how states in a subject’s mental economy (the *explanandum* in a theory about know-how) is best accounted for by appealing to an accuracy assessable notion of non-conceptual content—an *explanans* which, unlike practical modes of presentation of the same kind of conceptual content, is not just a reinstatement of the *explanandum*. The alleged truth of premise (1) is thus based on a conflation of two very different issues. One is whether ascriptions of know-how states are semantically evaluable. They are. The other is whether the content of know-how states is conceptual: not necessarily.

The root of this conflation arguably lies in the idea that, in defending the non-conceptual nature of the content of a state, theorists are thereby committed to the idea that we cannot formulate or communicate such content. But, of course, this is not true. The correctness conditions of a state (regardless of the nature of its content) will always be part of a linguistic characterization. That the characterization is linguistic and hence has propositional structure and conceptual content does not mean that the content it refers to has to

share the same properties. The obvious unavoidability of theoretical descriptions for expressing the correctness conditions of know-how states does not amount, in and of itself, to agreeing with the intellectualist that know-how states are propositional attitudes after all.¹³ We, as theorists, describe the knower as related to something that is expressed in propositional form, but the know-how attitude remains non-propositional because know-how is, on this account, the kind of representational state that is about things/facts (ways of doing things) not in virtue of relating the subject to a proposition concerning those facts, but in virtue of the subject's being in a know-how state with accurate non-conceptual content.

5 Conclusion

Once opacity is shown to be a red herring as a way of arguing against the non-conceptual nature of the content of know-how states, and given the difficulties in getting any explanatory mileage out of the notion of practical ways of thinking about ways of doing things, the most straightforward and plausible explanation of the difference between the functional roles that knowing-how and knowing-that states play in our mental life remains one which appeals to their having different kinds of content.¹⁴

Josefa Toribio
Department of Logic, History and Philosophy of Science
University of Barcelona
08001 Barcelona, Spain
jtoribio@icrea.cat

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¹³ Thanks to an anonymous referee for pressing me on this point.

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Book Reviews

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What Is Said and What Is Not: The Semantics/Pragmatics Interface, edited by Carlo Penco and Filippo Domaneschi. Stanford: CSLI Publications, 2013, x + 344 pages. ISBN 978-1-57586-667-3

The question of how to draw the distinction between semantics and pragmatics is central to the philosophy of language. As the title suggests, this volume seeks to approach the question via the intuitive and yet controversial notion of *what is said* in uttering a sentence, and the way that this notion affects our understanding of other phenomena. In particular, an emphasis is placed on how developments in the last decade or so have shed new light on this matter.

Grice thought that *what is said* in uttering a sentence is closely related to the conventional meaning of the sentence; he only explicitly allowed the time of the utterance, the fixing of any referential expressions, and the resolution of any ambiguities to be contextual factors that are relevant to such content. A tradition has followed this approach in seeking to place an emphasis on the role of semantic processes in determining *what is said*. Such views are represented in the *Semantics First* section of this volume. A distinct approach to the matter takes it that various pragmatic processes are essential to fix *what is said*. This approach is represented in the *Pragmatics First* section. The final *Alternatives* section consists of papers from authors who have sought to reject assumptions held by one or both of the aforementioned groups. But despite this tripartite distinction, the editors are right to make clear in the preface that while it is tempting to subsume each paper into a general category, close attention should be paid to the arguments of each individual piece (p. x). Indeed, it proves difficult to arrange the available views even into the general sections outlined. For instance, minimalism is placed in the *Semantics First* section, even though few minimalists would agree with the characterisation of the view as claiming “that ‘what is said’ by an ut-

terance is fully determined by syntax and semantics” (p. 13). Instead, many minimalists allow that *what is said* will be a context-sensitive matter and in so doing hold many points of agreement with those views represented in the *Pragmatics First* section.

Stojnic and Lepore’s contribution—the first of the collection—represents this point concerning minimalism well. They follow Cappelen and Lepore (Herman Cappelen and Ernest Lepore, *Insensitive Semantics*, Oxford, 2005) in arguing that it is not the task of a semantic theory to assign true indirect speech reports to utterances; a semantic theory does not have to account for what an utterance said. Instead, Stojnic and Lepore suggest a rather novel minimalist approach. They argue that a semantic theory should be based upon Lewis’ two ideas of the conversational scoreboard and coordination. A conversational scoreboard is an abstract record of all the information communicated and exchanged between conversational participants. Conversational participants face the challenge of updating their scoreboards in the same way as one another, so as to avoid misunderstanding. To avoid this coordination problem, participants will make use of conventions, defined here as a regularity observed by agents with a view to matching their behaviour with other agents. Stojnic and Lepore argue that it is the job of a semantic theory to track the shared knowledge of linguistic conventions that agents will use to adjust their scoreboard upon hearing an utterance. More formally, the adequacy constraint on a semantic theory is as follows:

A semantic theory *T* for a language *L* should assign as semantic content to an utterance *u* of a sentence *S* of *L* whatever *u* of *S* contributes to the conversational record in virtue of coordination. (p. 33)

As Stojnic and Lepore allow, a semantic theory of this kind will prove quite liberal in what it takes to be semantic phenomena, including presuppositions and conventional implicatures. But Lewis’s notion of a convention is concerned with action in general, and one wonders if such a view is properly able to distinguish between linguistic and non-linguistic conventions. Chess players may exploit the conventions of the game to communicate a great deal of information with an utterance such as “Your queen is exposed”, but it is not the job of semantic theory to track such conventions. The view will benefit from further discussion on this matter.

The broad views of minimalism and indexicalism are represented well in the *Semantics First* section. Both views take the output of semantic processes to be a proposition, but indexicalism differs from minimalism in taking this proposition to be *what is said* in uttering that sentence. In doing so, indexicalism takes the appeal to contextual features within semantic processes to be far more common. It is appropriate that an abridged version of Stanley's "Context and Logical Form" is reprinted here as the third chapter, as this has emerged as probably one of the most influential forms of indexicalism.

There are, of course, forms of indexicalism aside from Stanley's, and this is represented in Vignolo's contribution. In "Surprise Indexicalism", he argues that there are more indexical expressions than just the set of indexicals and demonstratives. Otherwise put, there are many more expressions whose (Kaplanian) character allows for a variation in content across contexts. Details permitting, both colour adjectives and comparative adjectives (such as 'tall') are indexical in this way. According to Vignolo, positing such indexicality is only justified in those cases that admit of incompleteness arguments. Cappelen and Lepore (Herman Cappelen and Ernest Lepore, *Insensitive Semantics*, Oxford, 2005 pp. 59-69), however, have argued that incompleteness arguments can be given for any sentence in a natural language, and so the move to positing extra indexical expressions is the first step on a slippery slope to radical contextualism. Further, they have argued that intuitions regarding such cases miss the point as they are metaphysical intuitions regarding what properties exist, rather than semantic intuitions. Vignolo responds to both arguments. Regarding the latter argument, he argues that such intuitions are in fact semantically relevant insofar as a semantic theory must account for the implicit knowledge required to understand a language. As such, an incompleteness argument tells us that competent speakers feel unable to evaluate the truth of a sentence independently of a context, and so we are given reason to suppose that such a sentence is context-dependent. But crucially, however, Vignolo must also respond to Cappelen and Lepore's "slippery slope" argument so as to avoid the proliferation of indexicality. After all, just as a sentence such as 'John is tall' leads us to raise the question of what standard John is tall according to, sentences that are not usually claimed to be incomplete (e.g. 'John went to the gym') raise questions of a similar

nature (e.g. how did John go? Did he go inside? How long for?). Here, Vignolo simply rejects the claim that speakers do not know how to evaluate sentences such as 'John went to the gym' independently of contextual completions (p. 71). But given that Cappelen and Lepore have given us reason to question the distinction between complete and incomplete sentences, Vignolo's argument would benefit from further reason to maintain such a distinction.

The difference between the *Semantics First* and *Pragmatics First* sections is perhaps best described as one of tradition and approach, rather than as one of theoretical claims. For instance, Claudia Bianchi begins the *Pragmatics First* section by arguing that the context relevant to reference-fixing in the case of indexicals and to force-fixing in the case of illocutionary acts is the context intended by the speaker and made available to the hearer. And while identifying the proper role for speaker's intentions in semantic and pragmatic theory is a crucial issue, Bianchi's conclusion by itself is not something that the minimalist and indexicalist views outlined in the first section are forced to deny. A similar, though not identical, point can be made regarding Catherine Wearing's contribution in chapter eight. She argues for the view that metaphorical content is realised at the level of *what is said* rather than implicature, via a defence of the scope argument. Perhaps most intriguing about this article is the suggestion made towards the end that the realisation of metaphor in *what is said* could even be accommodated by Stanley's indexical approach, which claims that all context-sensitivity is mandated by a variable present in the logical form of a sentence (p. 157). However, this would seem to require that every expression-type capable of being used metaphorically has some kind of metaphor-variable realised in its syntactic contribution.

Robyn Carston's contribution stands out by directly challenging the view held by both minimalists and indexicalists (and indeed some pragmatists) that word meanings are not fully-fledged concepts complete with a denotation. Her argument is twofold. First, the context-sensitivity of word meanings suggest that there is no one privileged concept that constitutes the meaning of an expression, and that instead each expression only provides a conceptual schema that must be fleshed out into a concept on each occasion of use. Secondly, Carston points to experimental evidence based on processing considerations

that suggests that in the case of polysemous expressions, hearers first access a general, underspecified conceptual schema and then flesh it out into one particular concept based on subsequent contextual cues. This underspecificity of polysemous expressions generalises insofar as all open-class expressions are “polysemous or at least potentially polysemous” (p. 192).

The *Alternatives* section is a lively one that consists of six papers from a range of different viewpoints. Joana Garmendia uses chapter twelve to argue that the social rewards associated with ironic communication is better accommodated by a Gricean implicature-based account. In chapter fifteen, Michael Devitt outlines three flaws that he argues are prevalent among the pragmatist approach represented in the second section.

Semantic relativism, which has attracted much discussion over the past decade, is represented (albeit indirectly) in John MacFarlane’s paper “Non indexical Contextualism”, reprinted here as chapter thirteen. Here, MacFarlane outlines a form of context-sensitivity in which the truth value, but not the content, of a proposition is dependent upon a parameter, the value of which is determined by the context of utterance. He labels such a view non-indexical contextualism, which given the fact that this collection already uses the labels of contextualism and indexicalism in quite a distinct way, is perhaps not the most helpful name. Nevertheless, his exposition of the view is clear enough so as to avoid confusion.

MacFarlane’s paper is useful when considering Corazza and Doherty’s contribution in chapter fourteen, which outlines their situationalist view. They argue that contextualists, indexicalists, and minimalists alike have laid too large a cognitive burden upon conversational participants. For a hearer to understand an utterance, it is not necessary that she must entertain a thought with the unarticulated constituents that it is argued may accompany such an utterance via free enrichment. However, the truth value of such an utterance (and indeed of the corresponding thought) can be dependent upon parameters not present in the content of an utterance, purely in virtue of the fact that such utterances are situated. The idea here is that utterances and propositions are anchored to situations, and these situations can affect the truth value of these propositions without doing so via its content.

As Corazza and Dokic note, the proposal is most akin to a form of non indexical contextualism outlined by MacFarlane in which the truth of a proposition is relative to a “counts-as” parameter. As such, situationalism can be seen as differing from many other relativist proposals, not only in that there is a single privileged context from which semantic evaluation should take place, but also in the fact that relativising the truth of propositions to a situation means that there is no restraint on what situational factors can affect the truth value of a proposition. Whereas many relativist proposals suggest merely that the truth of a proposition should be relativised to a specific parameter such as a standard of taste or an epistemic standard, situationalism allows a variation on nearly any parameter to affect the truth of a proposition. As such, free enrichment of communicated content is not required on this view. One fruitful topic of discussion for the situationalist proposal would be whether, despite our utterances and thoughts being anchored, free enrichment can nevertheless occur on some occasions, despite not being necessary to account for the intuitive truth values of such utterances.

One distinctive theme that recurs throughout this collection is how modes of presentation (both linguistic and cognitive) are to be accommodated within semantic theory. In chapter nine, François Récanati approaches this by arguing that the semantic reference of a definite description is fixed by the mental file associated with the singular predicate contained within the definite description, rather than by the singular predicate itself. Kepa Korta also confronts reference and cognition in chapter eleven when he argues that there is no single proposition called *what is said* that can serve as both what a speaker meant in uttering something, and the basis from which to calculate implicatures. This is because across different contexts propositions that differ in the kind of cognitive fix contained within them are required in order to calculate implicatures. In some, the hearer must access the referential content in order to calculate implicatures, while in others, only the speaker-bound or utterance-bound content is required.

Finally in chapter sixteen, following Kripke’s famous puzzle about belief, John Perry seeks to show why inferring ‘Pierre said that London is pretty’ from ‘Pierre said “London is pretty”’ (which Perry labels *disquotation*) is not valid, and neither is inferring ‘Pierre

believes that London is pretty' from 'Pierre said that London is pretty' (which Perry labels *content explanation*). Crimmins and Perry (Mark Crimmins and John Perry, "The Prince and the Phone Both: Reporting Puzzling Belief", *Journal of Philosophy*, 86, 1989) argued that the latter inference is not valid because a belief report may not properly track the *notions* that the agent (Pierre) uses to think about the relevant objects. Such notions are present in belief reports as unarticulated constituents, and so the truth value of the belief report will partly turn on whether they are the notions used by the agent. Here Perry builds on this approach and argues that *disquotation* may not properly track the *roles* that an object plays in a speaker's life. Just as notions are represented as unarticulated constituents in belief reports, roles are represented as unarticulated constituents in indirect speech reports. Perry's innovative proposal aside, it is fitting that he should complete this volume as the influence that his work has had is plain to see throughout.

This collection constitutes an excellent survey of the issues surrounding the pragmatic/semantic distinction, with fine contributions from esteemed authors. What this collection serves to show is that the notion of *what is said* is philosophically crucial, and not only because it is intuitive. How it is accounted for will affect and be affected by a vast range of phenomena including context-sensitivity, metaphor, irony, speech acts, modes of presentation, and methodological considerations. As such, one key way for this discussion to develop, which this collection contributes towards, is from further integration of these areas of research. And yet the resulting complexity of the issues is handled ably by the editors, who provide the student reader unaccustomed to the area with a historical introduction and a brief summary of each chapter. This volume will therefore prove useful for researchers and students alike.

Jumbly Grindrod
Department of Philosophy
University of Reading
Whiteknights
PO Box 218
Reading RG6 6AA
U.K.
j.grindrod@pgr.reading.ac.uk

Necessary Beings: An Essay on Ontology, Modality, and the Relations Between Them, by Bob Hale. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 320 pages, 2013, ISBN 9780199669578 (hbk).

In *Necessary Beings*, Bob Hale brings together his views on the source and explanation of necessity. It is very a thorough book and Hale covers a lot of ground. It contains not only new research but also useful summaries of Hale's views and overviews of the various positions he opposes or develops. Thus it is not only of interest to experts in the field, but it can also serve as an introduction to the topic to readers with a general knowledge of logic and metaphysics. It can be read with little background in the specific topic of the metaphysics of necessity, as a reader unacquainted with the particulars can rely on Hale's clear and accessible exposition and many pointers to further literature.

The core thesis of the book is that ontology and modality are interdependent and equally fundamental and irreducible. Hale explains modality in terms of the natures or identities of things, "what it is to be that thing—what makes it the thing it is, and distinguishes it from every other thing." (132) Each thing α has a nature Φ peculiar to it, and "truths about it are necessary [...] $\Phi\alpha$ tells us *what it is for α to be the thing it is*" (133). A thing could not have lacked its nature, but could have had different properties that are not part of its nature. This leaves space for possibilities. Hale presents an essentialist theory of modality, set out in chapter 6: propositions are metaphysically necessary in virtue of the natures of things, and propositions are metaphysically possible in virtue of not being ruled out by those natures.

Metaphysics and ontology are further intertwined due to Hale's Fregean approach to the questions of what kinds of things there are, presented in the "Ontological Preliminaries". There are objects, properties, relations and functions, where the distinction is made linguistically in terms of the differences in expressions of a language that can be used to refer to things of different kinds. Hale follows Frege in drawing ontological distinctions on the basis of syntactic ones within the expressions of a language. Roughly, an object is the kind of thing that is typically referred to by a proper name, a property the kind of thing that is typically referred to by a predicate, a

relation typically by a relational expression, a function typically by a functional expression. To avoid power of actual languages, Hale appeals to the irreducible and fundamental nature of modality. It is not the existence of expressions in actual languages that matter, but it suffices that there could be expressions of the relevant kind. By modalising the syntactic criteria, exemplified by “objects are the kind of things that could be referred to by a singular term”, “we can avoid an objectionable relativity of ontology to the contingencies of actual languages by means of an essentially *modal* explanation of what objects, properties, etc., are—an explanation which transcends the contingent limitations of actual languages by drawing upon their possible extensions.” (20)

After a discussion of difficulties with ‘the concept *horse*’ that Frege’s original proposal faced and modifications by Dummett and Wright, Hale presents his solution: “objects can be defined as those things which can *only* be referred to by singular terms, properties as those things which can be referred to by predicates, relations those which can be referred to by relational expressions, and so on.” (31) Properties can be referred to by predicates, such as ‘is wise’, as well as by singular terms, such as ‘wisdom’, but “these alternative modes of reference to properties are not on a level—predicates are logically prior to singular terms for properties.” (31) The metaphysician’s ‘Socrates has the property wisdom’ is derivative of the more ordinary ‘Socrates is wise’.

Hale’s Fregean approach to ontology motivates an abundant conception of properties: a property is anything that could be referred to by a meaningful predicate, no matter how heterogenous. However, due to the linguistic constraints, it is not so abundant as to allow for properties of infinite complexity. Any property has to be *finitely specifiable*. Chapter 8 discusses an important consequence for the semantics of second-order logic: “we should interpret second-order variables as ranging over properties and relations, understood as individuated intensionally in accordance with the abundant conception.” (193) Thus Hale rejects the standard semantics for second-order logic. His reasons are already clear from the monadic case. Monadic second-order variables range over the power set of the elements of the domain. If the domain is infinite, its power set contains infinitely large arbitrary subsets of the domain. These could not be

specified by a condition expressible in a language: neither is there a general predicate true of all and only the objects in those sets, nor can we list them all. In Hale's alternative semantics the second-order variables only range over the *definable* subsets of the domain. The chapter finishes with a defence of impredicative comprehension axioms.

Hale informed me that he claimed erroneously that certain results carry over from the non-standard Henkin semantics to his semantics, namely that if the second-order domains are taken to comprise just the definable subsets of the first-order domain, the usual categoricity proofs for second-order arithmetic and analysis, which go through under the standard semantics, fail, and compactness, completeness, and the Löwenheim-Skolem Theorems are provable just as they are under the non-standard Henkin semantics. Hale explained in correspondence that his semantics agrees with the standard one and "diverges from the more general Henkin semantics, in one crucial respect: once the first-order domain is fixed, there is no freedom of choice over the second-order domains. It is this feature of the standard semantics which, at bottom, underpins proofs of categoricity for arithmetic and analysis, and explains why the proofs of completeness, compactness, and Löwenheim-Skolem, which can be given assuming Henkin semantics, fail when the semantics is standard." Hale is publishing a paper which explains and rectifies the mistake, forthcoming in a special issue of *Synthese*, edited by Gila Sher and Otavio Bueno, on logics between first- and second-order. The relevant sections will be amended in the forthcoming paperback edition of the book.

The resulting conception of objects is fairly, but not quite so abundant: it is not sufficient for an object to exist that there could be a singular term that refers to it. Hale imposes "the small but important extra demand that (actual or possible) singular terms figure in some true atomic contexts." (40) So there are numbers, but no round squares or mythical creatures. Chapter 7 discusses which things exist necessarily. Hale argues that purely general properties, those that could be referred to by "*purely general* predicates—predicates which embed no singular terms" (166), exist necessarily. Thus purely general natures exist necessarily. They are natures of necessary beings. Such are, for instance, the natures of logical functions, but

also “natural” properties that are not object dependent, such as being an aardvark. Any purely general property of first level gives rise to further necessarily existing properties of second level. “The natures of such pure first-level properties and relations will themselves be pure second-level properties, whose necessary existence is again guaranteed.” (170) And so on. Other beings, such as the cardinal numbers, “exist necessarily because their existence is a consequence of the existence of certain functions and certain properties which themselves exist necessarily.” (177) Concerning other prominent beings that have been pronounced to exist necessarily, Hale assures us at the very outset of the book that his argument “does not lend itself to a proof of [God’s] necessary existence.” (5, footnote 7). One might, however, be forgiven to speculate whether the *summum bonum quo superius non est* can be described by a purely general predicate.

Not all things exist necessarily. In chapter 9 Hale puts forward his essentialist theory of contingent beings. For there to be contingent beings, it must be possible that “some of the natures that actually exist might not have existed, and that there could exist or might have existed some natures over and above any natures there actually are.” (222) The natures of contingent beings are “impure” or “mixed”: they are not purely general, but refer to particular objects. “Such impure properties depend for their existence upon the existence of the objects involved in them.” (223) If these objects are contingent, the existence of the nature, too, is contingent. In chapter 11, Hale argues for the necessity of origin for living things: “each living thing has its own distinctive life cycle, including a certain type of origin, so that being of that kind involves having a certain *type* of origin. [...] each living thing of that kind has the *particular* origin it has.” (278) The nature of Aristotle, for instance, depends for its existence on the existence of his parents. The same is true for them and their parents. And so on. Hale expresses doubt if the necessity of origin can be extended to covering artefacts, too, but he does not say anything about inanimate objects that are not artefacts, like planets, stones or lakes. Maybe the existence of all contingent things ultimately depends on the existence of the actual world, which is plausibly contingent.

In an appendix to chapter 1, Hale rehearses his well-known inferential tests that terms must pass to count as singular. To solve a problem posed by Rumfitt and McCallion, Hale imposes the requirement

that “the test inferences may all be *immediately* recognised as valid by any suitably endowed speakers—that is, recognised as valid *without the need for any intermediate reasoning.*” (45) I expected something more substantial at this point. Individual speakers’ powers of immediate recognition of validity may well vary, but what counts as a singular term cannot similarly vary. We should, in other words, expect an account of immediate inferences, as we might call them. All we know at this point is that they cannot be constituted by a single step in a suitable system of natural deduction, as “proof- and model-theoretic characterisations [of validity and hence inference] presuppose a prior syntactic specification of the language, and so are ruled out in the present context.” (44) I would have liked to read more on this issue. As Hale’s explanation of the difference between objects and other things depends on the possibility of drawing a distinction between singular terms and other expressions, it is vital that such a distinction can be drawn without presupposing the notion of an object. Without a more substantial account of immediate inferences, the central aspect of Hale’s ontological preliminaries is left in a somewhat unsatisfactory state. The issue is reminiscent of an aspect of Peacocke’s conditions for the individuation of concepts in terms of possession conditions, which Hale discusses in chapter 5. Peacocke characterises thinkers as finding certain inferences “primitively compelling” (141). The later discussion, however, makes no connection to the appendix and it is too swift to settle whether Hale might borrow an account of immediate recognition of validity from Peacocke.

In chapters 2 and 3, Hale defends the claims that we must recognise some absolute necessities and that they cannot be explained in non-modal terms. Hale “refurbishes” an argument by McFetridge that we must believe that some forms of inferences are necessarily truth-preserving and defends his views against a Quinean sceptic about necessity. Quinean worries are less prominent than they used to be, so I suspect most readers will be content with Hale’s conclusions. Hale expresses “doubt that there could be a definitive proof that there *cannot* be a reductive explanation of modality” (69), but he makes a good case for his conclusion by assessing a varied diet of attempts to reduce or explain modality in terms of something else: combinatorial views, supervenience on the non-modal, projectivism and non-cognitivism. Conventionalism, the view that necessity has

its source in contingent matters of conventions of use and meaning, is rejected in chapter 5. Hale strengthens arguments by Dummett and Quine to draw the conclusion that this cannot be the case with any necessities, and neither can they be the product of truth in virtue of meaning.

Having argued (a) that we can make a distinction between singular terms and other expressions, (b) that there are necessary propositions, (c) that they cannot be reduced to anything else, Hale proceeds to his account necessity. In chapter 4, Hale defines absolute necessity in terms of counterfactuals and quantification over propositions: p is absolutely necessary if and only if, no matter what else would be the case, it would still be true that p : $\Box p =_{\text{def}} \forall s (s \Box \rightarrow p)$, where “the quantifier $\forall s$ is to be understood as *absolutely unrestricted*—as ranging over all propositions whatsoever.” (99) Hale discusses two further characterisations of absolute necessity—as the limit of relative necessity and as the absence of competing possibilities—and argues that all three are equivalent. Hale acknowledges that “some logicians and philosophers hold that propositional quantification [...] is ill-formed and makes no sense, on the ground that s in $\forall s$ has to be taken as a name- or individual-variable, whereas at its subsequent occurrence, it must be taken to hold place for a sentence (and so not a name).” (98, footnote 1). I agree with Hale, who rejects this opinion: just because English, or any other natural language, for that matter, if that were the case, does not allow for non-nominal quantification does not mean that we cannot make sense of it.

The issue is, however, to some extent irrelevant. Hale could have avoided using propositional quantification by defining $\Box p$ as $\neg p \Box \rightarrow p$. Hale does not say explicitly which logic of counterfactuals he favours, but we can reconstruct what he has in mind. Hale rejects possible worlds semantics and develops an alternative in terms of possibilities or “ways things, or the world, might be.” (228) Whereas possible worlds require that any proposition is determinately either true or false at a world, Hale’s possibilities allow for incompleteness: possibilities may leave certain questions open, so that some propositions may not get a truth-value at a possibility. To accommodate incompleteness in his semantics, Hale modifies the clauses for the connectives and the definition of validity slightly so as to allow for formulas to be undefined at possibilities, but the result is very close to

the standard semantics. As it stands, there is something wrong with Hale's falsity conditions for the counterfactual. I assume that there is a 'and for all w_0 , if wRw_0 and $v_{w_0}(B)=1$, then' missing before 'for some w ' on page 239. So the conditions should read:

$$v_w(B \Box \rightarrow C) = 0 \text{ iff there is a } w_0 \text{ with } wRw_0 \text{ and } v_{w_0}(B) = 1 \text{ and for all } w_0, \text{ if } wRw_0 \text{ and } v_{w_0}(B) = 1, \text{ then for some } w' \text{ such that } Sww'w_0, v_{w'}(B) = 1 \text{ but } v_{w'}(C) = 0$$

Despite the crucial difference, Hale's framework is close enough to Lewis's—acknowledged as “the standard semantics [...] for conditionals” (129, footnote 19). It validates the axioms of Lewis's system V, where $(\neg p \Box \rightarrow p) \supset (s \Box \rightarrow p)$ is valid. Thus Hale's definition of absolute modality turns out to be equivalent to what Lewis calls the *outer modality*. Hale intends the logic of absolute modality to be S5. The outer modality of a conditional logic is S5 if the models satisfy the condition Lewis calls *uniformity*: the unions of all spheres around each world are identical. Finally, Hale assumes that the spheres are *weakly centred*: each world w is surrounded by a sphere of worlds as close to w as itself. (237) Assuming the counterfactual is weaker than the strict conditional of S5, Hale's implicit conditional logic corresponds to Lewis's VWU.

The question is whether we understand counterfactuals better than necessity or even just as well. This may reasonably be denied. In Lewis's semantics and on Hale's, too, $((A \Box \rightarrow B \ \& \ \neg(A \Box \rightarrow \neg C)) \supset ((A \ \& \ C) \Box \rightarrow B))$ is valid. Thus 'Had Russell not met Whitehead, he would have written *Principia Mathematica* on his own.' and 'It is not the case that, had Russell not met Whitehead, he would not have found another collaborator.' entail 'Had Russell not met Whitehead and found another collaborator, he would have written *Principia Mathematica* on his own.' Yet, this is not obvious and as a quick, albeit non-representative, survey on social media confirms, some competent reasoners don't think it does, most are at least puzzled and hardly any say straightforwardly 'yes'. Lewis's semantics may not be the best one for counterfactuals and different ones have been proposed. Even though Hale's semantic differs in that he favours possibilities over possible worlds, this does not translate into a semantics that validates different principles from Lewis's. Formalisation of conditionals is very difficult and there is a significant amount of disagreement. Contrast this with our under-

standing of necessity. It is relatively straightforward to get someone to accept the principles that what is necessary is true and what follows only from necessary propositions is itself necessary and thus to accept S4. Alternatively, instead of the second principle, we could adopt the principle that something's being necessary is not contingent. Appealing to Hale's position that "modal facts are not contingent" (84), so that also something's being possible is not contingent, we can motivate S5. It may be that necessity, possibility and contingency can only be understood together as what Dummett would call a "local holism". It may be that we have to live with the fact that S4 and S5 simply formalise different notions of necessity, without being in a position to single out one as "the true" one. But the opportunities for debate and disagreement seem less dramatic than in the case of conditionals or counterfactuals. Even tying counterfactuals by philosophical decree to Lewis's or Hale's semantics rather than speakers' intuitions doesn't hold much promise: I understand necessity, possibility and contingency much better than the relation of 'closeness' between possible worlds or possibilities that is supposed to motivate the semantics.

As languages are finite, the Fregean approach to ontology implies that the nature of a thing is "finitely specifiable": the nature of a thing is "a small finite selection [of necessary truths] which together capture everything that is essential to being that thing". (153) This counts even for what one might consider the most complex things of them all: possibilities. The natures of possibilities, too, "are always *finitely specifiable*—that is, they can each be given by a finite description." (229) I expect some philosophers will find that controversial. They may prefer to say that possibilities are not things or reject the Fregean approach to ontology. Hale's view, however, has an interesting connection to an extension of standard modal logic proposed by Arthur Prior. We extend the language by introducing a new kind of propositional letters $n_1, n_2 \dots$ called *nominals*, each interpreted as true in exactly one possible world. Nominals can be thought of as describing possible worlds in their entirety. A proposition p is true in a possible world described by n if and only if in all possible worlds, if n then p . Where \Box is the *universal modality*, i.e. truth in every world in the model, if the model assigns the nominal n to the world w , for any w' , $v_w(B) = v_{w'}(\Box(n \supset B))$.

This much carries over to Hale's possibility semantics. Hale's metaphysics motivates adopting a *hybrid* modal logic. Where n is a nominal, to formalise a classical hybrid modal logic, it suffices to add two axioms and a rule governing the nominals to S5:

1. $\Diamond n$
2. $(n \& p) \supset \Box(n \supset p)$
3. If $\vdash n \supset A$, where n does not occur in A , then $\vdash A$

Every world is possible; if a world n and proposition p are jointly true, then it is necessary that n implies p ; if it is provable that A is entailed by n independently of the choice of n , then A is provable. The formalisation ensures that \Box is the universal modality, which although identical to S5 in its non-hybrid fragment, is stronger than S5 necessity in that it entails S5 necessity, but is not entailed by it. As $\Box(n \supset p) \vee \Box(n \supset \neg p)$ is a theorem in the resulting logic, which means that the worlds are complete, this axiomatisation will not do for Hale's purposes, however. It is an interesting project for further research to formalise a hybrid modal logic for Hale's semantics of incomplete possibilities.

Nils Kürbis
Department of Philosophy
Birkbeck
University of London
Malet Street
WC1E 7HX
n.kurbis@bbk.ac.uk

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A filosofia da música tem tido uma história singular. Presente já nos alvares da filosofia, a abordagem da música por Pitágoras ficou célebre e Platão dedicou-lhe um espaço surpreendente na *República*. Ao fim de mais de dois milénios, em que o interesse filosófico pela

música se centrou ou nos seus efeitos sobre o espírito humano ou nos seus fundamentos matemáticos e no modo como pode espelhar a ordem natural ou sobrenatural do mundo, a estética adquire autonomia enquanto disciplina filosófica, para logo a seguir, Kant, um dos pensadores que mais a marcaram, como marcou quase todas as áreas da filosofia, ter dedicado pouco interesse à música, algo que seria surpreendentemente não fora o facto de, nessa época, a música pura instrumental não ter ainda suplantado a música vocal como o modelo da arte musical. Após essa mudança, após Beethoven, com o Romantismo e o triunfo da obra musical instrumental como foco de apreciação estética longe das frivolidades dos palácios de mecenas, dos teatros de ópera e das funções litúrgicas, temos a brusca transformação da música numa das artes mais profundas e importantes, para Schopenhauer, revelação directa da Vontade, e para Nietzsche, algo sem o qual a vida seria um erro.

No século XX, a tradição anglófona mostrou-se relativamente pouco interessada na estética em geral, até aos anos 60 e aos trabalhos de Goodman e Beardsley, que a recolocaram brilhantemente na cena filosófica respeitável, merecendo a música um lugar a par das restantes artes como fonte de problemas filosóficos específicos e particularmente desafiantes. Beneficiando ainda do facto de alguns dos mais destacados filósofos da arte da geração seguinte (Kivy, Levinson, S. Davies) terem um especial interesse na música, a produção filosófica sobre essa arte sofreu nos últimos vinte anos um incremento tão impressionante que, numa frase de S. Davies em 2003 citada pelos editores, “se fossem atribuídas medalhas pelo crescimento nos últimos 30 anos, a filosofia da música ganharia o ouro” (p. XXII), e ao ponto de o *British Journal of Aesthetics* se ter visto já na necessidade de rejeitar submissões de artigos sobre o tópico em prol do equilíbrio e da diversidade (Peter Lamarque, editor do *BJA*, cit. p. 294). Outro indicador é a publicação de nada menos que cinco livros de introdução à filosofia da música nos anos mais recentes.

O *Companion to Philosophy and Music* apresenta-se como o passo lógico seguinte, o primeiro a dedicar-se exclusivamente à filosofia da música. Ou, melhor dizendo, à combinação entre a filosofia e a música. Com efeito, como os editores sublinham, o volume estende-se a domínios e abordagens não especificamente filosóficos da música que, no seu entender, podem contribuir para a reflexão filosófica.

Vários ensaios têm como autores musicólogos, linguistas ou psicólogos, e o volume pretende ser apelativo para um leque muito variado de leitores que inclui músicos e musicólogos. Para isso, os editores procuraram apresentar ensaios num “estilo não-técnico”, de modo a tornar o volume acessível a todos os níveis académicos e às várias disciplinas visadas. Se bem que, em muitos dos ensaios, porventura a maioria, essa finalidade tenha sido conseguida, o problema que esta ambição levanta é que o que não é técnico para um estudante de um curso de filosofia (ou mesmo um académico da área) é-o para um de musicologia e, mais ainda, de música, e vice-versa; e o problema desdobra-se para o caso de ensaios que mobilizam algum domínio de competências de linguística ou de ciência cognitiva.

É de notar que é intenção expressa dos editores ultrapassar, neste *Companion*, dois pontos de vista que está actualmente em voga considerar como “limitações”. Um, da parte da filosofia da arte, é o centramento nos problemas típicos da “escola Anglo-Americana” (p. XXIV)—uma tendência que já estava presente, por exemplo, no *Companion* de Estética da mesma editora—, e aí estão ensaios sobre música e política, sociologia e estudos culturais, música e género ou fenomenologia, para além de dois ensaios cujos títulos falam por si: “A Filosofia Continental e a Música” e “A Filosofia Analítica e a Música”. A outra limitação, que tem sido desde os anos 90 o “bombo da festa” das novas correntes da musicologia, é o privilegiar do enfoque na música da tradição artística clássica e ocidental, e, dentro desta, no modelo pós-Barroco de *obras* de música instrumental (ou seja, não vocal) e pura (sem conteúdo programático ou descritivo)—, e aí encontramos ensaios sobre rock, jazz, música popular, a canção e a ópera, etnomusicologia, música para filmes e as tradições estético-musicais do oriente antigo.

O volume divide-se em seis partes, sendo que os pares em sequência exibem alguma afinidade entre si. A primeira é dedicada a questões gerais, a começar pela definição de música, e a segunda, inteiramente à questão da relação entre a música e as emoções. Salta imediatamente à vista que o tópico desta segunda parte é ele mesmo uma das “questões gerais” da filosofia da música. Os editores, que afirmam que o conjunto destas duas primeiras partes configura uma abordagem introdutória típica à filosofia da música (muito discutível no caso dos ensaios 17 e 18), justificam esta divisão com a importân-

cia que o problema tem assumido na filosofia da música. Há contudo alguma tensão com os intuitos ecuménicos que proclamam, uma vez que essa importância é, sem dúvida, muito notória, mas sobretudo na tradição anglo-saxónica. As partes III e IV abordam a história do pensamento sobre a música e suas figuras cimeiras. As duas partes finais são as mais variadas, contendo os ensaios sobre tópicos na intersecção da filosofia com outras disciplinas ou da música com outros temas susceptíveis de interesse filosófico—mesmo que nem sempre tratados de um modo que justifique esse interesse, como veremos.

A Parte I inicia-se com um ensaio de Andrew Kania sobre a definição de música, que parte da constatação de que quase ninguém tem dúvidas sobre quando está na presença de música, para a demonstração de que a construção de uma definição universalmente satisfatória do conceito é bastante espinhosa, uma vez que a noção de som musical, que lhe parece estar na base, o é também. Depois de analisar definições que se baseiam em propriedades intrínsecas desses sons e definições subjectivas, o autor manifesta preferência por uma definição intencional que, por via de uma cláusula disjuntiva, permite acomodar, por um lado, música com características musicais tradicionais mas produzida sem a intenção de que os ouvintes as percepcionem e registem como tais (música ambiente, etc.), e, por outro, obras experimentais que não exibam tais características: ‘Música é (1) qualquer evento intencionalmente produzido ou organizado (2) para ser ouvido, e (3) *ou* (a) para ter alguma característica musical básica, tal como altura ou ritmo, *ou* (b) para ser ouvida por tais características’ (i.e., ‘mesmo que não as tenha de facto’—aplicável a obras experimentais). A definição apresenta a vantagem típica de estratégias disjuntivas de funcionar bastante bem face a contra-exemplos, aliada à desvantagem de parecer artificial e distante de identificar algo como uma essência do conceito unitário de música—claro, talvez esse conceito não exista. O ensaio é modelar pela clareza, pelo facto de não se esquivar a esclarecimentos sobre metodologia de definição que um público filosófico mais experiente acharia didáticos mas que são imprescindíveis para os restantes, e pela substância filosófica, ao defender uma posição ao mesmo tempo que traça um mapa sintético das posições rivais actualmente discutidas. Inclusivamente, coloca em cima da mesa o interesse que poderão ter projectos de definição que não parecem ter utilidade prática, invocando a curio-

sidade filosófica como suficiente (e, no processo, fazendo a primeira referência à tradição anglo-saxónica ou “analítica”, no espírito da qual se propõe a investigação de uma definição pelo menos próxima do ideal da definição real ou essencialista).

O ensaio seguinte, por Jennifer Judkins, aborda o tema do som, silêncio e ruído em música, levando em conta diferentes estilos de música, execuções e gravações. Embora informativo, tende a ser expositivo de problemas mas não particularmente pródigo na exploração dos mesmos, para além de que o ensaio anterior já fazia alguma abordagem do problema do silêncio em música. Roger Scruton assina o ensaio sobre as três dimensões associadas à música ocidental, ritmo, melodia e harmonia, de onde ressalta a dificuldade de definir as duas primeiras. Scruton usa análises e perspectivas que já lhe conhecemos, num ensaio que serve o propósito de dotar o leitor não músico das ferramentas essenciais para a compreensão da maioria dos problemas da filosofia da música.

Um ensaio na colectânea sobre ontologia da obra musical é de leitura provavelmente mais fácil (e agradável?) para filósofos da “escola anglo-saxónica”. A autoria coube a Carl Matheson e Ben Caplan, dois autores que têm contribuído para algum desenvolvimento recente na área e que se movem com a necessária capacidade de síntese e de simplificação sem simplismo que o tema mais quente da metafísica da música requer. O ensaio inclui o tratamento do tema recentemente vindo a lume da meta-ontologia, que, no caso da estética, equaciona o conhecido dilema entre a descrição e interpretação do que os praticantes dizem e daquilo que acreditam ser o caso, e o intervencionismo filosófico com a prescrição de modos mais consistentes e coerentes de discurso sobre os itens artísticos. O espaço não permite muito mais que uma síntese deste tópico, que deverá aguçar a curiosidade dos filósofos não iniciados no sentido de subseqüentes explorações.

A noção de meio é tratada por David Davies. Não é uma leitura particularmente fácil e o tema pode parecer árido, graças também à fluidez dos conceitos abordados, que não têm geralmente um conteúdo suficientemente fixo nas práticas artísticas. Previsivelmente, D. Davies recupera os conceitos por si estabelecidos em trabalho anterior; e aborda uma discussão que geralmente se inclui na ontologia da música, entre sonicismo, instrumentalismo e contextualismo.

Lee B. Brown escreve sobre improvisação, um tópico que para

os não músicos é especialmente urgente clarificar, dado grassarem concepções extremas e irrealistas (viz., que no jazz a improvisação é completamente livre ou inteiramente pré-fabricada ou que os músicos clássicos nunca improvisam). O autor chama a atenção para a complexidade da avaliação de música onde a improvisação tem um papel importante—tanto mais que saber exactamente qual a dimensão desse papel (quanto da música é realmente improvisado) desempenha um papel fundamental nessa avaliação. É também abordada a ontologia da improvisação, que tem como limite negativo a ideia de que nenhuma obra de arte é produzida quando se improvisa (no sentido mais pleno de improvisação). Um argumento a favor desta posição é que só pode ser uma obra de arte algo que pelo menos *pode* ser trabalhado ao longo do tempo—mesmo que, na prática, seja produzido como por improviso.

Um dos ensaios mais duros de roer para não músicos será certamente o de Stephen Davies sobre notações musicais (oportunidade para os músicos se sentirem compensados pela travessia que fizeram do capítulo sobre ontologia), não por falta de clareza, mas pela dificuldade e especificidade da matéria, para mais quando se aborda também notações caídas em desuso e notações não ocidentais. Trata-se de uma abordagem didáctica, mas sem a qual seria impossível ao leitor não músico compreender um conjunto de problemas importantes, a começar por um clássico da moderna estética anglo-americana, a polémica abordagem da relação entre execução musical e notação por Goodman.

Os editores tomaram o ensaio sobre execuções e gravações a seu cargo. Analisam tópicos como a necessidade ou contingência da presença de um público para que se dê uma execução musical, a avaliação desta, a transparência ou não do meio da gravação ou os aspectos decorrentes de a nossa relação com a música ser actualmente maioritariamente mediada por gravações, em detrimento da música ao vivo. Há alguma complementaridade com o ensaio sobre ontologia quando é abordada a natureza metafísica das gravações.

Segue-se um ensaio sobre a autenticidade na execução musical, por Paul Thom. Infelizmente, este não faz jus à riqueza da polémica em torno do tema da autenticidade histórica, sendo a abordagem por vezes simplista e superficial, o que poderia ter sido minorado se tivesse sido prestada mais atenção ao tratamento do tema por Kivy

em *Authenticities*. A título de exemplo, a discussão desta obra é invocada aqui sobretudo a propósito do seu conceito de autenticidade pessoal. Thom defende que Kivy está errado ao afirmar que este tipo de autenticidade na execução (correspondente a um estilo pessoal) é incompatível com a autenticidade sónica—definida por Kivy como o replicar com sucesso dos eventos sonoros (ou um tal evento, viz., a estreia) do contexto original da obra. Segundo Thom, muitos intérpretes historicamente informados procuram a autenticidade sónica e exibem nas suas execuções autenticidade pessoal (p. 96). Mas isto revela incompreensão do primeiro destes conceitos. Se um executante consegue intencionalmente, numa sua execução, a autenticidade sónica—no sentido estrito dado por Kivy—, não pôde exercer escolhas pessoais, uma vez que o seu modelo sónico esgota todas as possibilidades e satura todos os espaços de liberdade para o executante. O facto de Thom usar ‘procuram’ trai o facto de que ele tomou aqui o conceito de autenticidade sónica—irrevogavelmente incompatível com o estilo pessoal—por um outro tipo elencado por Kivy, esse sim buscado pelos executantes historicistas: o uso de meios e práticas da época da composição, ou autenticidade *prática*, que, ela sim, não é *a priori* incompatível com a vertente pessoal. Em termos gerais, o ensaio, que se dedica numa segunda parte a questões de cultura e ideologia na autenticidade de música não clássica ocidental, arrisca-se a deixar o leitor com a ideia incorrecta de que os defensores da autenticidade histórica saem facilmente vitoriosos da discussão.

Ray Jackendorff assina uma versão de material já anteriormente publicado sobre música e linguagem, onde, a propósito da antiquíssima ideia de que a música é uma linguagem universal, resume as semelhanças e diferenças entre uma e outra de acordo com o estado da arte da investigação filosófica e científica. Extremamente informativo, por vezes de leitura difícil para os não iniciados nos aspectos técnicos da música e simultaneamente em linguística, o ensaio mostra no entanto de um modo suficientemente claro que as diferenças ultrapassam enormemente as semelhanças.

Igualmente interessante, e recheado de incursões em problemas filosóficos substantivos, por vezes na intersecção com a psicologia, é o ensaio de Saam Trivedi sobre o papel da imaginação na percepção e pensamento musicais, incluindo na prática dos músicos, com destaque para a questão da visualização espacial imaginativa do “movi-

mento” musical.

Tanto o ensaio sobre compreender a música, por Erkki Huovinen, como o de Jennifer Judkins dedicado ao conceito de estilo são informativos e acessíveis, sem contudo mobilizarem o leitor no sentido de o confrontar com problemas e debates filosóficos argumentativamente fortes.

Rafael De Clercq escreve sobre propriedades estéticas de um modo que envolve o leitor nas disputas em causa sem se furtar a uma análise mais tipicamente “analítica” do tema, que será talvez menos acessível ao leitor não familiarizado com este tipo de abordagem. Naturalmente, há uma aplicação ao caso da música de discussões mais gerais sobre as referidas propriedades—formalismo, realismo—, mas com várias nuances específicas a esta forma de arte.

O ensaio de Alan Goldman sobre valor na música é bem sucedido, simultaneamente acessível e indo directo aos enigmas sobre um dos mais temíveis temas da filosofia da arte, ainda mais irreduzível quando o objecto em análise é o valor estético de sequências de sons. Goldman propõe que pelo menos parte desse valor residirá na capacidade da música levar o nosso espírito para um mundo diferente e ideal em que a força criativa da mente artística se revela de modo particularmente destacado e intenso. Poderá parecer estranho que este seja sucedido por um ensaio sobre a avaliação da música por Gracyk. A diferença de pontos de vista reside em que este aborda, não tanto o valor da prática de fazer e ouvir música, como o anterior, mas sim os princípios à luz dos quais avaliamos comparativamente diferentes obras musicais (ou peças não classificáveis como obras), embora inclua uma página sobre a avaliação não-estética da música (ex.: o seu papel social) que teria igual cabimento no ensaio anterior. Relativamente acessível e bastante informativo, aborda os tópicos comumente cobertos em introduções ao tema, compreensivelmente sem grande especificidade para o caso da música.

Um ensaio sobre o tema relativamente recente da apropriação e hibridez na música poderia fazer mais sentido numa das duas últimas partes do volume, sobretudo porque James O. Young o aborda, não em termos dos eventuais problemas ontológicos suscitados, mas na possibilidade dessas práticas afectarem a qualidade estética dos produtos e, no caso da apropriação, na vertente dos problemas éticos acarretados. A parte 1 encerra com um ensaio incomum e, na sua

segunda metade, algo vago, de Anthony Gritten sobre tecnologia instrumental. Trata-se de um artigo em linha com a abordagem fenomenológica alemã que agrada sobretudo a leitores interessados nas perspectivas heideggerianas sobre a técnica e a tecnologia e seus desenvolvimentos mais recentes, mas que infelizmente não aborda praticamente nenhum dos interessantes temas levantados a propósito da tecnologia por, por exemplo, Stan Godlovitch no seu *Musical Performance*.

A Parte 2 é um curso rápido sobre o tema música e emoções. Os quatro ensaios correspondem ao conteúdo de um volume médio actual sobre o tema. Jenefer Robinson resume de modo lúcido e eficaz as teorias da expressão musical mais relevantes hoje em dia; Derek Matravers dá novo fôlego às teorias, outrora aparentemente condenadas, do despertar de emoções (*arousal theories*), abordando, entre outros, o problema das emoções negativas; Saam Trivedi analisa as teorias da semelhança e propõe que essas teorias poderão ser mais bem sucedidas se lhes for adicionado um elemento imaginativo que funciona após o trabalho causal realizado sobre a nossa percepção pelas referidas semelhanças entre a música e elementos mentais de alguma forma por nós associáveis a estados mentais; e Malcom Budd termina, num ensaio nem sempre idealmente claro e de título quase idêntico ao de Matravers, com mais ideias sobre o modo como a música pode despertar emoções. Trata-se sem dúvida de uma das partes mais ricas do volume, embora exposta a repetição de pressupostos e conceitos do tema nos quatro ensaios. Assinale-se que a importância filosófica deste tema e do trabalho sobre ele desenvolvido podem colocar em causa os apelos à libertação da “limitação” do modelo da música instrumental pura, uma vez que é precisamente esse modelo que proporciona os maiores desafios às teorias em causa e assim faz avançar a investigação.

A Parte III aborda a história das ideias estéticas sobre a música, incluindo um artigo, já referido, sobre tradições orientais antigas, e tem, por conseguinte, um interesse, senão puramente, pelo menos maioritariamente histórico, não fora os dois últimos ensaios, dedicados às “histórias” das duas “escolas” filosóficas (continental e analítica), o primeiro dos quais aborda inicialmente a questão do que divide de facto essas escolas, e o segundo inclui um elenco dos tópicos dominantes na filosofia da música de expressão inglesa. Mais história

surge na Parte IV, com ensaios sobre figuras particulares da mesma: Platão, Rousseau, Kant (algo surpreendentemente, dada a pequena conta em que este filósofo tinha a música), Schopenhauer (com Alex Neill a conseguir proeza de um ensaio claro, interpretativo mas filosoficamente interventivo, sem receio de confrontar as deficiências do pensamento da figura histórica que lhe coube), Nietzsche, Hanslick, Gurney (um autor que Jerrold Levinson muito contribuiu para recolocar no mapa da história da filosofia/psicologia da música), Wagner (onde Thomas Grey dá o seu melhor para justificar a inclusão do único não filósofo profissional no elenco, com sucesso limitado) e Adorno (em que Andy Hamilton tem a difícil tarefa de tornar acessível um autor que se empenhava em se exprimir de modo obscuro).

Como já foi sugerido, as duas últimas partes do volume são aquelas em que mais se materializam as intenções de diálogo e abertura da estética filosófica a outras disciplinas, a temas inovadores e a abordagens menos ortodoxas. Seria impossível fazer aqui mais do que uma breve alusão aos tópicos abordados. A Parte V intitula-se “Tipos de Música” e inicia-se com um ensaio dedicado à música popular, onde se discute o próprio conceito, a sua relação com a música folclórica ou tradicional ou com os conceitos de música de massas e o de arte. Como no capítulo que se lhe segue, sobre rock, é patente a juventude das abordagens filosóficas destes tipos musicais (se é que o são) na falta de consenso sobre as características mais básicas definidoras dos “tipos” e sub-tipos. Talvez seja outro reflexo desse carácter recente o facto de grande parte destes capítulos, como também parte do seguinte sobre jazz, evidenciarem menos argumentação tradicionalmente filosófica sobre a música e mais reflexões de carácter sociológico ou de filosofia da cultura num sentido amplo (veja-se as referências constantes às questões das supostas funções desses vários tipos e sub-tipos na criação de identidades culturais e sociais). Por outro lado, os ensaios sobre rock e jazz (este último da autoria do especialista Lee B. Brown) abordam muito brevemente as idiossincrasias ontológicas desses géneros, com relevo para o estatuto das gravações *versus* concertos ao vivo, no caso do primeiro, e da improvisação no do segundo. Uma crítica reaccionária que poderia ser feita à inclusão de “tipos musicais” como o rock é que existe uma diferença estritamente musical muito maior entre a missa de Machaut e uma sinfonia de Mahler do que entre uma canção de Schubert, uma de

Gershwin e uma canção rock, mas ninguém pensou em dedicar um ensaio aos “tipos” exemplificados pelos dois primeiros, simplesmente porque ambos estão subsumidos na categoria artificial ‘música erudita ocidental’. Isto revela que a prontidão dos editores, em sintonia com a atmosfera musicológica actual, em incluir um ensaio sobre o rock (sem extrair a conclusão de que a coerência levaria à inclusão de dezenas de outros “tipos” que, atravessando quase oito séculos, caem debaixo da categoria referida) provavelmente se deve ao privilegiar dos aspectos sócio-culturais em detrimento das dimensões especificamente musicais (o que ressalta também da escolha de alguns temas para ensaios—música e política, música e género e sociologia e estudos culturais—e permite apelar mais ao público ávido de novidades nas abordagens académicas da música).

O ensaio sobre a canção sofre, como outros, pelas limitações de espaço para fazer justiça à complexidade que os problemas filosóficos sobre a música atingem quando se encara a conjugação com a linguagem, que aumenta ainda quando a combinação se faz também com outras artes, no caso do ensaio sobre ópera. Ambos conseguem dar uma panorâmica razoável dos respectivos campos (que se sobrepõem em parte), ainda que fosse desejável dar alguma ênfase mais às questões sobre a avaliação de execuções nos dois domínios.

Uma surpresa espera os leitores de uma linha filosófica mais conservadora com o ensaio sobre música e filme (Noel Carroll e Margaret Moore). Um tema que facilmente poderia ser trivializado é tratado com rigor e substância filosófica (graças à integração do problema da música no mais geral sobre quem é o narrador num filme ou ficção televisiva, mas também à existência de uma literatura de qualidade sobre o tema, ainda que recente e, logo, pequena). Para mais, os autores dão-nos a esperada panorâmica dos debates enquanto simultaneamente esgrimmem argumentos em defesa de uma posição própria. O contraste com o ensaio subsequente sobre a música e a dança é notório. Esta, o “parente pobre” da reflexão filosófica sobre as artes performativas, tem vindo a ser mais abordada na tradição de expressão inglesa, mas o presente ensaio é, numa primeira metade, excessivamente histórico, e, na segunda, desenvolve-se sobre linhas associadas à filosofia francesa contemporânea sobre a corporalidade que não primam pela identificação de problemas filosóficos nem pela explicitação de argumentos relevantes. Esta parte encerra com ou-

tro tema inesperado, “Música Visual e Sinestesia”, contendo bastante informação provinda da psicologia que de outro modo não estaria facilmente à disposição do público filosófico nem do musicológico.

O volume encerra com a Parte VI, com o título “Música, Filosofia e Disciplinas Relacionadas”—se bem que, no caso dos ensaios sobre música e política, música e gênero e sociologia e estudos culturais, o ‘Relacionadas’ deva ser tomado com bastante generosidade. Os restantes são mais consensualmente expectáveis numa apresentação das disciplinas musicais teóricas: abordam a musicologia geral, teoria musical (nem sempre fácil de tomar como disciplina independente da filosofia da música), etnomusicologia, composição, análise musical, psicologia da música. Na fronteira está o ensaio de Diana Raffman (uma versão de material anteriormente publicado) sobre música, filosofia e ciência cognitiva, e é concedido lugar a um tema raramente abordado nestes *fora*, o da educação musical, em que Philip Alperson basicamente expõe a sua filosofia da educação musical (*praxismo*) em oposição à unilateralidade de uma educação fundada numa concepção formalista (extrema ou moderada) do valor da música. Já a inclusão, nesta parte, de um ensaio sobre fenomenologia da música (não no sentido neutro em que o termo ‘fenomenologia’ é usado na tradição anglófona) é mais discutível, uma vez que se trata de uma metodologia filosófica (geralmente associada, como é o caso neste ensaio, às correntes da hermenêutica) e não de uma disciplina relacionada com a música ou com a filosofia.

Em suma, apesar de escolhas editoriais que poderão parecer menos felizes, mas que os editores assumem desde logo como decisões com um grau de subjectividade ineliminável, trata-se de um volume percussor e original que contribuirá para o desiderato consensualmente benéfico de estimular o diálogo entre a filosofia da música e as disciplinas musicais académicas (e talvez a falha seja até maior da parte destas últimas, como se pode ver num exemplo do próprio volume: no ensaio sobre musicologia (p. 500), Justin London cita a obra de um colega musicólogo para realizar exactamente o mesmo ponto—a analogia entre a incapacidade da descrição para nos dar a experiência de uma qualidade musical e para nos dar a da graça de uma piada—feito por Peter Kivy numa obra até bastante conhecida entre os meios musicais—*Authenticities*—e publicada quatro anos antes). Um aspecto que poderá ser melhorado em próximas edições é

a uniformização entre ensaios quanto à presença de recomendações de leitura, ausentes num grande número destes, uma vez que isso só pode ser justificado em dois ou três ensaios cujos tópicos são tão recentes que as referências por si só quase cobrem a totalidade da literatura.

António Lopes
LanCog Group
Universidade de Lisboa
antonioerreialopes@gmail.com