

Chapter Nine¹

Sames versus Sameness in Conceptual Contents and Vehicles

' 9.1 Sames, Differents, Sameness and Difference

For certain purposes sameness can be treated as a relation.² So treated it is of special interest because, although there is only one kind of real sameness relation, hence only one kind of sameness in the real world, and only one kind of sameness on the level of intermediaries (intermediaries are, after all, supposed to be real in their own realm) there are two separate relations corresponding to sameness on the level of intentional content.

A visaging might involve (1) two or more presentations of what is the same content in fact or (2) two or more presented contents visaged as being the same. Call the first of these a "visaging of sames," the second a "visaging of sameness." Either can occur without the other. As I will slowly try to make clear. Or they can occur together.

Compare other internal relations. One might visage a tone, say, middle C, and also visage a different tone, say, A above C, but not visage one being a fifth higher than the other though of course it is. Or one might visage that one color was brighter than another without visaging either of these as a definite brightness or even as very definite hues. Imagine, for example, that the lighting is poor and peculiar, so one can't really tell "what the colors are." The passive picture theory of perception (' 8.2), however, with its projection of properties of the visaged onto the intermediaries of the visaging, requires that visaged sameness should correspond to real sameness in intermediaries, that is, that sameness should be represented by sameness. This is what I have called the "repetition" theory of the act of reidentifying (' 8.1).

Similar remarks go for real difference versus visagings of difference. Although there is only one kind of difference that is real, we must distinguish "visaging differents" from "visaging difference." Consistently held, the passive picture theory of perception would imply that visaged difference should correspond to difference in intermediaries, that is, that difference should always be represented by difference. When coupled with the above thesis that sameness must be represented by sameness, it would imply that no mistakes could ever be made concerning identity versus difference in visaged contents. Let us look at these moves now in more detail.

' 9.2 Moves Involving Same and Different

Because there are two possible kinds of visaging for same and two for different, there are two kinds of internalizing and two kinds of externalizing moves (' 8.3) for each. One can internalize sames, or one can internalize sameness, in either case positing both sames and corresponding sameness on the level of intermediaries. One can internalize differents or internalize difference, in either case positing both differents and

1 Some portions of this chapter were revised from "Perceptual content and Fregean myth" (Millikan 1991) and "Images of Identity" (Millikan 1997b) with the kind permission of Oxford University Press, and from "On unclear and indistinct ideas" (Millikan 1994) in Philosophical Perspectives, 8, Logic and Language with the kind permission of Ridgeview Publishing Company.

2 It is not in fact a relation, as I argue in (Millikan 1984) Chapter 12.

corresponding difference on the level of intermediaries. One can externalize sameness or externalize sameness, projecting assumed sameness of intermediaries into visaged content in either of these ways. One can externalize differences or externalize difference, projecting the assumed difference of intermediaries into the visaged content in either of these ways. Externalizing sameness is equivalent to internalizing differences, for if the same vehicles always produce visagings of the same contents then visagings of different contents can only have been produced by different vehicles. Similarly, externalizing differences is equivalent to internalizing sameness. But we must be careful, for externalizing sameness is not the same as internalizing difference, nor externalizing difference the same as internalizing sameness. These would be equivalent only on the assumption that visagings are always consistent. In that case, if sameness of vehicle produces a visaging of sameness, assuming it is impossible to visage identity and difference as both obtaining between two things, sameness of vehicle will not be compatible with a visaging of difference, so a visaging of difference would have to have been produced by a difference in vehicle.

The following four simple importation moves (' 8.3) are possible for same and different.

C One can import sameness. First internalize sameness, yielding sameness in intermediaries hence sameness in intermediaries, then externalize this sameness. The result is

(1a) what are the same contents are always visaged as the same contents.

It follows that

(1b) if you don't visage contents as being the same it must be different contents that are being visaged.

C One can import sameness. First internalize sameness, yielding sameness in intermediaries hence intermediary sameness, then externalize these sameness, yielding

(2) what are visaged as the same contents always are determinate contents that are indeed the same.

(For example, you could not hear that two pitches are the same without hearing what pitch they are.)

C One can import difference, yielding

(3a) what are different contents are always visaged as being different contents.

It follows that

(3b) if you don't visage contents as being different they must be the same.

C One can import differences, yielding

(4) what are visaged as different contents always are determinate contents that are indeed different.

(For example, you cannot see that two things are different colors without seeing what colors they are, these visaged colors being different.)

Each of these moves yields to a different demand for content completeness, that

is, a demand to fill out content with logically necessary aspects so that what is envisaged is a fully determinate state of affairs. But no one of these moves strictly implies any of the others.

If we also apply the demands for determinacy and consistency to visagings of same and different we get the strong result mentioned earlier ('9.1)` that no mistakes can ever be made concerning sameness or difference among contents of visagings. The demands for determinacy and consistency arise from the necessity that intermediaries, being real, must themselves be determinate and consistent, and from projecting this back into the intentional world of the visaging. By the law of non-contradiction, intermediaries are never both the same and different in any respect, hence that two things are both the same and different in some respect cannot be visaged. By the law of excluded middle, two things are always either the same or different in a given respect, hence intermediaries must be determinate in all respects, hence are always visaged as being either the same or different. For example, if my visaging is of two colored items, it must either be a visaging of them as same in color or else as different in color. ("They all look the same in the dark" because they don't look different.) Thus when either the demand for consistency or for determinacy is added in, various of the four content-completing moves listed above will imply various of the others, even though when taken merely in pairs, the moves are logically independent. For example, there is no logical connection between content-completing move (1) (what are the same contents are always visaged as the same contents) and move (3) (what are different contents are always visaged as being different contents) because there is none between externalizing sameness and externalizing difference, nor between internalizing sameness and internalizing difference.

'9.3 Same\different Moves in the Literature

Nelson Goodman (1966) attempted to exploit dissociations between internalizing and externalizing different and same in defining identity for qualia. Goodman began by calling attention to an apparent paradox concerning the nontransitivity of identity over appearances. One thing, A, can appear to be the same color as a second thing, B, and the second appear the same as a third, C, yet A appear to be a different color from C. The paradox will result from conjunction of these two internalizing moves. (1) Internalize sameness: if B is visaged as remaining the same while being compared first with A and then with C, it corresponds to an intermediary that remains the same over the comparisons. (Alternatively, this might be treated as an example of internalizing constancy' 8.5.) Also, if A is visaged as the same as B, then their intermediaries are the same; likewise for A and C. (2) Internalize difference: if A and C are visaged as different, their intermediaries are different. Goodman calls his intermediaries or their relevant qualities "qualia." A clarification is needed here however. Qualia are not external objects or their properties, but recline before the mind. And on classical views, what reclines before the mind should not have any part of its nature hidden from mind. Nor can something real lying before the mind have a contradictory nature. Clearly Goodman is conceiving of his qualia here as themselves dividing into two aspects, the real qualia and the appearances of the qualia, only the appearances of the qualia being transparent to mind. The appearances of the qualia are thus the visagings of qualia and the qualia

themselves are the vehicles. (Amazing!)

Goodman does not, of course, explicitly analyze the paradox the way I have. But he tries to avoid it, in effect, by now internalizing difference but not sameness and then externalizing sameness but not difference. Qualia \acute{a} and \hat{a} are identical just in case every quale \tilde{a} that matches either \acute{a} or \hat{a} also matches the other (Goodman 1966 p.290), where "...to say that two qualia are so similar that they match is merely to say that on direct comparison they appear to be the same" (1966 p.272-3). (Notice that qualia, quite explicitly, can appear to be other than they are.) Being very careful, it is not merely difference that is internalized here but lack of sameness, that is, sameness is also externalized. The assumption is that "on direct comparison" qualia that are the same never fail to produce visagings of sameness, so that not appearing the same on direct comparison cannot be a criterion of qualia difference.

Now the sorts of things Goodman calls "qualia" originally were conceived in the tradition to be intermediaries explaining the intentional contents of perceptions of ordinary external objects. Just as Peacocke had to split perceptual intermediaries into two levels with two levels of properties (' 8.5), if we opted not to be phenomenologists, Goodman's reflections would tempt us to make the same sort of split. The level that contains the appearances of Goodmanian qualia, these being the intentional contents projected by qualia themselves, is the same as the level that acts as intermediary for the perception of the external world. In a moment I will discuss a similar dissociation between the handling of same and different in the Fregean tradition, and a similar split between levels of intentional content engendered.

It is easy to produce paradox by combining internalizing of constancies with internalizing of visaged samenesses and differences. Suppose, for example, that between two identically colored objects a colored band is inserted, one that is subtly graded in color from side to side. The effect may be that while it appears that nothing has been changing color, still what started out looking like two samples of the same color now look like samples of different colors. Or suppose while you are watching, someone draws arrow ends on each of two equal parallel lines, turning them into Müller-Lyer arrows. While appearing not to grow or to shrink, the lines will begin by appearing the same length and end by appearing different lengths. Again: those trees in the distance looked the same size until I noticed the men standing beside them. Now they appear to be quite different sizes, yet things appear not to have changed. If we internalize constancy, sameness, and difference, such visagings would appear to be impossible. The demand here, of course, is for content consistency.

An entirely explicit externalizing and internalizing of the sameness relation occurs in Peacocke's discussion of manners of perception in (1986). Using perception of distances as his example he writes "if $\grave{\imath}$ is the manner in which one distance is perceived and $\grave{\imath}'$ is the manner in which a second distance is perceived by the same subject at the same time, and $\grave{\imath} = \grave{\imath}'$, then the distances are experienced as the same by the subject (they match in Goodman's sense)" (1986, p.5). Granted that modes of presentation are supposed to be some kind of real thing, real abstract object, real disposition, real

process, real adjectival or adverbial property, real relation, or whatever, as opposed to being merely intentional objects, this externalizes sameness. Next, "...the same manner can enter the content of experiences in different sense modalities. You may hear a bird song as coming from the same direction as that in which you see the top of a tree: we would omit part of how the experience represents the world as being were we to fail to mention this apparent identity"(1986, p.6). That is, a visaging of sameness of direction is produced by some kind of sameness in real intermediaries (sameness in "manner") responsible for these visagings, regardless of the differences between these intermediaries with regard to modality. This internalizes sameness. Thus, Peacocke claims, there are cross-modal manners of perception. I believe that Peacocke intends these moves to be stipulative, defining what constitutes sameness of perceptual manner. But such stipulations do not come for free. That there is any such correlated sameness existing on a non-intentional level must be argued. What is the argument that the appearance of sameness can only result from the presence of some kind of real sameness? For example, is the appearance of sameness necessarily transitive, as would be required if the appearance of sameness is always associated in this way with the same real manner of perception?

Another way of externalizing sameness is suggested when Evans (1985a) gives a tentative "yes" answer to Molyneux's question. His reasoning is that if perceptions of shape by sight and by touch produce parallel behavioral orientations in the space surrounding one, hence constitute perceptions of space for the same reason, then they are understood to be perceptions of the same. Because "[t]here is only one behavioral space" (Evans 1985a, p.390) within which grasp of visual and felt shapes are manifest, there could be no problem about identifying across these modalities. Again, relevant sameness in relevant intermediariesCthe intermediaries here are dispositions to orient oneself in space or the states in which these are rootedCis externalized to yield a visaging of sameness. Behaving the same in response to visual and tactual perceptions is grasping content sameness.

9.4 Same and different in the Fregean tradition³

Now perhaps we are warmed up enough to discuss sameness and difference in the more abstract context of theories of thought or conception.

Frege's senses (or more accurately but awkwardly, "graspings" of these) are his "intermediaries," given our gloss, for beliefs about the world. Graspings of senses of the kind Frege calls "thoughts" are what stand between mind and world, making errors in thought possible when harnessed by mental acts of assertion. Also, senses are what move the mind, as vehicles should. Differences among various grasped senses account for differences in mental movement if the mind is rational. Senses also actually constitute a level of intentional contentCthey are intentional contentsCjust as Peacocke's intermediary for perception has not only "sensational properties" but also

³ I am no Frege scholar. I speak here to the understanding philosophers have mostly had of Frege, not to his texts.

"representational properties" (§ 8.5), and just as Goodman's qualia, if freed from phenomenalism, would serve both as vehicles for visagings of the ordinary world and as things that are themselves visaged (§ 8.7). But let us put the latter feature of Fregean senses aside for the moment and consider them merely in their role as vehicles for reference to the world.

Frege certainly did not explicitly intend to project properties of things as thought of. Call these "conceptually visaged properties" upon his intermediaries. Contrast Hume, who took thoughts to be copies of impressions, themselves clearly picture-like. Frege's senses are modeled, very abstractly, on sentences and sentence parts, not pictures. Given this model, the only internalizing/externalizing games that can still be played are with sameness and difference.

First, Frege externalizes sameness, hence internalizes differences (§ 8.7). That is, he assumes that if the vehicles are the same—that if the senses grasped are the same—then the referents are the same. Grasping a sense is a way of conceptually visaging something. And the way of visaging is not separable from the thing visaged. One cannot visage two different things in the same way. Repeating a way of visaging also repeats the thing visaged.

Is any alternative to such a view possible? Is it possible not to externalize sameness in the case of thoughts? In Chapter Ten I will argue that there are many alternatives to externalizing sameness. Here let me suggest just an analogy. In natural language, sameness are not always externalized. The pronoun "he" might stand for any male person. Also, there are lots and lots of people named "Jane." But the issue is complex. I will discuss it in Chapters Ten and Eleven.

If sameness are externalized as Frege does, and then senses or ways of visaging are taken to be transparent to mind, the immediate result is internalism concerning thought content. Thus Frege's senses determine their own referents, each distinguishing its referent from all other things, and nothing external to what is grasped within the mind is relevant to this determination. This view contrasts sharply with the thesis of this book. Suppose that Frege is right to externalize sameness. Suppose that it is a psychological fact that human conceptual systems are designed to use the same vehicle again only to represent the same content again. Still, what the human cognitive systems were designed to do and what they in fact manage to do would be two separate things. Mistakes in reidentification are surely possible, in which case the same vehicle again may not represent the same content again.

Frege externalizes not only sameness but also sameness. If senses are the same, then the corresponding referents are necessarily conceptually visaged as same, or necessarily available to the rational mind as same. That is why the rational mind cannot take contrary intentional attitudes toward referents conceptually visaged under the same mode of presentation. And that is why identity judgments are uninformative when the sense of subject and predicate terms is the same. It follows, of course, that whenever referents are not conceptually visaged as same, the corresponding senses are always different. And in accord with the demand for consistency in content, when referents are visaged as different they are not also visaged as same, hence, senses are again

different.

The thesis that grasped senses' merely being the same is equivalent to visaging their referents as the same is the passive picture theory of cognitive grasp of identity and a form of the repetition view of the act of reidentifying. I will discuss alternatives to this view in the next two chapters. Here let me merely note that if one adds to the externalization of both sames and sameness the assumption that senses or ways of visaging are transparent to mind, the result is that where senses are the same, sameness of reference in thought is known a priori and with certainty. This particular Fregean thesis might be viewed as the central target of this book. If I accomplish nothing else, I should like at least to make clear that this thesis is a substantive claim, not a necessary truth.

Frege externalizes sames and sameness but, like Goodman, he does not externalize either differentials or difference. Referents may be taken to be the same even though the grasped senses are different. For example, this is how the thoughts Cicero and Tully are related for one who knows that Cicero is Tully. Where senses are different, their referents may be conceptually visaged either as same or as different, or visaged neither as same nor as different. Since difference is not externalized, failure to visage difference is not internalized nor, in accord with the demand for consistency in content, is sameness internalized. Conceptual visaging of sameness can be accomplished actively through identity judgments as well as passively through sameness in grasped sense. Identity judgments can visage sameness of reference despite difference in sense.

On the other hand, Frege introduces a second level of content (like Peacocke and our non-phenomenalist version of Goodman) onto which he projects sames, sameness, differentials and difference, indeed, on which no distinctions at all are drawn between content and vehicle. The sense contents in Ayer's Language, Truth and Logic were like Frege's senses in this way. They were their own intentional objects, lying passively within awareness and being visaged (intended) by mind in the same act. For Frege, differences in vehicle, differences in sense, become differences in content on this second level. Senses are intentional contents. On this level, thought forms an ideal vehicle, nonredundant and unambiguous, one thought one content, one content one thought. The fact of sameness or difference in content can be read off the sameness or difference of thoughts and vice versa. Thus for the rational thinker no misidentifications of thought content should ever occur. Contradictions show up right on the surface of thought so that no inconsistencies should occur either. The relation between thought and its content is perfectly transparent, indeed, it entirely disappears. There is no vehicle moving the mind but the very content itself.

Why does Frege introduce a second level of content onto which differentials and difference can be projected in this way? What happened in Frege's mind is clearly documented. First, he saw that in the case of differing definite descriptions referring to the same there was a way in which they did, but another in which they didn't, have "the same content." They referred to the same thing, but they got there by different routes and from different starting points, from initially different visagings of referents. They

made their contributions to truth values in different ways. But this does not give us a distinction among levels of content for the starting points, or not without regress. It does not give us a difference in content between the thought Tully and the thought Cicero, for example. Why then did Frege generalize? Why did he project two levels of content upon apparently simple thoughts?

Frege's second move is continually rehearsed in the literature. Cicero is Tully is an informative thought whereas Cicero is Cicero is not, so these thoughts must have different contents. But, quite transparently, that begs exactly the question at issue. Of course the thoughts corresponding to "Cicero" and "Tully" are different, at least for some people, or they couldn't move these people's minds differently. Their causal action on these people's minds is not the same, so clearly they are mediated differently. The question is whether their contents must be different in order for this to be so. Might they not differ instead, as it were, merely in notation, in vehicle?

One has to assume same-different transparency, in particular, one has already to have externalized differentials, for this Fregean argument to go through. One has already to believe that only different contents could correspond to, that is, either determine or be determined by, different movements of the mind. But it is perfectly possible that even though the same movements of the mind always corresponded to the same contents again, different movements sometimes corresponded to the same content as well. Sames can be externalized without externalizing differentials. One needs an argument that different movements of the mind always correspond to semantic differences, to different ways of helping to determine truth value. One needs an argument that only content can affect movements of the mind, that there is no vehicle moving the mind but the very content itself. Or one needs an argument that different movements of the mind result in different contents, different ways of helping to determine truth value, if that is the direction in which the determination goes.

' 9.5 Repeating Is Not Reidentifying

In confusing the content of thought with its vehicle, I believe the passive picture or repetition theory of the act of reidentifying is surely mistaken. This point needs to be made very generally. For example, no matter what kind of description is given of "modes of presentation," say, as words or descriptions in a language of thought, or as graspings of abstract objects, or as presentations of Kaplan-style character types, or applications of concepts with certain possession conditions (Peacocke), or ways that the thinker knows which object it is he thinks about (Evans), and so forth, still, the repetition of such a referential mode of thought would not, simply as such, constitute an act of reidentifying content. Reciprocally, there can be no direct argument from the fact that a certain sameness of content is or is not grasped to a conclusion about identity or difference for corresponding "intermediaries" (' 8.3). There can be no direct argument from the necessary visaging of sameness (by a rational or well-oiled mind), say, from the impossibility of taking opposing attitudes toward contents, to a conclusion about repetition of aspect in the presentation of these contents, that is, to a conclusion about sameness of mode of presentation as this notion is usually understood.

Supposing that identical intermediaries always possess identical contents (that is,

suppose we externalize sameness), then sameness in intermediaries will be an indication of sameness in content, perhaps it will contain the fact of this sameness as natural information and so forth. But compare: two bee dances danced side by side may jointly be an indication, or between them contain the natural information, that two sites of nectar are forty yards apart. It does not follow that the bees can read this information off the pair of dances. Not everything that falls out of a representational system is necessarily read or readable even by its primary interpreters. If we have rejected the passive picture theory of inner representation we should also be able to see that the mere being the same of two thoughts or percepts does not accomplish anything all by itself even when the fact of this sameness is a natural indication of sameness in content, or when this sameness is an implication of the content represented. The fact of sameness must be read somehow if it is to represent, rather than just be, a sameness. This sameness must appropriately interact with or move the thinking system in some way if it is to represent itself.

Nor should we fall into this nearby error. The way that the system must move or be moved in order to be grasping a sameness is not just in-the-same-way-again. Given the same context, having the same effects may be secured, of course, just by being the same. Having the same effects is merely a part of being the same, and does not add anything to it.

Consider the story of Zak, a patient at the Bell Neurological Institute, a victim of stroke, suffering selective amnesia. Each morning Dr. Helm comes in to see Zak, wearing a white coat and a name tag that says "Dr. Helm, MD." Each morning Zak greets him with "good morning Dr. Helm," and when asked if he knows who Helm is, being no fool, Zak unhesitatingly answers "my doctor." The appearance is thus that Zak always identifies Helm the same way and correctly. Nor, we suppose, does Zak have problems articulating a theory of the identity of persons over time; he used to be a philosophy professor. Upon further questioning, however, each morning Zak reveals that he does not remember ever having seen Helm before, nor does he show any signs of familiarity with the routine Helm puts him through each morning. That is, it appears that Zak does not recognize Helm after all. Though he appears to have an individuating idea of Helm, even what Gareth Evans would call a "fundamental Idea" of Helm (' 13.3), he is incapable of reidentifying him. He has no concept of this person that lasts over time.

Compare a much simpler case. The frog that reacts the same way each time its optic-nerve bug-detector fires does not thereby cognize a sameness among the bugs it eats. Something rather like the opposite is true, I suggest. A creature's perception that it is encountering the same thing again shows up, characteristically, in its reacting differently this time, differently according to what it learned last time. That the baby recognizes you is exhibited not in its crying again—that is how it reacts to strangers—but in its smiling, or exhibiting other behaviors apparently based on its earlier experience with you. And, of course, the notion that reidentifying a thing involves "applying the same concept again," say, attaching the same thought or mental name to it, is precisely the

central version of the passive picture theory we have been discussing all along.⁴

As mentioned in '9.3, there is a passage in which Evans answers Molyneux's question by externalizing sameness, taking behaving the same in response to visual and tactual perceptions to constitute visaging of sameness in content. It would be odd to call this an application of the "passive picture theory" of the act of identifying. But the general principle is exactly the same. It is another kind of example of the repetition theory of the act of reidentifying. Surely, merely effecting the same connection with "behavioral space" again is not to manifest a grasp of anything's sameness.

In what kind of way does one's thinking have to move then, or in what kind of way does one have to behave, in order to grasp an identity? That is what Chapter Ten is about.

⁴But see also '10.3 below.