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SUSPENSION OF JUDGMENT:
A RESPONSE TO HEIDELBERGER ON KAPLAN

In 'Quantifying In',[1] David Kaplan claims an advantage for his treatment of belief sentences over that of Quine's: it allows for the (partial) expression of suspension of judgment. In his reply to Kaplan, Quine agrees.[2] Herbert Heidelberger has claimed recently that Kaplan and Quine were mistaken.[3] He argues

(1) that the formulation given for suspension of judgment in 'Quantifying In' is not satisfactory and (2) that the systematization of belief sentences proposed in 'Quantifiers and Propositional Attitudes', whatever its shortcomings, does allow for the expression of suspension of judgment.[4]

I begin by observing that Heidelberger interprets Kaplan uncharitably. Kaplan does not claim that his formulation ((46) below) is a completely satisfactory expression of suspension of judgment. His claim is closer to this: the formulation expresses something which we might want to express in a situation where we have suspended judgment and which Quine's treatment does not allow us to express.[5] Heidelberger's argument does not bear on this more modest claim.

However, whatever Kaplan claims for his formulation, *we* can assess it as an expression of suspension of judgment. In Part I, I shall argue (1) that Heidelberger's criticisms of it on that score are misguided, and (2) that Kaplan and Quine were right to prefer Kaplan's treatment of belief sentences to Quine's.[6] This discussion will reveal that there are two ways of suspending judgment. In Part II I shall argue that Kaplan's formulation is, nevertheless, defective as an expression of suspension of judgment. I shall suggest how it should be modified. The discussion in these two parts raises a doubt about Quine's original intuition on exportation. I shall consider this briefly in Part III.

I

Heidelberger bases his argument on the following assumption:

If a man suspends judgment with respect to an individual's having a certain property then he does not believe with respect to that individual that it has that property.[7]

Though this unargued assumption is plausible, we should be warned about it by the fact that it seems straightforwardly inconsistent with the assumption that motivated Kaplan to talk about suspension of judgment in the first place. We might suspect that Heidelberger is at cross purposes with Kaplan. This turns out to be so.

Kaplan's assumption, which is also plausible and for which he argues, is that

in the same sense in which

(32)   [Ralph *Bel* ('*x* is not a spy', Ortcutt)]

and

(33)   [Ralph *Bel* ('*x* is a spy', Ortcutt)]

do not express an inconsistency on Ralph's part, neither should (33) and

(45)   ~Ralph *Bel* ('*x* is a spy', Ortcutt)

express an inconsistency on ours. Indeed it seems natural to claim that (45) is a consequence of (32).[8]

This leads Kaplan to suggest

(46) $(\exists\alpha)[R(\alpha, \text{Ortcutt, Ralph}) \, \& \, \sim\text{Ralph } B \ulcorner\alpha \text{ is a spy}\urcorner]$,

which *is not* inconsistent with (33), as a reading of (45). (46) exemplifies Kaplan's way of (partially) expressing suspension of belief. It is to be distinguished from another reading of (45),

(47) $\sim(\exists\alpha)[R(\alpha, \text{Ortcutt, Ralph}) \, \& \, \text{Ralph } B \ulcorner\alpha \text{ is a spy}\urcorner]$,

which *is* inconsistent with (33). We might try to put Kaplan's motivating assumption into Heidelberger's language as follows: a man can suspend judgment with respect to an individual's having a certain property, as Ralph does if (46) is true, and yet still believe with respect to that individual that it has that property, as Ralph does if (33) is true. This is inconsistent with Heidelberger's basic assumption.

Which plausible assumption is correct? The answer depends very much on how we understand Heidelberger's language. Fortunately we do not need to answer the question to assess Heidelberger's criticisms of Kaplan. A simple modification of the assumption in each case captures the intention of its proponent. The modified assumptions are different but they are consistent with each other; indeed they are *both true*. I shall return to the question in Part III.

It is quite clear what Kaplan has in mind. (33) and the sentence expressing suspension of judgment should not convict us of inconsistency 'in the same sense' in which (32) and (33) do not convict Ralph of it. What is that sense? *Ralph* is not guilty of inconsistency because (32) might be true *in virtue of one name* he has for Ortcutt ('the man seen at the beach'), whilst (33) might be true *in virtue of another* ('the man in the brown hat'). Similarly, *we* are not guilty of inconsistency in stating (46) and (33) because (46) might be true *in virtue of one name* Ralph has for Ortcutt ('the man seen at the beach'), whilst (33) might be true *in virtue of another* ('the man in the brown hat'). So (46) is quite consistent with Ralph believing of Ortcutt under another name that he is a spy. The whole issue arises for Kaplan simply because *there can be more than one name that 'represents' Ortcutt to Ralph*. To capture Kaplan's motivating assumption in Heidelberger's language, we need to modify our earlier version along the following lines: a man might suspend judgment with respect to an invidivual's having a certain property *under one name of that individual*, and yet still believe with respect to that individual *under another name* that it has that property. This assumption is the basis of Kaplan's criticism of Quine's notation. It is clearly true for the reasons given. Nothing Heidelberger says casts any doubt on it.

The suspension of judgment that Heidelberger accuses Kaplan of failing to express is a different one. We can bring out clearly what Heidelberger intends by modifying his basic assumption along the following lines: if a man suspends judgment with respect to an individual's having a certain property *under all the names he has for that individual*, then he does not believe with respect to that individual *under any name* that it has that property. The assumption is obviously true. Call this sort of suspension of judgment, 'strong suspension', and the earlier sort of Kaplan's, 'weak suspension'.[9] On the strength of this assumption — and in the belief that it is strong suspension that is under discussion — Heidelberger requires that any adequate expression of suspension of judgment must imply (47). (46) does not; so it is not adequate. But (46) is not offered as an expression of strong suspension; and the requirement is not appropriate for the expression of weak suspension.

Kaplan did not take account of strong suspension but it is easy enough to see how he could had done so. He could have expressed it as follows:

(1) $(\exists\alpha)[R(\alpha, \text{Ortcutt, Ralph})]$ & $\sim(\exists\alpha)[R(\alpha, \text{Ortcutt, Ralph})$ &

Ralph $B \ulcorner \alpha$ is a spy$\urcorner$].

From this (47) follows; indeed the second conjunct *is* (47). Thus Heidelberger's requirement that whatever expresses suspension of judgment (by which he means strong suspension) should imply (47) is met.

Do we have any need to express strong suspension? We seem to have at least as much need to as we have to express weak suspension. Kaplan attempted to establish the latter need by continuing Quine's well-known story

to a later time at which Ralph's suspicions regarding even the man at the beach have begun to grow. Not that Ralph now proclaims that respected citizen to be a spy, but Ralph now suspends judgment as to the man's spyhood.[10]

At this time (32) is false, and (46) is true. We can continue the story still further. Ralph learns that the man seen at the beach = the man in the brown hat = Ortcutt. He is thrown into confusion: he does not know what to believe about the man. Something stronger than (46) is true, i.e. (1).

Kaplan offered, we are supposing, a means of expressing weak suspension. Heidelberger criticizes it for not meeting a requirement appropriate only for the expression of strong suspension. Kaplan did not offer a means of expressing strong suspension but he could easily have offered (1), which meets Heidelberger's requirement. I conclude that Heidelberger's criticisms of Kaplan are misguided. Furthermore, (1) seems slightly preferable to Heidelberger's expression of strong suspension using Quine's earlier notation:

(2)   (i) $(\exists F)$(Ralph believes F of Ortcutt) and (ii) $\sim$Ralph believes $z(z$ is a spy) of Ortcutt.[11]

Though (1) and (2) are arguably equivalent, (1) has the advantage of being a first order statement. And there still seems to be no hope of expressing weak suspension in Quine's notation. So Kaplan and Quine were right to prefer Kaplan's treatment.

II

We can paraphrase (46) and (1) into ordinary language roughly as follows:

(3)   Ortcutt is such that under one name Ralph has for him it is not the case that Ralph believes him to be a spy;

(4)   Ortcutt is such that under each of the names Ralph has for him it is not the case that Ralph believes him to be a spy.[12]

These need to be compared with what we are trying to express:

(5)   Ortcutt is such that Ralph has suspended judgment on
             whether he is a spy [weak suspension];

(6)   Ortcutt is such that under each of the names Ralph has for
             him Ralph has suspended judgment on whether he is a spy
             [strong suspension].

((5) expresses weak suspension if Quine's original intuition about expor-
tation in his familiar example is correct: all that is required for a transparent
sentence like (5) to be true is that Ortcutt be such that *under one name
Ralph has for him* ... We shall return to this intuition in Part III.)

An obvious defect of (3) and (4) as expressions of suspension of judg-
ment is that they do not imply, as (5) and (6) do, any lack of belief that
Ortcutt is *not* a spy. Indeed, assuming Ralph to be ordinarily rational, (3)
will be true if under one name Ralph has for him Ralph believes him not to
be a spy; and (4) will be true if he believes this under each name he has for
him. This is to make judgments not suspend them.

The defect is easily corrected. We insert the further clause, '& ~Ralph
$B \ulcorner \alpha$ is not a spy⌐', within the scope of the variable in (46) and make a
corresponding adjustment in (1). However the resulting sentences are still
far from satisfactory as expressions of suspension of judgment.

In a final note, Heidelberger tentatively suggests that "a full account of
suspension of judgment ... should also imply that Ralph has considered the
matter of Ortcutt's spyhood".[13] He is surely right: *to suspend judgment on
a question you must have considered it.* (46) and (1) require that Ralph has
a name for Ortcutt but they do not require that Ralph has the notion of
spyhood nor, if he has, that he has ever considered whether that notion
applies to Ortcutt under that name. A person believes of each object he can
name that it has certain properties and lacks others. *He has not suspended
judgment on whether it has every other property*, including many he has
never heard of. For each object, even a much thought-of object like Nixon,
there are an indefinitely large (infinite?) number of questions that are too
trivial, too boring, too hard, etc., to be worth contemplating: life is too
short.

What modifications are called for? I suggest that the following are the
best we can offer as ordinary language replacements for (3) and (4):

(7)   Ortcutt is such that Ralph has considered whether he is a
             spy and neither believes he is nor believes he is not;

(8)   Ortcutt is such that under each of the names Ralph has for
             him Ralph has considered whether he is a spy and neither
             believes he is nor believes he is not.

I see no hope of analysing *consideration* in terms of *belief*. So the closest we
can come to the corrected version of (46) in a Kaplanesque treatment of
weak suspension is the following:

(9) $(\exists\alpha)[R(\alpha,$ Ortcutt, Ralph) & Ralph C ⌜α is a spy⌝ &
             ∼Ralph B ⌜α is a spy⌝ & ∼Ralph B ⌜α is not a spy⌝].

This differs from the corrected (46) only in including 'Ralph C ⌜α is a spy⌝'
("Ralph has considered whether ⌜α is a spy⌝"). The corresponding form for
strong suspension is,

(10) $(\exists\alpha)[R(\alpha,$ Ortcutt, Ralph) & Ralph C ⌜α is a spy⌝ &
             ∼Ralph B ⌜α is a spy⌝ & ∼Ralph B ⌜α is not a spy⌝] &
             ∼$(\exists\alpha)[R(\alpha,$ Ortcutt, Ralph) & (∼Ralph C ⌜α is a spy⌝ v
             (Ralph B ⌜α is a spy⌝ v Ralph B ⌜α is not a spy⌝))].

Note that (10) implies (47), thus meeting Heidelberger's requirement.

III

The discussion raises a doubt about Quine's original intuition on exportation
and the truth conditions of the transparent (33). Quine's intuition was, it
will be remembered, that we should in general be able to infer transparent
belief from opaque belief. Kaplan agrees, provided the exportation is
restricted to representing names. On this view, transparent belief requires
belief *with respect to at least one representing name* ("weak belief"). Our
discussion suggests, perhaps, that transparent belief requires uniform belief
with respect to all representing names ("strong belief").

Consider our ordinary expressions of strong suspension, (6) and (8).
These are curiously awkward in their talk of "under each of the names
Ralph has for him". They contrast unfavourably with our neat expressions
of weak suspension, (5) and (7). A similar contrast could be made for belief.
If Quine's intuition is correct, there are no neat ways of expressing strong

belief, strong suspension, etc., in ordinary language. Yet out continuation of Quine's story indicated that we have a need to express strong suspension. And we presumably have *more* need to express strong belief: consider, for example, the situation still later in the story when Ralph (now fully aware of Ortcutt's many identities) finally makes up his mind. We might wonder then if the standard transparent form meets these needs. If it does, of course, awkwardness will pervade our expressions of *weak* belief, suspension, etc..

A reason for thinking it does is the plausibility of Heidelberger's basic assumption. He claims that if a man suspends judgment with respect to an individual's having a certain property then he does not believe with respect to that individual that it has that property. This can be true only if the transparent form is construed *strongly*.

We can see now what was at stake in the question we set aside in Part I about the two plausible but inconsistent assumptions: it was Quine's original intuition. If we side with Quine, then Kaplan's assumption (expressed in Heidelberger's language) is correct. If we take the other side, then Heidelberger's assumption is correct.[15] Neither side seems to have a monopoly on our ordinary intuitions.

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NOTES

[1] In *Words & Objections, Essays on The Work of W. V. Quine*, edited by D. Davidson and J. Hintikka (New York, 1969) pp. 206–242. It is reprinted in *Reference and Modality*, edited by L. Linsky (London, 1971), which also reprints Quine's 'Quantifiers and Propositional Attitudes'.

[2] *Words & Objections*, p. 341.

[3] 'Kaplan on Quine and Suspension of Judgment', in this Journal 3 (1974) pp. 441–443.

[4] 'Kaplan on Quine and Suspension of Judgment', p. 441.

[5] *Words & Objections*, pp. 234–235; note particularly the words I have emphasized in the following:
"If we are to have the means to express such suspensions of judgment, *something like* (46) is required."
". . . such *partial* expressions of suspended judgment as (46) . . ."

[6] I have serious reservations about Kaplan's treatment of belief sentences, particularly about his use of his notion of *representation*, $R(\alpha, x, y)$, explained in the mysterious part IX of 'Quantifying In' (c.f. my *Designation*, forthcoming). However these reservations are irrelevant to the concerns of this paper and so I shall adopt that treatment throughout.

[7] 'Kaplan on Quine and Suspension of Judgment', p. 442.

[8] *Words & Objections*, p. 234. I have followed Heidelberger in retaining Kaplan's numbering.

[9] Another true modification of Heidelberger's basic assumption runs as follows: if a man suspends judgment with respect to an individual's having a certain property *under one name*, then he does not believe with respect to that individual *under that name* that it has that property. The suspension of judgment referred to here is, of course, weak suspension. Kaplan's treatment of weak suspension is in accord with this modification.

[10] *Words & Objections*, p. 235.

[11] 'Kaplan on Quine and Suspension of Judgment', p. 443.

[12] I take it that (4) would ordinarily imply that Ralph had at least one name for Ortcutt.

[13] 'Kaplan on Quine and Suspension of Judgment', p. 443n.

[14] This is in effect the "ad hoc restriction on exportation" that Kaplan mentions in note 33 (*Words & Objections*, p. 242).

[15] I emphasise that whichever side we take on this issue, the conclusions of Part I stand: both strong and weak suspension still need to be expressed. A lack of awareness of the issue may partly explain Heidelberger's criticisms.