J. M. Hinton begins his essay, “Visual Experiences” (Hinton: 1967) by characterising a particular sort of (would-be) mental state or occurrence, which he dubs, ‘Ψ-ing’— or, more exactly, a certain sort of would-be statement, Q, which would mention Ψ-ing, were there such a thing. He remarks that it is ‘moot’ whether there is any such statement—nor, hence, any such thing as the envisaged Ψ. in fact,

I do not at present see how it can be, or could be, shown that there is such a thing as (Q). Consequently I do not see how it could be shown that there is such a thing as my psi-ing for these and other statements to be about.” (Ibid)

Many, I think Hinton among them, think, stronger, that there is good reason to suppose that there is no such thing as Ψ-ing; and that such can be seen from careful reflection on what it is that we take seeing, and, more broadly, visual experience, to be. Those who so think are often called (even by themselves) disjunctivists. Others think otherwise—Tyler Burge, apparently, on both counts. He is, at any rate, against what he calls ‘disjunctivism’. He thinks this blatantly false, moreover at odds with (what should be) known results of science. He writes of disjunctivism,

It is fairly unusual, at least since the days of Descartes and Newton, for philosophical views to be as directly at odds with scientific knowledge as disjunctivism is. (2005: 29)

Though, as it turns out, this needs to be taken with a grain of salt.

Other topics—knowledge, belief, for example—leave room for positions of the form of disjunctivism about seeing. These too are called disjunctivism—e.g., about (singular) belief. Burge thinks that disjunctivism about belief is mistaken, and on the very same grounds as disjunctivism about seeing.

In this essay I will discuss disjunctivism about seeing and about belief, though I will say much more about belief than about seeing, and discuss seeing only at the end. Following Frege I will try to show that both these disjunctivisms are cogent, motivated positions, and not so
much as spoken to by vision, or any other, science. Burge, I will argue, misconceives the the topics of disjunctivism, notably belief, in ways one who followed Frege’s lead would not. More broadly, with many others today, Burge misconceives how science (notably physics) has spoken to philosophy.

1. **Ψ-ing**: In Hinton’s special case, disjunctivism rejects a certain ingredient in perceptual experience, Ψing. In other cases, a disjunctivism rejects a similar ingredient in some other area of our mental lives. As a first step in understanding disjunctivism, one might ask just what Ψing is.

Hinton inspired at least the term ‘disjunctivism’. The disjunction here is between a pair (or more) of cases, e.g., one of seeing such-and-such, and one of illusion thereof. Ψing, if there were such a thing, would be something common to both terms. In Hinton’s somewhat special case, the one disjunct is seeing a photic flash. There is also such a thing as experiencing a phosphene—a visual experience, not seeing, caused by electrical activity in the brain. Some such experience might be, or seem to its subject, visually just like seeing a photic flash. Seeing the flash might provide nothing by which to tell by sight that one is not experiencing a phosphene. Conversely, experiencing a phosphene, one might be unable to tell by sight that he was not seeing a photic flash. He need be provided visually with nothing by which to tell this. In this sense, if he saw a photic flash, what he experienced would be, visually (for him), just like what he would experience in an indefinitely extendible range of possible cases of experiencing a phosphene, and if he were experiencing a phosphene, what he experienced would be, visually (for him) just like what he would experience in an indefinitely extendible range of cases of seeing a photic flash. In this sense, his photic flash admits of perfect illusions, namely, certain phosphenes, and his phosphene (where he experienced one) admits of perfect illusions, namely, certain photic flashes (just as fuzzy print may produce an illusion of blurred vision).

Two initial points about Ψing. First, to make sense of the idea, we need to make sense of pairs of an actual case of ‘the real thing’, for some value of ‘real thing’—here, as the case may be, seeing a flash, or experiencing a phosphene—and a range of cases of perfect illusions thereof, along roughly the lines just sketched. Second, assuming that we have done this, Ψing is to be experiencing something which one would be experiencing either in that case of the real thing, or in any case which was a perfect illusion thereof. A disjunctivism is about seeing where a value of ‘real thing’ is seeing such-and-such, or, perhaps, where any case of seeing what one there does generates a range of perfect (visual) illusions thereof, as just sketched.

Hinton’s position is not meant just to concern photic flashes. It is meant to generalise. Suppose Sid, on esplanada, spots Penelope Cruz, lounging on some adjacent rocks. There are (imaginable) body doubles, silicone dummies, holograms, and twins. And there is excess of orujo or psilocybin. In those first cases, Sid would be provided, visually, with nothing to go on if he needed to tell, by looking, whether it was Penelope or some such ringer. Perhaps that is enough for defining some Ψing-like notion. Generally, though, Ψing is meant to be something liable to be present in cases of the second kind as well. A case of the second kind might be, for Sid, just as though he were seeing Penelope. It might so impress him. It is less clear that the idea of it providing no visual cues by which to distinguish it from seeing her makes sense here—one problem for the position which disjunctivism (about seeing) means to reject.
One more note on perfect illusion. Sid saw Penelope in a yellow shift. He might experience an illusion of her in a yellow shift—say, her in a beige shift in special light. Not all such would be perfect ringers for his seeing what he did. In the illusion she might be in a chaise longue, rather than on the rocks. Or the shift might be from A. Salazar rather than from P. Garcia. Or her hair might be blowing in the wind, rather than at rest. And so on. The problem stands as we add to our list of features the illusion must have: in it, she is in her yellow shift from P. Garcia, sipping a mojito languidly. There are many different ways for things to look while she was doing that. To be a perfect illusion of what Sid sees in seeing her on the rocks sipping cannot just be to satisfy certain generalities. It should be no less than an illusion of what he saw, a ringer for his seeing what he did. His seeing what he did does not reduce to his seeing things being this, that, and the other way.

Sid seeing Penelope on those rocks is just one more case of seeing. But the presumption is that any case of seeing admits of (imaginable) illusions thereof on the model of Sid’s case, or of the photic flash. So for any actual case of seeing, one might equally well (or badly) identify a range of perfect illusions thereof, for which one might posit, or refuse to posit, a common feature such as \( \Psi \)ing. \( \Psi \)ing, as Hinton defines it, is specific to photic flash-phosphene pairs. To indicate that I am generalising that notion, I will write \( \Psi(\gamma) \)ing, the ‘\( \gamma \)’ indicating the particular actual case of seeing (or of illusion, where applicable) which generates the relevant range of perception-illusion pairs.

What we have so far is just that for any such range of pairs, \( \Psi(\gamma) \)ing is experiencing visually something one would experience in any case within the range. To this Hinton adds three features, which I will call plenitude, determinacy, and illusion-resistance. Plenitude is the idea that \( \Psi(\gamma) \)ing is not only present in all cases within the range, but present only there; so that to be \( \Psi(\gamma) \)ing is, ipso facto, either to be seeing what one did in the case which generates the range, or to be experiencing a perfect visual illusion thereof.

Determinacy is the idea that \( \Psi(\gamma) \)ing is experiencing something identifiable (without reference to its presence in that range of cases), thus (in principle) specifiable. It is not just experiencing what one does in all those cases, but moreover, experiencing such-and-such—things being, or looking, such-and-such way there is for things to look. As Hinton says, to say that one \( \Psi(\gamma) \)ed is to answer the question what one experienced visually (in seeing what he did, or being illuded as he was).

Illusion resistance is the idea that, while it is easy to imagine a ringer for seeing Penelope sipping—experiencing a perfect visual illusion thereof—and easy to imagine a ringer for experiencing such an illusion—seeing her sipping—it is difficult to see what it might be for there to be a ringer for doing either the one thing or the other. Since \( \Psi(\gamma) \)ing (if there is such a thing) is to be what one does precisely in those cases of seeing and illusion thereof, it is equally difficult to see what a ringer for \( \Psi(\gamma) \)ing might be. Indeed, something seems to speak against this. Suppose there were such a thing. Call it \( X(\gamma) \)ing. \( X(\gamma) \)ing would be, in this case, experiencing a perfect visual illusion of either Penelope sipping (as in the initial case), or a perfect visual illusion thereof. But how might a perfect illusion of a perfect illusion of Penelope sipping fail to be a perfect illusion of her sipping, save by being a case of seeing her sipping, and hence, either way, a case of \( \Psi(\gamma) \)ing, and not just a ringer for it?

So far, disjunctivism about seeing. Disjunctivism about belief would be rejection of some \( \Psi \)-like state as an ingredient in our believing the things we do, and/or, perhaps, some parallel common ingredient in the representations we relate to in representing the world to ourselves in
the way, or ways, we do. For a Ψ-like ingredient in our believing what we do, we first need to identify some way in which we may be under illusions as to what it is that we believe. So the initial idea, by which Ψ-like common factors are brought into view here, would be that where, say, Sid thinks that Penelope is sipping, there is one or more other thing for him to think such that if circumstances were right, it might seem to him that he was thinking just that which he in fact is thinking—he would experience a perfect ringer for so thinking—where, in fact, he would be thinking this other thing; and/or that, if circumstances were right, it would seem to him that he was thinking just that which he in fact is—he would experience a perfect ringer for so thinking—where he was thinking nothing (or no thought) at all. The Ψ-like factor would then be some way of thinking of the world—some way for it to be represented in representing it being some given way—which is a way it would be represented both in representing it as the way it was represented in the initial case, and in representing it as one does in all those ringer cases—ones of representing it as being some other way, perhaps some ones of failing to represent it as being any way there is for it to be.

Where there is such a Ψ-like factor to deny, disjunctivism about belief is its denial. Where there is none, disjunctivism can just consist in saying so. More needs to be said to make sense of the idea of a belief and its ringers. My concern here will be with Burge's attempts at saying this. Here Burge, and I, will restrict attention to one sort of thing one might believe, namely, that things are thus and so, where the thought that they are that way is (or is representable as) singular. (As Frege reminds us, the same thought may be decomposable as singular, general or particular (see 1892: 199-200).) A singular thought is one for which there is an object on which its truth turns essentially. More on this in due course.

2. Burge's Target: Is disjunctivism Burge's target? He says this:

The key disjunctivist claim entailed by naive realism is negative: No specific explanatorily significant state is common between the different perceptions in the three cases: the case of perceiving object a, the case of perceiving contextually indiscernible object b, and the case of having a referential perceptual illusion which is for the perceiver phenomenally indiscernible from the two preceding cases. (2005: 41)

Our concern is with disjunctivism's denial of common, explanatorily relevant perceptual state types and perception-based propositional attitude (belief) types, in the three sorts of cases ... (2005: 26)

It cannot be emphasized too strongly that disjunctivism is not merely the claim that there are mental differences among the three states. ... Disjunctivism denies that the relevant perceptual experiences have any explanatorily relevant type of perceptual state in common. This is the view that I shall criticize. (2005: 27)
Sid sees Penelope, on the rocks, reclining, in her yellow shift. In the blink of an eye, Penelope is replaced by a silicone dummy Penelope. Sid notices no difference. In another blink, the whole scene disappears, but computers generate the same patterns on his retinas. Here are three cases of the sort Burge has in mind—what I will refer to as a ‘stock triple’.

Ψ(y)ing is a very special sort of perceptual state or episode, one with the particular features just listed. To deny it is not obviously to hold that the perceptual states or episodes in the three terms of a stock triple have nothing in common. Indeed, for the case he discusses, Hinton suggests that they do:

In a way (A v B) does say what my A-ing and my B-ing have in common ... It says that my A-ing and my B-ing have in common that one is, what the other merely is like. (1967: 223)

Thus, a perceptual state in common throughout the terms: one of being such that that disjunction holds. Perhaps this is ruled out by what Burge means by ‘explanatorily relevant’. We will explore that possibility in due course.

But I think Burge's real beef with disjunctivism about perception (and about belief) lies elsewhere. It is that such disjunctivisms conflict with what he calls ‘The Proximality Principle’

What I firmly reject is the disjunctivist denial that there are fundamental explanatorily relevant perceptual state types that accord with the Proximality Principle. (2005: 28)

He states that principle as follows:

On any given occasion, the total antecedent psychological state of the individual and system, the total proximal input together with internal input into the system suffices to produce a given type of perceptual state, assuming no malfunction or interference. Call this the Proximality Principle. (2005: 22)

It is first worth noting that this principle is not really any result of science, but rather (so far as it is a good one) some piece of methodology with which the relevant science approaches its topic in the first place. Not that it is a bad principle. As Hinton puts it,

Well, and indeed it would be strange if, given a certain type of impulse reaching certain structures, what happened next there, or in adjacent structures, was different according to the nature of the remoter cause, the initial stimulus; the mechanically 'observable' effect of the given proximate cause taking after its grandfather, so to speak. (1973: 75-76)
So for Hinton, as for Burge, for given processing (typed by steps for a processor to go through, and input for it to receive) there must be some outcome-type such that same processing yields same outcome.

How, though, is disjunctivism meant to run afoul of this? The idea is, in the three terms of a stock triple, the same proximal stimulus (type)—the same pattern of irradiation of the retinas—receives the same visual processing (the same processing of whatever sort it is the task of vision science to identify). So, the idea continues, there must be the same processed product in each case. When the science has explained how that processed product, or end state, would be produced under the circumstances obtaining in each term of the stock triple, its explanatory burden is discharged, or at least its means for explaining whatever it is does explain have been exhausted. So, Burge reasons, there must be some one thing which it does explain throughout the terms, thus some one thing present and to be explained in each term. But the task of vision science, as Burge sees it, is to explain visual experience. So, he thinks, that one thing must be a type of visual experience; moreover, a type typed by what it is that is thus experienced visually. From this we can see what ‘explanatory relevance’ must come to here. An explanatorily relevant perceptual state is to be, first, a state (or episode) of experiencing such-and-such visually, and, second, that state whose occurrence is explained by given processing of given proximal stimulus, as per above.

If (but only if) this line of thought is right, there is something experienced visually in all terms of a stock triple, moreover something specifiable (what that processing would explain). Moreover, one might think, if one were experiencing that, he would have to be either, say, seeing Penelope sipping, or seeing a perfect ringer for that, or witnessing, or otherwise experiencing, a perfect visual illusion of that. For for him to experience something visually (be visually aware of something) which allowed him to distinguish his experience from seeing Penelope sipping, there would need to be further visual processing, or a different proximal stimulus, which, by hypothesis there is not. So it looks like we have something like plenitude, determinacy, and illusion-resistance for this supposed state of visually experiencing. What we do not have, to be sure, is that the specified output could be produced only by that processing of that proximal stimulus. But we can bracket that for the moment.

On these assumptions what vision science revealed really would be at odds with disjunctivism. We can see that it would be without even knowing the specifics of what it will reveal. Thus Burge’s comparison with (supposed) Hegelian astronomy—though what disjunctivism would be at odds with is the methodology of the science, not some result of it. But we can see already that more is assumed here than just that innocuous principle which Hinton enthusiastically endorses. Let us agree that there is some product of processing which is present in each of the three terms of the triple. It is another step to conclude that that something is a state, or episode, of experiencing such-and-such visually. It is in recognising this as an extra step that Hinton takes Proximality in his stride.

The Proximality Principle (same intradermal aetiology, same product) applies, or sowieso applies, only where the notion proximal applies. It is automatic only for what has location. It is agreed on all hands that in the area of visual experience there is that to which it does not apply, e.g., seeing. If Penelope is not sipping, Sid does not see this. Nor is there any other thing which he both sees in seeing her sipping and must still be seeing so long as the intradermal aetiology remains fixed. Given intradermal aetiology does not guarantee seeing some one thing. Nor, to

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be sure, is Sid’s seeing her sipping at a location, at least an intradermal one.

Seeing does not fall within the ambit of any genuine requirement of proximality. Now the question is whether any visual experience so falls, and if so, whether, moreover, it has the properties which mark \( \Psi(y) \)ing. Burge supposes that we can prescind from the shackles of the quotidian—those boring facts as to who is where doing what—so as to be left with a visual experience which is determinate, a plenum (relative to something there might be for one to see) and illusion-resistant, and on which a requirement of proximality gets a grip. But this assumption is not part of the methodology of any science. It is a bit of all too familiar philosophy, as will emerge.

3. Postures: Disjunctivism sins, Burge tells us, not only in re perceptual experience, but also in re belief. It denies “common, explanatorily relevant … perception-based propositional attitude (belief) types”. Here again the issue is whether there are belief states governed by a requirement of proximality, and if so, what sort. Perception and thought stand on different sides of a divide. In perception we encounter, witness, things to which to respond, inter alia, in thought. Thought, notably belief, is a response to what we thus confront. One might find it surprising if explanations of visual processing required some end state which was a response to what was thus visually experienced. Such surprise will prove well placed. But then too, perception’s role is to make the world bear for us on what to think and do. Burge would not be the only one to think this to require perception itself to confront us with something already conceptualised—some content for representing, notably a belief, to have. It might seem a short leap from this to the idea that there is—must be—a particular response it thus demands; a particular belief it would (ceteris paribus, perhaps) provoke. What inspires this thought, I note, is not some supposed demand of vision science for a given end product of given processing, but rather an idea, whose source lies elsewhere, as to with what perception must confront us.

Following Frege, one would not see the conceptual on the presentation side. And one would diverge from Burge on more points than this. Burge operates with a very particular picture of belief. I think we can only find our way back from that picture to the actual phenomena with an alternative picture in view. Frege offers just what we need. This section will sketch it in nine points. This alternative mandates precisely Burge’s target. One might dispute Frege’s picture. One awaits.

1) Judging (‘urtreiben’) is Frege’s term for the central case of a truth-evaluable posture. The first point is that judging in his sense (believing, taking to be so) is a posture, a way of standing towards things. It is not an act, still less one of representing. Sid takes things to be such that Penelope is reclining. He so stands. No act, of representing or otherwise, could achieve, or constitute, this. Sid tells Pia that Penelope is reclining. Such is an act of representing. New representing is created in and by thus making it recognisable. A new way for things to be is thus created: things being as represented in that episode. Suppose that, observing her, Sid comes to take Penelope to be reclining. For him to hold that posture is for him to be prepared to acknowledge this as being so—Penelope reclining as among the ways things are. No act, of thought or deed, would count as being so prepared. Nor is there any such which could not go missing while he remained so prepared. Believing thus involves no acts of reference. Acts belong to belief’s expression. If I write myself a note, I make recognisable to myself the representing I have thus done. I do not thus make recognisable to myself what I believe. If there were any question about that, that question would remain open. An act of
representing-to-be-so is, Frege says, the Kundgebung (announcing) of Anerkennung (acknowledgement) of some thought’s truth. Kundgebung does not create Anerkennung to be announced.

2) Believing (taking to be so) is a posture liable to a particular sort of success or failure. One may believe truly or falsely. The posture presumes its own success. It represents itself as a case of taking in how things are. But it also aims at that success in that it presents itself as what would be a failure unless a certain condition were met. To hold it is to acknowledge such liability, or at least to be suitably sensitive to the difference, for it, between such success or failure. Crucially, such a posture is always one for one to hold—for any given ones, perhaps another. Human reproduction ensures that our beliefs meet this condition. Given this, someone’s holding of the posture is a success (of the indicated kind, thinking truly) just in case anyone’s holding of it would be. (Cf. 1893: xvi, 1918: 67-69.) To stress a crucial point, someone believes that such-and-such only where that such-and-such is something for one to think—only where indefinitely many might agree or dispute as to precisely that. Such is a sine qua non for that objectivity Frege insisted on for (what he called) judgement.

3) We come now to Frege’s notion of a thought (Gedanke). A thought, Frege tells us, is that by which truth is brought into question at all. (See, e.g., 1918: 60-61.) But there is no such thing as simply bringing truth into question. For postures, there is no such thing as simply aiming at truth. Truth can be brought into question only by raising some particular question of truth. A posture can aim at truth only in making its success turn in some particular way on how things are. A thought fixes some such way. The thought is of things being such-and-such way there is for things to be. Viewed as a thought that such-and-such, it presents that way as among the ways things are. (For Frege, so presenting things is still to be distinguished from committing to truth.) A thought is a particular way to aim at truth. So, inter alia, it identifies a particular posture of believing—one for one to hold—in fixing what its success turns on. Each thought arbitrates success for some such posture. A thought is the content of a belief, where ‘content’ has precisely this significance.

If a thought is what brings truth into question at all, then, Frege insists, it is essentially invisible, intangible, not perceivable by the senses:

A thought is something not perceivable, and all perceptually observable things are excluded from the domain of that by which truth can come into question at all. (1918: 61)

An utterance, or some other perceivable thing, might go in for that success just discussed—make itself liable for being true or false (e.g., stating truly or falsely). But then there would be an intelligibly contingent question on what its truth was to turn, just how it had exposed itself to success or failure. One can (for the purpose) identify the utterance by (some of) the words that made it up, its speaker, its date, or etc. It is that utterance. An utterance’s having all those features is compatible with its having no content, or, if some, then (near enough) any. If its content is this rather than that, such remains to be said. And it is so far a contingent matter. It makes sense to ask why its content is such-and-such—what else in its occurrence mandates this rather than something else. Such questions cannot be asked intelligibly of a thought in Frege’s sense. A thought is a way for the truth of, e.g., an utterance to turn on how things are.
Circumstance connects it to any utterance whose content it may be. That a thought’s truth turns in a particular way on how things are (if we so speak at all) cannot depend on anything else. For its truth to turn on what it does is just for it to be the thought it is. Otherwise it could not be an answer to the question what question of truth some given utterance raised. Such, Frege sees, requires a thought not to have a perceivable form (say, orthographic, or geometric, or historical) which identifies it as the thought it is. Corollary: for any perceivable form of the expression of a thought, there might be another.

Such invisibility of thoughts separates them, and whatever has that generality intrinsic to them as such, from what lacks such generality—notably, its instances, what falls under it. This is to say that what has that generality is never the object of the senses, or of perceptual experience. Such will be crucial in what follows. But next to identify the generality in question.

4) It is intrinsic to a thought to have a certain sort of generality. As Frege puts it,

A thought always contains something which reaches beyond the particular case, by means of which it presents this to consciousness as falling under some given generality. (1882a: Kernsatz 4)

The success of a posture of believing cannot turn on all of how things are. For any given such posture, there must be something specifiable on which truth turns. Suppose that Penelope is sunning in her chaise longue. Such is a way for things to be. Things might be that way while she was being watched by Sid, while she was not; while she wore a yellow shift, while she wore britches and held a riding crop, and so on ad inf. There is indefinite variation in what might make for a case of things being such that Penelope is sunning. So for things to be as per some given specifiable posture of belief is not simply for things to be as they are, but rather for them to be what they would be in an indefinite range of other circumstances. Such generality is intrinsic to a way for things to be. Equally for a posture, so thought, which represents things as that way. Such is also contained in the idea that a given posture of belief is, per se, a posture for one to hold.

By contrast there is what a thought presents as falling under some given generality—what Frege calls ‘the particular case’. This precisely lacks that generality which marks thoughts and ways for things to be. A thought just is what brings particular cases under some given generality. It, in being what it is, fixes what instances that generality, what not—what particular cases the generality would reach to. Nothing in a particular case as such brings anything under any generality—fixes what would count as anything. Penelope’s yellow shift does not fix what it would be for anything else, or even for itself, to instance something being yellow. Nor does any particular case even determine what it would be for something to be a particular case. It, in being as it is, does not fix what a particular case might be. A thought makes it recognisable what would instance things being as per it. For a particular case there is no such thing to recognise.

5) Perceptual awareness is essentially awareness of the particular case; of things being as they are. Generalities—ways for things to be, thoughts of things so being—are, as Frege insists, not possible objects of sensory awareness. To borrow one of his examples (1918: 61), one sees the sun, large and red on the horizon. One sees it sinking into the sea. One sees the red glow it
I do not believe that the construction of concepts can precede judgment, because that presupposes an independent existence of concepts, but I think that concepts arise only through the decomposition of judgeable contents. (1882b (1980:118))

Thoughts are decomposable: the same thought may be decomposed in many ways; no one decomposition is privileged per se.

A thought, as sketched so far, has a task. It must fix something for a determinate question of truth to turn on. To decompose the thought is to decompose this task into subtasks, perhaps performed in some given structured way. For a decomposition to be a decomposition just is for those subtasks, so performed, to be the performance of the whole task. This is just what decomposition is. Which allows, in principle, for multiple, diverse but equally correct, decompositions of a given thought—but none which jointly fail to yield a whole thought back.

6) Some thoughts admit of decompositions on which they are singular. For any singular thought, there is some object such that the truth of the thought turns precisely on how that object is. Hence, trivially, there is no such thought where there is no such object. Without the object, there is no way the thought makes truth turn on how things are. There is no thought which might have been singular, but in fact is not.

A whole thought makes truth turn, in a particular way, on how things are—on whether they are such-and-such way. ‘Things’ here bears its catholic reading, as in ‘Things have been slow lately’: one cannot ask ‘Which things?’. In a decomposition of a thought as (once) singular, one element among others—one subtask which, with the others, forms the whole—is making truth turn on the object it does. Frege argues that there are ways of performing such a subtask: different ways in which some one object might be made to play this role in a thought of it that it is thus and so. He calls such a way of performing this task a mode of presentation (‘Art des Gegebenseins’).

When we express a thought in a sentence, the sentence, as a rule, functions to present
that thought as decomposed in a particular way. Different syntactically proper parts of the sentence correspond to different elements in the thought so decomposed. A part of the sentence corresponding to a mode of presentation of an object on the decomposition thus presented would make that expression of a thought whose truth turned essentially on how that object is. Where a sentence expresses a thought, for a part of it to refer to an object just is for it to make this contribution. Here, and just here, for words to refer to such-and-such is for some element of a thought (on a decomposition) to make that such-and-such that on which that thought's truth turns. There is that much coincidence between what words do on the understanding they bear, and what modes of presentation do, where a mode of presentation is a feature of a thought. Even here, nothing requires that about the words by which they are to be understood as referring to that object to coincide with, or be the way that object is presented within the thought itself. Nor, within the present conception, is this generally the case. Such depends on further factors, to be mentioned soon. (Frege himself was not always surefooted on this point. See (1906: 208).)

So on the notion mode of presentation on which thoughts might differ in their modes of presentation of an object, something is a mode of presentation of an object only as an element of a given thought on a particular decomposition of it as singular. A mode of presentation of an object, on this notion, just is an element in a thought: that which makes some object the one on which its truth turns. 'Refers', 'reference' and 'mode of presentation' might all be used in other ways. When they are, it is incumbent on their user to make clear what ways. A mode of presentation on some such other notion is not, or not per se, the way an object is presented in a thought as the one on which truth turns, hence by an element of the content of a belief.

7) For Frege, a thought is something essentially public: if thinkable by anyone, then by indefinitely many. A thought cannot be what Frege calls a 'Vorstellung': something one must be so-and-so to have in mind. Frege's way of conceiving the objectivity of truth makes sense only supposing this. Only this gives the right sense (for Frege's purpose) to the idea that anyone thinks truly just where everyone who so thought would. “Der Gedanke” (1918) argues elegantly (see my 2005) that a thought cannot be a Vorstellung (cannot be private). Nothing is more crucial to his picture of belief.

For Frege, a thought marks a point on which thinkers can agree or disagree. It is something whose truth can be (jointly) argued, investigated, discovered. For every such point, its thought, for every such thought, its point. For Frege this and the idea that a thought fixes something on which truth can turn ('brings truth into question at all') are two sides of one idea.

So a thought is identified in one way by how it represents things being—what question of truth it raises—but in another by in what cases two thinkers would be agreeing or disagreeing as to its truth. How is a given thought decomposable? As it would need to be to figure in all such (dis)agreements. Suppose we decompose a thought as singular—e.g., as about Penelope, to the effect that she is reclining. So decomposed it contains an element making her the one on whom truth turns. Following Frege (1892a), what element that is is liable to depend on its way of making Penelope the one. Such a way is as must be for a question of truth to disputes over which all the right thinkers would be parties. If Sid thinks that Penelope is reclining, that which he thinks presents her in a way (or ways) accessible to all those with whom he thereby agrees or disagrees. Nor could the question who these other might be have the answer, 'No one.'
On our present notion, a mode of presentation is an element of a thought. There might be other notions, e.g., ones on which a mode of presentation is a way in which something is presented to Sid, a feature of his particular psychology. There is the way Penelope is presented to Sid visually as he observes her on esplanada—e.g., in profile, or half-shadow. Perhaps there is also such a thing as the way she is presented to him in thought: his way of thinking of her, say, the one he takes to be reclining—though it remains to explain what such a notion is to be. But—the present point—no such notion bears a direct relation to the notion mode of presentation where that is a feature of an element of a thought. If one got so far as being able to individuate, or identify, modes of presentation where such things belong to a person at a time, it would be a mistake, for the reason just given, to conflate one of these with the mode of presentation of an object in some thought that thinker thinks. A mode of presentation of an object within a thought must serve a different function. To mistake it with some mode of presentation fixed by someone’s individual psychology would be to conflate the psychological with the logical in just the way Frege fought against.

8) A thought is what stands at a point of (dis)agreement among an (indefinitely extendible) range of thinkers. So two thoughts to a given effect—say, of someone that she is reclining—differ in their mode of presentation of that someone just where they represent different disputes into which one might enter. Such is a regulative principle of counting thoughts. It can seem in tension with another, perhaps suggested by Frege. It is that thoughts must count as different where they differ in what Frege calls ’Erkenntniswert’—roughly, in what one knows when he knows that they are true (or false). Frege highlights cases where (as he sees it) difference in ways of presenting some object is what makes thoughts so differ. I will not attempt to unfold this second idea here. I merely note that, whatever the right way of doing this, it must be such as to honour the idea stressed above: the essential publicity (shareability) of thoughts. Nothing is more central to Frege’s thought.

9) Sid witnesses Penelope reclining, and thus comes to think that she is reclining. What thought does he thus come to relate to believingly? Is this even a good question? Two suppositions might make it so. First, one might suppose that there is just one right way of counting thoughts—one right way of identifying where one thought was expressed or mentioned twice, where two, each once. Second, one might suppose that Sid’s whole posture towards things—his taking things to be as he does—has one correct decomposition into his taking things to be this, that, and the other way there is for things to be—his relating believingly to precisely such-and-such collection of thoughts.

By the first supposition, whatever might ever call for discerning two thoughts by virtue of difference in Erkenntniswert always does so: there are two different thoughts here tout court. One might then be moved to distinguish between thoughts very finely, by correspondingly fine differences in their modes of presentation of some object. Which is one thing which has moved some to seek the nature of a mode of presentation of an object in a thought in the vagaries of individual psychologies. (See Dummett 1981, chapter 10.) Frege’s conception of belief contains a cogent warning against so proceeding. Kripke also so warned (see Kripke 1979). Frege is silent on the first supposition. As to the second, it is at least in the spirit of his insistence on the multiple decomposability of a thought to insist on a parallel multiple decomposability of whole postures.

These last debates I will not enter here. What I have stressed is that ideas about some intrinsic ‘fineness of grain’ of thoughts need to be balanced against ideas about their publicity.
One must not lose sight of Frege’s insistence that what thoughts there are to think, what questions of truth there are to raise, is independent of who, if anyone, thinks or raises them, or under what circumstances. Frege compares a thought with a planet, “which was already interacting with other planets before anyone had seen it” (1918: 69). He also remarks,

That which I recognise as true I judge to be true entirely independently of my recognition of its truth, also independently of whether I think of it. It is not part of the truth of a thought that it is thought. (1918: 74)

In saying what Sid thinks we always choose from among things there are anyway for one to think. If there is a range of distinct thoughts, all of Penelope, all that she is is reclining, perhaps many (if any) are ones which count, or would sometimes count, as ones Sid thinks in being as he is. It is anyway not reasonable to suppose that his way of thinking of Penelope at a time makes some one thought, and its mode of presentation, the thing he thinks to that effect. If a mode of presentation of an object is to make a thought available to a range of diverse thinkers, as per above, and if a mode of presentation is the sort of thing individuable in terms of given representational features, then one would only expect any such mode to be underdetermined by the psychological history of any one person who may think a thought of which it is a part.

4. An Example: There is the psychology of thinking thoughts, of holding things true; and there is the logical structure of thoughts themselves, for which principles of being true. The two, Frege insists, are always to be separated sharply (1884: X) Holding these apart matters to reading Frege himself. For example, in the “Logic” of 1897 Frege remarks,

It is not necessary that the thought that he is cold be expressed by the one who is cold himself. This can also be done by another, in his designating the cold one by name. (1897: 146)

In “Der Gedanke” (1918) Frege tells a more complex story:

Now everyone is presented to himself in a special and primitive way, in which he is presented to no other. If now Dr. Lauben thinks that he has been injured, this primitive way in which he is presented to himself probably underlies this. And only Dr. Lauben can grasp the thought so determined. But now he wants to tell this to another. He cannot communicate a thought which only he can grasp. If he now says, ‘I have been injured’, he must use ‘I’ in a sense which others can also grasp, say, in the sense of ‘the one who is speaking to you at this moment’, by which he makes use of the accompanying circumstances of his expression of a thought. (1918: 66)
This second discussion immediately precedes Frege’s negative answer to the question whether a thought could be a Vorstellung—raise a question of truth available only to so-and-so.

In 1897, there is the thought that N is cold which N thinks, and also expresses using the first-person pronoun, and which others can also think, and express, e.g., in calling N by name. In 1918 there is a thought which Dr. L thinks, his thinking which is ‘underlain’ by a way in which he is presented to himself alone. And there is a thought which he communicates to others, relying on a certain understanding of ‘I’ in his mouth. Is there one thought here or two? If there must be two, then the thought Dr. L. thinks is one one must be him to entertain. So then Frege has changed his mind since 1897. Odd since he is about to argue that there could be no such thought.

Frege need not have changed his mind. True, in some sense of ‘present’, each of us is presented to himself in a way he is presented to no other. Plausibly Dr. L bases his thinking that he is injured on what he is presented with in being so presented with himself. But what notion of mode of presentation is in play here? First, a psychological one, since it is a question of how Dr. L is presented to himself, not a question of how he is presented in the internal structure of any given thought. Second, it is a notion that occupies the same place along the presentation-response divide as does that notion on which Penelope is presented to Sid visually in a certain way (e.g., in profile). Not that the mode here involves some sort of seventh sense. But perceptual modes of presentation present us with the nonconceptual: they gain us access to what instances ways for a thing to be, permit recognition of such instancing. They are a source of information. Thus is Dr. L’s special mode of presentation of himself. It allows him recognition of his being as he is as a case of someone being injured. It does this in affording his awareness of his injury. Whereas a mode of presentation in thought—a way of thinking of some object as the one in question in some particular case of representing things as thus and so—is no such source of information about the thing in question. It merely helps individuate the question of truth thus raised; locates it within the space of such. That way in which Dr. L is presented to himself alone is no such guide.

In the sense in which Dr. L is presented to himself as no other is, that his being injured is so presented to him tells us nothing about any mode of presentation in any thought he thus comes to think—any more than the fact that Penelope is presented to Sid in profile tells us any such thing about the thoughts he thus comes to think. On the other hand, Frege tells us that Dr. L bases a thought that he is wounded on what he is thus presented with. What thought that is depends on when someone else would think the same thing.

Who else can think (or dispute) what Dr. L does in thus thinking that he is wounded? Who else, for a start, can think of him that he is injured? All those acquainted with him, or with the right event. Anyone who knew who Dr. Lauben was, and when the condition was supposed to obtain—can, so far, think just what he does to this effect (though not learn in the same way about the injury). Perhaps, Frege’s argument notwithstanding, something requires a thought available to Dr. L. alone. But nothing yet in view.

The literature contains stories to this effect: Dr. L, having fallen from the carriage, has forgotten that he is Dr. L, but is aware (in that special way) that he is injured. There is something he does not know. This can be put as: ‘that he is Dr. L: Decomposing this as an identity thought, it would contain two elements, each making that thought about him. If we follow Frege (e.g., 1891, 1892a), these different modes of presentation are deployable to say of what he was then ignorant. The question again is: when would one thus be thinking him
ignorant of this? When would one be thinking a thought in which he is presented first in the first way (identified by 'he' above), then in the second? At most this: that first mode of presentation (signalled by 'he') must make it recognisable that the truth of the identity in question turns on what particular cases instance a certain generality, being that very thing so-and-so (where so-and-so is its referent, in fact Dr. L), and such recognisability must not presuppose, or depend on, already recognising that the case in question is one of something's being as it is instancing that generality, being the very same person as Dr. L. (Cf. Frege 1882b.)

No more yet follows.

We are not yet pointed towards an element in a thought which presents Dr. L as that on which truth turns in a way recognisable only to one to whom Dr. L is presented (on that other notion) as he is only to himself. So far, there is no reason to suppose this. Dr. L's special access to himself allows him special means of settling certain questions of truth. But it provides, so far, no special questions of truth on which only he can take stands. A good thing if we follow Frege, for then there are no such questions. So far the fact that Dr. Lauben, after the fall, bases his belief that he is injured on information provided him in that special way at best grossly underdetermines to what thoughts he thus relates.

Now for communiqués. Sid dials Pia and says, 'Penelope is on esplanada.' For there to be such representing is for it to be made recognisable as the representing that it is. Language helps with this. In the circumstances, Sid is to be taken as speaking language both he and Pia understand, and in a familiar way, using expressions in it for what they are for in it. Thus, e.g., that he said 'esplanada' makes recognisable that he was speaking of terrasse—presumably, in the circumstances, a certain familiar terrasse. In the circumstances, his use of 'Penelope' would most reasonably, naturally, be taken as speaking of Cruz, not of his ten year old niece Penelope, currently in her boarding school in Lausanne. Similarly, if Dr. L announces, 'I have been injured', the words he uses, as thus used, in those circumstances, make it recognisable how he has represented things being. Frege gives an idea of how 'I' might help with this.

Words used on an occasion to express a thought (where one was expressed) make it recognisable what thought this was. Just that is their function. They do that because, in the circumstances, they bear a certain understanding as to what is thus made recognisable. 'I' might work, as Frege suggests, by directing one to the mouth from which it issues. But there are two distinct issues here. There is how the words work to make something recognisable, and there is what is thus made recognisable—that what was expressed was such-and-such. Those factors in the workings of words which allow them to achieve their end of the bargain are not automatically elements in the thought thus recognisably expressed. It conflates the psychological with the logical just to assume that some given mode of presentation of a thought (in words) just is some mode of presentation within that thought. Such must be wrong where it makes thoughts unshareable.

The role of words parallels that of visual experience. Penelope is presented to Sid visually in a certain way. His seeing her is occasion for him to think various things about her. Perhaps it affords him certain things to think about her which he otherwise could not. Perhaps it allows him to recognise certain ways for truth to turn on how things are. But the way in which he happened to come to stand believingly to some such thought cannot decide, on its own, what the nature of that thought is. Similarly, the way words work on an occasion to make a thought's expression recognisable can never be conflated with the way that thoughts' truth turns on how things are. Language use belongs to the psychological, not the logical, when it comes to
holding these two things separate. Such space between psychological and logical modes of presentation—the psychology of grasping thoughts, and the logic of being true—is essential if thoughts are to be those points of (dis)agreement which, for Frege, they necessarily are. It is space within which Frege need not have reversed himself in describing Dr. Lauben as he did in 1918.

5. Common Factors: Burge's antidisjunctivism rests on a picture of belief very unlike Frege's. As with perception, where it equally departs from Frege, it is contained in the bearing assigned ringers. For Burge, certain constancies throughout a stock triple, built in more or less by definition, impose a certain common factor in (certain) beliefs formed in its terms. Each term of the triple involves some visual experience. The aetiology of the experience in each case is the same proximal (visual) stimulus (type), and the same processing of it. In basing a belief on this experience, the subject represents the world to himself as a certain way. In each term of the triple, as Burge sees things, the subject brings the same representational, so conceptual, capacities to bear on how he does this. These draw on the same pre-existing picture of how things are. In Burge's words,

The perceptions are formed from type-identical registrations of light rays. The ... beliefs ... are covered by many of the same psychological principles. ... They are formed from the same perceptual categories and concepts. They use the same demonstrative singular representational abilities and demonstrative representation types. (2005: 34-35)

Such constancies, Burge takes it, assure a certain common factor in the beliefs thus formed. Suppose, e.g., Sid spots Penelope sipping a *mojito*. He thus comes to take it that she is so engaged. Burge tells us:

An illusion might occasion ... a type-identical belief. A contextually indiscernible duplicate could be substituted, occasioning a ... type-identical belief. ... Type-identical representational contents mark, or type-identify, the same representational state types and abilities.

... What differs among these ... belief states is nothing about their general type. (2005: 34-35)

Sid sees Penelope, and forms the belief that she is sipping. Had it been a Penelope-ringer (a dummy, say, or a body double), then, unable to detect this, he would have responded (so far as he could tell) just as he did—*hence*, Burge holds, gone into a type-identical belief state; one of holding a type-identical belief. Had he been experiencing a visual illusion 'as of' Penelope sipping, again, 'same response', *ergo* a new type-identical belief.

What types these (supposed) type-identical beliefs? 'Belief' is the form of two different nominalisations. It may speak of a state or condition of believing, a 'belief state'. Or it may speak of something there is to believe—e.g., what one comes to believe in coming to think that
Penelope is sipping. Henceforth ‘belief’ (neat) here speaks of something one might think, ‘belief state’ of a condition of doing so. Burge types belief states by beliefs, or rather types of them. A belief in this second sense represents things as a particular way there is for things to be. A type of belief in this sense is a class of ways to represent things being, united by a common way things would be represented in representing them as any way within the class.

Such a common-factor way of representing which thus types a belief need not itself be a way for things to be—the way some thought represents things being. What types the types Burge is after here will not be that. For no thought is in common to what Burge wants to fall into one type. Some thought of Penelope that she is sipping, some thought of one or another ringer that it is sipping, and some other thoughts of as yet unknown nature are all meant to fall into one type by Burge’s principles. The common schematic way to represent things being which types things here is, so to speak, a representation a few elements short of a thought (so of some way to represent things being).

At this point the psychological has linked itself to the logical. The psychology of holding true, as supposedly manifest in the stock triple, is meant to have consequences for being true; for the structure of at least some thoughts (questions of truth) towards which one might, and we sometimes do, hold stands. By the reasoning thus far there must be thoughts which are structured so as to type those belief states in the stock triple which, we are told, share a type. How is this link forged?

Could the link be forged by Proximity: same input, same processing, so same type of thing believed? Here the situation is much as with perception. As Burge agrees, Proximity does not apply to belief itself. If the terms of the triple represent same input and same processing, they do not represent—certainly not by Burge’s lights—three cases of same thing thought so. For Penelope to be sipping and for a ringer to be are two different ways for things to be. Thinking things one way is not thinking them the other. So it remains an open question for what else, if anything, Proximity does hold. ‘It must hold for something if there is to be something for vision science to explain.’ Well, perhaps so. But first it is not clear why what explains our perceptual capacities should also be burdened with explaining our beliefs. And second, it is not yet required that this something be some identifiable form for thoughts (objects of attitudes) to share—some representation a few items short of a thought. We need to look elsewhere for a rationale for that idea.

The stock triple is meant to exhibit a core phenomenon. Sid watches Penelope sipping a *mojito*. Suppose that a ringer had been substituted for Penelope. Then he would have been watching the ringer sipping. But—such it is to be a ringer—he would—*could*—have noticed no difference. Everything would have seemed to him just as it does. In particular, how, and what, he thought of what he was watching would have seemed just the same to him. Similarly if, surreptitiously, he had been tampered with so that, undetectably for him, his retinal images were no longer products of those distal objects before him—Penelope, her sipping, and so on. If, watching the ringer, he could have thought that he was thinking of Penelope—if he could have so much as entertained that thought—then this ability would, at the same time, be liability to error—an error he would commit, undetectably from his position, if he did think such a thing. (This, I take it, is the point of imagining surreptitious switches in midcourse.) The question for the moment is what consequences this core point is meant to have.

Watching her, Sid thinks of Penelope that she is sipping. Conceivably, there could have been a ringer sipping. Had there been, the idea is, Sid’s thinking would seem just the same to
him as it in fact does. Nothing in the way it does seem to him makes it recognisable to him, in his present position, watching, as something it would not be were there a ringer. Or nothing currently recognisable about his thinking would make it recognisable (by its absence) that he was not so thinking were there a ringer. Yet the way he is thinking of things differs from the way he would be. In thinking as he did in the hypothetical situation, he would be thinking of some ringer that she/it was sipping. He does no such thing as things stand. Burge also supposes (though it is less clear) that as things stand he thinks something of Penelope which he would not be thinking were there a ringer. The way he is thinking (as to who is sipping) and the way he would be in that hypothetical situation are, in some such sense, ringers for each other.

So what? Here is one thing one might think: if Sid's thinking would seem (or would have seemed) just the same to him were there (or had there been) a ringer, then there must be an identifiable way he thinks of things as things stand which is a way he would still be thinking of things in those hypothetical circumstances. Here is another: there must be such a way which, in the counterfactual circumstances, would be his thinking of the ringer that she/it was sipping, but as things stand is not that. And another: there is such a way which, as things stand, is his thinking of Penelope that she is sipping, but in the counterfactual circumstances would not be that. Yet another: that way which would be his thinking of the ringer that she/it was sipping is, in fact, his thinking this of Penelope. One more: that way which is his thinking of Penelope that she is sipping would be, in the counterfactual circumstances, his thinking this of the ringer.

I have listed these ideas in rough order of dubiety. But I am more concerned here with their utility. None of them, as it stands, reaches beyond the psychological to link this with the logical. The ideas concern Sid's way of thinking of things, or representing, or presenting, things to himself. The ideas are that he has ways of thinking of things which are his thinking things of Penelope, or which would be his thinking things of a ringer were there one, and so on. But so far, his ways of thinking of things are just parts of his (current, perhaps transient) psychology. If some of them are, say, his thinking of Penelope that she is sipping, then for him to think in that way is for him to relate (believingly) to some thought or other. So far we know nothing about what thought this might be, or how it might decompose.

The point stands out clearly if we suppose, as we are now to suppose, that there are many thoughts, of Penelope, that she is sipping, each distinguished from all the others by its way of making her the one on whom truth necessarily turns. (One might dispute this. But for present purposes it serves as common ground.) Such a way for a thought to link itself to an object—for that object to be presented within the thought—is known in the trade as a mode of presentation. If Sid has his way of thinking of Penelope as the one he takes to be sipping, such is a feature of his psychology. It might be called a mode of presentation too. But now ‘mode of presentation’ speaks of a psychological notion. Perhaps there are respectable such notions which distinguish different such modes in some well-defined way. But, as we have seen already (section 4), such notions must be distinguished both from a different sort of psychological notion, concerning channels of information rather than forms of thought, and from that which figures in the logical notion of a thought—what is to be counted by the questions of truth which there are towards which to stand.

On the one hand, Sid's mode of presentation of Penelope, where that is an element in his way of thinking of things, must be distinguished from a mode which is, e.g., a way for Penelope to be presented visually—say, in right profile and half shadow. On the other, it must
be distinguished from those modes of presentation which are elements of thoughts. Here there
are two points to keep in mind. First, it is intrinsic to a thought to be shareable. A mode of
presentation of an object, such as Penelope, in a thought to the effect, say, that she was brilliant
in Jàmon, Jàmon, is something which makes that thought accessible—entertainable, thinkable
—in that indefinite variety of different ways in which it is by all the different thinkers, in
different circumstances, who can agree or disagree about its truth. It is what indefinitely many
different and various individual psychologies might make one thinker or another count as
thinking or disputing. It is (thus) not what is identified merely by the individual psychology of
some particular thinker who manages to count as so connected to it.

Second, following Frege, we get to the elements of a thought only by decomposing the
whole thought—some whole question of truth, distinguished from others by just how it would
be settled. For a mode of presentation to be a way some thought presents an object as the one it
is tied to in the singular way is for it, in the context of the thought's other elements on that way
of decomposing it, to contribute the relevant part of making truth to be settled as, for that
question, it is to be—to fix, e.g., how it would be settled whether the right thing was among the
sippers. What how his thinking seems to him on an occasion equips him then to recognise as
to who was, or was not, the one who must be sipping if things are to be as he thinks does not
automatically settle what it would be for someone to be the one on whom truth turns for any
thought he thus counts as thinking. Moreover, what Sid is prepared to recognise as to when
things would be as he thinks, given enough information as to what it is that is so to count or
not, is a very different matter from what he would be able to recognise in his present
circumstances as they stand.

So no bridge has yet been built. What sorts of further principles might do the building?
An idea of this shape may tempt: if, in thinking someone to be sipping, Sid thinks in a certain
way as to who it is he thus takes to be sipping—if he presents the one in question to himself in
a certain way—then the (or some) thought he thus thinks is one in which that person is
presented in that way as the one on whom its truth turns. For such an idea to have
applications, we would need a psychological notion of mode of presentation which fixed just
what a way for Sid thus to think of Penelope might be, thus what sort of constraint this
imposed on the thoughts he might thus count as thinking. In any case, for reasons just given,
ideas of this shape are not initially plausible. They await argument.

But there is a more general idea with perhaps deeper appeal (though I think still the
wrong way to frame questions of who thinks what). Roughly: where Sid's thinking as he does is
his thinking a certain thought, and where his thinking in other circumstances would be for
him a ringer for his thinking as he does, but not his thinking that thought, there must be a
thought he would then think which would be a ringer, for him, for the one he does, and which
the one he does would be a ringer for. If Sid thinks that Penelope is sipping, and in those
different circumstances would be thinking, not that, but rather, of some ringer, that she was
sipping, then there must be a pair of thoughts, one there is to the effect that Penelope is
sipping, one there would be to the effect that the ringer is, each a ringer for the other.

What might it be for two thoughts to be ringers for each other, either for someone on an
occasion, or just tout court? Here is a line of thought. To mistake one thought for another, you
must first grasp each. You must grasp each for it to be those thoughts you have in mind. To
grasp a thought you must know what question of truth it raises—just how it makes truth turn
on how things are. So you must know something which fixes a requirement on truth such that
the thought is true just where that requirement is met. For two thoughts to be ringers, then, there must be a such requirement which each imposes—so that one can thus grasp each without yet grasping anything about them which distinguishes one from the other. For that to be so it must be that the common requirement—the one there is to grasp in each case—while there is truth in each case just where it is met, nonetheless leaves a role for things being as they are in deciding, not just whether things are as the thought represents them, but also just what way the thought represents things being. In the case at hand, for example, for each thought in the pair of mutual ringers, the right person must be sipping for that thought to be true. But for each a different person plays that role. Each thought is to be taken as, say, about that person who relates to it in a certain way on a certain occasion for its thinking—e.g., as the one to whom the thinker of it would then be attending. Thus it is that one thought in the pair may be about Penelope, the other about some ringer for her, while each remains a ringer for the other.

The idea was: for there to be ringer ways for one to think of things, there must be ringer thoughts—ringer things to think. Unfolding the notion of a ringer thought, we have arrived at a position on which thoughts, and their structures, must be tailored to what a particular thinker, in a particular position in which he thought them, would be able then to recognise as to what it was he thought. The general idea that what one thinks is constrained by what he would be prepared to recognise as to when things would be as he thinks is not without appeal. Here we have a very special version of it. For one thing, ‘would be prepared to recognise’ has been exchanged in it for ‘is able to recognise as things stand, while in his exact current circumstances’. So read, that general idea may well bridge the gulf between the psychological and the logical. It may dictate, say, that how Pia is presented in any thought of her which Sid counts as thinking is fixed by what he can then recognise as to when someone would be the one in question. Perhaps this yields the result Burge insists on. To a Fregean eye, though, this special reading of that general idea will seem suspicious.

To complicate matters, this special reading comes coupled in Burge with a particular epistemology. The idea was: as things stand, Sid is unable to distinguish how he is thinking of things from how he would be thinking of things were he watching a ringer and not Penelope. He is unable to because his experience provides him nothing by which to tell the difference. Everything looks just as it would (or might) if it were Penelope; but equally just as it would if there were a ringer. If he can suppose himself to be thinking in the one way rather than the other (as he might after a midcourse switch), he would thus expose himself to risk of conceivable error. Such are ringers. What Sid thus lacks, and is not provided as he watches Penelope, is a proof that it is she and no ringer. A proof would start from things Sid anyway had to go on, without prejudice to whether it was Penelope he saw sipping, and, by some inferential steps, end in the conclusion that it is Penelope, and not a ringer, of whom he thinks. What is not allowed to weigh here is the possibility that, where Sid sees Penelope, no ringer in the offing, he might have proof without having a proof: he might simply recognise Penelope, thus that it is she who he sees. Such epistemology is all too familiar, and most unfregean.

6. The Third Term: Whatever links the psychological to the logical for Burge, whether ideas as above or others, it also leads him to two strange and notable conclusions. The first concerns the third term in a stock triple. The second is that singular thoughts may, and the ones we think must, be hybrids, in a sense of ‘hybrid’ I will explain in due course. Each is revealing of his understanding of what thinking is. I begin with the third term.
Burge insists that for any stock triple, there is some type of thought (a quasi-thought), such that a thought of that type is thought in each term. Perhaps he thinks this because he thinks that, since Si's thinking would seem just the same to him in all three terms, there must be, in each, a ringer for that which he thinks in each other; and, perhaps also thinks that only a thought could be a ringer for a thought. But no matter why he thinks this, the question is what the relevant thoughts in these three terms might be. A thought that Penelope is sipping might exemplify the type in some such first term. A thought that her twin is sipping might exemplify the type in a related second term. But what could instance the relevant type in a related third term? What might such a type be? Those first two instances of the type decompose as singular. For a thought to do this is for an element in it (so decomposed) to make a particular sort of contribution to when the whole thought would be true: for a certain object, it makes truth turn on whether that object is some way. Without the object for which they did this, they would make no such contribution. Without making such a contribution, they would not be elements of a decomposition at all, or certainly not of such a one. In the third term there is no object for the thought thus to be about. So the relevant thought cannot be of any object that it is thus and so. It cannot be singular. So it cannot decompose into, inter alia, an element as above, by which, in that thought, an object is presented in a given way. What, then, is so according to this supposed thought? In what sense could it be of the same type as these others?

Burge answers cryptically. He writes,

Consider a belief of the form *Franz bought that tomato*. The belief rests on a perception as of a tomato. An illusion might occasion a type-identical perception and a type-identical belief. (2005: 34)

Suppose that the individual forms a belief of the form *Franz bought that tomato*, where no successful reference is made to any tomato. Then whereas the original belief is true, the subsequent belief is false or truth-valueless. (2005: 32)

What identifies the thought thought in the third term is an English sentence in italics. To know what thought this identifies, one needs to know how this device is to be understood to operate. This is none too easily seen. An English sentence, when used to express a thought, presents this as decomposed in a particular way. The way it thus presents this thought may then be used to identify a form, or structure, of this thought so decomposed. Italic may be used to show that it is so serving. ‘*Penelope is sipping*,’ understood as expressing some thought that Penelope is sipping, might also be used to exemplify that thought's form so decomposed—one, e.g., in which an element makes the thought about Penelope. But suppose that a sentence does not express a thought, or we are in the dark as to what that thought might be. Then, *ipso facto*, it presents no thought as decomposed in any way, or if it does, we are in the dark as to what the decomposition might be. Now putting it in italics points to no form for any thought. So it is with Burge’s ‘*Franz bought that tomato*. The mystery was how any thought could be structured as a singular thought would be, while not being one: how it could contain an element ‘of the same type’ as what, in a singular thought, made its truth turn on some object, without having

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its truth _thus_ turn on anything. Italics clear up no such mystery.

For something _to be_ an element in a thought, if we follow Frege, just is for it to perform a certain function. The whole thought makes truth turn in a certain way on how things are. An element in it, in the context of others with which it _is_ an element, does _part_ of what the whole thought does. It makes truth turn, in part, on something in how things are—e.g., on how Penelope is, or on what instances there are of _something being such as to be sipping_. To see what an element in a given thought might be, we must first see what the whole thought does. If there is an object such that that whole thought makes truth turn specifically on how that object is, more specifically, on whether _it_ is thus and so, then the whole thought can be decomposed into an element which performs that part of this job, making truth turn on that object, and how it is. If the whole thought does not make truth turn on things in that way, then it contains no such element. There is no part of what it does for such an element to do. Such a thought _can_ contain no mode of presentation of an object. There are no thoughts with modes of presentation of an object which present nothing. Such an _idle_ ‘element’ would not be an element at all.

If being of the same type as the thoughts thought in the first two terms does not involve containing any such element, Burge gives us no idea of what it might be. Nor does he give us any idea what is so according to this supposed thought. Italics do not tell us that. Still, he thinks there is one. One can only speculate on why. I think it is because he conflates the psychological with the logical in a way which parallels a way of confusing the linguistic with the logical. Pia says, ‘Cheney smokes.’ She means Dick, not Lon. She thus expresses a thought, of someone, that he smokes. Her whole utterance, ‘Cheney smokes’, contributes to making it recognisable what thought this is. Her ‘Cheney’, in particular, helps us to identify that person of whom the thought is that he smokes. If the thought is one in which that person is presented in a particular way as the one, then _perhaps_ it also helps make recognisable what way this is. (Though in fact I do not think this is a good way of approaching the relation between words and thoughts.) But suppose it is now discovered that ‘Cheney’ (Dick, not Lon) was all a media invention (good press, good revenues). So ‘Cheney’ (Dick, not Lon) does not exist. There would be no such discovery to make unless the name ‘Cheney’, on relevant occurrences (notably, in Pia’s utterance) bore a definite understanding. As it is to be understood, for example, verifying Lon’s actual existence would not show that this discovery was only a ‘discovery’ (media inventions on media inventions). It is our understanding of the name as used by Pia which settles when such a discovery would have been made, when not—when there would be someone of whom she expressed a thought that he smoked.

Does all this show that, had ‘Dick Cheney’ been a media invention, Pia would have expressed a thought, of no one that he smoked, but which presented the supposed one it represents as smoking in the same way Cheney is presented in the thought Pia in fact expresses, given the sad fact that Cheney is no myth? Hardly. What we need to recall is that, while the function of a thought is to identify, or just be, some determinate way for truth to turn on how things are—a particular way of settling a question of truth—the function of words is to make, or help make, the expressions of thoughts (or other acts we do with words) _recognisable_ (to us) as the expressions of thoughts they are. The function of words is not to _be, per se_, the expression of such-and-such thought. If Cheney is no myth, then Pia’s words perform their function, and in doing so identify that object on which the truth of that thought (the one expressed) turns in the singular way. If Cheney is a (yet undiscovered) myth, then her words fail in that purpose. They fail in this in bearing the understanding they do. They identify no
thought as the one expressed, much less some thought with some mode of presentation presenting nothing. Which simply reminds us that if, in some sense of ‘sense’, ‘Cheney’, in Pia’s mouth, has a sense, that is no reason to suppose that ‘the’ mode of presentation of Cheney, in ‘the’ thought she expresses, is at all like that sense’s way of making recognisable who it is she is talking about. The (now familiar) social nature of thoughts, as Frege conceives them, precludes any such facile equation.

Now the parallel. Sid’s thinking of things as he does does not make the expression of thoughts recognisable, since it is not the expression of any thought. But it does make him recognisable, or at least identifies him, as one who stands to particular thoughts in particular ways, notably, holding them true—thinking them. It may, e.g., make him recognisable, or make him count, as thinking certain thoughts about Pia. He may thus count as thinking thoughts in which she is presented in certain ways, while not thinking ones in which she is presented in others. But what makes him recognisable as thinking what he thus does—his understanding, say, as to of whom he thinks that she is sipping—need not be, nor bear any fixed relation to, that in the thoughts he thus counts as thinking which requires it to be Pia on whose being thus and so their truth depends. Nor need we think (nonsensically) that that about Sid which identifies certain thoughts as ones he thinks would still have identified something as such where there was no such thing to be thought at all. A temptation to think otherwise is one sign of that conflation of the psychological with the logical which Frege warns against, and to which Burge succumbs.

7. Hybrids: On Burge’s view, singular thoughts admit of ringers: other singular thoughts which, in the right circumstances, may masquerade as them. What would it be for one singular thought to be a ringer for another? In the cases of concern here, these thoughts would differ from each other in that each thought’s truth turned on how a different object was. Now there is the line scouted in section 5. The ringer would require something for being the one on which its truth turned. What did, or was, as thus required would, ipso facto be the one on which its truth turned. But to grasp this much would be to grasp what there is also to be grasped about the thought it is a ringer for. Precisely so can the one be a ringer for the other. So what is required for being the right object cannot simply be: being such-and-such one. For such is not constant across the two cases. So the requirement is one which could have been satisfied by other than what does (or, were there the ringer, can be satisfied by other than what might have). What object an object must be to be the right one depends on the world (or circumstance) in which this requirement is imposed (so in which there is that thought to impose it).

Only Penelope, perhaps, could be the right object as things stand. But had they stood differently, it might have been her twin. The thought which imposes this requirement is (meant to be) a thought of her that she is sipping. It could not be, or have been, made true by anyone else. But (so as for it to allow for ringers) that in it which makes it so is what could (might) have made a thought one of something, or someone, else. Such is for it to be a hybrid in my present sense.

Frege tells us that any thought has something general about it: it presents things being as they are as a case of things being something they need not be just as they are to be. Penelope is sipping languidly; it might still be sipping if she were doing it avidly. Generality in this sense is instanced by things being as they are (or by something’s being as it is). But a thought can also
be general in the sense that if certain objects being as they are is things being as they are according to it, different objects being as they were might also have been this. Not all thoughts have this sort of generality. Singular thoughts do not. That is their whole point. To distinguish these two notions of the general, I will call what has this second sort *generic*.

So for thoughts paired with ringers, decomposed as singular, there is their generic way of making an object that one whose being thus and so their truth turns. Then (all going well) there is a unique object which relates to this thought in a particular way, the world being as it is (or if you like, designated thinking of the thought being as they are). It is the object picked out by that generic way of making one the one whose being thus and so counts. Given these two features, there is a non-generic way for things to be, that object being thus and so, which is also a way—in fact, the way—things are according to this thought. To grasp this generic way is to grasp, in one way, *when* the thought would be true (though perhaps not how to *tell* whether it is). To grasp the way *and* to recognise the fact of that object playing the role just sketched is, *per se*, to identify which thought the thought in question is. Such are hybrids.

As Frege tells us, a generic way for a thing to be is not, as he puts it, a disjunctive name. In his example, it does not follow from the fact that all men are mortal that Cato is. For that we need one more premise: that Cato is a man. The point holds, as he insists, even if that generic way is one such that at most one thing could be it. (See 1914: 230-231) If Penelope is the one whose being thus and so makes things such that the last star left is sipping, things might be that way even if Penelope had not existed. That way for things to be does not require there to be that way of instancing it. There is this thought: whoever parked across Sid’s driveway likes *mojitos*. Penelope is the guilty one. She likes *mojitos*. But that she does is not a way things are according to that thought. That she is the only one who so parked hardly converts what is not singular—that generic thought—into something which is. A hybrid (would-be) singular thought is true just in case things are a certain generic way: there is something which satisfies its generic requirement for being the one which makes it true or false; and that thing, whatever it may be, is thus and so. Suppose Penelope is as required, as at most one thing can be. How can that circumstance any more conjure the generic into the singular?

Frege insists that the sun (1892b: 35), or Mount Blanc (1904: 93, 1906:203-204), cannot be elements of a thought. Seeing why clarifies the present point. In brief, one arrives at elements of a thought by decomposing the whole thought. The whole is what he calls a *Sinn*—something general in that sense in which he tells us all thoughts are general. When we decompose a thought we remain at the level of *Sinn*: its intrinsic generality is found also in its parts. The way things are according to the whole thought may be, say, such that Penelope is sipping. Decomposing this as singular, we arrive at an element whose role is to make the thought about Penelope—that is, to make its truth turn on how she, specifically, is. It thus does a proper part of what the whole thought does: making truth turn in a particular way on how things are. *It* effects this; Penelope cannot. Like any *Sinn*, it does this in bringing things under some given generality.

Let us employ a trick Frege suggests in 1882, and often thereafter. Suppose we have an identity statement, say, ‘That woman is Rossy de Palma’. We can read the ‘is’ here as standing for a two-place relation, and then what flanks it as each designating an item which stands in it. But we can also, equally well, regard that ‘is’ as an ‘is’ of predication: that woman is that very thing, Rossy de Palma. We can even apply the trick twice if we like, getting something like: whatever is that very thing, that woman, is that very thing, Rossy de Palma, thus rendering
what looked like a singular thought in the form of a general one. *Being that very thing, Rossy de Palma* is a way for a thing to be, a concept if you like. It has the generality which all ways for things, or a thing, to be have. That same generality must be found in that mode of presentation of Rossy on our first, equivalent, analysis.

In representing the thought here as a universal generalisation we do not lose for it its singularity. Being Rossy de Palma is a thing there would not be for an object to do had there not been Rossy. And it is doing what it would take being her, and nothing less, to do. So if there is such a concept, something falls under it, and at most one thing could. Such a one place concept thus shares the crucial features of a singular thought. So I will also call such a concept singular. (One might then think of the singular thought as a zero-place singular concept.)

Where lies the generality? Rossy is sometimes sipping, sometimes texting her agent. When she is sipping, her being as she is instances someone sipping. We may put this by saying: she falls under the concept of (someone) sipping. While she is texting her agent, she falls under the concept (someone) texting his agent. Her being as she is is then someone doing that (but perhaps no longer someone sipping). She falls under such concepts transiently: at the moment, but ask again this afternoon. Throughout her being as she is is a case of someone being Rossy. So she falls under that singular concept, someone being Rossy. It is indifferent to falling under that concept whether she is sipping, or whether she is texting. Nor will it be relevant to ask again this afternoon whether she still falls under it (unless this is to ask whether she still exists). So many ways for someone to be are cases of someone being Rossy. Someone texting may be, someone sipping may be, and so on *ad inf.*, just so long as the one texting, or sipping, is Rossy. Many, in fact, all occasions of Rossy’s being as she then is instance someone being Rossy. None instance someone being Penelope. And vice-versa. Here we find that generality intrinsic to all concepts, from zero to any n places.

A general point applies. No case of something’s being thus and so (a sunset, a *mojito*, a balmy day) determines, just in being as it is, what it would be for something to be another case (or even any case) of this. You cannot study a particular sunset, or a particular *mojito*, to discover what it would be for something to be one—what range of variation is permitted. For that you must look somewhere else (as Frege insists, to something non-sensory). The point generalises to any specified collection of cases. And it holds, in particular, for cases of something being Penelope. It holds, too, for concepts, and objects falling under them (if we so conceive concepts), thus, in particular for the concept of being Penelope, even if, necessarily, only Penelope could be that. Penelope is a creature of our environment, living out an historical career—a life—in, as the Chinese put it, the red dust. Study her as closely as you like (if, improbably, she permits this), and you will not find there how it is that necessarily only she satisfies the concept. You will not find, in studying her, what it would be to satisfy this concept.

The point about the hybrid view is now this. The singular thought—the non-generic way for things to be is: such that *Penelope* is sipping. Whatever the relevant generic way for things to be would be, that, plus the fact of *Penelope* being the one who stands in some specified way to that generic way (thus as other things might have) cannot tell us, on their own, what it would be for something to be this non-generic way. *Generality*, so the non-generic sort, does not factor like that. If the generic way does not provide what requires Penelope to be the one, one cannot find what does require this merely in studying Penelope.

The point is about how a singular thought might factor. If the question is what distinguishes one such thought from all others, its being of Penelope, and of her sipping, *might*
do that, for all said so far. But it is being about Penelope, and not Penelope, which does this. The distinguishing element of the thought—that part of making truth turn on what it does—is: making it turn on how Penelope is. This Penelope cannot do by herself. Nor could any mere historical fact of her standing towards other things in the world as she does (at given times). Conflating functions of language with functions of thought can, once again, help illusion. If Sid asks, ‘Who blocked my driveway?’, the answer, ‘The woman sipping the mojito’ might make recognisable the right singular thought. Those words would have picked out another woman had another one been sitting there. They thus exploit a generic way for a thing to be, banking on there being exactly one thing that is that way. But to say this is not to describe the structure or content of any thought. It is only to describe a way of making some thought recognisable.

8. Ignorance and Error: Frege’s conception of truth demands that this be the Bedeutung of a thought. Accordingly, it is crucial for him that the relation between Sinne and their Bedeutungen be many-one. He says, for example,

One might object here that “2^2 = 4” and “2 > 1” surely say something completely different, express completely different thoughts ... One sees from this that identity of Bedeutung does not entail identity of thoughts. If we say “The Evening Star is a planet whose orbital period is smaller than the earth’s”, we have expressed a different thought than that expressed in the sentence, “The Morning Star is a planet whose orbital period is smaller than the earth’s”; for someone who did not know that the Morning Star is the Evening Star could hold the one true, the other false; and still, the Bedeutung of the two sentences must be the same ...

(1891: 13-14)

Freges standard reason for taking the relation Sinn-Bedeutung to be many-one concerns ignorance. Where there is ignorance, many Sinne for one Bedeutung allows us to say just what the ignorance is of. Someone might not know that The Morning Star is The Evening Star. What would he not know? Here we can reemploy that trick from 1882: at least he would not know that that which is that very thing, The Morning Star is also that very thing the Evening Star—that that which falls under one singular concept also falls under another. The content of a mode of presentation of an object is here represented as the content of a certain concept. We must, accordingly, now recognise many singular concepts of a given object. Below I sketch a way of doing that.

Ignorance, as most of us now conceive things, is a very different thing from what concerns Burge: the conceivability of ringers, or of whatever errors such ringers would allow for. So one might expect each notion to yield different results when it comes to discriminating senses. Since that summer in Donastia, Sid and Penelope have been fast friends. When he arrives on esplanada and sees her sipping, he recognises her instantly. Though no well-defined notion of an object being presented to someone is yet in play, one might expect this encounter to have little impact on how Sid thinks of Penelope as the one of whom he thinks ever so many things, now including the trivial detail that she is currently sipping. Pia, brooding in her darkened flat in Vigo, may think, enviously, that Penelope is now on esplanada sipping. There
is no difficulty in seeing Sid agreeing with her on this, the two of them thus thinking one thought to the effect that Penelope is sipping—one in which Sid's present visual encounter with Penelope has little role to play.

Suppose there had been a ringer. Then, too, Sid would have thought of Penelope, much as he now does, that she was sipping. He would have been mistaken. But only in so thinking. That visual mode in which the ringer would have been presented to him would play no role in the mode of presentation of Penelope in any thought he thus thought. Sid would also have thought something of the ringer, to the effect that she was sipping. His present experience is all of his acquaintance with her/it. Perhaps this confers on it some role in the modes of presentation in some thoughts of her/it he would thus think. Does this not reveal some state of thinking something he is in whether confronting Penelope or the ringer? Before answering I want first to present a way to think of Sinne, particularly ones whose Bedeutung is an object such as Rossy, or Frege.

It is said that we cannot view ourselves thinking from sideways on. “One rushes ahead and therefore cannot also observe the rushing.” (Philosophical Investigations §456.) There are, no doubt, truths in that. But we can certainly see our neighbour from sideways on. Suppose we want to say what he thinks. The first step is to identify some ways there are for things to be. We can then ask which of these are ways he thinks things are. For Penelope now to be sipping is a way for things to be. So perhaps he takes things to be that way. In all judgement, one (as Frege put it) exposes himself to risk of error. If our neighbour takes Penelope to be sipping, he thus exposes himself to risk of error—error he would succumb to if she is not. When we identify a way for things to be, we expose ourselves to risk of error—one we would succumb to if there is no such way, e.g., if ‘Penelope’ is mere media hype. I stress the ‘we’. If we take our neighbour to take things to be some way, where there is no such way, the error is all ours, not his. There is, so far, nothing for him to be wrong about. If for Penelope to be sipping is a way for things to be, it provides us with a way of articulating the way he thinks things into his thinking things this, that, and the other way there is to think them. If he thinks Penelope to be sipping, he is not (normally) thus in error if ‘Penelope’ is all hype. If he does think this, she is not all hype; if she is, there is no such thing he thinks.

It is a contingent matter what ways for things to be there are. In February 1848 (I estimate) an event took place which may have been highly contingent, perhaps mere chance. As a result of it we now have Frege to think about. Without it we would not have. So there are countless ways for things to be (e.g., such that Frege smoked) which there might not have been. All those ways for things to be which count on Frege for their existence thereby depend on a certain bit of history. Some, perhaps, depend in part, on generic history: what could have been someone else's. All depend on whatever history there is in there being that very person, Frege. Such history cannot be all generic. Some of it must be, intrinsically, his.

If there are many Sinne for one Bedeutung—Frege, say, or Rossy, or Penelope—we may identify them by refining history further. Frege had a career at Jena. He might not have. He would have been Frege for all that. A certain planet has a career as the first 'star' seen at night. It might not have. There might have been a brighter, or closer, heavenly object. Rossy has a career including a role in which she was unconscious for most of the film. She need not have. But since they did have these careers, these objects are identifiable by their having them. Someone able to identify one of these objects by its having had some one of them may be unable to identify that object by its having had some other. I suppose we are all in that position
with respect to any object we can identify. I, for example, can identify Rossy by her having played the role just mentioned, but quickly get stuck after that. So if Rossy also modelled for Prada on a certain occasion, I can be in the position of failing to know that that model was Rossy. Where there are such different ways of identifying an object, we can, accordingly, suppose there to be different Sinne with that object as Bedeutung, each such Sinn requiring a different bit of history for its existence. Perhaps what it thus requires is some generic history—say, that someone, of a certain general appearance once modelled for Prada. But if it is to do the work of making a thought about some individual in particular, it must also require some specific history—that that person (the one it presents) did the modelling.

Once again the trick of 1882. For any such Sinn (mode of presentation of an object in a thought) there is the corresponding singular concept, being that very thing so presented. As with any concept, there is that which it requires for falling under it. What it requires in this case is that what falls under it (thus, more generally, the world) have a certain history. Once again, we can extract from the required history generic elements. If Rossy modelled Prada shifts then someone did. But if the concept is singular, it cannot just require this. There is a certain person one would need be to fall under it, no matter what—that very one with the history in question. History allows concepts of individuals to work like that.

So conceiving Sinn, let us review the first two terms of a stock triple. In the first term Sid encounters (his old friend) Penelope, sipping. He thus comes to take things to be a certain way, in particular, in re whether she is sipping. He can see that she is. There are then those thoughts which count as ones he has come to think (in re this matter). To see which, we must ask with whom he would now (dis)agree. There is, for example, Pia in Vigo brooding. He agrees with her. There is, accordingly, a way for things to be which is a way they both take things, thus a thought they both think. For there to be that way the world must have had a certain history. For a start, it must contain Penelope for us to think of. If there are many Sinne with her as Bedeutung, then more is required by any given such thought there is for Sid and Pia both to think. If we needed to say just what history Penelope must have had in order for Sid and Pia to agree as to whether she is sipping—to agree on some one question to this effect—it would be difficult to find an answer. If we are to distinguish thoughts about her by the different parts of her history by which she is identified, in them, as the one who sips, then there are no doubt many which would count as ones Sid and Pia both think. Conversely, for any one of these, there are many different ways for someone's thinking as he does to make it count as one he thinks. Recall Dr. Lauben. There is no reason for these ways Sid and Pia both take things to be to require for their existence that Penelope then be on esplanada, or be seen by Sid—episodes in her history which Pia has not encountered.

Now the second term. Here Sid, arriving on esplanada, encounters a ringer—say, Penelope's twin. Suppose that he is taken in. This would be for him, mistakenly, to think of Penelope that she was sipping. The thoughts he thus relates to are, for the most part, ones he would have been thinking in the first term, e.g., answers to questions as to her sipping on which he and Pia agree. None of these requires for its existence that Penelope then be on esplanada, or seen by Sid. If it did, there would have been no such thought under the imagined circumstances. Sid also takes the ringer to be sipping. Perhaps he sees her to be. There are, then, some thoughts of her that she is sipping, which count as ones Sid thinks. His acquaintance with her, we can suppose, is only through this encounter. Perhaps that is reason enough to think that at least some of these thoughts are ones there would not have been—their ways of presenting her ones there would not have been—had she not then been on esplanada.
For them, it is crucial that *that* bit of history identify her as the one they are about.

Spotting Penelope sipping, does Sid come to think *some* thought as to her sipping which shares *something* in common with some thought he *would* have thought of a ringer, had there been one to think it of? Well, with whom, or what, might he agree or disagree? Sid sits on esplanada with his niece Mafalda. Both see Penelope sipping. But though Penelope is Sid’s old acquaintance, she is a stranger to Mafalda. *Perhaps* this means, though it need not, that the only thoughts of Penelope Mafalda counts as thinking are ones which require no more history of the world than that Penelope now be sitting, sipping, there. In any event, Sid and Mafalda are certainly in agreement as to whether she is sipping. So, on the assumption, there is a thought Sid counts as thinking which, for its existence, requires no more history of the world than that Penelope then be there sipping. But to require that history is to require a certain generic history: that *someone* be there sipping. Had there been a ringer in Penelope’s place, a stranger to both Sid and Mafalda, each would have thought, *inter alia*, a thought which, in requiring for its existence that *that ringer* being there, requires just that generic history.

So there is a commonality between something Sid *does* count as thinking and something he might have. What follows? Spotting Penelope, Sid comes into a state of belief: he takes things to be a certain way, stands towards Penelope’s sipping in a certain way. Spotting Penelope, Mafalda also comes into some such state. If there are many different thoughts of Penelope that she is so sipping, then for each, to be in the state he/she is thus in is to count as thinking many of these. Since there is something they agree on, for each there is some one of these thoughts which the other also counts as thinking. The belief state, in each case, represents what perception (the spotting of Penelope) has brought about. Such a state is not typed by a form for any given thought to have, so nor by some representational structure a few items short of a thought. So not by some schema which, filled in one way, is a thought about Penelope, filled in otherwise, perhaps a thought about a ringer, or about nothing. The state Sid comes to be in is one of thinking of *Penelope*. Ditto for Mafalda.

The belief states we attain to through perception—*e.g.*, standing towards Penelope’s sipping as we come to in seeing her so engaged—are not typed by any structure for a thought to have, perhaps a few items short of a thought itself; much less by one which, filled in one way, would be a thought of, say, Penelope, filled in in another a thought of someone else, or of no one in particular. This parallels Hinton’s idea about seeing. The kind of state one is in in being *visually* aware of what he is in seeing a photic flash is not typed by any identifiable thing one is thus visually aware of, still less where what does the typing is awareness a few items short of seeing something, even less where some instances of what is thus typed—some ways of filling in the schema which does the typing—are seeing a flash, some only experiencing a phosphene. This parallel, to be sure, does not yet show that Hinton is right.

The *generic* history required for the thought Sid and Mafalda share is the world’s—our shared environment’s. What sat there, then, would be interactive with its surroundings—a particular location in Gijón. It would be, *e.g.*, there for *one* to observe. A thought which required *such* history for its existence could not be the third term in a Burgean stock triple (where there is no such history). So far, *its* mode of presentation of Penelope could not contain the sort of common factor Burge posits in his triple. If we follow Frege, such would hold of *any* requirement on a thought’s existence, so of any (whole or partial) mode of presentation. For only our shared environment is what *truth* can turn on. (See 1918: 67-69.) For, again, there is a thought only where there is what could be agreed to or disputed, so, too, what *would* be agreed
to, by indefinitely many, in rational pursuit of the goal truth.

A thought is designed to capture what those who agree on something share. Just as its form is not imposed by how any given thinker thinks of things being as according to it, so, too, it can be grasped, so thought, in thinking in any of many ways of the way things are according to it. One can grasp the thought Dr. Lauben thinks in thinking himself injured without the sort of access to his injury he has. Similarly, Sid can grasp how Mafalda thinks of Penelope sipping. He can thus grasp a thought which requires only the history available to her. He thus recognises when it would be true. To count as thinking P is, grammatically, to be in a state such as so to count. But what P is does not decide just what state a thinker who so counted might be in.

I return to ignorance versus inconceivability of error. Burge focuses on a particular thing Sid could not do. Were he to encounter a ringer on esplanada, or were a surreptitious switch made midcourse, he would be unable, as things stood, to detect any difference in how he thought of things. Burge wants such facts to lead us to conclusions as to the natures of the modes of presentation of some object in the thoughts which count as ones Sid then thus thinks. But alongside what Sid cannot do stands what he still can do: what he is equipped, and prepared, to recognise, on suitable encounter. As he views the twin, he cannot tell that he is in fact thinking thoughts of two different people that each is sipping, in one case truly, in the other falsely. But confront him with the facts (e.g., let Penelope walk by and whisper in his ear, ‘Remember Donastia?’) and he can recognise exactly what it is that he was doing all along.

What matters here—what Sid can do, or what he cannot? For a start, thinking (holding) so is Lutheran: to take something to be so is to see oneself as with no other course; to feel the world so to bear that there is nothing else for him to think in pursuing the goal truth—hence (holding true being what it is) nothing else to hold punkt. To believe is thus to commit, to adopt a policy: here I stand (not am now standing). But policies lie in what one is prepared to do, here, inter alia, prepared to recognise. Given this, what matters to what Sid thinks is what he would recognise, not what he can tell at the moment. In which case the stress (burden) which Burge places on ringers, or the possibility of error, here is simply misplaced. It will later emerge just how misplaced.

As Sid confronted the twin he would in fact think thoughts of each of two different people that she is sipping. His thinking would seem to him just as it does in his thinking of Penelope. His thinking would be a ringer, to him, for what it is. Burge wants it to follow from this that there is some thought Sid would think which, if it existed, would be a ringer for some thought he does think, and would be so because that very same way in which some thought Sid thinks presents Penelope as the one on whom its truth turns might be the way some thought about the twin presents the one on whom its truth turns, with the sole exception that, in that counterfactual circumstance what would thus be presented is the twin and not Penelope. No such thing follows from the ways there are for Sid to fail to realise, as things stand, of whom he thinks one thing or another.

The common factor Burge posits in belief is meant to be required by, and for, empirical psychology. It is also, in part, a common factor in that which is believed in a certain range of cases. Whether there is such a factor depends in part on what believing something is. It is on these last grounds that a disjunctivist would deny the factor.
9. Scepticism: Vision science did not teach us that there may be ringers. Perhaps it banks on this. Burge casts them in roles Frege assigns ignorance. Their mere conceivability is meant to show something about the structures of the singular thoughts we in fact think, notably, about their ways of making truth turn on particular individuals—how, e.g., some thought Sid thinks in thinking Penelope to be sipping presents her as the one in question. Ignorance is not the same as defencelessness against conceivable ringers. Does the use Burge makes of this last yield a viable way of conceiving of Sinne with objects as their Bedeutung.

Burge assigns ringers two roles. One is to point us towards a sort of common factor there must be throughout certain ranges of thoughts, each of some object (though some of different ones), that it is thus and so. (For Burge this common factor also points to thoughts only purportedly about some object in particular.) The second role is to distinguish modes of presentation in different thoughts about some given object. This second role figures in passages such as these:

In accounting for a belief, we must distinguish between belief in a self-identity ... and a substantive claim that might be mistaken, because it involves two logically separable acts of reference (deriving from two perceptions). ... Given that duplicates and illusions could make a belief false—wherever there is a logically distinct act of reference—, there is pressure to recognize different representational contents for different applications, even in the case of tracking that is actually successful. (2005: 34)

The difference in application-representation occurs if there is a psychologically relevant, logical possibility that the individual might have been mistaken in taking the object to have remained the same. (2005: 37)

Arriving on esplanada Sid spots Penelope. She is sipping. He takes her to be. He strolls around to the other side of esplanda and glances back at her. Still sipping. He so takes things. There is a logical possibility of a mid-stroll switch: a ringer-Penelope in for Penelope, thus a ringer for Penelope sipping. Experience would furnish Sid no means to tell this. Thus, Burge holds, what he does think from the far side must present Penelope differently than what he did think from the near side does.

How is this meant to follow? I think the story can be factored into three stages. Stage 1: Here ringers are used to reveal a potential bit of substantial knowledge. Had there been a ringer, Sid would have been ignorant of something, namely, that that very thing which, from the far side, he took to be sipping was not that very thing which, from the near side, he took to be sipping. So, the idea is, as things stand there is something substantial for Sid to know: that that one viewed sipping from the near side is that one viewed sipping from the far side. Let us name the one first-mentioned NSS (for Near-side-sipper) and the one next mentioned FSS (mutatis mutandis). Then the substantial bit of knowledge is that NSS is FSS.

Stage 2: Ignorance and knowledge now safely in the picture, we can run through Frege's
line of thought. If it is true, but substantial knowledge, that NSS is FSS, then ‘NSS’ and ‘FSS’ must identify two different modes of presentation within the thought of this identity. It is one thing for a thought to present that regarding which it is singular as NSS, another for it to present this as FSS, even though the same thing, Penelope, is presented both times. Had there been a switch (as per above), Penelope could still have been presented as NSS. But she could not have been presented as FSS. If this last is a mode of presentation of Penelope, then there would have been no such mode of presentation of an object at all. So NSS and FSS identify two different modes of presentation of Penelope. Each requires her to have had a different bit of history for it to exist. (Symmetrically, presenting her as FSS might have been a way of presenting Penelope as the one on whom truth turns even if there were no such thing as presenting her as NSS.)

Stage 3: So far our topic is thoughts there are to think. Our concern is with being true (what questions of there are). Now we aim for a conclusion as to what thought(s) Sid does think from the near, and from the far side, watching Penelope sipping. We thus aim to move from facts about being true to a conclusion about the psychology of holding true. The idea is simple, though ought to be controversial. The inference is this. Had there been a switch, Sid could not have told that Penelope lacked the history for her to be presented as the one on whom truth turned in the way she might have been had she been seated on the far side. In thinking the ringer to be sipping, he would have been unable to tell that he was not thus thinking of the one (Penelope) he saw from the near side. So what he does think from the far side in thinking Penelope to be sipping cannot present her as the one in question in a way there would not have been had she lacked this counterfactually-missing history, that which makes her identifiable as NSS. Thus his (actual) stance towards Penelope from the far side must be on a different question of truth from that on which he stands from the near side, though both are questions, of Penelope, of whether she is sipping. The thoughts to which he thus stands must differ as a thought about NSS and one about FSS would.

Reverting to the trick of 1882, the idea can be put as follows: what Sid thinks of Penelope from the near side presents the object it is about as falling under a different concept than does what he thinks from the far side. The first presents her as being that very object, NSS; whereas the last presents her as being that very object, FSS. The thoughts in question in each case thus differ in what they require of an object for its being the one they are about: that it be NSS, and that it be FSS respectively. Each thus requires a different specific, and thereby a different generic, bit of history for it to exist at all.

Sid need not have walked for this argument to get a grip. He might have stood frozen, staring. Still, at any moment he might have blinked. Where passing time makes room for a conceivable ringer-switch the argument grips. For how long, then (if it is good) can Sid continue to believe the same thing—or at least stand in the same way towards some one and the same question of truth—some one thing to be thought as to who is sipping? Such questions do not just arise for times. Sid and Mafalda stand shoulder to shoulder watching Penelope sip. It is logically possible for a mad neuroscientist to have tampered, undetectably, with Mafalda: her retinas no longer register ambient light; she is supplied with proximal stimuli transmitted from a Penelope-ringer in a ringer-situation far away. Had that happened, there would have been a substantial fact of which Sid and Mafalda were both ignorant: that the one who Sid sees to be sipping is not (the) one who so seems to Mafalda. By above reasoning, there is, in fact, a substantial fact for both to know: this last, with ‘the’, minus the ‘not’. So, it seems, Penelope is in fact presented in thought to Mafalda differently than she is to Sid; hence, by the above line,
differently in the thought each thinks to the effect that she is sipping. When, if ever, then, could two people think the same thought?

These questions immediately recall Russell. As to time, he answered thus for those singular thoughts he thought there could be:

You can keep [thinking it] for about a minute or two. ... If you argue quickly, you can get some little way before it is finished”. (Russell, 1918: 203)

Such flows from Russell’s conception of what a genuine singular thought would need to be. To begin with, it would need to be about a quite special sort of object: in Freges’s terms a Vorstellung, something needing a bearer, to whose consciousness it belonged, and brooking no two bearers. Accordingly (as Frege notes), it would need to ascribe to that object a special sort of property—one which only such an object would be eligible for having (though the same vocabulary—e.g. ‘yellow’—might speak of it as also speaks of properties of those denizens, with us, of our shared environment). Russell thus happily answered the second above question with ‘Never’! For him, singular thoughts are intrinsically unsharable. All of which flowed, for him, from taking Frege’s advice: to find the logical structure of a proposition, ignore the grammar of its natural language formulation, instead ask directly the question under what circumstances it would be true. (In Frege’s words, “Our logic books still always drag much in—for example, subject and predicate—which really doesn’t belong in logic.” (Frege 1897: 154))

How far does this first role Burge assigns ringers carry us along, like it or not, down Russell’s path? Does it leave us with, if singular thoughts at all, then at best only ones about non-environmental objects—Vorstellungen in Frege’s sense? Might a thought Sid thinks (of Penelope, that she is sipping) from the far side, and specifically its mode of presentation of the object it is of (Penelope) require for its existence some generic history which one such as Penelope might have had—say, that someone have then been sitting (there, on that esplanada)? Or does the line just scouted rule this supposition out?

Sid, from the far side, could, conceivably, have been experiencing a ringer for Penelope, or for experiencing her, or sipping. As he strolled from one side to the other, there could have been a surreptitious switch. Had there been, there would have been something he did not know: that the one he watched sipping from the far side was not the one he had watched sipping from the near side. Representing that ignorance would require two different modes of presentation of an object. The mode of presentation of the object he was watching (from the far side) could not require for its existence that certain bit of history, that object’s former presence on the near side. Idem any thought that it is part of. By the line just scouted, this means that there is, as things stand (Penelope throughout) something substantive for Sid to know or not: that the one he had watched sipping from the near side is the one he watches sipping from the far side. Representing this object of knowledge or ignorance requires a mode of presentation of the one he is watching from the far side which, like that mode of presentation of the imagined ringer, does not require for its existence such a history as that the one it presents was formerly present on the near side. Again, idem any thought that it is part of. Following out the line, this fact about the modes of presentation in a thought which represented the knowledge, or ignorance, thus in question filters through to the modes of presentation in thoughts Sid thinks
from the far side, as things stand, of Penelope, that she is sipping.

Sitting (there, then) is the sort of history an item like Penelope might have. Such history would, crucially, belong to our common environment. For someone to be sitting is for him to occupy a place in webs of factive meaning. There is what it would mean if he were sitting for how things would be at places throughout our environment. For example, normally his sitting would be visible from an indefinite number of places in its surroundings—if from the near side, e.g., then, barring impediments, also from the far side. Webs of factive meaning are not in general a priori matters. But if Penelope is now sitting at a certain table, or under a certain umbrella, on that esplanada, there is the way someone's then sitting there would interact with the rest of the environment, things being as they then were. What did not thus interact with the environment simply would not be a case of someone sitting (whatever else it might then be). Sid, watching Penelope sipping, could have been watching a ringer sipping. But the point just made also means this: Sid, watching Penelope sitting, could have been experiencing a ringer for someone sitting. If what he sees does not interact with the environment as sitting would, it is not sitting. There is the logical possibility of ringers for so interacting.

Does our scouted line now apply to sitting? By it, a mode of presentation of Penelope, in a thought Sid thinks of her from the far side, cannot require her to have a certain history: to have then been sitting. Might it still require that whoever it is of be sitting? Sid in fact watches Penelope sitting. But he could, conceivably, have been watching her, or someone, ringer-sitting—so far as he could tell a case of someone sitting, but in fact not that: not interacting with the rest of the environment as a case of sitting (there) then would. Perhaps no such thing was to be seen, or otherwise registered, from the near side, or from anywhere else, as sitting then would have been. Such are the possibilities given proximal stimuli and processing leave open.

Taken in, Sid would have been ignorant of such things. He would have been unable to tell that what he experienced lacked the history to be a case of someone sitting. He would not have known that what he experienced was not anything Mafalda, on the near side, might have. Representing such ignorance would require a mode of presentation of what he experienced (a case of ringer-sitting), so of that which ringer-sat (if something did) which might have existed without any sitting going on.

Now the scouted line takes hold. As things stand, there is a substantive fact Sid might fail to know: that the one he watches, and supposes sipping (Penelope) has the place in history required for her/it to be sitting. Saying what might be known or not here requires a mode of presentation of Penelope which does not require for its existence that she have such history, so that she be sitting. Finally, by the scouted line, this mode of presentation of her is to be found in those thoughts Sid does think of her, e.g., to the effect that she is sipping. So it, and those thoughts she thus thinks, do not require for their existence that she then be sitting (much less at that table, on that esplanada).

All that matters about sitting here is that it is an environmental way for an object to be: to be that way is to occupy a suitable place in webs of factive meaning. So the point generalises. That just-postulated mode of presentation of Penelope cannot require for its existence any history, generic or specific, such that Sid, watching from the far side, could have been experiencing a mere ringer for what had it. So, for any environmental way for a thing to be, it cannot require for its existence a history in which something was that way. A singular thought containing such a mode of presentation thus cannot identify what it is of by that item being any ways there are for an inhabitant of our environment to be. What now separates us from
Russell's view that it would have to be a *Vorstellung* in Frege's sense?

Let us shift to the other use Burge makes of ringers: to identify common factors in modes of presentation within thoughts there are and ones there might have been—e.g., a thought of Penelope that she is sipping, and one there might have been of some ringer had there been such. On Burge's view, such pairs share a common Ψ-like factor: a concept whose satisfaction identifies the one of whom the thought is, given the world in which that thought exists, but which might have identified a different one for some thought there is not, but would have been had the world been different. Such a common factor could only be generic. So a thought in which it is present could require of the world no more than some generic history for it to identify as it does what object it is of. But the question now is whether it could even require that much—whether there is still room for even that much space between Burge and Russell.

We face a dilemma. Frege sets out both sides. On the one side, there is this:

For the word 'red', if it does not indicate a property of things, but is to characterise sense impressions belonging to my consciousness, is applicable only in the domain of my consciousness. (1918: 67)

If one were to call some *Vorstellung* 'red', he would be using the word in a different sense from that in which it might speak truth of a shift or a beach ball. A *Vorstellung* could not have the sort of property that a shift might. Nor a shift a property that a *Vorstellung* might. For a shift, or whatever, to be red, for Penelope, or whoever, to be *sipping* is always, *per se*, for it to have location in webs of factive meaning; for it to interact with the world as it (or something of its sort) *would*. Its being red, e.g., may make it a bad idea to wash it with the whites. If Penelope is sipping, *mojito* is ingested. What is ingested is (*ceteris paribus*) later there to find. So the further course of history could reveal the 'sipping' as, e.g., mere thespian's art. Similarly for being red. For a shift to be red, for someone to be sipping, is for that item to have a career, its condition's (factive) meaning, which extends beyond what is observable on an occasion. Equally for any other generality under which one of our environmental cohabitants might fall. This is not to say that for any given way for an object to be—being red, say—there is some such career an object must have.

We would like to suppose that Sid can think such things of objects as that they are sipping. For that he would need to think thoughts which presented the object in question as some way such things as Penelope might be; so some way an object would need a worldly career to be. We would like thoughts available to Sid to present an object as, e.g., that one now sipping, or in a way requiring some such history for its existence. But now the other horn. Frege expresses it succinctly:

By the step by which I win myself an environment, I expose myself to risk of error. (1918: 73)

If Sid, seeing Penelope, takes her to be sipping, he is thus exposed to risk of error. For for Penelope to be sipping is for her to have a career richer than what Sid now observes in this
sense: conceivably, further history Sid had not observed could mean—show—that she was not sipping (even if things looked that way to Sid). An empty glass rigged to look like a mojito. Now a parallel for modes of presentation. Suppose that Sid takes Penelope to be seated. Suppose the thought he thus relates to presents the object in question in a way which exploits the fact that that object is sipping. So what qualifies an object as the one in question is, *inter alia*, its history as (then) sipping. So the thought could not present the object it in fact does as the one sipping unless there were that certain bit of history: the right object’s then sipping. (Such is neutral as to whether it is a generic or a specific requirement which makes this so.) Then there is a ringer for an object’s meeting this requirement, and thus a ringer, from Sid’s position, for thinking a thought which requires it. Sid could have been thinking of a ringer-sipper (whether a different object or not) that it was seated, with no means for distinguishing what he thus thought from what he in fact thinks. The thought he thus thought in the ringer case would share its common Ψ-like factor with the thought he thus thinks. But sipping would not be required for being the one in question in it. So, by Burge’s principles, that Ψ-like factor could not require sipping for being what it presents.

I do not think that Burge imagines that any Ψ-like factor he is concerned with would implicate such things as sipping in its way of presenting an object. A Ψ-like factor would be part of a thought—something there is for one to think. But as Burge links the psychological to the logical, a thought’s way of presenting what it presents might rely on features specific to some one particular thinking of that thought. (The problem here is whether such reliance, or Burge’s form of it, yields shareable thoughts at all.) So perhaps he thinks of such a way of presenting an object as exploiting such things as its having appeared such-and-such way to Sid on an occasion (e.g., as he gazed from the far side), or having then been related to him spatially so as to be picked out deictically in a certain way. So it is important to note that the argument just run through applies for any environmental factor. For an environmental item to be positioned thus before one is, just as much as for it to be sipping, for it to have an environmental career. Ditto for it appearing positioned, or any other way, an environmental item might. In any such case, just as for sipping, there may fail to be any suitable such career where there seemed to be. Such failure may fail to make any difference in the way the thinker thinks things which is then discernible by him.

So for a thought identified by Burge’s method, what distinguishes an object as the one in question, what distinguishes it from what is not in question, cannot be its being any way for an environmental thing to be. Accordingly what is thus identified cannot be an environmental object. It must be a Vorstellung in Frege’s sense. But as Frege showed a thought cannot be a Vorstellung. Nor, accordingly, can it be of some Vorstellung that it is thus and so: its truth cannot turn on whether some Vorstellung’s being as it is does or does not instance some way for a Vorstellung to be. There are no such generalities under which for an object (a potential Bedeutung of a mode of presentation) to fall. His point in brief is that what goes for ‘red’ also goes equally for ‘true’ (vide 1918: 68-69). For the same reason that ‘red’ would need a different sense as applied to a Vorstellung, so, too, ‘true’ would need a different sense used of a thought of a Vorstellung, rather than of some environmental object, that it was thus and so. (Unsurprisingly, given the relation Frege notes between the thought that that shift is red and the thought that it is true that it is.)

Here a new sense for ‘true’ is, as Frege tells us, a change of topic. Thoughts are what bring truth into question at all. What could be ‘true’ only in some new sense of ‘true’ would not be a thought at all. (Frege also shows that there can be no such new sense for ‘true’ or any other
word.) So giving ringers the free rein Burge allows them we arrive at (if anything) $\Psi$-like factors which cut the thoughts containing them off from the world (our cohabited environment) entirely. If such thoughts were about anything in the singular way, it could not be an object with an environmental career. We must thus agree with Russell that a genuine singular thought would need a special sort of object for it to be about. But, for the reasons just scouted, this means that, with ringers cast in Burge's roles, what we had hoped would be singular thoughts turn out not merely not to be singular, but not to be genuine thoughts at all.

This conclusion assumes Frege to be right about the essential publicity of thought. I have omitted his argument. It is remarkable enough if Burge must count on Frege being wrong on this. Burge types belief states by representations thus related to. He assigns ringers a certain role in distinguishing the states, and thereby the representations there are thus to relate to. If Frege is right, thoughts—questions of truth—cannot be so counted. So nor ways of standing towards them. Science hardly forces the impossible on us here. Such a role for ringers has a quite other and familiar source.

10. Seeing: Disjunctivism about belief fits with Frege's view of thought. It differs from Burge's in the way it sees someone's stance towards things—his taking things to be as he then does—as decomposing into particular postures of believing one thing or another—taking things to be particular ways there are for things to be. At the core of disjunctivism is Frege's idea of the essential shareability of thoughts, and of the essentially environmental nature of those ways things are thus thought to be—so to speak, Frege's argument against the possibility of private language. One particular manifestation of the difference here is, in the case of singular thought, rejection of that hybridism which, as we have seen, Burge finds compulsory. Within Frege's conception, much speaks in favour of disjunctivism. But my aim here has not been to establish it. It is enough for the moment that it is coherent, not to be rejected out of hand, and certainly not at odds with any recent (or ancient) result of science. It is not science's business to show what interests we must serve in decomposing postures. Nor, despite his protestations, is it science that moves Burge. He is rather moved, as we have seen, by a small, if depressing, set of familiar philosophical ideas.

Postures (e.g., belief) and perception, I have suggested, lie on two sides of a divide. Perception furnishes thought with things to respond to; postures such as belief are our responses to these. One must be wary of importing morals across this divide. As Frege continually insists, belief and seeing are organized by fundamentally different principles. Still, there is one point of agreement. Beliefs are shareable. What Sid believes in taking Penelope to be sipping is measured by in what cases another thinker (or he himself at other times) would be in agreement, or in dispute, with him as to whether things are the way in question. Perception—when it is perception, and not merely perceptual experience—is also shareable. What Sid sees is, per se, what there is for one to see. I plan now to work this point hard in exploring what visual experience might be in common to the three terms of a Burgean stock triple, in particular, whether there is anything in common resembling $\Psi(\gamma)$.

A few initial points about seeing need to be kept in view. As points about seeing these apply, naturally enough, only to the first two terms of a stock triple. Illusions as Burge understands these are another matter. First, seeing is a particular form of awareness of one's surroundings—more specifically, of what, in some suitable sense, is before one's eyes. That form is visual awareness. The sense thus exploited (or exercised), sight, affords this. Insofar as
there are visual (processing) systems, the same may be said of them. Sight affords awareness. It puts this on offer. In seeing, the offer is taken up. One then has something to take in (or just to take) as a case of things being thus and so.

Seeing is occasion for exploration, investigation, discovery. One might look closer, or move around to get a better look, so as to discover more about what it is he sees. Or one might keep track of it and see what it will do—another route to such discovery. The key point: what one sees is, per se, what is open to examination, and so opened by one's seeing it.

What one sees is precisely what is before his eyes—unless he misses it, or it is occluded, or something of the sort. Modulo such exceptions, the question what Sid saw in viewing Penelope in he chaise longue is answered by what is before his eyes: if a yellow shift by P. Garcia, then that; if a striped chaise longue from Habitat, then that. No need for Sid to know that this is what he sees. No need to get inside Sid's skin (or mind) and see how things look as he views them to answer this question. Sight's role just is to provide such access to one's environment. Seeing just is a relation to that in these surroundings which thus supplies such answers.

The sorts of things one might see are the sorts thus encountered: a chaise, its stripes, Penelope's arm stretching languidly, the mojito being lifted to her mouth, the yellow of her shift. And so on. What one sees is historical, a temporally located part of the world's unfolding. One does not see what has that generality that marks a thought, what might be instanced by things being as they are. Such belongs to that realm of which Frege says,

What belongs to this agrees with Vorstellungen in that it cannot be observed with the senses, but with things in that it needs no bearer. (1918: 69)

Penelope's arm moving languidly is an event unfolding before Sid's eyes. It is thus something he might see, or miss. Those stripes on the chair are also before his eyes. Ditto for them. That Penelope's arm is moving languidly is not before Sid's eyes. Nor is it datable (though there is a date at which the arm was moving). So it is not something Sid can see, where seeing is perceiving. We speak of Sid seeing that Penelope's arm is moving. Frege notes of this,

One can say that, but then does not use the word 'see' in the sense of mere light-sentence, but means by this a thought or judgement connected with it. (1897: 149)

Sid may see the yellow of Penelope's shift. He thus sees yellow. But what he thus sees is not a generality under which things may fall—being coloured yellow, being such as to be so coloured—but a case of something (here the shift) being such as to instance that generality. What he sees is the yellow of the shift, something to be seen only by looking there. One cannot see that case of something being yellow by looking at another shift, or a canary or flamboyant Porsche. The yellow of Penelope's shift may be cadmium yellow. Another case of something being so coloured may still be on the rack, to be seen there. Frege's point about the conceptual and what

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instances it stands.

I have already introduced Frege’s idea that the word ‘red’ (or any other), if it is to apply to a Vorstellung, cannot speak of the same thing (or way to be) that it would speak of applied to an environmental object. The key idea is: a Vorstellung is precisely what could not interact with an environment. Or, more precisely, its being in some given condition, where that is one a Vorstellung might, or might not, be in, could not so interact. I now want to wield that idea again with regard to objects of perceptual experience, and in particular, now, in the case of the third term of a stock triple, e.g., experiencing, visually, an illusion which is as though Penelope were reclining (or her shift were yellow, or etc.). In the cases which make third terms, an illusion is generated by some proximal stimulus, so by retinal images, where these are not images of anything impinging on the retinas. Perhaps they are computer-generated. So the experience thus generated is not one of seeing Penelope—or anything. It is not as though the illusion is only of her being yellow. It would still be visual experience, though ‘aware’ read as a success term would be a bad fit.

If there is an answer to the question what Sid experienced visually here, what this is is not found in his surroundings. If Sid sees Penelope’s yellow shift, there is an object—the shift—which is yellow—moreover, canary. Sid takes in, visually, the historical circumstance of things so being. Some (e.g., Price1932, p. 105) used to think that if Sid experiences an illusion of yellow, there must be something which is yellow, and which he experiences so being. The idea would be: one can experience yellow (visually) only in experiencing an instance—a particular case—of something being so coloured. One has no visual experience of generalities. Not a bad idea. Still, neither Burge nor I thinks that there are non-environmental objects whose being as they are just is, inter alia, their being yellow. Frege’s point which I am exploiting here is that there could not be. So either Sid does not experience yellow in this illusion (though it may well be for him as though he did), or there is something else for his experiencing yellow here to be—something other than experiencing things which, in being as they are, just are a case of something being yellow.

Frege’s point applies. Being yellow is an environmental property. To think of something that it is yellow, one needs to win for himself an environment in which that thing is found. For something to be yellow is for it to occupy a particular place in that web of factive meaning which belongs to the environment (that environment we all inhabit): that such-and-such was so means that the thing would be yellow, for it to be yellow means such-and-such in re the rest of how that environment is. It is only a start on this to say that it is the sort of thing one of us could see if he could but work his way into the right position to observe it. (It might also be that washing it with new jeans would turn it green.) A visual illusion as though one were seeing a yellow shift is not an experience of anything whose being as it is could occupy such places in this web. This is what Frege means when he says that if one were to call a Vorstellung yellow he would have to be using ‘yellow’ in some new sense—in which it applied, if at all, only to his Vorstellungen (or perhaps only to that one then).

What, then, of Sid’s illusion? It is for him ‘as of’ a yellow shift. For him, such is what it is like. But what it is like for him here is not independent of—is perhaps precisely a matter of—how things impress him. Which, in turn, is a matter of his responses, or his responsiveness, the other side of the divide from that to which, in offering awareness, perception offers opportunity to respond. Responsiveness takes up here work done elsewhere, but not here, by the environment itself—the scene before Sid’s eyes. It offers compensation, such as it is, for
there being no scene relevantly before Sid's eyes.

This much allowed, one may say what he likes as to whether Sid's illusion is experiencing yellow. It would be natural to say not. Then Price's principle can stand, though it invites a modus tolens where he sees a modus ponens. But if we like we can say that for there to be such responsiveness on his part just is for him to experience yellow. The illusion Sid experiences gains him no access to his surroundings, or to the presence or absence of yellow in them. But his experiencing it belongs to the environment—its being as it is. His being as he thus is may instance someone experiencing an illusion of a particular kind, e.g., as of something yellow. One might also count the way yellow figures here as something experiencing yellow might be. For present purpose, say what you like about this so long as you see the facts.

Where do we now stand? In the first two terms of a stock triple, Sid's visual experience, provided by the visual processing (vision science's business) that then went on, was visual awareness of yellow, in that it was visual awareness of an instance of something being yellow—of something which so counted. He saw a shift's yellow—in the first case, Penelope's, in the second, that of some ringer for it. In the third term the experience was no such thing. If its being as though experiencing yellow was Sid's experiencing yellow—if this, too, may so count—still, for all that, Sid's experiencing yellow in this case is (as it is not in the first two) a matter of his posture towards what is happening to him, not just the availability of postures by him towards it.

With which we return to Hinton: what seeing and an illusion thereof have in common is, he says, "that the one is, what the other is merely like". We now see how this encapsulates disjunctivism, captures what is not in common to the two cases. In the one case (either of the first two terms of a stock triple) there is awareness of yellow in awareness of something whose being as it is is, per se, a case of something yellow. In the second (the third term of a stock triple) there is being impressed in a certain way by what is going on visually with one; its being, for him, like seeing yellow. In the one case what was experienced is settled by what was there to be experienced (if it was not missed). In the other, it is settled by how the experiencer was impressed. Only in the first is there something whose being as it is is its being yellow, so that it is awareness of that which is experiencing yellow. There is no object of visual awareness present in all cases of the triple with the further features which might make awareness of it $\Psi(y)$ing.

The point turns on some observations of (philosophical) grammar; on how our means for representing, thinking of, perceptual experience work. Such observations are always open to dispute, and, in philosophy, often enough wrong. But vision science has given us no reason to think our concepts do not—or cannot—work that way. And there is a plausible case that they do. Again, there may well be a good sense in which vision science provides us with the same materials for explaining what is going on in each case of the triple. In the first two, it allows us to understand how one of us can be visually sensitive to the sorts of features of the environment we are—to a shift being uniform yellow, say. In the third it may offer an explanation of why things seem to us as they then might. Burge supposes further that, in providing these same materials throughout, vision science also demands of us that we find some one thing for them to explain throughout, and, moreover, that that one thing must be, throughout, our experiencing such-and-such—some one thing to be experienced visually. I doubt very much that vision science claims this for itself as a result. It is, anyway, an entirely gratuitous assumption.
11. Veils: Burge writes,

I want to remark on one motivation for disjunctivism. The usual motivation is a concern to insure that we make “direct” perceptual contact with the physical world. The doctrine was originally an overreaction to veil-of-perception views of the British empiricists.

... On such a view, experience of the physical world is held to be indirect, both in not being the first object of perceptual reference, and in being the product of an epistemically evaluable inference from more fundamental objects of perception.

... The veil-of-perception view is empirically and philosophically a dead position. All present empirical theories of perception and nearly all serious philosophical positions reject it. (2005: 29-30)

He pleads innocence of commitment to such a veil for the following reason:

Perceptual representation does not produce a “veil of ideas” because the first objects of perceptual reference are physical entities in the environment. This is a sense in which perceptual representations are directly “about” the environment: They are referentially non-derivative. (2005: 30)

In the old days some spoke of sense-data, or qualia, where these were, first what we really, strictly speaking, perceived, or experienced perceptually, and second, these gained us access to what surrounded us by resembling, or otherwise relating to it. Such views are gauche today, though some still mention qualia. Philosophers now speak instead of (truth-evaluable) representations (of things as being thus and so). There is, it is rumoured, a way things are according to perceptual experience. Things here, Burge tells us, are what surround us.

It may be comforting to think such things. But I think Burge has forgotten what it is to represent things as some given way. There are two cases. One is simply holding a posture towards the world (felt as forced on one by the weight of things being thus and so). No one suspects perceptual experience of such things. Perception is a source of information, not a reaction to it. Second, representing-as may be placing messages on offer; making available to one suitably placed and equipped what the representer has to offer (or chooses to). Such representing fixes when a particular goal would be reached: representing things being as they are. The way it represents things being is that way which things would then be. For such representing to exist is for it to be recognisable as what it is. It works via something (e.g., a sentence) recognisable without recognising any representing going on, but by whose presence one knowledgable in such things can tell this.

If an experience issues, or bears, messages—if such-and-such is the way things are
according to it—then something in it must make these recognisable. If the representing is for us—not just that of one subdoxastic mechanism for others—then it is something experienced which must make this recognisable. We can see how things are thus represented to be in being so represented to. This something cannot be things around us, things seen. Penelope’s yellow shift, or her wearing it, may be a signal to Sid to meet her at La Bellota Hermosa at 9. But it hardly represents itself to be a yellow shift. In fact, if an experience represented it to be so that Penelope was wearing a yellow shift, what made this representing recognisable would need to be something which would be there to do its work whether Penelope was so clad or not—what, so far as it went, could be making false representing recognisable.

So if experience does the representing Burge supposes, what makes it recognisable must be sought elsewhere than in what is before us. Accordingly, when we have recognised the representing done on an occasion, and concern ourselves with whether this was representing truly, we must look beyond what made it recognisable to find what settles the question: that historical circumstance, things being as they are, which, in being a case or not of that generality, the way things were represented being, makes this representing a case of representing truly, or, as it may be, falsely. We must look beyond what makes the representing recognisable to those surroundings themselves which were represented as being some given way, to such things as Penelope’s shift, and its being as it is. If these were themselves things then experienced, that representing, and this exercise of evaluating it, would be simply idle. Now, though neither sense data nor qualia yet have an acknowledged place in this picture, one might well ask what more one could want for a veil between us and that of which (supposedly) perception places us to judge.

12. Concluding: Burge turns the personal psychology of holding true to revealing the structure of being true—those points there are at which for thinkers, such as us, to meet in agreement or dispute. He then gives ringers free rein in fixing a thinker’s epistemic standing towards what he thinks—what he can recognise this to be. Had he followed Frege he would have done neither. As Frege shows, much, some set out here, speaks against each. It is this that moves disjunctivism about (singular) belief. Perception (seeing) parallels belief at least in this: what there is to see is what there is for one to see. Personal psychology cannot tell us what that is. Ringers, charged with uncovering things we experience perceptually, uncover, instead, nothing.¹

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